

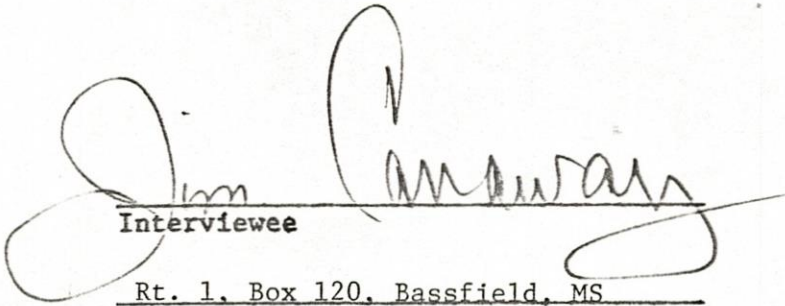
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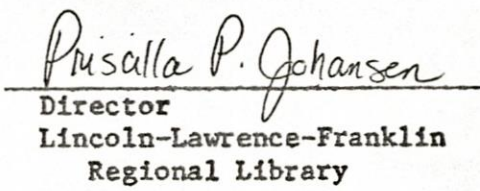
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Interviewee

Rt. 1, Box 120, Bassfield, MS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

  
Director  
Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin  
Regional Library

August 1, 1977  
Date of Agreement

History of St. Regis - Ferguson Paper Mill in Lawrence County, MS

\_\_\_\_\_  
Subject of Tape(s)



Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library  
Oral History  
Data Sheet

FULL NAME James Woodard Carraway  
ADDRESS Rt. 1, Box 120, Bassfield, MS PHONE 587-7711  
BIRTHPLACE Sumrall, MS DATE OF BIRTH 1934  
EDUCATION Attended schools in Bassfield and Taylorsville, MS; Pearl River Junior College; University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS

OCCUPATION Past Director of Mississippi Game and Fish Commission; Southwest Regional Manager of Public Affairs, St. Regis-Ferguson Mill, Monticello, MS; State Air and Water Pollution Commission  
TRAVELS United States - extensive

SPOUSE'S FULL NAME Mary Catherine Dawkins Carraway  
BIRTHPLACE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_  
OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF CHILDREN Three (3)  
NAMES OF CHILDREN

David Woodard Carraway  
Charles Kirkland Carraway  
Kenneth Payne Carraway

FATHER'S FULL NAME John Woodard Carraway  
BIRTHPLACE Bassfield, MS DATE OF BIRTH 1903  
OCCUPATION Farmer  
MOTHER'S FULL NAME Lela Jones Carraway  
BIRTHPLACE Moselle, MS DATE OF BIRTH 1906  
OCCUPATION School teacher

MAJOR NATIONAL AND/OR LOCAL EVENTS OF IMPORTANCE DISCUSSED  
One of two original local employees of St. Regis Paper Mill in Monticello, MS; Development of Monticello; Effect of paper mill on Monticello and vicinity.

INTERVIEWEE'S AREA OF INTEREST AND/OR CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Evelyn Benham  
INTERVIEWER  
June 22, 1977  
DATE  
St. Regis-Ferguson Mill  
PLACE OF INTERVIEW  
James Woodard Carraway  
INTERVIEWEE'S NAME

An Interview with  
James Woodard Carraway  
June 22, 1977

Interviewed by  
Evelyn Benham

Mississippi  
Department of Archives and History  
and the  
Lincoln-Lawrence-Franklin Regional Library  
Oral History Project  
Monticello and Vicinity



BENHAM: This is an interview with James W. Carraway, Rt. 1, Box 120, Bassfield, Ms., June 22, 1977. Interviewed by Evelyn Benham. Mr. Carraway, what is your full name?

CARRAWAY: James Woodard Carraway.

BENHAM: When and where were you born?

CARRAWAY: I was born in Sumrall, Mississippi, in 1934.

BENHAM: And what is your father's full name?

CARRAWAY: John Woodard Carraway.

BENHAM: When and where was your father born?

CARRAWAY: He was born in Bassfield, Mississippi, and he's seventy-three (73) years old, so that would have been what?

BENHAM: 1903, because that is when my husband was born. What kind of work did your father do?

CARRAWAY: He farmed most of his life. And in fact, he's farmed on the place that my ancestors homesteaded on over at Bassfield.

BENHAM: What is your mother's maiden name?

CARRAWAY: Lela Jones Carraway.

BENHAM: And when and where was she born?

CARRAWAY: She is seventy-one (71) and she was born in Moselle, Mississippi.

BENHAM: Did your mother work outside of the home?



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CARRAWAY: She taught school for thirty-eight (38) years.

BENHAM: How old were you when you started to school?

CARRAWAY: I was five (5) years old when I started.

BENHAM: Where did you go to school?

CARRAWAY: I started at Bassfield and then for about three (3) years my father worked for the power company over in Taylorsville and I went to school in Taylorsville during that time. My mother taught there and we were over there, and that was the only time that he was away from the farm those years. And the time we were living in Sumrall when I was born. He was working for the telephone company down there.

BENHAM: I see. Can you describe your school?

CARRAWAY: Well, the Bassfield school, I have very little memory of those first years. The school that I attended there has burned since that time and a new one has been rebuilt. The one that is presently there is the one that I came back and went to high school and finished at. There have been some additions to it. And it was, I think, a very fine school at the time. I think we had some very, very fine teachers. Some of my teachers are still around; in fact, my mother was one of my worst teachers, because she made it harder on me than anybody else did.

BENHAM: But that was good, don't you think so?

CARRAWAY: Well, I didn't get any ribbing from my classmates in saying that I was the teacher's pet because she was my mother.

BENHAM: Yes, yes. I have had that experience too. Not that my mother

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was a teacher, but I went to school with a young man whose mother was a Latin teacher and she didn't spare him one bit. But he turned out to be a very fine young man.

CARRAWAY: I couldn't get by with not doing my homework.

BENHAM: That's right.

CARRAWAY: She knew what I had to do.

BENHAM: That's right. Where did you attend high school?

CARRAWAY: At Bassfield, Bassfield High School.

BENHAM: Were you happy about going to school?

CARRAWAY: I suppose I was. I remember my high school time as a happy time of life. Enjoyable time. As all kids, I had problems and opportunities too, but I remember it as being a very happy time of my life.

BENHAM: What were your best subjects that you liked in high school?

CARRAWAY: I suppose that history was one of my favorite subjects and one that I enjoyed at that time. And then, being out on a farm, I enjoyed the shop and those type things. And agricultural courses because I lived on a farm; I enjoyed that. My favorite things at school though, were the athletic activities, as a lot of kids have that as a problem. I enjoyed football and basketball. Athletic activities.

BENHAM: All right, what changes have you observed in schools today as opposed to when you were in school?

CARRAWAY: Well, I suppose the biggest change has been the integration of our schools since the time I was in school and that has created some changes, I think. But beyond that, I don't know that the Bassfield school



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has changed an awful lot since the time I was there. I think the facilities that they have are better than those we had. They have more equipment. I don't know whether the teachers are as dedicated now as they were then. Some of them, I'm sure, are and I think that during the time I was in school, though, that teaching was looked upon at a much higher level than it is today. It was a job that paid well during those times and it was a job that created a great deal of respect by the people in the communities. And I'm afraid that may not be so as much today as it was then and it's a shame that it is not, because the teachers certainly need to have the respect of the communities.

BENHAM: I believe that too.

CARRAWAY: I think that we have lost something there in our educational institutions.

BENHAM: We really need to get back to the grass roots, the way it used to be, in a lot of ways, don't we?

CARRAWAY: Well, the teachers need to be highly motivated people, because they really are setting the stage for the careers of all of the young people.

BENHAM: Exactly right.

CARRAWAY: And I am afraid in many instances where salaries are not nearly as good as those of the student that they taught last year, who may go out and go to work on a construction job, it's hard for them to be motivated about being real special when they teach a boy that may not have been too talented and next year he is making more money than they are doing something out



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on a construction job.

BENHAM: Well, you know that, it really could have a lot to do about the salaries that they pay the teachers, you know, in Mississippi. That has always been sort of a bad thing. And maybe if they could bring up the salaries, it would encourage other people. What they really need is new blood into this county. Into a lot of the counties.

CARRAWAY: I think, and I'm not speaking, you know, specifically of the Bassfield school or Jeff Davis school system or Lawrence County school system, but I don't think we are getting the best people in education today as we did back during the time I was in school. I think the teachers I had were just tremendous, really. They were fine. They were real motivators.

BENHAM: And they came from all other states besides just right here where you grew up and then they have the teachers. There's nothing there. I mean, they need someone to come and bring other ideas into it. That's why I think that this paper mill, that's new blood that has come into the county. And I think over a period of years it's going to, you know, go out into it. Well, let's see now, where did you go to college?

CARRAWAY: I went to junior college down at Pearl River Junior College. And I left there and graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi. I started out, as I mentioned earlier, living on a farm. I started out majoring in agriculture. Didn't know there was anything else to major in and after being in school awhile, I decided that that really wasn't the area I should finish school in and frankly, one of the reasons is because I began to look at what agricultural teachers made when they got out of school and I was making



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more money each summer pipelining than they were making teaching school after four (4) years of college, so I changed my major to business and finished at the University of Southern Mississippi.

