

**Daniel E. Wegner Oral History Collection  
A Register, 1978**

**Creator:** Daniel E. Wegner

**Collection Number:** Mss 278

**Title:** Daniel E. Wegner Oral History Collection

**Abstract:** Daniel E. Wegner conducted a series of interviews with eight residents of the Newry community of Oconee, SC in 1978 as part of research for his Clemson master's thesis. The interviews focus on life in the small rural mill village of Newry during the first decades of the twentieth century. Interviews are with both black and white individuals of both genders. Some of the historical information in this register is based upon research done by Karen Ellenberg and Michael Kohl in regards to Mss 154 Henry Cater Collection, and Mss 162 Courtenay Manufacturing Company Records.

**Quantity:** 0.31 cubic feet consisting of 48 cassettes in 3 boxes. There are 3 duplicate sets of user copies -- each made up of 16 cassettes.

**Scope and Content Note**

This collection contains 48 cassette tapes (three sets of sixteen) that document interviews conducted by Daniel E Wegner during research for his 1979 master's thesis entitled *Recollections of Life in a Southern Textile Mill Village*.

**Additional Collection Information**

Cite as: [description of items such as "Ellis Benson Interview"], box number, Mss 278, Daniel E. Wegner Oral History Collection, Special Collections, Clemson University Libraries, Clemson, SC.

**Biographical/Historical Note**

Daniel E. Wegner was born in Cleveland, Ohio in 1946. He is the son of Edwin and Deoldine Wegner. He has one sibling: Ruth Miller.

Wegner attended Houghton College, New York from 1964-1966, Wheaton College, Illinois from 1966-1968 (BA in History), North American Baptist Seminary, San Diego from 1971-1973 (Master of Arts-Christian Education), Clemson University from 1978-1979 (Master of Recreation and Park Administration), and Texas A&M from 1979-1986 (PhD-Philosophy).

Wegner taught at Clemson as a graduate assistant from 1978-1979. In addition, Wegner taught at Texas A&M from 1980-1986, Howard Payne University from 1987-1990, Southwest Texas State University from 1990-1996, and California State University, Long Beach from 1996-2001.

Wegner served in the Army and was stationed in both the U.S. and Turkey from 1969-1971.

Daniel E. Wegner served the National Park Service by working at Glacier National Park, Montana 1973-1976, Death Valley National Monument, California 1975-1976, Blue Ridge Parkway, North Carolina 1979-1981, and Castillo de San Marcos National Monument, Florida 1987.

As part of the research for his 1978 master's thesis *Recollections of Life in a Southern Textile Mill Village*, Wegner conducted a series of interviews with eight residents of the Newry community of Oconee County, SC on sixteen cassette tapes. Newry was a typical southern mill village with resident mill owners and local labor. The interviews focus upon life in the small rural mill village during the first decades of the twentieth century. The individuals who grew up in the village and recount the everyday life and unique character of the community are: Claude Anderson, Ellis Benson, Helen Brock, Henry Cater, John L. Gaillard, Odessa B. Gaillard, Horace Kirby, and A. Richey Ramseur.

Captain William Ashmead Courtenay was granted a state charter in 1893 to incorporate a firm for the manufacturing, spinning, dyeing, printing, and selling of all cotton and woolen goods which was capitalized at \$300,000. That year, he purchased land in Oconee County and began building the textile mill at a place he called Newry; this was in memory of his father's home in County Down, Ireland. The following year, on June 14, 1894, the Courtenay Manufacturing Company began operations using water power. By 1903, the firm was producing fine sheeting for converting purposes with 19, 440 ring spindles and 635 forty inch looms.

Captain Courtenay died in 1908, leaving his sons, Ashmead and Campbell, as president and general manager of the firm. The Courtenay family continued to manage the business until the 1920's when the firm was sold to Isaqueena Mills of Central, SC with C.W.L. Gassaway as president and treasurer. It produced pajama checks and carded broadcloth with 25,344 spindles in 1927 and used a combination of water and steam generated power from three boilers. In 1930, the stock and property was sold to Cannon Mills in North Carolina which had served as its selling agent prior to the purchase. At that time it employed 365 people and purchased 5,500 bales of cotton.

The Abney Company bought the mill in 1939 and by 1943 employed 450 people producing cotton warp, rayon and cotton, and rayon filling using 6,500 bales. After World War II, Courtenay Manufacturing operated as a unit of Abney producing print cloths until its closure in 1975. The mills houses were sold in 1959, primarily to their tenants.

### **Related Material**

Mss 154 Henry Cater (1923-1996) Collection, 1914-1985  
Mss 162 Courtenay Manufacturing Company Records, 1889-1971  
Mss 163 Alester Furman Company Records, 1918-1977  
Small Accession 94-115: **Newry Mill Information** (donated by Ruth McCullough)  
Small Accession 98-117: **Newry, SC** (donated by the Blue Ridge Arts Council)  
*Adaptive Utilization, Courtenay Mill-Village* by Lawrence Tarentino (Architecture Library NA6410 .T3)  
*Newry: A Place Apart* by Michael Hembree (Oversize F279 .N54H46 2003)

### **Collection Item Indexed Terms**

Textile Industry—Social Aspects—South Carolina—Sources  
Textile Industry—South Carolina—Newry  
Company Towns—South Carolina—History  
Villages—South Carolina—Newry  
Anderson, Claude (1884 - ?)  
Benson, Ellis (1908-1983)  
Brock, Helen (1903-1992)  
Cater, Henry (1923-1996)  
Gaillard, John L. (1920 - )  
Gaillard, Odessa B. (1896-1981)  
Kirby, Horace (1900-1983)  
Ramseur, A. Richey (1908 - )  
Wegner, Daniel E. (1946 - )

### **Administrative Information:**

Acquired from Daniel E. Wegner on March 30, 1994.  
Formerly accession number 94-25.

### **Processing Information:**

This collection was processed by Carl Redd in 2005.

### **Detailed Description**

<b>Box 1</b>	16 Cassettes
<b>Box 2</b>	16 Cassettes
<b>Box 3</b>	16 Cassettes

## CASSETTE ABSTRACTS

### **Claude Anderson Interview**

**Biographical Note:** Claude Anderson was born November 15, 1884 in what is now Stephens County, Georgia. His death date is unknown. He worked at Courtenay Manufacturing Company and farmed the surrounding area.

### **2 Cassettes**

**Speakers**-Claude Anderson, Daniel Wegner, Henry Cater, and a female family member of Anderson's

**Audio Quality**-Good

**Date**-Tuesday, November 28, 1978

### CASSETTE 1

#### Side 1

**00:06**--Anderson is speaking mid-sentence. He explains that work shifts would typically run from 6am to 6:15pm at night. The workers usually worked the extra 15 minutes in order to get off early on Saturdays. He mentions that the best "weavers" could usually do 6-8 looms per day, where as most could only manage 2-4. Regardless of how proficient they were, however, no one made more than \$10.00 per week. Anderson makes passing reference to employees in the early days who worked the "shuttle", and how they had to "suck" on a piece of machinery in order to get it to work properly.

**1:00**--A third speaker (Henry Cater) explains that in Anderson's day, employees who worked on the "shuttle" had to "suck" on a particular part of the machine in order to thread the cloth through it. The modern "shuttles" now automatically prepare this step.

