

Karen Ferguson: Could you tell me where you grew up?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: In Woodruff, South Carolina.

Karen Ferguson: In Woodruff, South Carolina. And could you tell me a little bit about that community?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: It's a small town, 16 miles south of Spartanburg, South Carolina. And I couldn't tell you how many people because when I grew up there, 3 or 400 I guess in the whole place. But it was just a little country town. We had about 12 or 15 stores, a general store, and several other stores. And we had— I grew up in a large family. My parents had nine children, eight girls and one boy. But my father believed in education, and we had a junior high school— After you finish ninth grade there, that was as far as Black kids could go to school. There was a nice high school there, but we couldn't even walk on the lawn because if we did, you would take a chance on the police getting you. Not the people that worked there, the custodians, but they were the only Black people that could go on the school grounds.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: But we had our own little— It was a nice little wood school we had. There were nine grades, one through nine. And you finish ninth grade, that was all that you could get unless your parents were interested in trying to send you to some of the little mission schools. They had church schools scattered throughout South Carolina. And we had to— My father always believed in education and my mother did too. My mother had a ninth grade education. My father had a fifth grade education, but he believed in education.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: He was an electrician for 40 some years in this little town, practically every building, the doctor's homes because we had four or five White doctors there. We had lawyers and things. But most of the home, my father wired them. And I know a good bit about outlets and things like that because being with my daddy, when the houses were going up, he'd show you what to do. But after we finished ninth grade, he would always arrange for us to go to some of these little schools somewhere to finish high school and then go on.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: So when I finished ninth grade, we had a teacher that was living with us. She had finished a junior college in Cheraw, South Carolina, a Presbyterian school. The people from Pennsylvania, I can't think of the place now. They would sponsor these schools, church people, Presbyterian people. Well, so I was 15, I got on the train in Woodruff and went to Columbia, South Carolina, and came up to Cheraw, to this little campus. And I guess they had maybe 5, 600 children there because they were from seventh grade through 12th grade. Then it was a junior college. It was Cota Academy in Cheraw. So when the kids— After you finished high school, you could stay there and get two years of college. But when I finished Cota, then I went back home, back then I went to Alabama to go to school, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And I was down there for a year and a semester. I didn't finish there because I

really wanted nursing. So I came back home and my father found out about the school of nursing here in Charlotte. And there was one in Durham that he was interested in attending. But I chose the one in Charlotte. So I finished nursing here at Good Samaritan Hospital. It's torn down now and that's about it.

Karen Ferguson: Okay.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Then I got married just before I graduated. My husband and I lived together for 46 years and I think it was 10 months. And he died July, 1991.

Karen Ferguson: Could I ask you a few questions about Woodruff, about your childhood there? You did now you said you grew up with 10 brothers and sisters, or 10 of you altogether?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: No. No. There were nine of us.

Karen Ferguson: Okay.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Eight girls and one boy.

Karen Ferguson: Oh, one boy. Okay. Okay. Did anybody else live with you?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: No. My mother and my father. I'm going to turn this fan on, it's hot.

Karen Ferguson: Okay, that's fine. That's fine.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: My father was on the school board and if— And when I was a child, when I was say under 13, we lived in the country, up on a beautiful hill just outside of Woodruff. And if some person looking for a job teaching wanted to teach, well they would have to meet with the White superintendent of schools. And he would always tell them that you must go and talk to Mr. Cannon. And he would direct them to our house. They'd come there and sit on front porch and wait until my father came because they wanted to talk with him so they could get a job teaching in this Black school.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: They would come from Charleston, from Greenville, South Carolina, from Spartanburg, Cowpens. Oh, we had teachers all around that would come, but they would— And I said, "Well, my daddy just had a fifth grade education." He didn't know anything about employing them. But no, they would have to talk to him and he would really talk to— He always took off his head and held it on his chest because he respected them. And he would talk to them about—

Karen Ferguson: Why did they have to come to talk to him?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Because he was a school board member.

Karen Ferguson: Oh I see.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And they respected my father. My father was— I don't know, he was well liked there, well known there. And everybody knew us. We could go uptown and say— And if you in a store, they'd say, "You want to get that and charge it to Wallace? And Wallace will pay for it when we see him." And we said, "No, we didn't come for anything. We weren't supposed to get anything maybe on that day." We didn't— They just knew us like that, and they knew we were all this Wallace Cannon's daughter.

