

Betsy
FyH

INTERVIEW WITH SADIE EVE (98 YRS OLD)
MARCH 2, 1994
BAY VIEW NURSING HOME - BEAUFORT

DRAFT

Present: Mrs. Eve, and her daughter Ms. Bette Cooper.
Interviewers: Darlene Sherman & Bruce Lampright

Ms. Eve stayed on Spring Island and went to school for a time at the girls school- Confederate Home in Charleston. She came back and the hog man had all the pigs named after her - he'd yell "woo Sadie, woo Sadie" and a whole groove of pigs would come in. She was about 15 years old at the time. She was the only girl. Her brothers were Jim, Miles, Usses, Devant. Sadie used to ride a buggy through the woods to the Copp Landing. No cars were there at that time. Sadie left Spring Island for good in December 10, 1913, she got married - it was a freezing, cold day. She moved to Ocean Bluff, the Eves Farm near Broad River. She raised seven children there. Her next to the oldest went in the Army and was killed in Korea. He is buried in the National Cemetery.

Q. What was your home like on Spring?

It was big enough - there was a long hall with a living room, had a big fireplace on one side and bedrooms on the other. A great big kitchen and dining room. Cooked on wooden stove.

Q. What were you favorite things to eat?

Plenty of hams and sausage. They would grind the sausage. Had beef.

Sadie was raised by her natural parents and her mom died at 57. There was 5 children, one girl Mattie died at the age of 3 from "worms". They had bad water back then. They took Mattie to Hampton to be buried. They treated Sadie for worms - her mother said she never had seen so many worms come out of a child!

Sadie like to read. Her mamma wouldn't let her go near the barn. She helped her mamma in the house. They had a black help. They would pay them off by butter, milk, clabber.

They used to picnic over in Bluffton. They had to go by boat. One time they docked and the tide was real low - they had to pick her up and Miles and Jim were just kids themselves and they couldn't hold her and dropped her in mud. Then she went to the well and washed off and dried and went on to the picnic. They created their own amusement. Sadie's mamma would try to keep her dressed up, complete with hats.

A teacher was paid \$50./month with room and board and find a place to have school. Nelly Fripp taught school - they used a deserted house for school. Her oldest brother married his school teacher. They had several teachers. The teachers wouldn't stay, it was too little pay, too rough of a life. Blacks did not attend school with the whites. The boys could mingle with them but not the girls.

Sadie said the Copp house was lovely. Mr. Copp used to strip naked and jump of the dock every day for a swim. Q. In broad daylight - he didn't care. He had a black mistress, Hattie. Sadie liked Hattie more than the white one he married. Sadie's maid married her brother, someone killed him, he was shot or something like that. She than lived with Hattie and when Hattie moved she, Agnus, moved with her. Mr. Copp moved Hattie to Savannah. Mr. Copp gambled - they would get him drunk - he didn't know how to play cards -but he always played his debt. Ed Mactyre's house was built with money from gambling. They didn't gamble on Spring - they went to Beaufort. Mr. Copp was a southern gentleman. He was good looking, curly blond hair, tall, very sure of himself. He was such a rogue up north that his family bought Spring Island for him and sent him down here where he had the time of his life.

Mr. Copp and her daddy were good friends. Mr. Copp wouldn't make a move without talking to her daddy first.

Q. Could you tell us about Mrs. Copp? The fact is I spent one night with her and it was enough for me. She was a bad drinker, henna, red hair. I thought Hattie was a lot better than she was.

Q. Was it true that Mrs. Copp had brought 2 Chinese cooks over and they didn't stay but a week? Yes, they didn't like it. She tried to raise Pekinese dogs. Q. How many? A bunch, and my brother went over there to help with the dogs and he didn't mind cleaning up them but he hated to brush their teeth. He said it was terrible and he quit.

Q. Do you remember turtle cages by dock? _____ We used to have alligators and papa knew where the alligator holes were. Papa was a smart man, he fixed a long pole with a hook in the end of it and he knew where the alligator holes were and he would poke the pole down there and they would come out after the hook and Papa would hook them and pull them out of there and Mamma and I would hold it while Papa shot it.

Q. Did you eat the alligator? No, but we did eat a lot of pigs, ham, sausage, shoulders.

Q. Did you eat a lot of seafood? Yes, oysters, clams, we really had the oyster, and fish and crab. Q. Did you fish yourself? I didn't go fishing much - it's so slow.

Q. Did you parents go to school - and how far?
Mamma I think went through Grammar School, but I don't think Papa ever did. He taught himself how to read. He would read the Bible.

Q. Did you have a place for worship where you gathered or was it done at home? We used to go to a little chapel at Fripp and of course Nelly Fripp taught over there and went to the Confederate Home also.

