South Georgia Folklife Project

College of the Arts

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May 5, 2005

Mr. George W. Harrington 802 Habersham Road Valdosta, GA 31602

Dear Mr. Harrington,

On behalf of our project interviewing team of Tim Prizer, LeRoy Henderson, and myself, I'd like to thank you for taking the time over the past several years to share your experiences and recollections with the "Faces" of the Piney Woods: Traditions of Turpentining Project. Enclosed with this mailing please find a copy of the project report. For persons with Internet access, the project website is www.valdosta.edu/turpentine, where you'll find all sorts of interesting information about the project and naval stores in South Georgia.

Traditions of Turpentining was made possible under the auspices of the South Georgia Folklife Project at Valdosta State University with special project grant funds from the Georgia Council for the Arts Folklife Program. The South Georgia Folklife Project as a whole is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and Valdosta State University College of the Arts with the aim of documenting and supporting the traditional arts and customs within a 41-county area of South Georgia. Photographs, tape recordings, and notes from the folklife project will be placed in the Archives of Odum Library, Valdosta State University, as part of a resource collection on South Georgia heritage and culture. This is where your photos, tape recording, and notes on our conversation will go. As you recall, you were asked to sign a consent form so the university has your permission to make these materials available for educational, nonprofit purposes.

Unfortunately, the South Georgia Folklife Project is losing funding at VSU on June 30, 2005 after seven years. However, I will continue to work on Traditions of Turpentining through a book manuscript in progress which I hope will tell the story of those we have interviewed more fully than was possible in the project report (as you'll note, the report doesn't reflect the full range of persons interviewed or material gathered). Also, as mentioned above, the materials from Traditions of Turpentining will become part of the VSU archives.

Please let me hear from you if you have any questions about the project. And again, thanks from all of us for sharing your story.

Sincerely,

Dr. Laurie Sommers, Director, South Georgia Folklife Project

Field Notes Feb. 10, 2004 George Harrington 802 Habersham Rd. Valdosta, GA 31602 h-244-7791 gave verbal permission on

5-20-04

to copy protos from LCHISTORICAL

Mission for depositor) SEFP includes

Use on Indianet

Mr. Harrington (born 1932) called me on Feb. 4 after hearing from Donald Davis at the Lowndes Co. Historical Museum that I might be interested in some photos he has of the Greenwood Turpentine Camp in Stockton. I went over to interview him at his home, but when I got there he had some reservations about signing a consent form. He said a handshake was good enough for him. I explained the policy, and he is thinking about whether or not he wants to be recorded. In the meantime we talked for over an hour and a half, and I took notes. He had lost his wife to congestive heart failure a year ago yesterday, and I think was lonely and enjoyed the company. He asked me to join him for lunch. The Harringtons have two children and about 5 or 6 grandkids. We talked at his kitchen table. He is a fit man, with snow white hair. Says he goes to the YMCA three mornings a week. I did not take a photo.

**He mentions that Mrs. Powell, of the Powell turpentine camp in Homerville, lives in Valdosta. Could get me her name and number through a neighbor.

Lloyd L. Powell - Son with the lives we have the lives with the li

His father Jake (JL) Harrington Sr. was raised on a farm in Ludowici surrounded by turpentine lands. He worked in turpentine from the 1920s until 1960 (died 1987), getting out then because he couldn't find reliable labor. The family lived in various turpentine camps, some before George (GW) was born, so the bulk of the interview revolved around the period 1941-1960 at the Greenwood Camp, owned by Southern Resin and Chemical Co. of Philadelphia, which the elder Harrington managed. There was a 16,000 acre tract of land which adjoined Langdale lands. GW worked in naval stores in various jobs from 1943-1950. In 1'951 he went into the service. He also spent a year in professional baseball minor leagues as a outfielder, the old GA-FL League.

When GW as a baby, the family lived at 8 mile Still outside Homerville. His earliest memories are of the Fodie Camp outside Morven, 1935-37, named for a turpentine still. They lived in company housing and GW went to kindergarten in Morven (2 miles). His father operated the still. The crew was black, both for stilling and working in the woods.