Karen Ferguson: And this was Black and White people.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: These were White people talking to us if we were in the stores, no Blacks only the store or anything. They say, "Did you want that today? And we'll just charge it to Wallace. Oh he'll pay for it when he comes by."

Karen Ferguson: Were there other Blacks on the school board?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Yes, but I don't know why he would always send them to papa. We never— He certainly would. They'd wait for him so he could talk to them.

Karen Ferguson: Well, how did he get onto the school board?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: I think he was appointed. I think. Because I don't know, I was little. I remember there were two of my sisters in Columbia, South Carolina, at Benedict College. One was in college and I believe the over was a senior in high school. The banks closed, and my father came home one day, and he said to my mother— I remember this because I was small. He said, "Well, the banks have closed on all our money." And my mother started crying.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And I know we hugged around her. She was standing up, we were hugging around and she was crying and we were crying and we really didn't know. All we knew, Papa just said the banks closed on us today and all our money's— Couldn't get. She said, "No, the children will have to come home from school." She was crying. He said, "No." He said, "Where there's a will, there's a way. They are going to stay there." Because see, they were in Columbia. And sure enough they sure stayed.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Then my oldest sister, after she finished her junior year at Benedict College, she was one of the first Blacks to get a job teaching. But when they held a meeting at the time they were discussing her, my father said, well he wouldn't sit in on that meeting because they were discussing Juanita, my oldest sister. But she got the job teaching. She taught my brother in the first grade.

Karen Ferguson: So before that, the teachers that were in the schools were White?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: No, they were Black. But they came from other places, other little towns to get a job. She was just the first Black person from Woodruff to ever teach. See, ninth grader was as far— People didn't have any money, the depression was all— They didn't have any money to go to school, but my father

would wire different places and he believed— He saved his money, but my mother would help. She was very frugal when it came to a dollar. She could stretch it. We used to tease her, she could stretch it. She was good at it. She just knew how to manage 3 or \$4. She could make them go a long ways.

Karen Ferguson: How did they manage to keep your sisters in college?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: My father worked every day. Just like he'd been doing all along. I tell you, he was always wiring something or someone was always calling him to come and repair something or fix something. See, he was well known. And he always say— He would say— He believed in doing a neat job. He said, "When you cut a hole to put a cover one of these outlets in—" He said, "You have to do it neatly. Clean up the floor and everything. Leave it nice."

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And most of the people, they were all White, most of that he worked for, and he just believed in working. And they would call him because he could do so many things with his hands. Or sometimes at home they may bring the electric fan by. Back then they had the kind on a stand. You don't even know what I'm talking about. But it was on a stand. "Wallace, can you fix the fan for me? And I know you can do it because if you just put your hands on it'll be all right." But he knew how to take it apart. It was a gift. He hadn't studied it anywhere.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Now my brother, he's much younger than I am, but he finished Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia. And he was in electronics. But then he went on to graduate school in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to get masters in electrical engineering. But my father kept— I think for 20 some years, my mother said they had— I believe she said 27 or 28, there was either one or two children somewhere away in school. Because there may one trying to finish 10th, 11th, 12th grade, and another one in a college somewhere. Or one of my sisters went in nursing school in— She went to Columbia finish, she's older than I am. But it took work, and he just believed in working.

Karen Ferguson: How did he learn how to become an electrician? Did he—

Florence Cannon Goodwin: I think I've heard him say that he started out with the Bell Telephone Company when he was about 17 or 18. He worked stringing lines, he'd say, for Bell. I guess it's Southern Bell, but he'd say Bell Telephone Company. And I think from there he learned how to work with wires, and how to touch them, and how to handle them. We used to walk along the streets coming home from school and we would look up on a pole sometimes, and my daddy would be up there.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: He would have a belt around his waist with his tools hanging on it. And he's swinging back because he'd have the belt around the pole swinging— He had spurs, that's what he called it. Because he had a toolbox. We used to get his tools out and play with them, mama make us put them up. But he'd have to stick these spurs in the poles to climb it. And he'd sit— He'd do— And we'd be saying, "Hey, my daddy up there." Because we had our daddies up there working on the light pole. And if there was ever a storm, sometimes they would— After the storm was over, if lines were broken, the Duke power people would come and ask him to come and just help us get them back up. And he knew how to handle the hot

wires, not to— You just had to have— I guess mother went to learn things like he did because he just learned them the hard way.