Q. How many months out of the year did you go to school when they had teachers? About 4 to 5 months. Papa was a Catholic and Mamma was Episcopalian. Papa was one of 14 children. She never let a baby inter with her life - she nursed them and put them on the bed and they had better stay there. Papa never worked he taught his boys to work and he'd sit on the porch.

Q. Was Papa strict? No, Papa wasn't he left all the discipline to Mamma. Mamma was French. Mamma hardly ever whipped me. I remember I did something and she said she would have Papa whip me when he got home. I remember that was the longest day I ever spent and Papa didn't do a thing in the world but say "Sadie, and patted me and said are you going to be a good girl now?" and I said "yes Papa".

Q. Did you get along good with your brothers? Yes, I loved them.

Q. Then you were a close knit family? Yes, and we had a piano and had an uncle that would come and play and sing and he had a beautiful voice - his name was Jimmy. Papa used to play a guitar and he and Mamma used to sign.

Q. Did you exchange stories and Mamma and Papa tell you stories about their time? Yes, he would tell us about it.

Q. Do you remember any stories about ghosts or superstitions? Oh all the colored people believed in ghosts but it didn't seem to keep them from walking through those woods at night.

Q. Where there any trouble, fights, violence? They would fight among themselves. From what I understood everyone got along pretty well? Yes, didn't even lock our doors at night.

Q. We heard Colonel Copp treated everyone well and love Christmas and would bring gifts - did he bring the Pinckney family gifts? Yes, I remember Christmas was a big time! Q. Did you have a tree? I think so, we would go get our own tree and decorations came from somewhere.

Mr. Copp was not a bad man - he drank a lot. Q. Did you visit folks a lot on other Islands? No, stayed close to home - but visited Pinckney Colony a lot. They had geese and would make there own blankets.

Q. What about fruit trees - pecan trees? Q. Did you used to pick them? No, I don't remember much about pecans, but Papa planted peach trees, pear trees and fenced them in.

Q. Was that on Chechesse Creek? Yes.

Q. Would you happen to know who is buried at the grave yard - a John Fripp listed as B Company? Yes, I know there is a grave yard - don't know much.

Q. Mr. Copp didn't have children? That's right.

Q. Hattie had children? That's right. Her brother John was a carpenter that worked on the Island.

Q. Did things change once Mrs. Copp came to the Island? Yes things changed because people didn't like her - and I can see why. She was a bad drinker, loved to give orders.

Q. Was she mean to the black people on the Island? Yes, I think she wanted to treat them like slaves.

Q. Where you here when Mr. Copp died? Yes, I know he stopped being active and it wasn't long before he passed on. I don't believe he every had a doctor.

Q. Do you know what kind of sickness he died from - was it a heart attack? No, I think he just wore himself out.

Q. Where did they take his body? New York, I think - I believe. Cause he was really from a prominent family from New York.

Q. Did he have any family, brothers, etc that came down? No.

Q. He didn't have many visitors on the Island? No.

Q. Did you ever wonder why he had a big house? No, I guess cause he could.

Q. Do you remember Margie Lanford, who's daddy built the Copp house? I have a dim recollection of her. One of the funniest things that happened to one of my brothers is that we had a high dock and we used to jump off that dock into the water. Well he didn't have a bathing suit, so she got one of mamma's dresses and pinned it with a safety pin and he jumped off the dock the pin had come loose and he said that was the longest drop - he thought he would never hit the water.

Mamma - tell them when papa went to Colonel Copps birthday party.

Papa got drunk, and Papa never drank. He had a horse that knew the way home and papa passed out went to sleep down in the buggy and the horse brought him home.

Q. I bet your mamma wasn't happy about that! What did your mamma think about Mr. Copp, was he allowed in the house when she found out he had a black mistress? NO - she invited him until he had the black mistress and then she had nothing more to do with him.

Q. Did they make moonshine on the Island? Yes, but I didn't know nothing about it, papa didn't drink - he smoked.

Q. Did he have a pipe? Yes, he used to chew too - chew and spit - chew and spit.

Q. Did they grow tobacco on the Island? No, he used to get slabs of tobacco and bite off a piece.

Q. When you had coughs and colds what did they do? Did you have remedies? Well, mamma used to put tallow plasters on our chests. Of course, they relieved them but I hated the smell they used to but turpentine in them.

Q. What about a toothache? Papa would get a little juice of his tobacco and put it on it - it would stop it.

Q. What about stomachaches? I don't remember having much stomachaches.

Q. What about boils? My brother had boils, Jim and he couldn't wear anything tight around his waist, so mamma put one of my dresses on him and people came up during that time, and he started running and I remember somebody looked at him and said that girl could sure run. Q. What kinda salve did she use? I don't remember. She used some kinda of liquid resin, sweet, but it had - quinine. It was used for malaria.

Q. Was there a lot of malaria? There was some there but once we got the fresh water there wasn't any. Q. Did you have to dig a new well to get fresh water? Yes, an artisan well - the water flowed.