**1:35**--Wegner asks Anderson to try to recall some of the houses in the Newry community. Anderson can remember a time before most of the houses were built. The area was mostly pasture--local milk cows were allowed to roam freely. There was no indoor plumbing in those days--outhouses were numbered for use according to the house number. Before reservoirs were built, the residents used local wells. Anderson states that there was one well per eight families. Anderson describes the location of the old school house, explains the general topography of the community, and recalls specific houses and the families who lived in them.

**6:33**--Wegner asks Anderson to recall the flood of 1904. The rising waters entered the mill, flooding the weave shop and bursting the front doors of the mill off their hinges. Countless bales of cotton were washed away. The cloth room was flooded as well--Anderson states that in his day the cloth room was not located as high above ground as it is today. The looms were buried in mud--it took three months to clean them. Many of the bales of cotton that floated away were retrieved some distance down the river. The retrieved cloth was unwrapped and laid out in fields to dry. Anderson states that local blacks helped clean up after the disaster.

**11:30**--Anderson recalls the early days of hauling cotton with mules.

**12:28**--A fourth speaker (a female family member) encourages Anderson to talk about his childhood. The answer doesn't seem to be the correct time period--there is

some difficulty getting Anderson to talk about the correct topic. Anderson eventually recalls when “old man Crenshaw’s barn burned.”

**15:35**--Anderson recalls his school in Newry, naming various teachers. He brings up church, and Preacher Billy Thompson.

**17:55**--Wegner wants to get a feel for how people used their recreation or leisure time. Anderson states that people played baseball, and took Sunday trips out of town.

**20:00**--Anderson talks about the night watchman. He would strike the bell at 4:30am, 5:30am, 5:45am, and 6:00am. Anderson states that if employees were not in the mill when the bell rang at 6:00am, then they were not allowed to work that day. An evening curfew bell was struck at 9:00pm, and all residents were expected to be off the streets and in their homes by that time.

**21:00**--Anderson discusses the role of the Courtenays as overseers. Ashmead Courtenay worked at the Company Store where seemingly all needs could be met. In fact, employees were discouraged from buying products from any other establishment.

**24:00**--Anderson’s brother was the paymaster

**25:00**--Anderson was one of eight to ten members of a local string band. He played guitar. They would usually play well into the night--and make large sums of money.

**27:00**--Wegner asks about the smallpox epidemic of 1910. Anderson cannot recall many details about the event, but easily remembers the 1914 flu epidemic that hit the town hard. Whole families died.

**28:35**--Audio ends.

## **Side 2**

**1:05**--Anderson’s father worked in the card room and made sixty cents per day. He then names and gives the occupations of some of his brothers and sisters.

**3:45**--Wegner asks Anderson when he was born. Anderson states that he was born on November 15, 1884 in Georgia. The area that he was born in is now Stephens County. Anderson names his siblings: Clarence, Estill, Lizzie, Roy, Bertha, and Mack.

**5:50**--Anderson moved to Newry in 1900. He worked for the mill and did some farming.

**10:15**--He talks about the local market. Five-cent drinks and ice cream were available after school.

**11:45**--Anderson reminisces about the Crawford and Watson families. These families worked at the market. Mr. Watson worked at the meat market. Cows and hogs were butchered for their meat and it was sold for ten cents per pound.

**14:25**--Local blacks are discussed. Fuller Jenkins was a “dray-boy” who delivered goods from the store. Since there were no washing machines in those days, local blacks were responsible for doing the wash and laundry.

**18:43**--Snipe hunting pranks are discussed.

**22:00**--Anderson describes some of the Courtenay family. Ashmead could always be seen smoking a cigar. “Pat” was known to drink heavily, though he eventually became a preacher.

**25:30**--When “old man” Courtenay (William Ashmead) died, mill operation stopped for five minutes while his body was being lowered into the grave. Workers all worked twenty-five minutes longer that day. Anderson also mentions the long-held rumor that

the textile mill was founded on money that had originally been allocated for Charleston earthquake relief. William Ashmead Courtenay was the mayor of Charleston when the great earthquake of 1886 hit.

**28:30**--Wegner asks about local doctors. The doctor back in those days was Dr. Ashmore. He married Lucius Cater who worked at the Company Store. The conversation moves to the genealogies of related families.

**31:40**--Audio ends

## **CASSETTE 2**

### **Side 1**

**00:08**--Mr. Honeycutt (?) or Undercut (?). This individual had a very nice house.

**1:00**--Wegner asks about the local graveyard. The graveyard actually predates Anderson. There were no undertakers in those days. It is now in disrepair. People from all over the community were buried there, regardless of whether they worked at the mill or not.

**1:50**--The conversation turns to the local church; the mill company was responsible for building the church. The first preacher Anderson remembers is Preacher Lydie. The Methodists and Baptist held separate services at the church. Billy Thompson is another preacher that Anderson remembers,

**10:40**--Wegner asks what kinds of foods were eaten in those days? Anderson relates that the food was "not fancy." Corn, beef, and vegetables were available.

**14:00**--Anderson talks about plowing cotton, and the cattle business he was involved in.

**17:15**--Wegner wants to know about hunting. Anderson states that you had to hunt in order to get meat.

**18:05**--The Company Store is revisited. Anderson names people who worked there. Also, if an individual got sick and missed time, he/she had to make it up. There was no help given to families by the mill; there was no insurance in those days.

**20:00**--The female relative states that there was once a park (Cooper or Goober Park?) that the women of the local church developed in 1925. Flowers and park benches were made available. The project was not mill related.

**21:00**--Saturday night entertainment consisted of "fish-fry's." There was a lake above Westminster where they would catch catfish.

**28:20**--Wegner asks about cars in those days. There were not many cars in Newry in the 1920's, but the first car that Anderson saw belonged to "old man" Crenshaw. It was a white steamer. Drivers had to light a pilot light fifteen minutes before travel in order to get the pressure built up. Anderson states that gas cost thirteen cents a gallon in those days.

**30:25**--Audio ends.

### **Side 2**

**1:27**--A man named O'Brien helped rebuild the local dam.

**3:15**--The mill had a train called the “dummy.” Anderson recalls how it would sometimes “get away” from the drivers, and how they would have to leap from it whenever it got out of control.

**4:15**--Audio ends.

### **Ellis Benson Interview**

**Biographical Note:** Ellis Benson was born on September 28, 1908 in Newry, SC. He died in November of 1983.

### **1 Cassette**

**Speakers**--Ellis Benson, Daniel Wegner, Henry Cater

**Audio Quality**--Good

**Date**--December 7, 1978

### **Side 1**

**00:08**--Benson relates brief biographical information--he was born on September 25, 1908 on the Courtenay Farm in Newry. He has attended Canaan Baptist Church in the Fairview District for his entire life. He worked several odd jobs as a youth. He worked for the Ramseur family at the Courtenay Mansion from 1926-1939. He left Newry in 1939, working in Anderson and Greenville. He was drafted into WWII, and spent 28 months in the service. Upon receiving an Honorable Discharge, he returned to the Newry area and worked for Horace Kirby at the mill for 14 years. He then worked at Oconee Memorial Hospital until 1973, where he retired at the age of 65.

**2:50**--Wegner asks Benson about his childhood and farming. Benson helped raise cotton as a youth; he explains the process of planting and tending to cotton such as learning to “hoe.” His relatives worked for the Courtenay’s. His father was a sharecropper. Mules and fertilizer were provided by the Courtenay family--the crop was split 50/50 between Mr. Courtenay and Bensons’ father. Benson also explains about “hoe-cropping.” These workers “hoed” the fields in order to prepare them for planting. “Hoe-croppers” got 1/3 of the crop.