Beginning in 1941, JL managed the Greenwood camp. GW has some photos of the camp, taken by his brother-in-law Joseph O. Rodgers, Jr., including one of the inside of the commissary from the early '40s. I think it is unusual for a family to have such photos. Some of GW's most interest memories involve the commissary, which his mother ran. His father did the ordering, but his mother would have "grocery time" or "grocery night" for the hands. The commissary stocked non perishables and pay was cash only, except for those long-time workers deemed reliable, who could run up a tab. There were several sources for the store stock: T & R Factors of Valdosta (Turpentine and Rosin) on Cypress Street at RR Track (old building still there) for most commissary food, medicinal, and clothing goods and animal feed; Lerio Corporation (tins for trees,

hacks, dip buckets, nails). They would take a pickup truck weekly to load up. Things like the gum barrels came from the still in Glen St. Mary's FL, which would pick up fulls and bring back empties. Blue Whistler was the name of the original barrel; later standardization resulted in three quarter barrel size. At one time, the pay was \$2.50 for a barrel (Blue Whistler) of dipped gum. Hands were also paid by the thousand for chipping trees.

Ice blocks delivered on a truck from Homerville

Items GW remembers

Horse feed, chicken scratch feed (all hands raised chickens)

Canned milk (used a lot of that, no fresh milk readily at hand); flour in bags (also used flour sacks for other things), lard, dried peas in cans (had to be careful of rats), sugar, commeal (made combread and biscuits to take to woods), grits, cans of corned beef, tripe, sardines (very popular), pork and beans (a big staple, "sold real well"), saltine crackers, a barrel of cheese, canned fruit, 5 cent cakes from Tip Top Bakery, rice, ketchup, cane syrup in bottles and cans, fat back, canned oysters. Some hands would have box of Royal Crown cola but it wasn't sold at the store.

Dad butchered hogs and made his own sausage for sale. Mother would make pies to sell at the commissary, esp. lemon and chocolate cream pies. At Christmastime, she made fruitcakes for sale.

Tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, cigarettes, Iodine for cuts, baking soda for heartburn, Ipana and Pepsident toothpaste, Vaseline, BQR (for colds), castor oil (for colds), Black draught (colds, congestion), (note turpentine also used for cuts, scrapes, sore throat) **His dad would take hands to the doctor in town.

Work clothing such as rubber boots, Wolverine shoes and gloves, overalls

A rolling store (Guess Co. in Valdosta) would come through every Sat. morning from Valdosta. This is when hands got paid. This offered fresh produce, fish, smoked meats. Other stores visited the camp, esp. Slocum Furniture in Valdosta. His dad didn't like this, because it would get hands in debt. Sometimes trucks would come selling wearing apparel.

Additional food came from hunting and fishing. Company had fish ponds on the property.

Dinner was taken out to the woods in lunch buckets made out of gallon cans with lids sealed on to keep out ants, stored in the shade. Hands would take out sausage, or cooked raccoon, rabbit, squirrel, fat back. Sardines and grits were popular. They were heavy into rice, pork and beans, biscuits, cornbread. They would carry water in jugs and bury the jugs to keep it cool.

The day would start at 4:30 am when his dad rang the camp bell to raise the hands.

There were three hot meals a day in the camp, prepared by the women. "Mama believed in a hot meal." Here is what GW remembers his mother fixing for the family:

Breakfast, 5-5:30 am. Grits, fried eggs, bacon, oatmeal

Dinner (11:00 a.m.): "Something that would stick with you" fried chicken, rice, speckled butter beans, cornbread, corn, okra, new potatoes, sliced tomatoes. Biscuits, some kind of dessert. He remembers his mother's pies and homemade bread pudding.

Supper 5 p.m.: leftovers from dinner or country sausage. Usually had fried fish every Friday, esp. mullet which would get at downtown fish market in Valdosta.

His dad would be in bed by 8:30/8:45 each evening.

On Saturday nights, the hands would often get a hold of alcohol. Some hands had guitars. On weekends you could hear them. There was a church in Stockton, not on the premises.

In the quarters, GW remembers the "smell of soul food cooking—I'll never forget." Various kinds of greens, cornbread, peas, corn, cabbage, squash, sweet potatoes from rolling store, biscuits every day made from flour and lard.