BENHAM: Well, I just want to say, Mr. Carraway, that I finished at the University of Southern Mississippi just last year. I went to college very late in my life, in fact, I finally got my degree when I was sixty (60). And so, no wonder you and I have hit it off right away. You see that.

CARRAWAY: My wife did that. We were married when we were in college my senior year. I lacked about two (2) quarters and she was a sophomore. She went back after our kids all - I have three (3) boys - after they got in school and got her degree and finished about five (5) or six (6) years ago.

BENHAM: It does something to you, doesn't it? Oh well, I should have done that way a long time ago, but I had to wait till all my children grew up. We had five (5) of them. Well, let's see, I was going to ask you about your major in college and you have already answered that. How old were you when you started your college?

CARRAWAY: Eighteen (18), I believe, seventeen (17) or eighteen (18), somewhere in there.

BENHAM: What did you do after college?

CARRAWAY: I went to work for a house building company and lived down in Tallahassee, Florida, for about a year. And was in sales and ordering the lumber and inspecting the jobs and that sort of thing and then was transferred from there up to Memphis with the same company and lived there for about three



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(3) years. And during that time I was there I went with another construction company and was transferred to Jackson, Mississippi, which I had wanted to get back to Mississippi all the time. And then stayed there for a period of time and during that time I went in business for myself up there with a cousin of mine in the house building business, in real estate. And then moved from there over to, during the Paul Johnson administration I had gotten involved in his campaign and became director of the Mississippi Game and Fish Commission during that period of time that I lived in Jackson.

BENHAM: All right, was it about this time that you met your future wife?

CARRAWAY: No, I had met her, we'd been married. We married back when we were in college, so I've been married then all working career, outside of college.

BENHAM: All right. What is your wife's full name?

CARRAWAY: Mary Catherine Dawkins Carraway.

BENHAM: How many children do you and your wife have?

CARRAWAY: We have three (3) boys.

BENHAM: What are their names?

CARRAWAY: David is the oldest son, David Woodard; and Charles Kirkland, we call him Kirk, but it's Kirkland from my mother's family name; and then Kenneth Payne, we call him Ken, and the Payne is from my wife's mother's family name.

BENHAM: All right. How did you get interested in working for a



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paper mill?

CARRAWAY: Well, I suppose they got interested in looking for somebody in Mississippi who lived here when they started building the project. They wanted someone that lived here and knew some of the people in the state. At that time, I was Director of the Mississippi Fish and Game Commission and as a result of that, had worked with the legislature on things and worked with people around the state and Governor Johnson knew that I had a desire to move back home and on the family farm at some point in my life. And I think the people from St. Regis went to him and Gene Triggs and told them that they were looking for someone to fill a job - at the time they called it Community Relations - and he recommended, and Gene Triggs recommended, that we talk. So I talked to Maynard Stitt and Jim Kuss in Jackson during that time.

BENHAM: And who is Mr. Gene Triggs?

CARRAWAY: Gene Triggs was the head of the Agricultural and Industrial Board of the State of Mississippi during the Johnson Administration. He was working with the St. Regis people on bringing this plant to the state.

BENHAM: And who is the other gentleman that you mentioned?

CARRAWAY: Paul Johnson was the governor at that time.

BENHAM: No, but you mentioned another gentleman.

CARRAWAY: Maynard Stitt was the Regional Public Affairs man with St. Regis at that time. And Jim Kuss was the head of the Public Relations Department and still is and is based in New York.

BENHAM: How did you get the job with the St. Regis Paper Mill?

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CARRAWAY: We met and talked and both became interested, I suppose, and they offered me the job and I accepted after some deliberation. I really hated to leave the Game and Fish job. It was fascinating work and I thoroughly enjoyed it. But politics being what they are, I felt that this would give me an opportunity to move back home and live on the farm. My father was beginning to get enough years on him that he was going to need some help and the Johnson administration had about a year to go or a year-and-a-half and I felt I better get out before the politics got me out.

BENHAM: Yes, that's right. Sometimes it works that way in New Orleans, in Louisiana. You know, the new administration coming in and they would have all their people to come in and the old people would get out and it was a big rat race and so my husband said, "I am going to get out of it and we are going to move to the country." And that's when we moved to the country.

CARRAWAY: Well, that's exactly the situation I was in, plus the opportunity that St. Regis was offering me doesn't come along that often. A fine job and an opportunity to move back where you were born and raised and be on the farm. I wanted the boys to have that opportunity.

BENHAM: We did, too. I never lived on a farm and my husband, other than just living in Oklahoma way out in the prairies for three (3) years, he thought that that was really country, but he wanted to bring up our children in the country too so they would have a choice. Living in the country or living in the city. And what did they all do when they grew up, they all went right back, some of them in Louisiana and some way out to Colorado, and another



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one to Massachusetts. But they all went in small towns. But I have three (3) in Louisiana.

CARRAWAY: Well, I hope that some of mine will want to stay around.

BENHAM: I do too. I hope they will too. Did you come with the paper mill when it first came to Lawrence County?

CARRAWAY: It was under construction. I came with St. Regis in 1966 and the first time I came down here they were driving the piling on the site out here and still doing some of the clearing of the land and property. There is one other employee on the site now that has been with the company longer than I have, locally, and that is Audrey Patterson over in Personnel. She is the first employee that they had at this location. She came down about four (4) months, I think, before I did. So we are the oldest two (2) employees on this site.

BENHAM: All right, well, then you two (2) were the ones that we did want to interview. The ones that sort of came here at the beginning.

CARRAWAY: The other people that come around at that time were not local Mississippians; they were transferred in from other places because of their job expertise. Audrey and myself are the oldest two (2) local ones that have been around.

BENHAM: So you have been here since 1966?

CARRAWAY: That's right.

BENHAM: All right, that answers that question. Did Mississippi's



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rather bad reputation in the 1960's influence you in any way?

CARRAWAY: Well, being a Mississippian, you know, I was a part of the reputation, I suppose. I had the same feelings that many of we Mississippians did. And as far as influencing me, I don't know that it did. I felt that Paul Johnson turned the reputation of the state around or started turning it around. I think that without his actions as governor, we would have had a blood bath in the state. But he did begin to try to settle the state down. He put forth tremendous effort to put the Ku Klux Klan out of business. It was somewhat unique, because he was supported by that group of people when he ran for governor. In a discussion with him one time, I asked him, "Governor, you got the support of these people and now you are putting them out of business. How did you justify that?" And he says, "Well, you've got to be a politician before you can be a leader." To me, he really did turn the way we were going. He stopped the marching around the capitol and all of this business and began to say that we can't do that, we can't act this way in this state. And he did it very quietly, a lot of people I don't think realized. By him keeping his mouth shut had a lot to do with settling the temperature around. I know that I was incited by some of the speeches and some of the things that had gone on prior to that time and I shouldn't have been. I was in my middle twenties and easily influenced, I suppose. And I did feel that we were being abused and I still do to some extent.

BENHAM: Yes, I do too.

CARRAWAY: I think that we were wrong in some instances too in the



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we acted as a people. But I suppose, you know, in your original questions, I wasn't influenced by it, I was apart of it, I suppose. In the Game and Fish job we were involved in the civil rights marches and going out and picking those people up and trying to keep peace and guarding the Capitol when that happened that time, we had to ring it, so I was so close to it until I'm sure that I was influenced, but I don't know how or to what extent. Because it was a part of my life at the time.

BENHAM: Well, you know, really, we thought maybe you might be someone away from Mississippi, so in a way this was sort of written up for almost anyone whether they were Yankees or whether they were Southerners and so maybe a lot of these questions could be sort of for an outsider, but you are going to have to take them right on and answer them the best way that you know how. I wasn't born in this state, but I am very much a part of it since that I have lived in Mississippi for the last thirty-five (35) years and so that is longer that I have lived anywhere since I've been born. So I'm really a Mississippian at heart. How did the employees at St. Regis who came from other parts of the country feel about Mississippi?

CARRAWAY: Most of the employees that I've talked to were very hesitant to move to Mississippi. They'd lived in places like Jacksonville, Florida, and Pensacola, Florida. A lot of this hesitancy was due to the type recreational activities they were involved in. They liked fishing the big water, salt water fishing, and they liked boating. At Monticello you don't have any big waters; you do have other area of activites. Many of the wives, you know,



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didn't like the idea of moving to Mississippi during the middle 1960's and early 1960's. At that period of time, the state's reputation was at a real low ebb and they just didn't want to come. And I'm sure that there were a lot of people who were offered jobs that didn't accept for that reason, because of the state's reputation at that time. But it's been very rewarding to me to see these same people that hated to come in the first place being offered transfers and being offered jobs somewhere else now away from Mississippi and not wanting to go once they've lived here.

BENHAM: That's right. There's something about Mississippi, isn't it, that really gets you. Especially near the Pearl River, too.

CARRAWAY: I think so, I think so. But you know I'm a native and I don't want to live anywhere else except in Mississippi. And I'm not going to unless, you know, it would have to be a matter of that's the only way I could feed my family is to move. But I plan to live here and I have to be around some Yankee friends all the time and I am always telling them that, jokingly, that Mississippi better do something to screw its image up again or we are going to have all these Yankees moving down here on us. We'll be like California once they find out what we have. And I believe that a little bit. I hate to see us get overcrowded because this state has, to me, more beauty and more to offer than anywhere else in this country.