**6:06**--Benson explains that he began working for the Ramseur family in 1926. He lived in a servant’s house behind the Mansion. His duties included keeping up the yard and the garden, looking after livestock, keeping the vehicles clean, and serving as personal driver for the Ramseur family. Benson was responsible for the landscaping at the mansion, and grew peaches and muscadines on the grounds. Benson talks about some of the cars that the Ramseur’s owned: a 7 passenger Nash touring car, a Hubmobile, and a 6 cylinder Buick. The Ramseur’s kept two or three cars at a time.

**11:45**--Wegner wants to know what kinds of vegetables were grown in the garden. Benson states that beans, cabbage, okra, tomatoes, lettuce, sweet potatoes, and Irish potatoes were grown. The crops were shared between the Ramseur and Benson families.

**12:40**--Wegner is interested in the workings of the Courtenay Mansion. Benson remembers the “cork-room” at the Courtenay Mansion where the wine was stored. This recollection is of his youth, the Ramseur’s did not store wine. The Mansion had a huge wood-burning stove. There was a large tank for water and steam heat. Cooking and

drinking water came from a well. In the old days there were no electric lights in the house; gas and carbide lights were utilized.

**19:50**--After William Ashmead Courtenay died, Mr. Campbell Courtenay, who was paralyzed in one leg, took over operations of the mill. He usually traveled by horse and buggy, though in later years he purchased a specially designed car that was ordered from New York State for his handicap. Mr. St John's wife was from the family that owned Woodside Mill in Greenville.

**23:40**--Benson thinks Mr. Campbell Courtenay died in 1933. He is unsure about the particulars of Mr. St John's status.

**24:40**--The conversation moves back to the workings of the Courtenay Mansion. Benson recalls a game room, pool table, pianos, many antiques, old style telephones, and wind-up victrolas. The Mansion was heated by steam, but fireplaces with burning wood and coal were also utilized during the coldest months of the year.

**26:46**--Wegner is interested in what the Ramseur's and Benson's did for recreation or time off. Benson states that the Ramseur family liked to go to Highlands on holidays such as Labor Day and the Fourth of July. They would often lodge at the King's Inn on weekends.

**28:30**--Audio ends.

## Side 2

**1:01**--During free time, which was usually Saturday afternoon, Benson went to church, visited his mother and father, attended country picnics and ball games.

**1:54**--Benson names several blacks that lived in Newry in the old days: Pat Crooks, Arthur Bruce, Curt Williams, Henry Miller, Ed Haygood, and Will Williams. These individuals worked odd jobs around the mill, such as firing the boiler and working on the train.

**6:30**--Benson recalls that as a youth, he worked for Mr. Alexander delivering ice from a building known as the "Café". During the summer, 15-25 pound blocks of ice were covered in sawdust and delivered by wheelbarrow every morning. He would also help Mr. Alexander collect watermelons from the country farmers for ten cents a piece and sell them for forty cents a piece. The community where the black people lived, cut wood and farmed was called the "Branch".

**14:09**--Wegner asks Benson to tell a little about the local black church. Benson has attended Canaan Baptist Church in the Fairview District his entire life. An early preacher named J.J. Stabbs (Stubbs?) started a school where blacks could get a high school education. Benson recalls other ministers at the church: A.B. Moore, J.R. Brown, and Otis Pettigrew. The church offered Sunday morning and evening services, as well as prayer meetings. Church was an all day affair. "Retracted" (?) meetings usually lasted a week, where visiting preachers and choirs from nearby churches would attend. Baptisms were held in a pond where a specially made baptismal font was built.

**19:45**--Wegner wants to know where local blacks are buried. Benson states that many are buried at the cemetery next to the church. Members or non-members could be buried there; the church would sell anyone a plot. Caskets could be bought at the Company Store, costs ranged from \$5.00 to \$25.00 depending on size. There were no



undertakers in the old days; people were usually buried quickly. During the Flu epidemic of 1918, local blacks helped dig graves.

**22:50**--Benson recalls the local black schoolhouse. A black lady, Miss Lilly Pool was the teacher. School started with devotion. A scripture was read, followed by a prayer and hymn. Usually one would study a lesson, and then recite what was learned for a grade. Arithmetic was first, followed by reading. There was a 30 minute recess/lunch period. Benson would often carry biscuits with jelly or ham to lunch. The older students used a blackboard, but Benson recalls using a "rough tablet" which cost five cents. The school system was called "lay by time." The school year was from July 20 until September after which school was dismissed so the children could pick cotton. School started sometime before Christmas if the weather was good, and usually ran until mid March. Benson states that his schooling lasted from 1915 to 1922.

**31:35**--Audio ends.

### **Helen Brock Interview**

**Biographical Note:** Born on February 19, 1903 in Newry, SC. She died on August 22, 1992. She did not grow up in Newry, though she has many recollections of the area through visits to her grandmother (Mrs. Callas?), who ran the Newry boarding house.

### **1 Cassette**

**Speakers**--Mrs. Helen Brock, Daniel Wegner, Henry Cater

**Audio Quality**--Good

**Date**--December 12, 1978

### **Side 1**

**00:06**--The audio begins mid sentence. Mrs. Brock was just a baby when her father left the Newry Company Store in order to start a business in Seneca, though it did not prove to be a successful venture.

**1:54**--Her grandmother ran the boarding house. Mrs. Brock recalls traveling doctors and dentists who were frequent guests. She relates other details about the boarding house.

**3:00**--She remembers that her uncle was a paymaster and a cotton buyer for the mill.

**3:50**--Mrs. Brock can recall hearing a terrible sound, and seeing individuals jumping off the out of control train. She is likely referring to the "dummy", a local train the mill used that seemed to jump the tracks on occasion.

**4:55**--Her grandfathers' corn mill (bought in 1845) was flooded due to construction on the Newry Dam. He sued and won a settlement.

**7:50**--Wegner asks about the General Store. Mr. Kelly, who worked there, would always give the local girls chocolate. Miss Cater, who was a milliner, made hats. Mrs. Brock's parents married in a room above the store.

**9:25**--Mrs. Brock recalls how people got fresh fruits, vegetables, and meat. Individuals with wagons full of produce would sell to the people of Newry. Many of these individuals were Germans from Walhalla.

**10:20**--The Courtenay's are mentioned. She recalls their cars, and the beautiful mansion.

**13:30**--The Crenshaw's had a livery stable where one could hire a horse and buggy in the days before cars.

**15:20**--Wegner would like to know more about the boarding house, and its occupants. Mrs. Brock cannot recall much, since she was a small child during this time period and not local, but remembers a dentist named Dr. Thompson who spent much time there.

**19:00**--Wegner asks about the Meat Market. There one could find meat freshly butchered from hogs and cattle. Meat could be bought off wagons just as with the produce.

**25:00**--Mrs. Brock gives a short description of the interior of the Boarding House. There was a large central dining room, with long tables. The house was decorated with ferns, cactus, and pictures.

**30:50**--Audio ends.

## **Side 2**

**00:51**--Daniel Wegner reads from a newspaper account detailing the wedding of Mrs. Brock's parents. The article is entitled "A Beautiful Wedding."

**6:30**--Wegner would like to know "outsiders" opinions of Newry. Mrs. Brock can answer this since she grew up outside the Newry Community. Mrs. Brock states that the "outsiders view" of Newry was always generally positive. Newry was known as a good place for trading produce. She mentions a few derogatory names for mill people: "lint-heads" and "factory-crackers."