Women, both black and white, did housework and fixed meals. Some of the black women helped GW's mother in the home with laundry, clean house, change beds (they used to "sun" the mattresses). There was one other white family (woods rider), although for a period there was a black woods rider, Leonard Hollingsworth. There were some 12-15 black families at Greenwood. The white woods rider lived next door. All housing was company housing. Company provided housing free of charge. GW has a photo of his family home there which had a screened in front porch and looked quite substantial. The quarters originally were "old shanties, never had a coat of paint." Located right near family home. Later they built new block houses just up the road. Very nice for the time. 2 bedrooms, kitchen, living quarters. Outdoor plumbing. Wood stove and wood fireplaces for heating. When the Harringtons moved in they initially used kerosene lamps. Dad had a generator installed. In 1945 REA came in, and also in the mid-1940s the Harringtons got indoor plumbing.

Black boys would work in the woods as soon as they were able; schooling was not a priority, according to GW. The girls rarely worked in the woods, and were more likely to go to school on a regular basis. On rare occasions, women worked to help the family finish an assigned crop.

GW remembers playing with the children of the black hands: ball games like baseball and catch, horseshoes (played with real horseshoes), hide and seek, tag, rover, over the house (throw ball), pop the whip.

Dad had two good-size farm gardens: butter beans, tomatoes, okra, English peas, corn, for the family's own use. His mother put up food from the garden. The hands had their own small gardens, collard, turnip, and mustard greens, cucumbers, squash, crops that didn't need a lot of land. The black women would can some, too.

The camp had 2 scuppernong grapevines, fig and plum tree, sycamore trees, pecan tree, sweet gum, blackberries "galore" around the fence (mother put up jelly), wild blueberries. There were about 12 houses for the hands, a building adjoining the Harrington house for a fire truck, a wagon shed for saddles and wagons, barn for horses and mules, a gas pump, the bell pole, commissary, cattle gaps to keep cattle from coming into yard, fenced pasture for cattle (dad would butcher meat), chicken coops.

The family never took a full vacation because JL felt responsible for the whole acreage and was constantly worried about forest fires. Coal burning trains would set the woods on fire. There was a forester/timber cruiser who managed the timber for fence posts, pulpwood, and poles. JL managed naval stores. The family did take 2-3 day trips to Jacksonville Beach, Cherry Lake, Twin Lakes Pavilion (with its swimming area and dancing during WWII).

Every year around July 4, the company had a picnic for the hands. Dad would pick up BBQ pork and beef from Jimbos in Homerville. His mother would do the rest: homemade lemonade in a barrel, potato salad, beans. They would play games like horseshoe and pitch the ball around. At Christmastime they would give each family a bag: the company would provide nuts, fruit, and a little toy for the kids.

His mother would fix a special thank-you meal and serve it at the back door of the house for someone who had done something special or extra for the family.

His sisters helped with housework chores. At age 10-12 George started dipping. Didn't ever do much chipping and pulling. Later he rode woods. Dad and GW took care of horses and mules. Dr. Joe Crane, vet of Valdosta, used to come out to camp and shoe the horses. GW also worked as a tally man. All the hands had a calling name when they would work. They'd "holler out their call" and he'd put a dot by their name. He recalls that the also "loved to sing." They sang all the time, humming and singing. "It was motivating to them."

GW was George's nickname. Other hands had nicknames, one he remembers is "Mutt."

It was 11 miles across the property. Truck would drop hands off at different locations. They usually worked with someone else. They would haul the dipped gum to barrel stands, set up near an area with the # of trees necessary to fill a barrel. The wagon driver would go pick up the barrels.

During the cool weather, after the season was over and gum stopped flowing, they would do "control burning", clearing around the trees. At the end of the season they would gather the "scrape" and put it in the turpentine drums. They would also turn the terra cotta cups upside down so they wouldn't burst in a freeze. Sulphuric acid came in about '46-'47. It would eat up your clothes and was a pain to use. If hands weren't careful, it would get on shrubs and get on clothes. But it saved time, less streaking time.

During WWI, there were plans to use German POWs to work turpentine. They had modified trucks with benches and locked doors to transport the men daily from Moody Air Force Base, but then the company changed its mind. Thought it wouldn't be productive, POWs would be a problem.

At the end, labor got to be a problem. Couldn't keep dependable help on a regular basis. He described his father as fair with workmen, treated them right.

