

(When did you start cooking?)

I don't know, about ten. I cooked when all in the family was sick. I was small but they told me how, and what to cook and I did it. They told me how to make bread, beans. Whatever they tell me I cook it on fireplace.

(On the floor around the fireplace?)

Yes, floor was rocks all around fireplace. Rocks for chimney. In iron skill-ets I put dough in it, cover it with iron skillet and put in on coal and coal on top too, and it cook it. Iron kettles pots were used for meat, corn, put them on top of coal and had long handle spoon to stir it up with. In winter we put lots of water in pot, put corn in it, or hominy and it was cook just right next morning 'cause we had fire going all night in winter time.

(Nothing like that now?)

No, they don't know nothing about that now. (laughter) We used to help each others too when there was sickness.

(Tell me how you cook blue dumplings.)

Blue dumpling? You take corn and lye, put it together, boil it, wash it, and about dry, grind it with pole in something made of log. But clean. Burn dry bean hulls to use it for bluing. Find dry hulls. Sift as fine as flour. Mix it. Boil water with little lye in it. You can put beans or sweet potatoes in blue dumpling and put it in boiling water about size of biscuits. But they make it with corn meal now. (laughter) They make it different now. Did she tell about sour bread? (meaning Mrs. Cannon.)

(Tell it.)

We use sofky grits (corn), put in water all night. Almost boiling water. Mix it and set it all night. Use baking powder, some do, or use soda. It puffs up itself. Put little flour in it to thicken it a little. Pour it in pan or iron skillet and put it in oven. That's the way I know it.

(At this point she is talking about riding a horse.)