Q. Where was the artisan well located? It was on Pinckney Landing.

Q. What about broken bones? Did you go to a doctor? Papa was quite a doctor - I remember I cut my foot and papa didn't do a thing in the world, but squeeze it together, wrap it tight and poured turpentine and something over the top of it and that thing healed up just as good.

Q. What did you do for poison ivy? I don't remember much about having poison ivy.

Q. Did you put something on to keep the ticks off? We picked the ticks off from us.

Q. When you mamma had the babies - did she have them in the house? My grandmother would come over and she and papa would deliver the babies. Grandmother was a midwife she delivered all her grand babies.

Q. Did they have anything they'd give the women for pain? No. Q. Do you know of any children that were still born? No, I don't think mamma ever lost a child.

Q. Do you remember any other illness on the island, any illness that the blacks had like epilepsy? One time some girl who never did menstruate and when she started to bleed one time she bleed to death. It was Agnes Ward's family. I think she had two daughters.

Q. Do you know what happened to them when they left? No, my brother Miles used to tease Agnes.

Q. What was Mr. Ward's job on the Island? I think he was a carpenter.

Q. Do you remember anyone with Indian blood in them? Where there any Indians left in the area? No. Q. Where there any mixed children on the Island? No, surprisingly. I know one women had a son by her daddy - daddy Mac and he was kinda crazy like, never had good sense. Q. Was he mixed? No he was black.

Q. Did you stay mainly at the North end of the Island, Chechesse Creek or did you go to Copps? We stayed by the big river with a big dock. Q. That was probably Chechesse Creek, did you call it Chechessee Creek? Uh uh. Q. What was at Callawassie - do you remember? We used to go by row boat from Spring Island to the Pinckney Colony, we'd get lost along the way when a fog came up and we couldn't see at all and mamma had a great voice for hooting and she could hoot! They would put a light out and you see the light from a distance and we could see the light from the distance.

Q. Did you every come back with your children and visit? Oh yes. (daughter - "We about grew up here, we visited so much)

Share some of your most best and fun times on Spring Island.

We lead a busy life over there - I used to help mamma as much as I could but I think I was lazy - I didn't like to work much.

Q. What are some of your best memories? I remember mamma cleaning tripe from one of the cows, we cleaned that tripe but we swore we'd never do it again - and we never did. I remember falling down the back steps, mamma had one side of the big bucket/pail and I had the other side and it just fell over and turned over and I got all wetup!

Daughter (Bette Cooper) - I remember when I was 13 and went over - they had a stallion, Midnight. He was up in papa's barn and the horse was so humongous and I remember putting a saddle on him and he took off and he must of known, he took me through the woods, all around, finally he settled down and took me back home. Papa was white as a sheet said "Bett you could have been killed". I never had so much fun in my life - I will always remember the freedom I felt. Sadie - I had the nicest horse to ride over there all the time - his name was Mit. She was nice, easy and get her pacing and you just felt you were in a rocking chair.

Q. Did you used to ride to the Copp house? No, I wouldn't go that far.

Q. You stayed around Pinckney Point? Yes.

Q. Can you recollect some other funny stories you could share? I remember my brothers, I could never run fast enough to suit them, so my brother got behind me so he'd get behind me and make me run fast and I was running as fast as you could push me and Jim my other brother fell down in front of me and tripped me up and I remember I almost broke my knee. And that was supposed to be fun, wasn't it? (Bette Cooper) Yeah.

Q. Did you play baseball? I wasn't much at it.

Q. Did the boys play a lot of baseball? They used to play what you'd called hail over. It was a small house, some would be on one side of the house and some on the other and they would try to catch it and run around.

Q. Did you have electricity? No, We used lamps. Was it kerosene? Yes, and those lamps had to be kept good. Q. Did you have an outhouse - or did you use chamber pots?. Yes - and they finally added a bathroom on where we could have a johnny and running water.

Q. Now the Copp house had bathrooms didn't it and running water? Uh uh. Q. How did they heat water for hot water? I remembered we had a big stove that had a big thing on the end of it and you'd just dip the water out when you needed it to wash dishes.

Q. Wasn't that called a reservoir?(Bette Cooper) Yes, a reservoir.

Q. I bet you miss those times? I wouldn't say. Q. Do you think you had a better time after you left the Island? Well I got married when I was eighteen years old and I had 4 children in 4 years so I was kept busy. Q. You waited 5 years and had 3 more? Uh huh. I don't know why, I just didn't have any. (children for 5 year span). I remember I was 32 when my youngest child was born. I went over to the Savannah hospital and had the baby there - that was Francis. She was the sweetest little baby and I remember someone looking at me, mind you this was my seventh child, and said is this your first baby? The fact is I still looked good. Q. What did you husband do? He was a farmer - a hard worker.

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