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80-79  
Meadow Perry, Jr / *with* Riley  
Recollections

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80-79

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An Interview with

MEADOW PERRY, JR.  
MRS. MEADOW PERRY SR.  
and  
MISS MARGUERITE RILEY

Interviewed by  
Robert Bowman

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Oral History Project:  
Yazoo City and Vicinity

OH  
80-79 Meadow Perry, Jr.

Recollections

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Recollections

B: Marguerite, can you tell me something about your first ancestor that you know about? How they came here? When?

RA: I can't tell you when they came, but I can tell you about how old Grandpa Riley was when he came. They said he was about nine years old and he was 69 years old...lets see, I was three years old when he died. That was 68 years ago. He was 69 years old when he died. That would be 137 years ago.

RB: What was his name?

RR: Patrick Paul Riley

RB: Who did he marry?

RR: Margaret Kayes, who also came here from Ireland.

RB: Can you tell me something about the trip that you remember your grandparents speaking of?

MR: No more than them having that sick child. They came here on a sail ship. They were six months coming. The wind would blow them back and it took six months for them to come to New York. The little child was real sick and they thought it was going to die and they would have to put it overboard. They prayed it would live until they got to New York. It did and they buried it there.

RB: Was this your grandfather's little brother or sister?

MR: No, it wasn't that family. It was Grandma's family. I believe that was the Kayes family. Because Grandma Riley was just sixteen years old. They must have come over here together (Rileys & Kayes). (At this point, Mrs. Meadow Perry, Sr. spoke up and said that if she gets a chance to visit her aunt, Mrs. Todd (Winnie Riley) Brumfield, she is going to ask her about that).

RB: What was your grandmother's name?

MR: Margaret Kayes was all I know. I was named for her.

Mrs.P: Grandpa settled at "Stuckey" place when he came here and managed that until he bought this place where they lived.

RB: Did they call that place "Stuckey" then? Or, was that the old Martin Anding place?

Mrs.P: Martin Anding owned it but they called it "Stuckey".

RB: Can you give the names of your grandparents' children and their spouses?

S.P: Well, there were a couple of children that died that I didn't know. Mary married Tom McCosker; Maggie married John Jordan; they had one named Ellie who lost her mind when she was 16 years old; and they had one named Johnnie who died when he was four or five years old; Aunt Annie never married; Uncle Pat - never married; Tommie Riley never married; -- it runs in the Riley family! Aunt Winnie was the baby and she married Todd Brumfield; and Papa (William Joseph) married Emma Ferris, the daughter of Dr. Lee Ferris.

: Where did your grandparents come from and who were the parents of your grandmother Margaret Kayes Riley?

S.P: Westmeade County, Ireland near Dublin.

(At this time, different ones began to talk about Father Hannelly and Father Egan and subjects not pertaining to this interview, so I will not transcribe this- since I have sent in Riley family sheet- RB).

B: Meadow, Jr. you say you remember hearing your father, Meadow Perry, Sr. say that he knew old Captain Taylor that lived down in Bentonia?

Jr: Well, it was probably back in the '20's. Daddy said that Captain Taylor was the kingpin of Bentonia back in those days. He owned the old store that Kirk Whitehead owned that Champ Simmons runs now. (Note: I believe he is mistaken about the location of the store. Think it was the store on the corner where the present Joe Stegall store is located. The Taylors sold their property to W. M. Puffer, who built the present three stores on the corner in 1935- RB.) Daddy said that Cap'n Taylor had a favorite rocking chair that he kept back there by that old pot-bellied stove. It was a caned-bottomed chair and he liked to sit in it. One morning he went back there and there was an old negro man sitting in it. Just as he got back there, the old negro jumped up and Cap'n Taylor said, "Naw, naw, sit down, sit down". Everybody that would come in the store, he would say: "Come on back here, I want you to meet Cap'n Taylor". He introduced the negro all day long as Cap'n Taylor. The old negro begged and begged him to let him get up, but he wouldn't do it. Everybody that would come in the store, he would say, "this is Cap'n Taylor". Had the old negro just about crying. Cap'n Taylor, from all indications must have been quite an old man.

B: Have you heard any other old tales that you would like to tell that your daddy told of any other persons who lived around there?

Jr: Did you know old man George Bradshaw who lived up there around Dover? He was a Spanish American war veteran. He was an old bachelor and had quite a reputation for being real tight. I remember one story Daddy told me about Mr. George. Mr. George was a young man and his daddy was on his death bed - real old - and just about dead. He wanted some oranges so he called George in and said: "George, go hook up the horse to the buggy and go get me some oranges". George

said: "Pa, you want me to use my money or yours?" - "Aw, George! Just go get the oranges". But Daddy couldn't help but laugh, said the old man was dying and was going to leave George every penny he had and George was worrying about who was going to pay for the sack of oranges.

Didn't Mr. George have an automobile?

Jr: Yes, he bought one of the first cars out in that neighborhood. Daddy was working or running a service station down there at Bentonia and Mr. George would come in there and say: "Give me fifty cents worth of gas". Daddy would put the hose in the tank and would say: "Mr. George, you say - fill it up?" Mr. George would say- "You heard what I said". He would come in there and buy - you know, you could cut a nickle or dime's worth off of a plug of tobacco - and he would come in there in a pair of old ragged overalls and say: "Give me a nickle's worth of that "Blood Hound". Daddy said he would wrestle around in those britches for five minutes and would say: "I've got a nickle here somewhere- just a minute". Daddy would say: "Mr. George, I'll sell you the whole plug and you can pay me tomorrow". "I don't want but a nickle's worth!" Years later, Mr. George bought him a brand new 1940 Ford. That was a real fancy car in those days. Everyone of them was black... I never did see any different colors, I don't believe. He lived about a mile from the Dover store. He would walk down there every day to get his mail. That was as far as the mail rider would come. They would say: "Mr. George, how come you didn't come in your car?" Mr. George would say: "Aw, that thing will use near about a gal- long of gas to come down here!" Mr. George was quite an old man! He was a Spanish American war veteran and he died in the Veteran's Hospital down there in Gulfport. The Veteran's Home or whatever it is down there.

B: Did you know any other older people around there in that area?

Jr: No, I wish I had my daddy here. He could have filled this book up with tales about Cap'n Taylor and Mr. George. He knew a lot more tales about Mr. Bradshaw... Some we can't put on this tape. Daddy was quite a story-teller and he could remember things.

END OF INTERVIEW



