

(Well, now, the town of Welling here, it must have been a pretty good little place at one time.)

It was. The railroad--it was. At one time, they had two or three stores there, a big cotton gin, and two blacksmith shops, a drugstore, a post office, and I don't know what all there was around there.

#### EARLY DAY STORES IN SMALL TOWNS

(Who ran the stores in those days?)

Back there, some Knights, let's see, Longs and Hodges! Hodges, oh, boy, I tell you, you could buy anything from Springfield Wagon from them Hodges up there. They ran the cotton gin, grist mill--oh, they bought ties. They buy nearly anything.

(Well, did old man Gray have a store down here at one time? Out there where--)

Yeah, he worked for Hodges back up there. The house, the other side of where the post office used to be up there, that little white house when you turn to the left going that way. That was the Hodge dwelling. Now, the store was set off kinda off that way from the house, and the cotton gin. It set down there in that low place.

(That's been a long time ago---)

Now, that Gray, he worked for them, and he put in that store where that cobblestone building is there.

#### SCHOOLS IN EARLY DAYS

(Now, where was that Elm Spring Mission?)

Right up yonder where that house is--right on the side of that white house--if it hadn't of been for that thing, I probably wouldn't have been able to read and write. Yes, sir, I finished eighth grade there.