February 13, 2004

George Harrington 802 Habersham Rd. Valdosta, GA 31602

Dear Mr. Harrington:

Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences and recollections about turpentining with the Faces of the Piney Woods project. This project was made possible through a grant from the Georgia Council for the Arts Folklife Program, which is a joint initiative with the Georgia Humanities Council. As I mentioned, we hope to use information gathered for this project to encourage greater awareness of the importance of naval stores in South Georgia. All of the interview materials will go into archives at Valdosta State University and Georgia Southern State University. We also plan to put the results of the project on the Internet as part of an educational website devoted to the stories of former turpentine workers like yourself.

"Faces of the Piney Woods" is part of the outreach of the South Georgia Folklife Project at Valdosta State University. The folklife project is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and Valdosta State University College of the Arts. Its aim is to identify, interpret, and encourage traditional arts and customs within a 41-county area of South Georgia. Photographs, tape recordings, and notes from the folklife project ultimately will be placed in the Odum Library, Valdosta State University, as part of a resource collection on South Georgia heritage and culture. This is where your photos and recorded interview will go, should we work out the consent form issue. A consent form clarifies that the university has your permission to make these materials available for educational, nonprofit purposes.

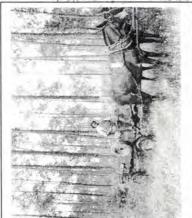
Thank you again for sharing your experiences with me (and even including lunch!). I enjoyed meeting you. If you should decide to do a tape recorded interview with a consent form, I'd love to work with you. I'll also be contacting you about the possibility of copying your photos.

Best wishes,

Dr. Laurie Sommers Director, South Georgia Folklife Project Tarrington there's could by 415 in som courses aunder to Historial Società



Jake Harrington (man of Horse) Leonard Hollingsworth (using Puller) Southern Resin & Chemical Co. Greenwood Camp (Turpentine) Stockton GA around Late Forties



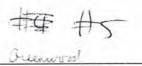
Fats Baker (Gum Hauler) Wagon Driver. Southern Resin & Chemical Co. Greenwood Turpentine Camp Stockton, GA late forties



Leonard Hollingsworth Greenwood



Daddy, George & Leonard Hollingsworth Commissary Greenwood 1952



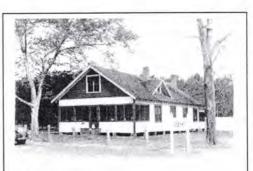
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Daddy at Greenwood 7/14/54



Greenwood Turpentine Camp #18 Stockton, GA



George Feb. 24, 1957 Greenwood

partial of

G.W. Harrington At Greenwood

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photos by Brother-in-law Joseph O. Rodgess, Fr.

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NAME George Hasnington ORGANIZATION/GROUP NAME	
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ADDRESS AND PHONE 802 Habersham Rd	
COUNTY Lawrees Valdosta 3/602	
BIRTHDATE 9-8-32 BIRTHPLACE Clinch Country	45
CATEGORY OF ARTIST turpentine and history	
GENRE/CATEGORY OF PRODUCT	(her trother
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Methodist	Pine Valley aris.
OCCUPATIONS - Cocacola - Investory Control	
ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATIONS	
FIELDWORKER: Laurie K. Sommers, S. Georgia Folklife Project	
DATE: 1-10-2004	
LOCATION: Harrington home	
COMMENTS:	
Education - Labeland H.S.	

photos Pats Baker (Gum Hauler) Wagon Driver Southern Nern + Chiminal to Circenavard Terry Comp. Stocker, GA low 405 - Bookman's Studio (Enlayed) all photos of Grather-in-law Jala Harnoten (Manager on Horse) Leonard Hollings worth (Using Puller) - Shows birds eye also have 3x5 7×5 H (952 7 (3) tunmissuy-Jala Harryton, Gury + Leenard Hollingsworth Gunwood 4x5 V Leonard Hollingsworth - on horse (4) 4x5 H- Greenwood Camp- then house (9) ca. mid 1940s GW Harrington on bila w 3x5V bell in hackground 6 Commissy in back R Gasoline pump in for R Storag blds behind bill L. Ca. mid'40: Mutos by Joseph O Rodgers, Tr his hrether in-law

11654 and most of them would be suckers or carp. Seems to me like it's a built in instinct for a brim or bass or jack—he can detect falling water before these other fish does, and he scoots back where he come from and gets over the ridge back into the falling water. He's ahead of suckers and carp. A lot of them get caught and have to stay in. A lot of them die out there too.