BENHAM: We really have a little bit of everything in this state, don't we?

CARRAWAY: If we could get it together and I think we've got a ways to go yet. And the ignorance of some of the people in the state is part of



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the problem that we have. And we've got to overcome that.

BENHAM: Right, right.

CARRAWAY: But if we can overcome that, we have a beautiful state. We don't take very good care of it. All you have to do is ride down the road and look at the cans and the trash to realize that. I was up in Virginia last year and the roadside was just beautiful. But the roadsides didn't have anything that our roadsides don't have except they were well kept.

BENHAM: That's right.

CARRAWAY: That was the only difference.

BENHAM: That's the way it is in Massachusetts.

CARRAWAY: They weren't littered and they weren't all beat up with trash, but maybe that will come and maybe our people will have more pride in our state one of these days. It really makes me sick when I drive out to my place on the roads out there. They are just full of litter; we pick it up all along the road on our place. About every three (3) weeks we get a truck and get out there and put the boys out and we'll pick up all the cans and things that have been thrown out. And you'll get three (3), four (4), five (5) big old cotton baskets full of junk that has been thrown out over a two (2) or three (3) week period. It not only is costly to us because we try to mow our road bank and keep them attractive looking, and we cut tires. It has that problem plus being aesthetically, it's bad.

BENHAM: I remember when we first came here they didn't send out people, the supervisors, to cut along the roads and get all the trash out of the ditch and throw it out where it can be picked up. Now, that's really just



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within a few recent years that that has been going on. So you see, they are progressing.

CARRAWAY: It is a tremendously expensive thing to do that, to have to do it. Solid waste is a problem, not only in Mississippi, but all over the country, and we don't you know, we don't hold the only key to that. Mississippi has its problems, but a lot of the other parts of the country does too. Especially when you go up East, I think those problems up there, the areas up there just look so bad. But you know this thing of littering is something, we were talking about the schools earlier, that has to be tackled there and tackled at home too. A lot more people today are conscious of it than they were five (5) years ago. So maybe it will come around.

BENHAM: Right. Well, you can always just keep on talking.

CARRAWAY: My kids won't let me throw the Coke bottle out or anybody else, you know. They say, "No, you don't do that."

BENHAM: That's right. That's right.

CARRAWAY: My car gets pretty littered sometimes.

BENHAM: That's right. Well, that's all right, they don't care about that.

CARRAWAY: We can stop at the dump and get rid of that.

BENHAM: That's marvelous that they feel that way about it. Well, what was your reaction when you first found out that they were going to put this new plant in Monticello? How did you feel about that?

CARRAWAY: I don't remember that first time that I really heard about it or the first discussion that I had about it. The first time that I remember any part of it was that I came home from Jackson one weekend to visit



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with my folks and we decided to ride over and look at the paper mill site. We never found it. We came over here and looked around, but we couldn't find it. We were mistaken, at first, to think it was across the river, which it wasn't. If you remember, at that time the road that came out here was very small and very crooked and it was a little gravel road that wound all over the country to get here. And it just scared us to death during the time that we were building this plant. That two thousand (2,000) people working here on the construction job - the number fluctuated up and down - didn't have some real serious accidents getting in and out of here, because you'd hit that dusty road when everybody was coming in or everybody was getting off and you couldn't see anything. But we didn't have any. We still don't know why.

BENHAM: Well, it was just meant to be. But it was just meant for this paper mill to be here. Now, that's the way I look at things. And it was good for the paper mill to come here. Well, were you impressed that they were going to put it in Monticello?

CARRAWAY: Oh, I thought it was going to be great for the area, because living in Jeff Davis County and knowing how poor that county has been and Lawrence County has had the same problems. It needed payrolls. Our people needed payrolls. When I got out of school, finished high school, some of my classmates went on to college; others had to leave and look for employment elsewhere. There weren't any job opportunities around here. They didn't have any choice of staying, so they all had to leave. And that's been the case for years and years now. And that's the big reason that, I don't have any idea now how many people have applied for jobs at this mill,



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but back during the time we were hiring, we were going to need five hundred (500) and some odd people to man the mill. Half of those were going to have to be brought in from somewhere else with particular job skills. And for the two hundred and fifty (250) or so jobs that were actually going to be hired here, back at that time there were over twelve thousand (12,000) applications.

BENHAM: My goodness.

CARRAWAY: And that, you know, there weren't that many people locally wanted jobs, but that was all of the kids like yours and ours and everybody else that graduated from school and went off somewhere else simply because there were no opportunities.

BENHAM: Yes, that's right.

CARRAWAY: They had to go.

BENHAM: That's exactly right. That's exactly right. Now they talk about, forever, keeping everybody in Mississippi, keeping them here, but then if you don't provide something for them, they are not going to stay.

CARRAWAY: They can't stay.

BENHAM: They can't stay. Not that they don't want to stay, they can't stay.

CARRAWAY: Well, that twelve thousand (12,000) applicants, a big portion of those are people who don't even live in Mississippi any more. But this was home. They wanted to come back. It was sad that so many of them who were such well qualified people couldn't all get a job out there too. Because there were some great folks in that now. We hired some of them and we missed a lot of them.



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BENHAM: That's right, you did.

CARRAWAY: Just because we couldn't hire that many people. But an industry that wants to move to this state and will pay fair wages and has good jobs to offer can find employees, more than he can ever hire. Because they'll come back. People living in Louisiana, Arkansas, Illinois, and wherever want to come back to Mississippi. Don't ask me why, because I don't know why we all come back home someday.

BENHAM: Well, I know why. I mean I think I could answer it because of my own idea. Well, this is home; this is where they grew up; this is where they put their roots down. Once you put your roots down, Mr. Carraway, it's just like going out there and trying to pull up a big tree and move it somewhere. It is very hard to adjust. And so that has a lot to do with it.

CARRAWAY: It must.

BENHAM: And so maybe, don't you see, the thing is the paper mill may be the real instrument in bringing all these other people back home. It could be.

CARRAWAY: It could be a part of it, I think. We can never hire enough of them to bring them all back, but I think we will see with the new gas activities in this part of the state, this county and Jeff Davis County, I think we'll see some new industries locating and bringing jobs in here. And as that happens, that's going to make more dollars available to make our lifestyles better here, I think. It will be able to give us things that we haven't had before. Look at the things that have happened in Monticello over the past ten (10) years. I do remember the first time I came to Monticello after I had accepted a job with the company and I went downtown. The company had



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its offices at that time over what is now the Western Auto Store.

BENHAM: I remember that.

CARRAWAY: Which was an old hotel there then. And we walked across the street that day, the first day I came to meet with Gus Wall, he was the Woodlands manager and was getting into the state about that time. No, Gus had been here a while, I believe, the Woodlands area, they had some people here. We went over to Bob's Cafe. And that was the dingiest looking place I've ever seen. They had the old fly sticker things hanging around, you know, the bulbs hanging down, and the main street was horrible.

BENHAM: Oh, well, you saw it just ten (10) years ago, but you should have seen it thirty-five (35) years ago.

CARRAWAY: I'm sure, I'm sure.

BENHAM: They had only one stop sign in there. They would go right through Highway 84 and never would have stopped in Monticello.

CARRAWAY: Well, it's a beautiful little town now. I have to say that old Mayor Graham has had an awful lot to do with that, because he has pushed and fussed and planted flowers and gotten things done.

BENHAM: Yes, that's right.

CARRAWAY: He really has been an instrument of getting that town moving, I think. I know he brought some criticism on himself when he started fussing about redoing your storefront and all. But it's a very attractive town now when you ride down main street in Monticello.

BENHAM: Yes, that's right.

CARRAWAY: It's an attractive little town. I hope that our payroll has had something to do in that form and that our employees have too. And it



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took those local people pushing, you know; our people were working. They were busy with jobs. So the local people did it.

BENHAM: Well, you gave them the incentive. That's what people need. If they don't have anything else, they have got to have something to get them going and this is what you did. This is what the plant did. That's the way I feel about it.

CARRAWAY: And there had to be enough dollars circulating for that merchant to have enough money to spend to do something on his store front. If he was barely feeding his family, he couldn't go spend any money on redoing the store front. So you've got to have that cash flow being generated from something. And there are other things that have happened in Monticello; we are not the only thing that's brought money in. But it's growing. I don't have the statistics on the tip of my tongue now, but they have looked real good for Monticello as far as bank deposits and all for some number of years.

BENHAM: Well, I want to ask you something that I have always wondered about. Why are all the paper mills under the name of St. Regis?

CARRAWAY: You mean the St. Regis Paper Mill?

BENHAM: Right. Now for instance, this mill is named after Mr. Roy Ferguson, but it is still under the name of St. Regis. Where did this name St. Regis come from? Was it a family name or something like that?

CARRAWAY: No, the company name was originated from, it was a river named St. Regis River in New York State when it was originally started, and that's just the company name now - St. Regis Paper Company. Just as Ford

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Motor Company is a family name, St. Regis happened to have been named after a river that they built a mill on many, many years ago. And Ferguson, Mr. Ferguson, at the time this mill was being planned and built and all, was chairman of the board and had been very instrumental in the growth of the company. He since has passed away.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: But you may have seen on the wall out there in the lobby a picture of him.