**10:00**--Community spirit in Newry always seemed to be high.

**11:00**--Mrs. Brock mentions Carlyle Courtenay. He was the head of a children's home in Columbia. He always seemed more down to earth and approachable than the other Courtenay boys.

**13:45**--Audio ends.

## **Henry Cater Interview**

**Biographical Note:** Henry Cater was born on March 11, 1923 in Newry, SC. He died on August 23, 1996. After serving with the U.S. Army Medical Corps during World War II, Mr. Cater worked for Courtenay Manufacturing Company from 1952 to 1964. He then served as Oconee County Treasurer until 1987. In addition, Cater worked throughout the 1980's to have the history of the Newry community preserved. He assisted Daniel E. Wegner with the interviews of local individuals in the Newry community. He was the son of Robert J. and Addie Cox Cater. He had three siblings: Alice, Florence, and Margaret. Cater married Genora Waters. They had three children: Judy, James, and Patricia. Henry Cater was a member of Lydia Baptist Church. He is buried in Mountainview Cemetery in Seneca.

## **3 Cassettes**

**Speakers**-Henry Cater, Daniel Wegner

**Audio Quality**-Good

**Date**-May 11, September 28, October 26, 1978

## **CASSETTE 1**

### **Side 1** (May 11, 1978)

**00:44**--Cater states that the center of attraction in the Newry community was the Company Store. Virtually any item from sugar, lard, coffee, beans, clothes, medicine, etc. could be found there. Even wood and coal could be purchased at the store. In the old days pay tickets or coupons were utilized for trade at the store. In the 1930's the mill started using "loonies." These were metal coins that could be used in place of "hard money" (real currency) for exclusive use at the Company Store. There were occasional break-ins at the store; Cater states that it was usually local boys in search of cigarettes and candy. One incident, however, was perpetrated by an outside group. The group took the moneybags, thinking they were full of "real" money. They had in fact stolen several bags of "loonies" which were worthless to them. The stolen "loonies" were soon found in a Walhalla farmer's field where they had been tossed.

**7:00**--Mr. Jim Williams was the local constable. He was formerly the chief of police in Seneca. His brother Rupert would help him on the weekends. Cater states that moonshine and other alcohol consumption was a problem in the community. The jail in Newry was located between the gin and warehouse. It was called the "calaboose."

**9:00**--Everyone had cattle and hogs that were used for meat. Cater explains how to properly cure ham.

**11:39**--Housing in the community is discussed. There were usually two families per house. Cater's family lived in one 6 room house on account of its large number of members. The toilets were outside in those days. Rent is discussed. Cater explains that at age 16 he started work at the mill by driving the dray-truck from the Company Store delivering goods. He made \$.25 per hour. This was of course an "outside" job. Cater knew that to make a higher wage he must find work "inside" the mill. Wages were up to \$.32 per hour in the late 1930's for work inside. Calculating how long it took the watchman to make his rounds, Cater would sneak into the mill and learn what he could about the machines before usually being discovered and thrown out. He finally did get a job inside the mill in the "slash-room" at age 17. After returning from World War II, Cater worked in the weave shop at the mill, then left and got into the funeral business and eventually involved himself in politics.

**16:30**--Cater brings up the rumor about William Ashmead Courtenay using funds allocated for earthquake relief in Charleston in order to start the mill community. Even the location of the mill is key to the story, as it was claimed that the community was essentially "hidden" by its location in the valley. Cater can prove these allegations are false, and produces copies of documents for Wegner that state that William Ashmead Courtenay sold stocks in 1893 in order to build the community.

**18:09**--Cater begins to show Wegner a stack of photographs. He makes comment as he displays them. Among these are the local string band, a steam engine car, the corn mill, the Company Store (talks about child labor as well), farm equipment, church events, members of the Old Fellows Club, surveying at the river, baptisms, baseball teams, the Courtenay Mansion, the first schoolhouse, the baseball park (now sixty feet underwater), trips to Sandy Springs, the railroad, etc.

**31:40**--Audio ends.

**Side 2** (September 28, 1978)

**00:07**--Cater recalls pranks, such as scaring the community with talk of the “callywompus” beast. In addition to spreading rumors about the beast, he and his friends would make fake footprints that genuinely terrified people. A prank that predates Cater involves hiding in the woods and using a device that consisted of a metal can with thin leather wound over it tight like a drum. A leather strap dipped in beeswax was then pulled through a hole in the can--making an unearthly growl that was immensely frightening to the unsuspecting.

**3:40**--Wegner asks Cater if he was aware of any blacks living in the community. Cater affirms that there were, and states that they lived in an area known as the “Branch.” Cater adds that unfortunate as it is, the area was also called “niggertown.” Cater describes some of the jobs of the blacks: firing the boilers, working in the warehouses, doing the wash and laundry, and street work (cleaning the streets). The only blacks that were allowed to work inside the mill were ones who held janitorial jobs which involved cleaning the restrooms, etc. Blacks were never seen after dark in the community; it was never spoke of or enforced as any type of law--it was simply understood. Cater recalls that in 1926 or 1927, a black construction worker was killed in Newry when he fell from the smokestack. His body was kept in the post office overnight--from then on the post office a night was seen as a “spooky” place. Cater can recall the names of some local blacks: the Sloan family, Ellis Benson (the Ramseur’s chauffeur), and Cora Henderson (got her high school diploma when she was in her 60’s).

**16:05**--Wegner is interested at how Christmas was celebrated. Cater can recall the late 1920’s when members of the church would go out in search of the largest cedar tree they could find, and how the mill company would provide painted lights and cotton rope to wrap around it. The mill also provided a present for each child that included fruit, candy, nuts, and a toy. The mill and local teachers took the lead in preparing Christmas festivities.

**21:30**--The Depression. Cater recalls hard times; people were loosing their jobs at an alarming rate. Houses became crowded as out of work family members trickled in from out of town. He remembers a relief program that was set up: families who faced burdens because of new people coming in were given sacks of flour. The hours at the mill were cut or “curtailed.” The mill operated three days a week, four hours per day.

**25:10**--Cater makes mention of the school, the meat market, and the icehouse. He can remember “fights” taking place near the meat market and icehouse. His elementary school in Newry was located in the old meat market. He went to high school in Seneca. Cater talks about an old “A” model school bus. A tradition among students and baseball players that would give the bus driver fits is related. By crowding all occupants into the very back of the bus as a particularly steep climb in Newry was approached, they were usually successful in raising the front of the bus straight up into the air.

**30:00**--Brief mention is made of “bootlegging” and running moonshine whiskey.

**31:03**--Audio ends.

**CASSETTE 2**

**Side 1** (September 28, 1978)

**00:14**--Fighting in the community is discussed. Cater recalls that there were occasionally fights in the mill--these especially involved job related issues. Once an individual started working on a particular mill job, they usually had that job until they died. Upon the death of any particular individual, immediate talk of who will get the vacated job began. This often led to friction, as certain jobs stayed within families. For example, if the father worked in the weave room, chances are his children would also be groomed for that particular work. Everyone possessed knives; many residents carried terrible scars from previous conflicts. Cater can remember a particularly terrible altercation between an overseer and an employee. The reasons were unknown, but the two met in the "tower" to fight. The incident was graphic and brutal; the overseer was left to literally hold in his own intestines where he had been slashed. A local doctor successfully sewed him up right there on the scene--the injured man never spent any time in the hospital. Fights mostly involved knives; shootings were almost unheard of. Cater can recall only one shooting incident between two men quarrelling over a girl. The Company Store yard was a popular hangout; 25-30 men would routinely gather to drink and play checkers. Tempers would often flare. On this occasion a fight broke out where gunplay was involved. One man was shot; it was the talk of the town and dominated local gossip for some time. The shooter spent a night in jail; the incident was not pursued any further. The two gentlemen worked it out between themselves and both lived to be old men.