Karen Ferguson: Right. Right. Why don't you tell me a little bit about your mother?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: She was a sweet little love. And my daddy was an angel. But my mother was just a sweet darling, loving mother. But she believed in discipline. You were going to listen. And when we were coming from school, you had to— Well, you could eat a little something but then you'd get your books, and she was going to listen to you read. Then you'd study your spelling and you'd have to spell the words to her because she want to be sure you knew the spelling, knew the—

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And you have to work your problem. And she would go over those with you, and she always— And that's one thing. She would see— But you had to do the work, and then go over with her to let her listen to you read it or listen to you spell. But now in the summertime, we had to help grow vegetables, can them, we were busy all summer. My mother would say, "Well, I'm going to try to put up a hundred jars of fruits and vegetables this summer." And sure enough, we'd get that hundred. A hundred a summer.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And then I knew as I got older, I remember we used to always have a Sears-Roebuck catalog. And he ordered a sealer. It was for sealing tin cans. And my daddy could buy the tin cans there in Woodruff at this general store. And he would buy these tin cans with the lids that fitted down on them. We would can, and you'd fasten this sealer to a table, and it would just seal the can just like their seal when they come out of the stores now. And you would put those in and then Mom would put them in a big pot of water and you have to let them heat for so long. We had tin cans and our jars of everything, you just named it, we had— We always had plenty of food. People would come from down in Woodruff up there to sit on the porch in the summer time.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: We had these big old trees and cool porch. They'd sit up there and Mom would tell them to pick whatever they wanted out of the different patches, or out of the— Little spring beans over there. Some tomatoes. And pick one and get your head of cabbage. Oh, I know one lady used to come in her bare feet, or if she had shoes, she had them thrown across her shoulder. She wouldn't wear them. And she would wear an apron, and she would always pick her plenty of good vegetables, and she'd tie them up in this apron, and she'd go with her shoes over her shoulder. Really. And my father was always giving something to somebody. He believed in giving the things away he loved. And we [indistinct 00:16:34].

Karen Ferguson: Did your family own their own house in Woodruff?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: We owned a five room house, and on this beautiful hill. Usually when I go to Woodruff we try to just drive by because White people bought the house after we moved because my dad had a place in Woodruff that he rented out. But then, I don't know, finally he decided to fix it up. And we moved into this house, and my sister lives in that house now. It's our old house. But we had to work because— And in the wintertime, you see he would cut plenty of wood, and we'd help him stack it. It's a lot

of work. And if you didn't do— You just had chores to do when you came in in the afternoon. You knew to get in some wood and get some chips, so my dad would have them to start the fire. They were in a cold scuttle.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: It just worked to be done. And we worked, although we got our lesson, and he believed in you going to school. I don't care how hard it was raining. We had umbrellas, we had overshoes, and if it started raining while we were in school— Kids used to tease us. I remember one boy used to look after him, "Here come Mr. Cannon with all those umbrellas." My dad would be walking up in the school yard, he'd have one over them. He'd have maybe four, five umbrellas on his arm. And he'd go maybe knock on the teacher door and he'd leave his umbrella for us. He would leave those umbrellas so we wouldn't get wet going home. We didn't have any buses to ride. We walked those two miles every day.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And I don't know, it was something else. It was different. We had all those old used desks with names cut all in them. And a place to put your ink bottle, and maybe that hole had ink all around. And the seats were always old and used. I don't ever remember us having new desk in our school because they would send them from up at the White school because those new desks were— That was too good for Black people. White people get the good things, and you all take the hand—me—downs. So I knew— I don't particularly care for a lot of hand—me—downs today. Really. I just— Because as a child you see, when something just [indistinct 00:19:11].

Karen Ferguson: So you were always aware that this was—

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Right, of hand-me-downs.

Karen Ferguson: Right.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Although we had to take our sister's clothes, my mother took care of them. And if she would wear the coat, and when she outgrew the coat, the next child would have to wear it for two or three years until she outgrew it, if we was still good. Well, anyway.

Karen Ferguson: So you always knew that the White children had better stuff?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: They were always supposed to have the better things because— But now don't you think My mother and father didn't work. And they gave us, we had as good as any other Black children would've had.

Karen Ferguson: Compared to other Black families in Woodruff, how well were you off financially, do you think? Or in terms of what you had?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Some people thought we were well off but we didn't have anything. Because the bank closed on my there in 30, 31. Was it 30? Somewhere back in the thirties whenever who it was closed the bank.