BENHAM: No, I didn't see it. I saw some pictures up there.

CARRAWAY: But then the Jacksonville mill is just called St. Regis Paper Company and then the one in Pensacola is St. Regis. But they did name this one after, it's the same company.

BENHAM: Oh, it's just a company, but you say there's one in Florida?

CARRAWAY: It's still St. Regis. It's all still St. Regis Paper Company.

BENHAM: This is St. Regis, too?

CARRAWAY: Yes. And then we have a plant in Tacoma, Washington; one up in Bucksport, Maine; paper mills that are all a part of the St. Regis Paper Company firm.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: Our home offices are in New York. These are just plants that are scattered out around the country. They have to be because of the raw materials. You have to have availability of timber and water, those resources, to run a monstrous operation like this.

BENHAM: So it's material and water that's really the backbone, the



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things that you really need.

CARRAWAY: Those are two of the things you have to have to have a paper mill. Without them you can't have a mill. There are other things that are a part of the needs, but those are two that are a must.

BENHAM: Well, was that the reason why you came and put it on Pearl River? Was it because of the water?

CARRAWAY: That had to be a part of it. They also had to look at the company's timber resources in the area. Not only those that they owned, but those that were available through private ownership that would be available. We have to have somewhere around a million (1,000,000) cords of wood a year through here. So you have to look at a radius of available wood too. And you have to look at availability of water and then all of the other things get into the list, requirements, you know, before they build. Transportation is a consideration. But this particular plant, we generate all our own electrical power and steam with the exception of a small amount of standby that they just have to keep things going in an emergency and that wouldn't keep the plant going. It would just keep emergency facilities operating. But energy is a consideration too. It wasn't as much so when we built this mill as it would be today, I'm sure. The energy thing has changed in the last ten (10) years.

BENHAM: Well, that answers my next question. No, it doesn't either. Why was Lawrence County chosen for the paper mill?

CARRAWAY: I think that the availability of raw materials and the necessity of having water and it's located kind of in the center of trees that we would be trying to get to bring in here to use in our operation.



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It also had at the time we started here, it had three (3) railroads that served this site.

BENHAM: So it really was ideally located, wasn't it?

CARRAWAY: That's right.

BENHAM: How did it feel to be uprooted from the environment that you were in before you came here?

CARRAWAY: Well, since I came back to the environment that I was raised in, it wasn't as much of a shock to me, I'm sure, as it was to somebody coming out of Jacksonville, Florida, who all of a sudden had the big city life and they were moved into a small town. There were some traumatic experiences for some of those people, I'm sure. And some people that were very unhappy and some that were unhappy and didn't stay. But overall most of them, after they got here and they became accustomed to our lifestyles and all, I think they really enjoyed it. And this area may not offer what Jacksonville offers, but it offers other opportunities, hunting and fishing. We're close to Jackson; the Gulf Coast is not too far away to go. So I think, you know, it may take you a little longer to get to those facilities, but they are available to you.

BENHAM: You're right. It was a traumatic experience for me, because I came out of New Orleans and came right up here. I had never lived in the country before and it didn't make any difference what door or window I looked out, there was no, absolutely no other house. It was nothing but trees or a road. And so that was very hard to get used to. And I can imagine these people that came in from other states felt, you know, could have felt, the similar feelings that I had.



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CARRAWAY: It was probably harder on the wives than it was the men, because they had something that was like a new toy to them. Had the most modern mill in the world to be a part of starting up and getting going. They were just completely tied up in that. But the wife was at home and didn't have that interest. So the wives, I think, had a harder time of it than the men did because the men had their interests.

BENHAM: That's right. That's right. Now, my husband took to this place like a duck to water and he says he never wants to leave it. Well, I don't want to leave it now either. In what way did the people in the county welcome you?

CARRAWAY: Oh, I think that the Lawrence County people have just been terrific as far as the help they offered in trying to help us get housing started. Trying to do everything they could to accomodate the people coming in here and make them feel welcome. I know they sent people off to Jacksonville and off to Pensacola, local people, to visit with them and talk to them.

BENHAM: Yes, I read about that.

CARRAWAY: Well, they just showed old Southern hospitality.

BENHAM: Put the red carpet out to you, didn't they? What kind of problems did the mill run into when they came to the county?

CARRAWAY: Well, housing, as I just mentioned, was one of the problems that we ran into. There was just not enough housing for our people. So we had to get out and began to work with the local people in developing financing and developing people, you know, bring people in, because there weren't that many builders in Lawrence County and so we were able to get some build-



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ers from other parts of the state to come in and build some subdivisions. We had anticipated problems.

BENHAM: You were talking about the problems that the plant could have had when they moved to the county. Would you go on and tell me some more about that please?

CARRAWAY: Well, the company had to be concerned about the situation that was occurring in Mississippi and the South at that time. The racial thing was heated up pretty good about that time. Marches were going on. The company was committed to the hiring of minorities and we had to be concerned, you know, what effect this would have on the local people, me being one of those local people. So that was given a great deal of consideration and when we opened the plant we did something that was just unheard of, frankly, in this part of the state. We invited Whitney Young, who was head of the Urban League at the time, to come to our dedication and it was real funny because he and Judge Brady, who had written Black Monday, ended up sitting across the table from each other down at our dedication.

BENHAM: How did they carry on?

CARRAWAY: They, I assume, I was busy doing some other things. I just glanced over there and saw it and shuddered two or three times. They got along fine, I'll say.

BENHAM: Good. You know, a lot of times things like that sort of ease out when a big thing like something is going on. People momentarily forget their animosity to each other or whatever.

CARRAWAY: Well, we had a number of black leaders that showed up and were invited to this dedication and we all sat down there and had lunch



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together and the thing went uneventfully, but I have to admit there were some nervous moments on some of our parts.

BENHAM: I bet there was.

CARRAWAY: The hiring then was even more sensitive because as I mentioned earlier, that we didn't have nearly enough jobs to go around. And the company started placing blacks in jobs that historically they had not served in in this part of the country. As secretaries and chemists, assistant personnel manager and personnel department. And for each one of those blacks that was hired, minorities, that knocked some white person out of a job. And I suppose this has been one of the biggest criticisms that I have heard around the state from people. You know, "We can't get a job over there, because they are all hiring all blacks." That simply is not the truth. We've hired a number of blacks; we've been fussed at by the Equal Employment Opportunity people about not hiring enough, so we are kind of in the middle. We are not going to satisfy either side of that question, I don't think.

BENHAM: You just have to make up your own mind what you are going to do and just follow through with it.

CARRAWAY: But you know, through all of that we got some criticism, but it went amazingly well considering the strong feelings on both sides of that issue that were around at that time. We still face that problem. We still face the problem of the EEOC fussing because we are not hiring enough and other people fussing because we're hiring too much. I hope that we reach a point somewhere down the road that we don't, that that doesn't enter into it; that we hire because of a guy's qualifications.



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BENHAM: Good. I think you have hit the nail right on the head. Is to hire them because of their qualifications and not because they are politically, you know, strong, but because of their qualifications. Good.

CARRAWAY: Hopefully we will be able to do that one of these days.

BENHAM: I wish everybody else in this county felt that way. Maybe you can have some of that to rub off on them. I hope so.

CARRAWAY: Well, you know, you touched on another area that was sensitive to us to some extent. In Jeff Davis County and all of Mississippi practically, jobs have always been so scarce that they were gotten on the basis of who you knew.

BENHAM: That's right. Not how much money you had.

CARRAWAY: And being one of the few natives that was working over here in a job that a lot of people didn't - you know, community relations, public relations, a lot of people didn't really understand what I was doing; they just knew I had an office next to the boss - and so being local, they just, you know, "All I've got to do is go get old Jim and he'll get me a job over there." And it literally, I would have to leave home on weekends during the time the company was hiring over here to be able to have any privacy, because the cars would line up at my house practically.

BENHAM: My lands.

CARRAWAY: People wanting me to help them get a job. And good people, you know, fine folks. But I didn't have anything to do with the hiring of the people, but they didn't understand that. The other areas that created problems, that had always had tremendous influence in jobs, was the Board of Supervisors. And they were most helpful to St. Regis. They helped us get



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the bridge. They helped us get the roads. And as a result of that they felt they should have the right to name a lot of the jobs. Well, the company didn't feel that way. And that created some tensions and some fussing, but on total they accepted it and we generally hired who Personnel wanted to hire, I think. I'm sure that when you are dealing with people, I'm sure there is always a foreman or somebody that has a buddy he wants hired.

BENHAM: That's right.

CARRAWAY: And that may be fine, that buddy may be the best guy for that job, you know; you never know. But the company has tried to leave it on the basis that if you are going to work a guy, you have to have a part in the hiring of him. So if Personnel recommends somebody to a foreman or supervisor, then he has to agree that that's who he wants too. But there were some tense times when people were unhappy with our not hiring their brother or their uncle or their cousin or whoever.

BENHAM: Yes, I know, because that's the way it had been for so many years and they wanted it to go on.

CARRAWAY: That's right.

BENHAM: Didn't really know any better, really.

CARRAWAY: No, that's right. That's the way it was supposed to be, you know, and you could certainly understand their feeling, because they felt like, "Well, we helped you on this. We scratched your back, you scratch my back."

BENHAM: That's right, yes. Exactly right.