**7:00**--Housing and living conditions in Newry--heating with coal, cooking with wood, and electricity off a single drop-cord are covered. The evolution of mill community bathroom facilities are traced from outhouses to indoor plumbing.

**10:15**--Whiskey and bootlegging--Cater describes how his father made "locust beer" and kept it in a wooden keg. This product was made from the nectar of the locust tree. Sugar was added, and it was left to ferment for a short time. Peach brandy was another popular home brew. Bootleggers often were mountain people who produced alcohol in their own personal stills.

**14:00**--Camping expeditions are discussed by Cater.

**16:50**--"Serenading" newly married couples. Cater explains that --as a joke-- newlyweds would often be inundated with "watchers." These friends would strive to stay with the new couple all night, rotating in two or three hour shifts, depriving the couple of their "wedding night." Afterwards, they would continue to periodically wreak havoc on subsequent nights by banging on tin cans and metal buckets while stationed outside the newlyweds' window.

**19:00**--Mr. Cater reflects on days gone by when Newry was a Company town. Doors were never locked. People had more respect and looked after their neighbors. A walk down the street in the old days found friends and family on their front porches; now houses are closed up while families watch television. Although people are "materially" better off, Cater suspects something was lost along the way.

**21:47**--Audio ends.

## **Side 2**

--Blank--

**CASSETTE 3**--Slide presentation about Newry given by Henry Cater to Beta Sigma Phi Chapter in Seneca, SC on October 26, 1978. \*This is a very good presentation; much of the material mirrors Caters' earlier interviews, however, this material has a much more focused narrative since it is in presentation form.

**Side 1**

**00:07**--Opening remarks by Wegner

**00:50**--Opening remarks by Henry Cater.

**2:50**--Cater gives his family's background and makes comment on the general family atmosphere of Newry in the old days.

**3:40**--the sewer system of Newry.

**4:30**--Cater gives a short historical background of the Newry Community--the earthquake story (Cater produces certificates that prove the rumors were false)--the Courtenay Mansion, Innisfallen--aspects of mill life such as how one got a job at the plant--breast feeding in the days before bottles.

**9:14**---The flood of 1903.

**10:30**--The first schoolhouse.

**11:30**--Christmas in Newry.

**12:21**--The mill tower, and structural changes in Newry over the years.

**12:40**--Black people in Newry, and "the dummy."

**13:16**--Story of the mill bell and in what increments it was struck.

**15:00**--How the mill was powered.

**16:58**--Examples of payments, how much a typical family made, and child labor.

**18:35**--The Company Store, coupons and "loonies."

**20:40**--The post office and glass bulb gasoline tanks.

**21:07**--The corn mill and its gasoline engine.

**21:23**--The cotton gin.

**21:30**--The train and Courtenay Junction.

**21:45**--The Newry steam engine--the "dummy"-- and how it would go out of control.

**23:20**--Greasing the railroad track in order to hitch a ride on "the dummy."

**23:58**--The barber shop.

**24:40**--A black man named Sam Green worked at the pressing club building and pressed suits.

**25:00**--The farm shop building that housed farm equipment.

**25:35**--"Coolers" are kept in windows. These kept things cool in the days before refrigeration.

**26:56**--School related slides.

**27:17**--At Unity Church there were baptisms at the Courtenay Pond.

**28:22**--Audio ends.

**Side 2**

**1:25**--Taking pictures on the River Road.

**2:14**--Sunday school class.

**2:20**--Homecoming and family reunions.

**2:39**--The Newry band.

**2:50**--Trips to Sandy Springs and fixing flat tires along the way.  
**4:17**--Mill baseball team. Cater's brother was a talented pitcher.  
**5:15**--Surveying the river  
**6:05**--Explanation of plant operation. Cater traces a piece of cloth through the mill, naming the various machines, until the cloth is a finished product.  
**8:23**--The mill tower was a popular hangout.  
**9:00**--Newry as it looks today [1978].  
**9:50**--End of slide presentation.  
**10:04**--Newry today, and plans of the historical society.  
**13:42**--Cater takes questions from the audience regarding housing issues.  
**21:55**--The jail or "calaboose."  
**22:35**--making whiskey.  
**22:55**--The population of Newry over the years. There were perhaps 700 at its peak, now around 200 [1978].  
**23:40**--The changing ownership of the mill over the years.  
**25:50**--The Courtenay Mansion, Innisfallen.  
**29:40**--Company money and "loonies."  
**31:40**--Audio ends.

### **Odessa B. Gaillard Interview**

**Biographical Note:** Odessa B. Gaillard was born on March 24, 1896 in Newry, SC. She died in January, 1981. She was the daughter of Balus S. and Mary Sosebee Boggs. Mrs. Gaillard had three siblings: William, Earl, and Ressie. She was the Assistant Postmaster in Newry with 50 years of service. She was a member of St. Mark United Methodist Church, Order of the Eastern Star, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and the American Legion Auxiliary. She married John L. Gaillard, Sr. They had four children: John Jr., Lamar, Ellen, and Mildred.

### **4 Cassettes**

**Speakers**-Odessa B. Gaillard, Daniel Wegner, Henry Cater, Ellen Gaillard

**Audio Quality**-Good

**Date**-October 17 and November 2, 1978

**CASSETTE 1**--Comments made by Mrs. Odessa B. Gaillard and Henry Cater while viewing a film entitled *Newry in the Fall of 1938*.

**Side 1** (October 17, 1978)

**00:07**--Various people identified on film.  
**5:39**--Miss Thompson and the location of the school.  
**6:55**--The Superintendent of the school (Mr. Croyle?).  
**8:50**--Cater identifies a man who killed himself between the time the movie was taken and when it was first shown.  
**9:35**--Individuals carrying lunch pails.  
**10:40**--A man carrying a rifle.  
**11:30**--Individuals involved in mill management.  
**12:20**--Courtenay Mansion and "lover's lane" by the old bridge.

- 14:28**--The golf course.
- 15:35**--The barber, Clyde Moore.
- 16:26**--Individuals talking on their porch.
- 16:35**--Wash drying.
- 17:50**--Keeping pigeons as pets.
- 20:00**--The post office, and how children would clean the post office for one cent.
- 26:00**--The general store and the "hall" above the store where banquets, church services, and weddings were held.
- 26:40**--A wedding in the "hall" is described by Mrs. Gaillard.
- 39:40**--Audio ends.

## **Side 2**

- 00:40**--Mrs. Gaillard continues the story regarding the wedding.
- 3:50**--Mr. Campbell Courtenay and his family's genealogy are referenced.
- 15:20**--The Company Store was a popular gathering place.
- 18:20**--Buying soda from the "dope wagon."
- 19:30**--The boarding house next to the Methodist Church--individuals who lived there.
- 21:00**--Some of the villagers refused to cooperate with the film makers because they feared they may have been foreign spies.
- 27:44**--The local World War II marker--Mrs. Gaillard's family donated funds towards its construction.
- 29:43**--Audio ends.