Karen Ferguson: Right. Were there other prosperous Black families?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Yes, there were. I'm not going— I won't say how many. But you could just about count them on one hand.

Karen Ferguson: What did they do for a living?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: I don't even know. But I do remember some that owned their homes. And I guess they— I'll say 5 or 10 families. And then after papa started sending us away to school, some of the other families decided to start sending their children away to school. So anyway.

Karen Ferguson: Can you talk to me a little bit about the Black community in Woodruff? Did you live around other Black people?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: They were— Oh. Well, see, when we lived up in the country, the next family was about as far as from here up to that brick building up at that church. But in the town, yes. In fact the street that our house is on, the first four or five houses, they're White people, and then the next house is our house. And we are on the corner. And then White people used to live across the street right in front of us. But now they're Black.

Karen Ferguson: But when you were growing up, there were White people next door to you then?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Oh, now when we were growing up, there were some White people that lived closer than that church to us because the little children used to love to come over there to play. And they would always like for my mother— She would fix breakfast, and Mama always made nice golden brown soft buttermilk biscuits for our breakfast. We had that along with maybe some oatmeal, or grit, or whatever she was fixing on that morning. And they would come to play and they would— They'd call my mother Bunch. They called, "Hey Bunch. I want one of your butter biscuits." She would always butter them a nice biscuit. And it was all right with their mother, give them a biscuit. And they would play with us, but then as they would grow up though, you see, they knew to not play with us.

Karen Ferguson: Right. Right. Did they come into your home and eat the—

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Oh yes. They were just as happy.

Karen Ferguson: Right.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Because they were little children. 8, 9, 10 years old.

Karen Ferguson: Were you able to go to their house?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: No, we didn't go across them at their homes. No.

Karen Ferguson: Were you also told that at a certain point— Did your parents have to explain—

Florence Cannon Goodwin: No.

Karen Ferguson: — when they couldn't play with you anymore?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: No. No. You just accepted it.

Karen Ferguson: So it was something that happened to other people.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And my father had an extra job. He used this money to help send us to school. There was a First Baptist Church, White. On weekends, he would clean this church. It was Saturdays. And on Sunday, he was a custodian there. But he took this job to help send his children to school. That was his little extra— He'd call that his extra work. And we would go on Saturdays and help him clean because we could dust the tables and just clean up, help clean the bathrooms and things at this church.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And I think after he was there for so many years, they even gave him a little celebration. But he worked at this church for, I think it was either 25 or 27 years. This is written up somewhere. I have one of the articles they put in the paper there about him working there for so long. But I tell you, my mother knew how to handle a dollar, and so she would stick right behind so that we could go to school.

Karen Ferguson: The other— Can you tell me a little bit about the neighbors that you had once you moved into the town? The Black neighbors you had.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Just lovely. Some of them are still there. Yeah. Corner opposite— Yeah. We had nice neighbors and they're still good neighbors. Some of them are dead and their children are there. See their—

Karen Ferguson: Was it a close-knit community?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Yes.

Karen Ferguson: How so?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Everybody knew everyone. And I told you, we had the two churches, and our church was Baptist, and it was near our school, right at the school. And the Methodist Church was in another direction, but it wasn't very close by, within walking distance. And everybody walked everywhere. A few people had cars when I was little growing up. They had Fords, about the only type of cars they had. But a few families had.

Karen Ferguson: Can you remember any of your neighbors that— Any—

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Oh, yes. Although that I remember when I was little growing up there. Oh, they've been dead for years. But maybe some of their grandchildren of grandchildren. I remember a few. I know one little boy that was our neighbor and he was having a time learning to read. And so his mother asked my mother if she would just help him learn to read. And this little fellow lives in Columbus, Ohio now.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And when he see us, he always tell— He said, "I don't think I would've ever learned to read if Ms. Cannon hadn't taken time." He said, "I can see us now—" Sometimes she would sit on the front steps, but we had a porch and it had some— I think about six or eight steps. Some afternoons he would bring his book and he would come there and mom would sit down there on the step with him and help him learn to just call the words.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And she would say, "I don't want you to just calling word, you had to move along. And she wasn't a teacher or anything. But she didn't want you saying, "Dick said—" She wanted you to say, "Dick said move along." She was something else. She was a great influence on us learning. And then with my father believing in education and going to school. He was just going to school, he didn't do anything else. He believed in that.