CARRAWAY: The other thing that, you know, you really couldn't get across to some people is that the mill was so big that they felt like, you



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know, "What's one more job? What difference, you know, just hire this guy. One more job's not going to make any difference." But the local management has to set a budget up for how many people they are going to hire and what jobs they're going to do. That has to then be approved by Corporate Management all the way up the line. So we can't just add a job to hire somebody because we want to.

BENHAM: That's right.

CARRAWYA: And you have to justify why you need this person and what he's going to do. But that's been very hard for some of my friends to understand. They say, "Oh, you all can. What's one more, five hundred (500), what difference is another one going to make, you know?" And the turnover has just, we just haven't had it. These guys get these jobs out here, they don't leave them. So you know, in recent years I think we had, last year we hired through retirements and transfers and the whole thing around twenty (20) people. And that's not very many folks. You know, we employ five hundred and fifty (550) and we only had twenty (20) that, total, that retired or transferred or elected to go somewhere else. So we just don't have anybody to leave. And that twenty (20) includes the secretaries that got pregnant or got married or whatever, you know. Everybody. So there're just not that many jobs on a year to year basis that are hired out here.

BENHAM: I'll keep that in mind so if I ever need a job, I'll say, "I know Mr. Carraway." No, no, I'm always going to be an art teacher, so you don't have to be worried about that. Yes, but, well, maybe it will improve though, as the years go by - as time goes on.

CARRAWAY: Hopefully, hopefully.



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BENHAM: Right. Well, I do, I see a lot of good future for St. Regis. All right, let's go on with this now. What do you think that the reaction was of Lawrence County on St. Regis and St. Regis on the county?

CARRAWAY: Well, the reaction of Lawrence County to St. Regis was, as I mentioned earlier, they welcomed us in every way that they could. They couldn't do enough to welcome the company here. That honeymoon has continued it seems, because we've never gotten into any squabbles with the county people or the local people as far as getting into a big hurrah.

BENHAM: Good.

CARRAWAY: The company was committed to the idea, though, when we came here, that although we were going to be big in the community, that we were not going to try to run the community and we've stuck with that. We've not tried to tell the county what they ought to do and what they ought to not do. And we've tried to sit out here and be a good citizen. The company has had a very successful operation here. They've been very happy with the attitudes that have been met with and I think if they had it to do over again after having been here for ten (10) years or eleven (11) years, they would build right back here and do the same thing they did before.

BENHAM: Well, that's good if you can say that. That if you had it to do over again that you'd follow the same procedure, that's always good.

CARRAWAY: That's the best measure, I think.

BENHAM: That's right. It is the best measure. It's just like saying, "Well, if you had your life to live over again, would you marry the same man or the same woman?" And if you said, "Yes, I would," then that's a pretty good measure. Well, how did the employees of St. Regis treat the local



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people? How did the people here treat the local people?

CARRAWAY: Well, a lot of them were local people, you know. A lot of the employees were local people.

BENHAM: I know, but the people that were not from here?

CARRAWAY: They were, you know, they were just great to them; they tried to make them a part of the community right off.

BENHAM: No, no, I mean how did the St. Regis people treat the people? The Lawrence County people.

CARRAWAY: You mean in the hiring?

BENHAM: No, no. How did they feel about the people in the county? St. Regis people? How did you feel about the people? How did all these people out here feel about the people in the county?

CARRAWAY: Well, I think they felt very good about them.

BENHAM: They did?

CARRAWAY: They must have or they would not have wanted to not be transferred when the time came. You know, they had become a part of the community really. And I don't think that, it never seemed to me that we got into that situation. Here are the townspeople and here are the St. Regis people. It all kind of melted together. It had to though, because the kids were playing ball together, they were going to school together, people were going to church together, and they were doing the things that there were to do together. And a lot of the Lawrence County natives were employees out here, so I think it just kind of melted together. At first, I am sure there was a period that you had friends that were transferred into here and they ran around together probably and they were friends and they'd go every-



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thing together. But I think the thing has just kind of melted in. Now we are part of Monticello; we're just a part of the Lawrence County scene.

BENHAM: Good. That's good. I'm glad to hear you say that.

CARRAWAY: You can look at the involvement of our employees and see that that must be the case. We have people on the hospital board that work out here, we have people coaching Little League, we have people involved in the public school activities and people involved in the private school activities. And so, they are all diversified, you know. They haven't stuck together as a group.

BENHAM: Yes, very good. I'm glad to hear you say that. All right, how many employees do you have here?

CARRAWAY: Around five hundred and fifty (550).

BENHAM: How many of them are local people?

CARRAWAY: About half would be local. Now, that started out that way. That's probably increased because the first people to leave, you know, as other mills opened or were transferred were the people that came in here with the most years of experience. And that figure will continue to increase in local people, because all of the people we are hiring now are local people. You know, you don't go out and bring in any more outsiders.

BENHAM: Oh, you don't.

CARRAWAY: You hire local people now. Oh, in a few - maybe a specialized job. If you're hiring a specialized job and you can't find somebody that has that particular expertise you might go and hire him. But generally, the only jobs you are hiring now are the bottom jobs.

BENHAM: I see.



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CARRAWAY: Because there is a movement up through the lines of progression.

BENHAM: How do you mean up the lines of progression? What do you mean?

CARRAWAY: Well, as the guy that has the top job is either transferred away from here or promoted into a superintendent's job or a foreman's job, the guy right below him moves up. Well, that guy that was hired last then is going to move up one notch, so you are going to bring in a new guy and he's going to be on the bottom.

BENHAM: Oh, I see, yes.

CARRAWAY: So it steps up. And the Lawrence County people and local Jeff Davis and Lincoln and all people were generally hired into the bottom jobs because they had had no paper mill experience.

BENHAM: I see, yes.

CARRAWAY: So now they've moved through these years. They keep moving up and moving up and you still have, you know, those people on the top will go to some other mill just for the same reason they came here. They can better their position. And so you will have an increase in local people.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: Ever since we got our original employees that's been the case and will continue to be the case.

BENHAM: You know, there is something that I want to really commend this plant about and that is that I was reading in the old Presses that you all for the different number of years service that they gave to them, they always have their picture in the paper commending them for their services and gave them some sort of recognition which is very nice to do that. And I'd like to see more of that done in the county.



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CARRAWAY: We have an Awards Banquet every year and employees with different tenure, the first one would be for five (5) years and then it goes right on up to the thirty (30) years. The twenty-five (25) year guy gets a very fine watch.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: But you're given tenure pins and that sort of thing.

BENHAM: But that's nice to do that.

CARRAWAY: They're recognized or we recognize them.

BENHAM: Yes, I think that's very good. Because that helps them to put more into their jobs and really help the paper mill too. Well, what is your ecological policy?

CARRAWAY: It's extremely sensitive to me, because for the past ten (10) years I've served on the State Air and Water Pollution Control Commission. After leaving Governor Johnson and the Game and Fish job, he appointed me to the State Air and Water Pollution Commission which had just been created. It was created in 1966 by the Legislature. And the company was a little nervous about that, because it really did put us out in a position of, "Here's a guy that's serving on the commission. If we get out of line, well, the press is really going to have a field day with it." And so we've had to meet the Federal and State standards very rigorously. And paper mills are not noted for being the cleanest manufacturing operations in the world. But we now have all of our Federal and State permits. And they were in here two (2) weeks ago, the Federal and State people, making complete examination of what we've done. And we monitor the river on a daily basis. It's tied in with our computers to tell us what's coming to us in the way of dissolved oxygen and temperature and so on. And on occasions we have to shut down



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our affluent flow into the river because what's coming to us would be of a nature that we don't want to put anything else in there.

BENHAM: I see. Well, do you use the river? How do you use the river?

CARRAWAY: We use the water out of the river. We pump water out of the river and put it over in our holding pond. And then use it in the process. And then it's taken to a clarifier which is sitting behind the mill and it does just what the name implies, it clarifies the solid particles out.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: It takes out all the pulp, the particles of bark, or whatever that's ended up in there, primarily would be pulp. Takes it out of the water and puts it back into the process to be used.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: Then the water goes into these big ponds right out here that you may have seen that have the bog churns in them. And those big churns' purpose is to put oxygen back in the water. And they are just that, they are big churns that turn around and around, stir the water up, and they put oxygen back into the water. And then it goes into the big holding pond over there. It lets it sit in there awhile and circulate around before it goes into the ditch and back into the river.

BENHAM: I see. Oh well, you are going to tell me that after while about how to make the paper and so I don't want to get too far ahead on that. So let me just ask you this one thing and it comes right in right now about describing, if you will, the sequence of events in your paper making.

CARRAWAY: Well, you can really start in the woods with the cutting



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down of the trees. And that comes to us in about three (3) forms. It either goes into one of our out-lying chip mills around the state, like up at Hopewell, where you would bring the full length log in there and it would have the bark taken off of it and be chipped up and be brought in here by rail. The other way would be for it to be cut up into what we normally think of pulp mill or short lengths and hauled in here by truck or by rail. And then the third way would be the chips that are bought from sawmills. As they are making lumber they chip it up and make it into chips and we buy it that way. And it's brought in and put out on the chip piles, the big piles that you see down south of us here on the mill site. And then we start using it in the process and it comes up the big conveyor back there that you see going there. It's put into the digestors, it's cooked, the pulp is cooked, and that's primarily where the odor comes from that you get. Just like cooking collards or anything else.