## **CASSETTE 2**

### **Side 1** (October 17, 1978)

- 00:07**--Mrs. Gaillard can remember the first post office being located in the Company Store. It consisted of a small window inside the Company Store in which mail was dropped. This mail system lasted only a short while--the post office building was soon built.
- 1:59**--Mr. Campbell Courtenay and his buggy--Mrs. Gaillard recalls the excitement of waiting for the Courtenay family pass by in their carriage.
- 4:45**--Mrs. Gaillard states that she was born on March 24, 1896 in Newry. Her father ran the post office and the boarding house.
- 6:20**--Mrs. Gaillard regarded the Courtenay's as very friendly.
- 6:50**--The doctor's house and the doctor are described. Mrs. Gaillard remembers that Dr. Ashmore, who was single at the time, lived in a 3 room house near the mill. The small house contained a bedroom, a kitchen, and an office. Dr. Ashmore later married Miss Lucius Cater.
- 9:00**--Mr. Bob Boyd's corn mill and relatives are discussed.
- 11:20**--There were apparently many cow barns in the area. Most people owned hogs and cattle. In Mrs. Gaillard's day individuals would buy feed from the Company Store--in return the Mill Company would provide the land for them to graze on.



**12:30**--Mrs. Gaillard describes how her father obtained the land that he built their families house on.

**15:10**--Mrs. Gaillard was sworn in as assistant postmaster at age 12.

**22:00**--Audio ends.

**Side 2** (November 2, 1978) \*Henry Cater is showing a slide presentation of local scenes. Mrs. Gaillard and her daughter Ellen add commentary.

**00:40**--A picture of William Ashmeade Courtenay as Mayor of Charleston.

**3:50**--Scenes of the 1903 flood.

**7:20**--The original schoolhouse. Mrs. Gaillard recalls that school was originally held in the "hall" above the Company Store. The original schoolhouse was built shortly afterwards.

**10:05**--The Newry mill bell is shown. Cater states that the one pictured is not the original. Mrs. Gaillard adds that the original bell came from the Courtenay's homeland in Ireland.

**14:03**--Oscar Hawkins and Edgar Owens are depicted at the barber shop. The group attempts to recall where the original barber shop was located.

**16:50**--The pressing club and Sam Green.

**18:26**--The livery stable fire is recalled. The Crenshaw's owned a livery stable from which could be rented horse and carriage. Mrs. Gaillard recalls the shock and grief of the community when scores of horses were killed.

**22:00**--Mrs. Gaillard recalls a couple of houses in the community that have been "moved" from their original location.

**25:00**--A picture of a "window box" (early form of refrigeration) sparks conversation.

**26:25**--A school picture is shown. The group attempts to identify individuals depicted.

**31:40**--Audio ends.

**CASSETTE 3** \*Slide presentation continues

**Side 1** (November 2, 1978)

**00:07**--Baptisms at Courtenay pond.

**1:40**--Secret fraternal orders--The Odd Fellows and The Red Men. These were local groups not unlike the Freemasons.

**2:35**--Several pictures are shown; the group attempts to identify several of them.

**6:25**--The Newry Band is shown. Mrs. Gaillard identifies her husband, who played the drums. She recognizes nearly all of the members. She believes the picture may have been made circa 1910-1911, because she married her husband in 1912.

**9:50**--A picture depicting men changing a tire during a trip to Sandy Springs is shown.

**12:17**--A slide depicting men surveying the river.

**14:25**--Slide presentation ends.

**15:20**--Mrs. Gaillard states that her father was the postmaster in Newry. Her mother was originally from Georgia. Since there weren't many cotton mills locally in the late 1890's, many individuals from Georgia and North Carolina moved to the Newry area in order to work at the mill.

**19:50**--Holidays in Newry. At Christmas they had a Santa that would visit. She describes the "hall" and how it was decorated. There were usually three trees, with the largest one in the middle. The trees were decorated with candles. The local teachers and Sunday school teachers were in charge of organizing holiday events. At Easter they had Easter egg hunts. The entire community celebrated Fourth of July--the mill shut down on that day. Mrs. Gaillard can't recall Thanksgiving celebrations

**23:25**--On Fourth of July celebrations, there would be picnics, fireworks, ballgames, and music.

**24:40**--The mill built a wooden "pavilion", where dances were held on Saturday evenings.

**27:03**--On Sunday afternoons, there were usually gatherings in people's homes where sacred music was played. Children had birthday parties.

**28:58**--People did a lot of reading in Mrs. Gaillard's day. Books had to be ordered until the library was established at the school.

**30:05**--The mill bell--Mrs. Gaillard state that the original bell came from Ireland. There was a fire in the mill, and the original bell was destroyed.

**30:50**--Audio ends.

## **Side 2**

**00:42**--The curfew bell rang at 9pm. Everyone was expected to be off the streets at that time. Workers would work twelve hours a day from 6am to 6pm with a 1 hour lunch.

**2:30**--The policeman or "constable" would watch after things at night in the community. The "calaboose" was for "the drunks."

**7:25**--Most people had gardens and grew their own vegetables.

**7:50**--Mrs. Gaillard recalls that "mountain men" from Whitewater would visit around October carrying goods such as kraut, canned vegetables, cabbage, pickled beans, chestnuts, apples, and whiskey. They would stay until all of their stocks sold out.

**14:00**--There were at least five local fraternal orders: Freemasons, Eastern Star, Odd Fellows, Rebecca Lodge, and Red Men. The Eastern Star and Rebecca Lodge were for women.

**20:08**--The Courtenay's coach--it had curtains and a convertible top. It had two rows of seats that faced each other. The Courtenay's always had beautiful horses.

**25:19**--Mrs. Gaillard recalls an Irishman who sold linens to the community. He would come in the spring and fall of the year. He would sell beautiful linens of the highest quality; goods that were unavailable in Newry. Lace curtains, scarves, and Irish table cloths were among the products he sold. Mrs. Gaillard can remember him well because he would usually stay at her parent's boarding house. He traveled by foot.

**31:40**--Audio ends.

#### **CASSETTE 4**

##### **Side 1** (November 2, 1978)

**00:07**--Laundry--the post office had a basket where people could drop their clothes off on Tuesday's and receive them back on Thursdays.

**3:45**--Mrs. Gaillard recalls the Courtenay brothers. She was often instructed by her father to take Campbell Courtenay's laundry to the post office for him because he was partially paralyzed. Whenever she brought his clean laundry back to him, he would always make her hold out her hand where in it he would place a dime or a quarter. She always remembered Campbell as a good, thoughtful man. The oldest of the brother's was Carlyle Courtenay. He founded a children's home in Columbia, SC. St. John married a woman from Greenville.

**10:46**--School in Mrs. Gaillard's day is recalled. She went to school in a two room schoolhouse. It had an upstairs and a downstairs. The children used slates and blackboards to write on. There were two pot-bellied stoves--one on each level--for heat. There was a library at the school.

**16:30**--Ellen Gaillard adds that when she was in school, patriotism and love for ones flag was encouraged. On "flag days" such as Armistice Day, the children would march to piano music and sing songs dedicated to patriotism.

**17:45**--The teachers always reminded the students to keep out of trouble and to "stay on your side of the tracks" after school.