Karen Ferguson: Do you remember other ways in which neighbors helped each other out?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Well, now this wasn't a help out, but every year I know my mother always— And this was just— I don't know why they did it, but near the end of school, my mother would have all the teachers and the principal to come and she'd fix dinner for them. And that was something they look forward to, just like you look forward to a picnic now. But they would go to Mr. and Mrs. Cannon's to have dinner. And she would have a— I think they were about eight or nine teachers because they would teach each grade and then the principal. So anyway, they would always have dinner for the whole entire faculty. And those teachers looked— That was something they enjoyed.

Karen Ferguson: Did you look up to any of your neighbors particularly? Was there one that you really saw a role model?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: We respected our neighbors. We had to. Because if they said to my mother, "She was acting up." Oh dear. And my mother, I think she [indistinct 00:27:48] and sting those little legs real good for you, have you dancing, and then make you sit down and be quiet. And you'd want to cry and "Stop that whimpering," she'd say, "I don't want hear it." And we would like— Now, when we get together, we say, "Now Mama would whip you. And then make you, and you know your legs are stinging and you'd want to cry about it, she wouldn't let you cry." Stop it, and she leave.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: I think she was firm. But after we were grown, we'd go back home. I was working with children sometimes in my work, and I would say, "Mama, I appreciate every whipping you gave me." I said, "Because I see some little children now today, they are so out of hand." I said, "They don't listen to

their parents, they don't listen to anyone." Mama said, "Well, I'm glad they didn't grow up around me."

Florence Cannon Goodwin: But really, in my work, their mothers could say, "Well, let's sit down." They were thinking about it, going on, doing what they want to do, just something that simple. And as they get older, you tell them, "Well, don't maybe get in trouble, take drugs." But they haven't learned to listen when they were little, "[indistinct 00:29:05] going to influence me, and I'll follow him."

Karen Ferguson: Can you ever remember a specific incident where you got in trouble and a neighbor told your mother?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: I don't think so. Trying to think because your elder sisters kept us straight. The older sister would kind of look after the— And if you did something, if they went and said, "Mom, she didn't listen to me, she did something." You were in trouble. I remember my oldest sister was teaching there, and I wouldn't—I just didn't want to call her Ms. Cannon because that was my sister. And we would walk to school together. She wore a hair in a ball back at behind, teaching first grade, but I just couldn't call her Ms. Cannon. So she came home.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Oh, I know what, my mother went somewhere one day, I forgot where it—One Saturday because my older sister laughs about it now. And she's 81 years old, I think. She would say, "Oh," she said, "Florence was so hard headed." And she told me whatever it was I was supposed to do, she wouldn't do it, so Juanita got her hairbrush. So she was going to—the brushes were wood at that time, but it had some nice bristles in. And she had the back of the brush, "pat, pat" back on to spank me. And I wasn't going to listen to her. She was my sister, that's not my mother. You don't have sisters to tell you what to do. Honey, she was trying to hold my hand and spank me, and the brush just split open. I say, "Goody, goody, goody."

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Just silly little things like that. But no, I didn't like to listen to my— And at school, I wouldn't say anything. I wouldn't even call her name because I wouldn't call her Ms. Cannon. Then my second sister started teaching there, and Juanita was gone, my older sister was gone, but my second sister got a job there teaching. So she taught me geography. And I'll never forget it. Some of the things that I learned under her in the fifth grade, we had to learn the capitals of every state in the United State, and you had to know them because you had to stand up. Oh lord, some of the geography I learned back then, I can follow it now.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: But if my sister say, "Oh she didn't—" And I did never call her name, sat in the classroom, but no, I wouldn't call her name. So if I wanted to go to the bathroom, I wouldn't go. I'd just wait because I wasn't going to say, "Ms. Cannon, may I be excused?" No. That wasn't that— That I would treat my sister. But Mama would tell me, "Now Florence, now you respect Helen." I didn't say anything. Terrible, (laughs) is what it was. But we had some good times. We had dolls.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And I know my oldest sister was teaching, she bought me a pretty doll one year because I wanted a doll for Christmas. And she brought me the prettiest little doll. And I remember my doll