BENHAM: But I think that you people have, right at the very beginning you did have that problem, but I think you've kind of whipped it down.

CARRAWAY: We work on it. It's something you work on constantly and you have to meet the air standards and all that are necessary. But then, you know, once you go in, you store your pulp out in those tanks and put out on the machines. It's sprayed out and there it's about ninety-nine (99) percent water and one (1) percent pulp. The water goes down through the screen and leaves your pulp matted there and goes through the driers and comes out as a sheet of paper.

BENHAM: Very interesting.

CARRAWAY: And from that point it's cut up into rolls of the size that



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the customers desire. It goes back down into the shipping and storage area and is shipped then. Paper that we make, a lot of people don't understand - paper we make is being made most of the time for a specific customer. It's not made and put back there in the warehouse and then sold.

BENHAM: Well, I've wondered about that.

CARRAWAY: Whenever you have an order. But it's being made for a specific customer in a certain fashion.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: A certain thickness and weight and hardness or whatever that he requires to convert it into whatever he's going to convert it into. That may be paper sacks or it may be pasteboard boxes or a whole variety of products.

BENHAM: Oh, I see. I see what you mean. A company can say, "Well, I want ten thousand (10,000) little boxes five by seven (5 x 7)," and you just make them up, is that it?

CARRAWAY: No, we would just make the roll of paper. He would tell us that he wants so many rolls of a certain weight paper and then he would take it to his converting plant and he would make those ten thousand (10,000) boxes.

BENHAM: Oh, I see.

CARRAWAY: Or it may go to one of the company's converting plants around the country.

BENHAM: But you do not make boxes?

CARRAWAY: We do not make at this location any products except the paper, the roll of paper.



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BENHAM: Well, let me ask you this. What do you roll the paper on?

CARRAWAY: It's on a pasteboard tube that is made at another plant which is right down the road from us here. (Part deleted by Mr. Carraway.) They are made down the road by a little firm down here. But they don't have a name out there.

BENHAM: Well, has the energy crisis effected St. Regis in any way?

CARRAWAY: Certainly, certainly. It's cost us a lot of money. Well, it's effected us in a number of ways. First is they put in some big tanks to be able to use heavier oils than we'd planned to use. We'd planned to use natural gas. The other way - and this was good effect, I think - is we were having air problems at our chip mills that I mentioned scattered around the state. We burned, originally, the bark that was produced here. Burned it for fuel. Put it into the bark vault. So the air problems at the chip mill, along with the energy crisis, made the company put in this bark handling system out here that makes us able to use more bark. So now we're bringing the bark from all those chip mills in, which originally had just been burned up.

BENHAM: Oh, very good.

CARRAWAY: We are using it now as fuel. So we are using a lot more bark than we did in the past. And we then made a deal with First Mississippi Corporation to build a pipeline from the field over at Bassfield gas field. And we are getting gas from them because the uninterruptable contract that we had with the gas company originally was all of a sudden interrupted and we were being cut off from gas. So it's affected us in those ways and then the cost has gone up considerably. Our fuel is costing us much more than it



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was originally.

BENHAM: So now what you are going to have to do is try to find a way to cut down on the cost of your fuel and you'll come up with something.

CARRAWAY: And the usage. There's been a great deal of attention exerted in the direction of trying to make sure that we are not wasting. That all of the fuel that is being used is needed. Don't leave a block of lights burning out there if there's no good reason to leave them burning. Or don't leave a motor running that's not doing anything.

BENHAM: That's right.

CARRAWAY: And a great deal of effort has been put on that and some real accomplishments have been made.

BENHAM: Yes, I bet you have found a lot of things, haven't you? Well, now who are the major personnel at the mill at the present? I want you to give me their names and their titles.

CARRAWAY: Okay. The Resident Manager is Palmer Derby, G. P. Derby, and that is the top guy at the mill; they call them Resident Managers. Below him you would have the - he has a staff of people working for him - and that would be the Manufacturing Superintendent, that's Jim Green. Then you have Engineering and Maintenance Department which is headed by Ken Forehand. Then the Personnel Department is headed by Dan Bowling. And the Traffic Department is headed up by Howard Hinesly. The Purchasing Department is headed up by Dick Phillips.

BENHAM: All right.

CARRAWAY: Order and Production is headed up by Dewey Allen. And the Comptroller's Office is run by Ed Melzer. Then outside of the mill, the



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immediate mill group, you have the Woodlands operation which is also located out here. Gus works with Palmer. He doesn't work for him, but Gus Wall heads up the Woodlands Division for the whole state of Mississippi and he's located out here also and he has a staff of people working for him. Gus works in the Woodlands Department and Palmer works for the Kraft Division as the Resident Manager of this mill. One I left off of there, I hope I didn't leave any others, the Technical Department would be headed up by Bill Black. He heads the Technical Department.

BENHAM: I'm only putting down the names that I am not sure of how to spell and I'll check back with you afterwards.

CARRAWAY: I'll have to look at those after, you know, we sit down because I'm just getting them off the top of my head.

BENHAM: All right.

CARRAWAY: Maybe I didn't leave one out.

BENHAM: All right. Well, when it comes back to you and if you have left it out, you can just put it into the paper. What does your job entail, Mr. Carraway?

CARRAWAY: My job has changed since I originally came with the company. As I mentioned earlier, I started out as Community Relations. And now the department has changed to Public Affairs Department and it comes under the corporate end of the thing. My salary and my expenses, I pay rent for this office here, in fact, to the Ferguson Mill. I work under the corporate umbrella.

BENHAM: What do you mean by corporate?

CARRAWAY: Well, the corporation is divided. You have the corporation



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and then there are different divisions.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: The Kraft Division, which this mill is a part of; the Woodlands Division, which Mr. Wall is a part of and they work for that; and then those people's expenses and everything they do or produce is put into that division. That division produces a certain income for the corporation. There are other service departments, such as the one I'm in that doesn't produce anything in the way of a product. And I have a region. My title is Southwest Regional Manager of Public Affairs and I have Texas and Arkansas and Oklahoma.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: And Mississippi and Louisiana.

BENHAM: That's your Fish and Game Commission background sort of coming back, I mean, that you are using, aren't you?

CARRAWAY: Yes, it is.

BENHAM: Because you were over a good many, were you just over Mississippi?

CARRAWAY: In the Fish and Game? Yes.

BENHAM: Oh, I thought it would take in other states like this other.

CARRAWAY: No, it was just Mississippi.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: But my job involves working with problems outside of the mill - whether they are with governmental agencies or whatever kind of problems there are and trying to communicate with the public about what's happening at this location and the other locations that are within my region.

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BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: It's very interesting.

BENHAM: I bet it is.

CARRAWAY: You work with the legislatures.

BENHAM: You don't have a dull day, though, do you?

CARRAWAY: You get involved with a lot of different things.

BENHAM: That's right. I think being involved with a lot of things like that really helps, keeps your enthusiasm up. And that's what you need to just go on every day, don't you? There was an article written about locating an airport in the county. Do you know when this plan will go through?

CARRAWAY: No, I don't have any idea. That was something, I think, that was discussed sometime back. There was an effort being made to get Jeff Davis County - if it's the same thing that you are talking about - and Lawrence County to build one jointly. That kind of fell through; everybody couldn't get together on it. Jeff Davis County, I believe, has since gone on and built one. Now, there has continued to be an effort on some of the people's part in Lawrence County to build an airport in the county, but I don't know where that is, frankly. We are not directly involved with it any more.

BENHAM: I see. Oh, I wish it was, because I have a son that uses his company plane and it's a small one and if he could touch down in this county, even though he lives in Baton Rouge, maybe we would get to see him more often. But he does come home quite often. But anyway, if he could put it down here instead of driving over, you know, he would be here in about thirty-five (35)



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minutes, rather than three (3) hours.

CARRAWAY: Well, you're about fifteen (15) minutes from the Prentiss airport and they have a nice new strip over there.

BENHAM: I know it, but that's in Prentiss. We ought to have one here, really. We really need one here. I thought at one time that I heard that they might use the Tommy Clay's place out there. You know, he has a good open area. It's on the old Highway 27. And that's where his farm is located.

CARRAWAY: Well, they used to do that. They used to land some planes in there.

BENHAM: They did. But there is nothing there.

CARRAWAY: Well, it's a real shame.

BENHAM: It is a shame.

CARRAWAY: You know, that even if the three (3) counties - Lawrence, Lincoln, and Jeff Davis - had gotten together, that we couldn't have ended up with one nice facility as they did down in Forrest and Jones County, because it's hard for one county that doesn't have a lot of traffic in to support the thing.

BENHAM: But you know, that would bring something in, that would bring something else in. It will come to that.

CARRAWAY: I suspect so.

BENHAM: Yes, it will.

CARRAWAY: We're not involved though, directly at this point, in the airport thing.

BENHAM: All right, maybe you will get interested. I hope you do.

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Well, who was Mr. Roy Ferguson and why was the new paper mill named for him?

CARRAWAY: He was Chairman of the Board at the time the plant was being built and had really been the leading force in this company for years and years. They felt that the largest project the company ever undertook should be named after him. And that was the reason that that took place.