**18:48**--Mrs. Gaillard reflects on school once again. School started at 8:30am with a one hour period for lunch/recess from 12-1pm. Classes resumed at 1pm and lasted until 4pm. Games at recess included "drop the handkerchief," "hopscotch," baseball, and "hide and seek." Henry Cater explains how the children made their own balls out of leftover materials from the mill.

**25:50**--Mrs. Gaillard recalls the flu epidemic that occurred around 1918. It was truly a "terrible" time for the community. The mill had to be closed down because so many fell ill. There was a "soup kitchen" set up to help cook meals. The Company Store provided food and ingredients for the meals.

**30:30**--Audio ends.

##### **Side 2**

**1:22**--Mrs. Gaillard continues discussing the 1918 flu epidemic. The conversation turns to home remedies. She describes a treatment for the flu which involves a pneumonia salve and woolen compresses. The compress was placed on the chest area. Other everyday remedies included pennyroyal, dry mustard plant, catnip tea (for babies with hives), and ginseng. The group also discusses "talking out the fire", "stopping blood flow", and curing thrash with the 7th son. This particular remedy was achieved by having the 7th son of any family blow into the affected child's mouth. Asafetida was a popular herb. It was often worn around the neck to help ward off contagious disease.

**25:07**--The conversation turns toward locust beer and how to make it. Locust trees were local in Newry in those days. Many were on the River Road.

**31:25**--Brief mention is made of muscadine wine and jelly.

**31:37**--Audio ends.

### **John L. Gaillard Interview**

**Biographical Note:** John L. Gaillard was born on February 10, 1920 in Newry, SC. He was the son of John L. Sr. and Odessa Boggs Gaillard. He had four siblings: Earnest, Lamar, Ellen, and Mildred. Mr. Gaillard was the Personnel Supervisor at Courtenay Mill.

### **3 Cassettes**

**Speakers**-John Gaillard, Daniel Wegner

**Audio Quality**-Good

**Date**-November 21, 27 and December 1, 1978

### **CASSETTE 1**

**Side 1** (November 21 and 27, 1978)

**00:07**--Mr. Gaillard was born in 1920. As he reflects on his childhood, he states that people in the community didn't have much--but didn't know they were wanting in any way. Life was simple and enjoyable.

**1:30**--Wegner is interested in how the community celebrated various holidays. The common theme in all holidays was the efforts of the grammar and Sunday schools in coordinating events. During Valentine's Day, children at school would make their own cards and pass them around to their friends. It was, however, customary to be secretive about giving a Valentine's card to ones "sweet-heart." They were often slipped under doors when no one was looking.

**3:05**--Mr. Gaillard states that a popular recreation at school was playing with sand-tables. It was generally a 4 x 6 foot box in which children could build castles, tunnels, and houses.

**4:55**--Halloween was a school sponsored holiday. The children would have parties at school; a "Santa Claus" inspired mythical character named "Tall Betsy" (a witch) was said to be seen in town around Halloween. The children would each be put in charge of decorating a window, and usually used paper cut-outs and carved jack-o-lanterns. There wasn't much trick-or-treating in Mr. Gaillard's day, but children were allowed to put on sheets and run around the neighborhood.

**9:00**--Mr. Gaillard reflects on community life and how the mill company took on a kind of parental role--life revolved around the mill. Whether it is banking and money issues, clothing, shelter or medical, the mill was involved. Gaillard explains that most of the folks in the area were by in large farm workers in the years before the mill was built. Life was hard. There was no running water, electricity, or indoor plumbing. Cloths had to be handmade. The mill provided a guaranteed job with steady employment, shelter, running water, indoor plumbing, electricity, and a central location for goods in the Company Store. Life in the mill village was certainly better than farm life.

**12:30**--Wegner steers the interview back towards holiday celebrations. Thanksgiving was not really celebrated. By this Mr. Gaillard means that the mill company didn't sponsor activities for this holiday. The schools did have Thanksgiving plays and costume parties, but the mill never closes on account that the holiday always takes place on a Thursday. Families celebrated at home. Fourth of July celebrations in Newry were modest compared to what went on in Pelzer. Boxing matches, ballgames, and a general carnival atmosphere could be found there. Newry folk often opted for more modest and quiet time picnicking and fishing in the mountains. Local churches took the lead in Easter celebrations. People always wore their best clothes on Easter Sunday. Though Gaillard now finds it odd, people in Newry didn't associate fireworks with the Fourth of July. The tradition in Newry was to shoot fireworks at Christmas. The Company Store was always the focal point for gathering and watching Christmas fireworks.

**20:50**--Leisure time games and activities--children played "peg" (Gaillard explains the rules to this game), played with hoops, push wheels, and rolled automobile tires. In addition, kids made "Tom Walkers" (stilts), whereas smaller children used paint cans for walking and balancing games. Children also played "Cowboys and Indians" as well as "hide and go seek." Baseball was a popular game; Gaillard explains the steps in making homemade balls. Baseball games were often played in the cow pasture.

**29:35**--Audio ends.

## **Side 2**

**1:17**--Leisure time games and activities continued--for baseball pick-up games, Gaillard states that teams were made up of one side of town vs. the other. For instance, the south-side of Newry called the north-side the "backside," and vice-versa. So in essence it was the "backside" vs. the "backside."

**3:40**--There was a small golf course in Newry. This course was only for company officials and their guests. Normal villagers couldn't play for any other reason than they couldn't afford golf clubs. Individuals who did play dressed in the classic style by donning knickers and wearing argyle socks. Local children were allowed to caddy.

**6:05**--Movies and silent films were popular entertainment on Friday and Saturday nights. Movies were held in the "hall." Billboards and advertisements would be posted to alert the community of what films were being featured. Gaillard can remember classic *Chaplin* and *Rin-Tin-Tin* films. Admission was 10 cents.

**8:30**--Gaillard explains a process through which children made their own home movies by cutting out comic strips, pasting them on scrolls, and rigging a homemade projector out of mirrors and floodlights.

**15:00**--Gaillard explains how to build a wagon or "soapbox derby" style racer.

**17:40**--Children would play in the nearby forests, imitating *Tarzan*, and burying treasure.

**18:38**--Football at recess was popular. Someone usually had a real football, but occasionally if one was not available the children would make one out of a 5 lb sugar sack filled with cotton.

**20:10**--The local pond was a popular destination for playing pirates, swimming, and fishing.

**22:33**--School children also picked cotton and cleaned the golf course of rocks.

**23:40**--When walking home after school, children were instructed never to cross the road.

**25:25**--Other popular activities were playing with marbles and spinning tops. Children played with ceramic pee wee marbles. There was also marble candy, in which an individual would occasionally find the most prized possession of all: a glass marble.

**29:43**--A popular game for children as well as adults was horseshoe pitching.

**30:35**--Audio ends.

## **CASSETTE 2**

### **Side 1** (November 27, 1978)

**00:07**--Mr. Gaillard briefly mentions grammar school, and the fact that in his day there was little educational instruction at home on account that the children were getting a better education than their parents.

**1:15**--Reflections on mill life. Children did not have many material things but had a good life nonetheless.

**9:50**--Church services among the different denominations are discussed. Before the church was built, denominations met in the "hall."

**15:00**--Gaillard gives thoughts on the history and evolution of textiles in the South.

**17:50**--The Newry Mill had a "full operation." The entire process from the beginning to final product could be produced within the mill. Mr. Gaillard explains in great detail the process by which cotton is made into textile products. He follows the cotton through the mill, as it passes from one machine to another, finally arriving at the finished product.