left out in the rain one summer, and back then the dolls, if they got wet, they would puff up. And my sister would see, they say, "Ooh, she died. She had measles." Or something. But the rain would just puff— It was something, whatever the material was that the doll was made from.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: And sure enough, a little face was old, so we had to bury her. And we had playhouses under a tree. You can make a nice little playhouse. And my daddy would make us some little— He'd make us a little jigsaw— A little dance in the jig puzzle. This little old thing he made, facing with string, you stick your fingers in it, and it would dance. I don't know, he could make baskets. He used to make the prettiest baskets. I know how to make baskets. Really. And I know what to make them with. He would make them and put little handle across it, or he'd make a big basket, and we would help him. So the children nowadays, it'd be nice if they were exposed to something, like using their hands. Making baskets, doing anything to keep that little— I guess that's the way they brought us up.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: But now each of us was about two and a half years apart, and I'm three years older than my sister under me. So see, there was a little space in between us. But as we grew up, none of us— We were never all at home together because the older girls were gone. So I was in the middle of the crowd. They were four above me and four below me. And so my mother used to always say that I was the— My mother said, "You are the baby to the first four, but you are the oldest of that second four." And she'd depend on me to lead them in the right way. If we were going to school even, if one got down the street, we supposed to be on the sidewalk, get down there and step on the sidewalk because we were going to tell mama when you got home. So anyway.

Karen Ferguson: Was it hard being in the middle?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: No, I was just indignant. And I didn't let any of them push me around. I had to look out for myself.

Karen Ferguson: Who was in charge at home, your mother or your father? Who was the boss at home?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Well, I kind of think my mother, because my father was easy and good. I never remember my daddy spanking me. But my— Oh God, I had enough spanking from my mother. I knew what to do and what not to do, I'll bet you that much. But I think my mother was the stronger figure. Because my daddy was a good, honest, sweet, hardworking, loving father. And he loved us to death. He loved his girls. He loved brother too.

Karen Ferguson: Who was in charge of the money, the family budget and that kind of thing?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: My mother.

Karen Ferguson: Okay.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Because my father, he would come home, and I've seen him put money on

dining table and he said, "Use it in whatever way." And don't you think she didn't, I tell you she knew how to— Really. And when I was eight or nine years old, when we lived up in the country, see there were two mill villages near us where they may cloth. Woodruff was a mill town. Okay, so there was a store near this mill town, right the edge. Oh, we didn't live— We lived a half a mile from the mill store. Okay. My mother would put some eggs in a basket, she could send two dozen eggs, and then we would trade those in and you could get— Oh, whatever she need. If she needed some thread, and she needed some— A lot of things she would need because we grew so many things.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: But maybe she said, "Get a spool of black thread, a spool of white thread and get a—" You'd end up— You'd have a whole lot of little things to carry back home. And the man would take the eggs because he needed the eggs cause he was going to sell them. They called it trading.

Karen Ferguson: Did that happen in other places too, not maybe with stores, but between neighbors or?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: I've heard of stores out in the country, maybe there was a general store, some little town that they created. But I knew we could do it there at the store because this man knew my parents, he knew them well, and he knew us. Walk in there with your little basket with your eggs in it, he'd say— And we had cows and chickens and hogs. And my mother would pat out butter, put it in a mold, and have a pretty flower on top of it when she dump it out. And sometimes White people say, "Well, Mrs. Cannon, I'd like— They call her Bunch. Bunch, I'd like a pound of butter." They would come in and buy some buttermilk. For 10 cents, you get a half a gallon of buttermilk, 20 cents a gallon. And they would really come because they want good buttermilk.

Karen Ferguson: Did your mother ever work outside the home?

Florence Cannon Goodwin: No, after we were— Oh god, teenagers, she used to work at a American Legion hut. It seemed like on Wednesdays they would have some kind of dinner or something. I think they were veterans or something. And I remember when they built that place, and my daddy wired that, because see, we'd go and carry his dinner when we were little. And that's when we got in on all the roughing in of it, where the wires and things were coming. But she used to go up there and I think helped with those dinners. And that was just about her work. No, she had her hands full at home. And we always had different little things to do around the house, keep things clean.

Florence Cannon Goodwin: Every Monday— She'd always wash every Monday. She considered that her wash day. And then on Tuesdays, we would help starch the pillowcases and sprinkling an iron with smoothing iron. So we got an electric iron, but you would heat the iron before the fire. You'd them take off and iron it. And things had to be white. My mother liked white clothes, her sheets, and your underwear, and things. And then she sewed. She could make our things. Then we were big enough, you take a home ec class at school and you learn to make your own dresses. So after I was about, I guess 13, I started home ec lessons, and I said, "Mom, you don't fit— I wanted my dresses to fit tight." You know, those foolish things, like it's silly. And so I started making—(loud buzzing and faint music for the rest of this side of tape)