BENHAM: All right. Well, do you believe that Mr. Ferguson's philosophy of "awareness of opportunity" has paid off for the St. Regis Paper Mill?

CARRAWAY: Oh, I'm sure it has.

BENHAM: I like what he said there, because I feel like Mr. Ferguson does about that too, about being "aware of opportunities." And I would like to have met him, but really in one sense of the word, I really have met him, because this is what he was aware of and here it is. So it has paid off then. How does it feel to be associated with the world's largest Kraft Paper Mill? Give me your honest opinion now. You've been telling me all the time, but we'll come back to it again.

CARRAWAY: I think that that would vary from day to day depending on how things were running.

BENHAM: Right. I know. All right, remember that you are on tape, Mr. Carraway.

CARRAWAY: Sometimes it feels pretty good and sometimes you'd just as soon it be somewhere else.

BENHAM: Yes, I know, but that happens with everything. I don't care what job you have.

CARRAWAY: Surely, surely. I have thoroughly enjoyed my relationship with St. Regis in the time that I have been employed. They really have been



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a great bunch of people to work with and for.

BENHAM: Well, they really always are holding out their hand as a gesture of friendship really to anyone that wants to come through, like young people who I met in the hall and they looked like they could be freshmen college students. They all had their hard hats on and so they apparently were going to be taken through a tour of the place or something. It seems like you are always doing something like that.

CARRAWAY: You know, I really goofed this one. I should have kept up. We have records of who all has come through and maybe I could go back and figure it out. The number of people that have been through this plant is just unbelievable. From all over the world. Not only Americans, but we've had people from practically every country through this plant at one time or another since we've been located here. It's been most interesting.

BENHAM: Yes, it has.

CARRAWAY: Meeting some of those people.

BENHAM: Yes, yes.

CARRAWAY: It has been a showplace for the industry. And an awful lot of visitors.

BENHAM: Good, good. I hope they saw the county and said, "Well, maybe I'd like to live here," something like that. Do you like the idea of having clothes made out of paper?

CARRAWAY: Well, I suppose that will become practical at some time. It's been tried but never has really caught on. And it has some opportunities in some areas of clothing, I think, especially your disposable clothing, medical clothes. Clothes that people would use in service industries has

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an awful lot of opportunity. I brought some paper dresses home to my wife one time and I really never could get her to get into those too much. But they were long dresses and they were quite attractive, really.

BENHAM: Yes, I remember that. I remember seeing something like that a long time ago. Really, these Pampers, you know, diapers that they use for babies? That was unheard of when I had my children. They had those Bird's Eye Diapers and the Curity Diapers and here comes this other thing and so. It's a lot of good things about it that can be said about it. Well, already you've answered this question about the bark from the trees, what you do with them, but had you ever thought that this bark could be sacked up and sold to greenhouses for greenhouse plantings and sold around the country? Had you all ever thought about that?

CARRAWAY: That's being done at some locations.

BENHAM: Oh.

CARRAWAY: In fact, one of our chip mills that's closer to Mobile than it is here, is selling its bark to the nurseries. Tremendous nursery industry down in Mobile area. And when we were originally looking, before the energy thing came along, we started using the bark for fuel. We were looking at that bark as a source of mulch, and some of it's being used to make charcoal out of, but generally, you need to be closer to the major cities than we are.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: To use it. It is being used though in those areas, you know, where you have plants that are close to major cities.

BENHAM: Good.



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CARRAWAY: But it's too easy around here for you to run out there in the woods and get all the mulch or whatever you want.

BENHAM: That is if you live around near the woods.

CARRAWAY: That's right.

BENHAM: All right. Now, tell me what is the overall future for this plant or for the paper mills?

CARRAWAY: Well, you know, the company is always looking at what they're going to do and what's going to happen. You're always planning. That's done some at this location, it's done an awful lot though by the technical people and people in New York management and there are no plans at this point, announced plans of having any expansions here. Whether it happens in the future, only time will tell and circumstances. There will be a lot of circumstances that would determine that, what's happening in as far as the business that we generate would have an awful lot to do with it. But I believe - and this is a personal belief, it's not something that anybody in the company has said, certainly not management - that one of these days we'll see this plant expand. I hope we do.

BENHAM: Right. I hope you expand, but don't destroy the country feeling of it, you know. I don't want it to expand to the point where we become a city.

CARRAWAY: No, no. I don't think we could ever do that here. If we expanded, there probably would be an expansion of another machine which would employ another hundred or two or three hundred people.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: That would be about what it would amount to. But beyond



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that, you know, that may happen next year or it may not happen for twenty (20) years. Only the future will tell, all of the elements that enter into that decision.

BENHAM: All right. I understand that noted educators made a survey of the schools in the county for St. Regis. Why did the educators not want to comment and make public their hearings? Is that all right to ask you that?

CARRAWAY: It's all right to ask me. That study was made prior to my going into the company and I understand that they did bring a group of educators down here and they made a study of the school systems and that it indicated that there were some problems in the school systems. The company didn't feel that being new citizens and moving in here, that it immediately needed to start telling folks where you all got this, that, or the other wrong with you and do something about it.

BENHAM: You did the right thing.

CARRAWAY: It wasn't our place to start being critical of the local community, because it was their schools and not our schools. But I think that there's been some real progress in the school systems in Lawrence County over the past ten (10) years. Not as a result of St. Regis, but I think that there's been some leadership and there's been some progress.

BENHAM: Right. They're going to put art in the schools and that's quite a thing.

CARRAWAY: That's not to say that they're where they ought to be, I don't think. There's room for improvement still.

BENHAM: Yes, there is. There is. Mr. Carraway, is the Kraft paper sold by weight or is it sold by the roll?



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CARRAWAY: Sold by weight.

BENHAM: Does the paper mill have to be shut down for cleanups?

CARRAWAY: It has to be shut down for maintenance and at that time, they do clean up. They have regular outages that they would take it down. These are very rare. You know, this is not something you want to do more than a couple of times a year, though.

BENHAM: I see.

CARRAWAY: Sometimes you break down and you have to shut down. It's undesirable with that much equipment; it's not going to always work right.

BENHAM: I see. Why is it so important for independent sawmills to sell their wood chips?

CARRAWAY: We just need that source of wood to help us keep the mill running. And they need the added profit that it gives them, because in the past that was just thrown away in the old slabs and things that were discarded, just burned up. So it helps that local small business out there to realize a little better profit and it helps us fill our needs for wood.

BENHAM: Has the mill been successful every time in getting pulp wood?

(Begin Side Three of Tape)

BENHAM: What are the different kinds of wood that the mill uses for making Kraft paper?

CARRAWAY: We use primarily pine, but we also use a certain percentage of hard wood which would be your oak, the hard wood species.

BENHAM: In what way do you feel that the mill has helped Lawrence County?

CARRAWAY: Well, I'm probably partial on that. I think we've been an



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asset, primarily in offering people jobs who otherwise would have had to leave this part of the country and go somewhere else. That's what it meant to me more than anything else. It gave me an opportunity to move back home and have a good job, otherwise I would have had to have lived and raised my family somewhere else in a city. I think that this has been the big thing and it certainly has put money in the county that helped the merchants and helped the county in being able to do some of the things that it wants to do. When your employees buy cars and buy groceries and buy clothes, it generates money for all of the people whether they're local or whatever.

BENHAM: All right. Now, I'm going to ask you something, you might not like it or maybe you would like it. I'm going to ask you if you are a Yankee or are you a Southerner?

CARRAWAY: Having been raised and born in Mississippi, I suppose I'm a Southerner.

BENHAM: All right. Well, do you think that Yankees and Southerners have the same feeling about things in general, such as politics, religion, individual right, and that sort of thing?

CARRAWAY: I think that Yankees and Southerners are just as much alike as Southerners and Southerners are and just as much different as Southerners and Southerners are. I think that in traveling around I can find Yankees who I can completely agree with, just as I can find Southerners that I can completely agree with. I can find Southerners and Yankees both that I don't agree with at all. I think people are different, you know, and the Southern and Yankee thing is getting less and less a part of our feelings. I don't think it's as much as it has been. I feel that Atlanta is getting a lot



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like some of the eastern cities. It's getting so big that you will find people there not as friendly as they are in Jackson, Mississippi. And the simple reason is because it's so crowded and there are so many people. You find that in New York. I find though in traveling that frankly, that I has rather travel west than I had east. I find the people more friendly or friendlier as I go west than I do when I go east.

BENHAM: Well, then maybe that old adage about, "Go west, young man," that's the thing to do.

CARRAWAY: If I had to leave Mississippi, I'd want to move west, I think, I really would.

BENHAM: It is beautiful out there.

CARRAWAY: I had rather move that direction than I had east.

BENHAM: I don't know. Well, that's all right. Well, it's more open.

CARRAWAY: Yes, I like Dallas and I like Houston; I like those towns. The people seem to be very friendly. But I find when I go to New York, you find very friendly people up there too.

BENHAM: Well, you know, I think it has a lot to do with you, don't you think so?

CARRAWAY: I suppose so.

BENHAM: You know, if you were a very closed up person and didn't want to extend yourself out that they wouldn't respond to you either.

CARRAWAY: That's right. But you get out of New York. You get out into the areas of the state up there or anywhere up north and I don't find people that much different than the people in the rural area in Mississippi and the rural area in the north. Now, in the cities they are harder, they



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are a little more close up, and they have to be, I suppose. More guarded.