**29:23**--Audio ends

### **Side 2**

**1:20**--Gaillard continues discussing the steps in production: drawing and roving fly frames, different types of thread, spinning frames, spooler room, slashing operation, steaming and drying process, looms, and the weave room.

**9:50**--The backgrounds of local Southern rural textile workers is discussed; many were Scotch-Irish or German.

**15:20**--The "calaboose" and how individuals found themselves in it. If one was called into the main office after a weekend of trouble, he/she had to sit in what was called the "electric chair," and be lectured by company officials. People occasionally were fired, though Gaillard states that they were usually hired back a short time later.

**21:00**--Fights (fist and knife) are discussed. Shootings were rare.

**22:40**--Unions were a true cause of division in mill villages. Unions never got properly organized in Newry; organizers tried to unionize the area during the heart of the Depression. People were thankful that they had the mill during those rough times. The mill could manage to open just a couple of days a week, and for that the people were grateful. The Newry community never became divided over such issues.

**28:20**--Audio ends.

### **CASSETTE 3**

#### **Side 1** (December 1, 1978)

**00:07**--Mr. Gaillard estimates that there was an average of four children per family in Newry. Families were very loyal and protective of their own. There weren't any broken families. Children would fight, but there were generally not any town bullies because of how close relationships were. A bully would have to fight several individuals before he got to his target. Management expected families to get along, and the last thing people wanted was to wind up in the mill office.

**9:18**--The Company Store's operation is discussed. Tuesday's and Thursday's were delivery days. The dray wagons mule named "Lightening" is recalled.

**24:56**--Wegner is interested in the Newry political scene. People looked to community leaders for advice. Mill management would give subtle hints as to who they were backing. Whoever mill management backed usually won. Votes could be "bought" with everything from money, whiskey, even fish-fry or cook-out sponsorship. Women played a minor role in politics.

**30:00**--Audio ends.

#### **Side 2**

**1:10**--Wegner is interested in the roads and how they were maintained. Mr. Gaillard remembers that in the days before paved roads, Clydesdale horses with drag pans were utilized for the actual building of roads. The road into Newry was dirt in those days. To combat against muddy travel, cinders or "clinkers" from the excess coal at the mill was spread over the roads.

**6:50**--Wegner asks follow up questions regarding politics. There were no elected officials in Newry, as mill management exercised total control. No city government existed; even the school trustees were selected by management. Voting was held in the "hall" above the Company Store. Women were not considered politically savvy in those days, so they voted alongside their husbands in the same voting booth. It was well into the 1930's before politics outside the county were even paid attention to. People usually voted based on hints from mill management. Gaillard states that "...people were a little like sheep in those days." Nevertheless, no "strong-arm" tactics were ever employed.

**13:45**--Mr. Gaillard reflects on life in Newry as it once was. Newry was the typical American story--hard working individuals who were community minded.

**15:30**--Gaillard struggles to find anything deeply troubling or negative about Newry life.

**16:49**--Audio ends.

#### **Horace Kirby Interview**

**Biographical Note:** Horace Kirby was born on January 21, 1900 in Converse, SC. He died in December, 1983 in Spartanburg, SC. He and his wife Pauline had three children: Blair Jr., Albert, and Mary. Mr. Kirby was Newry's Master Mechanic.

#### **1 Cassette**

**Speakers**-Horace Kirby. Daniel Wegner, Henry Cater

**Audio Quality-Good**

**Date-May 11, 1978**

### **Side 1**

**00:07**--Mr. Kirby came to Newry from Spartanburg in 1911. His father was a master mechanic; later he would take his father's place in that same position. In Mr. Kirby's opinion, Newry was one of the most modern mill villages in South Carolina at the time. There was piped sewage and the most modern advancements in street light used. When the mill was first built, water power was utilized. Water was combined with steam before 1911, with outside electric power coming in the 1930's and 1940's.

**7:00**--Flooding problems--Mr. Kirby recalls that around 1902 [actually 1903], a flood left 6-7 feet of water in the basement. In 1913 there was a large flood that left the community scrambling to save cloth in any way they could.

**9:00**--Mr. Kirby discusses working in various departments in the mill, houses in the community, working for the Southern Railway and the Newry train, and the flu epidemic.

**18:05**--Mr. Kirby discusses the original water wheel that was used for power.

**22:05**--One of Mr. Kirby's many jobs was inspecting cloth. He worked 64 hours a week at one point.

**28:59**--Kirby recalls his father's illness. Mr. Cater tells about how people would sit up all night with grieving families when death occurred.

**30:54**--Audio ends.

### **Side 2**

**--Blank--**

#### **A. Richey Ramseur Interview**

**Biographical Note:** A. Richey Ramseur was born on March 18, 1908 in Atlanta, Georgia. He was the son of Ralph and Edith Ramseur. Richey moved along with his family to Newry at age 12. After the mill came under new ownership, his father Ralph became president of the company and the family moved into Innisfallen (Courtenay Mansion). Ramseur attended Clemson University, graduating in 1930 with a degree in Textile Engineering. While living in Newry, he was responsible for village maintenance. He later became president of Ramseur Oil Company in Anderson, SC.

#### **1 Cassette**

**Speakers**-A. Richey Ramseur, Daniel Wegner, Henry Cater

**Audio Quality-Good**

**Date-December 15, 1978**



## **Side 1**

**00:30**--Ramseur gives a brief background statement in which he states that he came to Newry along with his family in 1920 when he was 12 years old. His father, Ralph, became the president of the company, and the family moved into Innisfallen.

**00:50**--Wegner asks Ramseur to recall what he can about the mansion. There was an Irish Hawthorne tree on the grounds; it had been brought over from Ireland by the Courtenay's. There were large porches on the top and ground floors that had double doors that could open for air-conditioning. The hallways were 10 feet wide and around 30 feet long. There were 6 bedrooms. The house had a library, a pool room, and a ball room. The ball room had a baby grand piano. Ramseur can remember many dances and parties that his parents would host.

**5:15**--Ramseur recalls school and church in Newry.

**6:50**--Wegner is interested in learning about Mr. Ramseur's family background. His grandfather and father were both in the railroad business. His father moved to Central and worked with Isaqueena Mills, and mergers between companies's eventually led to his father being president of Courtenay Manufacturing.

**9:50**--More recollections of Innisfallen--outbuildings near the mansion, the servants' quarters, and the gardener's house.

**10:30**--Ramseur makes mention of Ellis Benson, who worked as the family's butler. He lived in the servant's quarters behind the house.

**13:23**--Mr. Ramseur recalls the plum and pear trees on the grounds, the old road behind the mansion, the cork room, and the local golf course.

**17:09**--Wegner asks Mr. Ramseur about what spare time activities took place. Hunting with English Setters and "Pointers" (bird dogs), fishing for trout at Whitewater with Dr. Merrit, and Saturdays hunting and playing golf with his father all were leisure activities.

**19:40**--Mr. Ramseur spent summers working for the mill where he was responsible for village maintenance. One recurring problem was the maintenance of front door steps due to the steep incline of many of the houses. He also worked with the icehouse.

**21:00**--Ramseur recalls how roads were poor, and how his father got a road built out of an old, unused railroad bed.

**23:23**--Ramseur and Cater begin reminiscing about several issues: the barber shop and pressing club, the mill pond, how the area has changed, the reservoir completed in 1920, and the plumbing system at Innisfallen.

**30:22**--Audio ends.

## **Side 2**

--Blank--