LKS I wanted to ask about making it legal. It wasn't legal to be out in the river or the lake?

JW A lot of people got caught and arrested and took into town for fishing nets in the lake. But they was going to do it. Now the game wardens there was nothing they could do to stop it, they was just going to do it. That's all there was to it. No matter if they got caught...

11791 LKS Did you ever get caught?

JW Nooo. I stayed a jump ahead of it.... I just knew where everybody was at before I messed with it. Got close to getting caught once or twice. Most of us that was doing in then was just after the sucker and that's all... they knew it, the game wardens knew it. They knew everybody was going to do it and they argued with us to let us have a net season. Because it was a dead drag on them trying to keep up with everybody and their net. They couldn't do it! It wasn't physically possible. Because if they was working Flint River everybody'd be over at Spring Creek and the Chattahoochee River and they'd be getting them fish. I'll tell you, they was going to get them suckers. So they argued with us to make it legal in certain places so we could go there and do the net. And it worked out good. It took a lot of rough fish. You catch as many shad minners in these nets as you do suckers. Well shad, we just throw them out on the hill and let em die. And of course we took the suckers out. And the people, it's the only place in the country where you can work a conservation project like that and everybody be happy with it. You take out several tons of suckers and shad minners every winter out of this lake. And you're not really disturbing the game fish at all.

11907 LKS and is there danger of the suckers being over fished?

JW Oh no. In this body of water, we got Spring Creek, which in my opinion is the incubator of the whole lake. Up Spring Creek right now you can go up there and get the dark glasses and get up over them deep holes and suckers are just working alive in them deep holes right now. But they ain't but just about that long. You want them about this long to be really good eatin.

LKS So they get to as much as 2 feet?

JW some of the big ones'll get that big.

LKS and what's the ideal size for eating?

George Harrington - aller Cennety Dutman Dad

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hogs-made hanch: Suisage raccoon, rabbits, Squired kill + cock For Mack (got from T&R), canned oysters

(2) Fished company hunds

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Women would cook-fix luncher, take care of children.

1941- Old quarters was right by their home. Worden hours deferiorated then moved block houses just up the road- Vey new for them. 2 bedrooms, ketchen, living quarter.

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hide & seelc

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George's sisten - housework / chures

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beans mother would be the rest In Pad- Would 1364 for hands Steedly 15 name. games - horse choe, play ball - petched the ball around. Dad would picket up Christmantine - would give all family had a boy - company funished huds, fruit, little try - Mother would fix a special neal - Serve at hack door to thanh for help of they did something extra had black woman-did laundy, dean hous, change heds, used to Sun the mathesses - Madworld take hands to doctor - George started depring at age 10 - with one of black helpers as he got older - age 12 = dipping - didn't won do much Chipping + pulling later rode woods learned coops, handarin-Test cattle ground in pastered Company owned buy, daddy would butchen dress cattle. = Still at Comp when First moved there- We didn't do operation of Still by the time we get there When moved in new electricity · had Gor I much on promuter -

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George's land. Mother would fix Lived chicken, rice, hottler beaus Padad in gallon-Size can. Seal up so ants

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5.2 Breakfast Moma believed in but ment

Grits Cued eggs, basen, oatmeal (hot)

11:00 mid day-like Sunday dinner-regular they- vaised on Fryen
dinner" Fried checken, Obro, new potation, Strad tomation

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5:00 livering meal "Supper"
tails - left boers from lunch or Sausage. Usually had mullett just about long Friday - less expensed would get it in baldosta-fish market - downtrum Dad bed by 8:30 = 8:45. Used to go in Vacation & facksonville Beach - 2-3 days max Cherry Lake never took a fall vacation dancing - WWII because Forest fires - he felt responesble for whole acres Treaherous- Coal hurning trains set brook an fire full pursed fine pulpursed Fire buck on premises. Timber cruse added an - poles Forester managed forest Dad managed Naval stores Building-12 total = plus our house + woods orders homes. Building adjoining our house had firefuch, another for fruchs barn - house or animals, mules Wagon - Shed - Saddler, wagon Commissay-Cattle gapo is heep cattle from coming into faid. Chichen coops 2 grapevines - sating - Scuppinary Fig hu , plum thee Sycamore from Swed gum plan true black burn galon around for fence - methur put of felly wild bluebanies