BENHAM: They have to, right. There's a lot of competition going around and everybody's, you know, it's a real rat race sort of thing. But then, there are a lot of people that like that sort of thing.

CARRAWAY: That's right.

BENHAM: And they stay there.

CARRAWAY: That's true. I'm just tickled to death for them to stay there and let me stay down here.

BENHAM: That's right, I know. There are other people that like out in the country. Have you done much traveling in your lifetime?

CARRAWAY: Not outside of the country. I've done a good bit here in the United States. But I've not done a lot of traveling outside of the country.

BENHAM: All right. Now, was this in connection with your job?

CARRAWAY: Some of it, a lot of it.

BENHAM: Well, do you want to tell me some of the places you went to right quick?

CARRAWAY: Oh, last summer I had a couple of interesting trips. My wife and myself went up through Washington, New York, and up into Maine and spent some time with the Ex-Resident Manager, Bob Kohlmeyer, who was the first Resident Manager at this location. We visited with them and found the people of Maine most interesting. Very much like the people of Mississippi, they think as awful lot like we do. They're very independent and they like to have their own way and do their own thing. We also were able to go out into Colorado and New Mexico last summer and found the same thing



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out there. You know, it's a great big country and when we say those are Yankees or those are Southerners or those are Texans or whatever, they're just as different as the people right around here are.

BENHAM: That's right, that's right. They are just individuals.

CARRAWAY: You can't put them all in a sack and say they're all alike because they live in a particular place.

BENHAM: That's right. Right, I agree with you. What are your hobbies, Mr. Carraway?

CARRAWAY: My wife says it's farming.

BENHAM: Well, what do you say it is?

CARRAWAY: I suppose that that would be it, really. I enjoy it. As I told you earlier in this discussion, that I had originally started majoring in agriculture and I suppose that I've always had a love of seeing things grow. In the job that I have with the company, it sometimes is hard to really know when the day's over or the week's over or the month's over whether you've really accomplished any of your objectives. You don't see anything. I suppose it's like an artist where, you know, you paint a picture and you see something that's yours. It's a result of your talents and I suppose farming to me is that way. I plant a seed and I see something come up and it gives you a sense of accomplishment that sometimes working for a large corporation you don't have, because there are so many people involved in every decision and you are a small little part of that plan. You don't get the full sense of accomplishment that you do when you go out to plant some beans and you see them come up. As I started to leave home this morning I was looking out on a field behind the house, trying to see whether my

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beans were coming up or not, you know.

BENHAM: Yes, yes.

CARRAWAY: I was real interested in that and if they come up, I'll be tickled to death; if they don't, I'll be very disheartened about it.

BENHAM: That's right. And a lot of times that does happen too, doesn't it?

CARRAWAY: Yes. That's right. So my main hobby, I suppose really would be living out on the farm and farming. We grow wheat and we grow soybeans.

BENHAM: Good.

CARRAWAY: We used to run cattle out there, but we got away from those and went into these other things. The boys do most of the work.

BENHAM: Oh, that's marvelous.

CARRAWAY: I hope that I do the guiding, you know.

BENHAM: Yes. Does your wife share your enthusiasm about this, your hobby?

CARRAWAY: She enjoys the garden more than she does the other part of it. She enjoys the farm and we enjoy fooling with it together.

BENHAM: Good, that's very good.

CARRAWAY: We had a beautiful garden this year. Her main hobby is cooking a lot now. She does an excellent job at that.

BENHAM: Well, looking at your sons' pictures over there, they look good and healthy and you do too. But I don't think there is anything in the world like living in the country. I really don't. I am just the opposite from what I was thirty-five (35) years ago. I just hated this place; I



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just thought if I could just get away and go back to New Orleans, how much better off we'd be. How happy I would be. And I remember that my husband planted some oats one year and the whole thing just kerplunked, you know. He was no farmer, but he was determined he was going to live in the country, because all of his people had always had farms. But I said, "Oh, Harvey, let's just stop everything and go back to New Orleans." He said - and the words he said at that time really just were terrible - because he said, "Evelyn, we can't do it. We are either going to have to sink or swim." And I thought that was the worst blow I ever went through. But do you know, I did become adjusted to it and now I'm just the opposite.

CARRAWAY: How long did it take you to become adjusted, do you think?

BENHAM: Well, it was a slow, slow thing of putting your roots down and having the children grow up. And then I remember I had to go to New Orleans to have an operation. You see, I have a brother that lives there and I had some children living there and so I decided to go over there and have the thing done. And my son-in-law was a doctor, but anyway, while I was there it was all I could do, I just hated it, just gradually, with all that static and noise, noise, noise, noise every day, you know, no matter what. It just began to get on to my nerves and finally, I just simply one day just got in my car; I didn't tell anybody I was even going to come home. I just told the cook. I said, "I am going back home right now." And I got in the car and just drove on and I got home. And Harvey said, "What in the world are you doing here? I'm supposed to come down to New Orleans and get you." And I said, "I couldn't stand it anymore. I just had to come home." But I was well enough to leave New Orleans, but halfway



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down home, I called to tell Sarah that I was on my way home and of course, I had gotten everybody worried. But I said, "I just couldn't stand it another minute. I just couldn't take it." And so, you see, I'm just the opposite. So that happens.

CARRAWAY: You think it took you, what, twenty (20) years to finally get to realize, you really never knew that you were becoming adjusted?

BENHAM: That's right, I wasn't the whole time. Finally, when the last child left home, you go through, mothers go through this empty nest syndrome. And we had five (5) of the children and that's when it began to dawn on me and then of course, all I wanted to do was get on the phone. Now really, I'm telling a story and this is really your story and here I'm telling you my story. But anyway, it might help someone else, though. But you go through this feeling of not being wanted and there's no need for you and you feel thrown away and nobody loves you. Mothers just go through this. And so maybe you can sort of feel close to that.

CARRAWAY: I'm sure we have some wives that must go through that, you know.

BENHAM: What?

CARRAWAY: I'm sure we have wives of our employees who came from big towns and all of a sudden they are thrust into a small community.

BENHAM: And of course, another thing that you have to do is that you have to make friends. You really have to make the friends. Because when you make your friends, then you feel that, you know, and you get into it. You have to really get into it. And all the years that we lived out there and where we are still living, you know, I couldn't get involved with any-



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thing because there were the five (5) children. I knew nothing about living on the farm. I knew nothing about canning. I knew nothing about making a quilt. I didn't know anything. And I had to learn. It was a whole new way of learning to live. For instance, in New Orleans you ate your breakfast at nine (9) and by nine o'clock we would be staggering out to eat breakfast and people were already through with practically, with their whole day's work. They had come out of the field and here we were just getting ready to go into the field, you know, and all that sort of thing. And even the food that we ate was different. The whole bit I had to learn. And it was a wonderful experience and I wouldn't give it up for all the money in the world. If someone said, "Now here, Mrs. Benham, you can have this money and then you could be different," but I wouldn't change it for anything because it helped me to grow up. See, I was the only daughter in the family. I had never been really away from my family. I could always get on the telephone and say, "Mama, how do you do this?" You know. But here I was cut off entirely from everyone and I had to grow up and my children had to learn to grow up too and be self-reliant. And they all are.

CARRAWAY: This is, I think, a big plus in living, you know, like I do out on a farm where the kids have to go on and make decisions and do things.

BENHAM: That's right. And they all had to work. That kept them out of trouble and kept them off of the street. And Harvey just wouldn't let them go to town to work. I did want them to get out and have a different, you know, sort of a balance, but he said, "No, they've got work here to do and they're going to do it." So they did it. The girls did too. They had



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to milk and they had to do a lot of farm work and help me. Well, anyway this is not my story and it's your story. Well, let me ask you this. Is there anything else that you would like to say at this time?

CARRAWAY: No, I can't think of anything. I know there are a lot of things that we've missed that could have been said. But it's been a real experience for me to be involved with this plant down here for the last ten (10) years and see some of the people come and go. We were laughing the other day. I had to have some new pictures about the young guys on the staff, you know, and we've been here ten (10) years and that's a little while. We've got to go back and get new pictures taken now because we've all grown older. We were like a bunch of kids when we first came down here, some of us. But it has been most interesting and real rewarding to see the plant progress. We still enjoy showing it off.

BENHAM: I know.

CARRAWAY: We think we have an attractive plant. The Resident Manager that we have now, Derby, is really interested in having the place look attractive - not only be productive, but look attractive. As you came in I'm sure you saw where there's no trash on the road out there coming in here. It's mowed. He's proud of the facility.

BENHAM: You have to be.

CARRAWAY: And it makes me proud of what we have.

BENHAM: Of course it does.

CARRAWAY: We just hope to continue to be a good neighbor in the community and that the people will feel as good about us twenty (20) years from now as they seem to today.



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BENHAM: Well, and I hope that you will feel that way about us.

CARRAWAY: We are a part of you now.

BENHAM: That's right. All right, then I will bring this interview to a close. Thank you, Mr. Carraway, for letting me talk with you. Thank you very much.

CARRAWAY: Thank you for asking me.

BENHAM: All right, this is the end of the interview.

(End of Interview)

(Transcribed by Evelyn Benham)