

This is a transcription of memories as written by Lucinda Catherine (Lula Kate) Taylor (1890-1983). At the time of writing she was 86-87 years old and confined to a wheelchair. Her daughters, Velma and Doris asked her to write down some of the things she remembered about growing up, and these are her stories, just she wrote them. No changes have been made, either in sentence structure or in spelling. There is no chronological order to her writings.

J. Russell (8-24-2015)

THE TAYLORS

Allison Wagner Taylor
and
Martha Ellen Vaughan

A. W.'s brothers: Alexander Taylor
George Taylor
Alfred L. Taylor
James Hugh Taylor
Levi Taylor

A. W.'s sisters: Martha Christina Taylor (Brandon)
Susan Taylor (Bradford)
Mary Ann Taylor

Martha Ellen's brothers [note – these are half=brothers, Martha's mother died around the time of Martha's birth]

George Vaughan
Silas Vaughan
Bill Vaughan

Martha Ellen's sister: Catherine Vaughan She and mother would swing out over the Holston River on a grapevine swing . They would also paddle a little canoe over the river. Catherine's hair was almost red. Mother's hair was black, like her mother. [note: mother of Catherine and Martha Ellen was Elizabeth Painter.]

A. W. and Martha Ellen -- 10 children – 5 boys and 5 girls were born to them

Boys: Rutherford Burchard
James Houston
Thomas Leonard
Charles Alexander
William Ray (Billie)
Girls: Amy Elizabeth
Lucinda Catherine (Lula)
Essie Mae
Julia Alvertie
Flora Anne

We were living in an 8 room house, one mile from Bowmantown and one mile from the Fall Branch Highway. Three or more acres of ground – mill – house, barn “Johnnie on the Hill”. First—buhr mills, one for wheat and one for corn—which made real good flour and meal.

Then Allison Wagner decided to have a roller mill. He borrowed Nine Hundred (\$900.00) Dollars from Mr. Cruikshanks. Now that was a lot of money in those days. He could hardly sleep at night, thinking of “payday”.

He ordered the machinery and before many weeks the wagons came rolling in, each with a piece of machinery. Of course the machinery had to be sent by train, so it arrived at the old Jonesboro Depot (now torn down) where the men loaded it on the wagons. With it all set up, Daddy, with the boys help, began to make flour, first grade and second grade, bran and screenings from the wheat. I would take a sack to the mill and “wag” about 50 lbs. of flour to the house where we made delicious lightbread, cakes and biscuits. We had a table in the kitchen that had a drawer in it and it was kept about half full of cold biscuits. When Daddy got hungry he would get a cold biscuit to eat.

Old Rooksey Armstrong would come and get 50 lbs. of flour and say “charge it to Jake”(his son). The next time Jake would come and get 50 lbs. saying “charge it to the old man” so they never paid anything for flour. Daddy was so good and just carried them along

We kept two or three horses, three or four cows, 40 ducks and about 74-75 chickens. About every four weeks we would corral the ducks in a pen and pluck their feathers. We would have a big wooden washing tub, with a quilt to hold the feathers, and every time we would pluck a bunch of feathers the old duck would 'quack-quack'. We had a tub full of fluffy feathers and mother made each of us girls a feather bed and two pillows. She made each of the boys quilts. We had a wonderful Mother and Father, so loving and good.

We would walk to Bowmantown every Sunday for Sunday School and Church, and the best old-time singing you ever heard. Dock Morrow was chorister, Anna Bowman, Dora Campbell and Lula Taylor sang alto. Would like to go there again. We would come home, eat lunch and walk to Chalybeate Springs for more Sunday School and singing. Would like to go there again. We would leave the house and walk to church. We always left the doors 'wide open' but nothing was ever taken. No one can do that today.

The Campbells and Sellers were our neighbors. Us girls had a wonderful outdoor life. I would fish in the mill dam and catch 20 or more big fish. Campbells had all kinds of animals – jacks, jennys, horses, mules, cows, chickens, guineas and whatnot. They had a little tame jenny that we would ride. About four of us would get on her, bareback, and go about a mile to their orchard to pick apples. Then we would put the sacks of apples on the Jenny's back and we would have to walk home, a mile or more. Then we would hook old jenny to a sled and go to Wiley Armstrong's woods to gather may apple roots to sell. My bag of roots brought .39 cents after they were dried. That was a lot of money in those days. We would put old dresses on and go swimming in Daddy's mill race.

I was about to forget about our old house, before we built the new one. As well as I remember, it was similar in style to the new one. I remember very well the kitchen had a double door – top and bottom painted a pale blue. Poor little Charley's hands would get “rusty” in the winter time. He would wash, but didn't do a very good job. Burch (the oldest brother) would fuss at him to wash his hands and finally I guess he got the “rust” off for Burch wrote on the top of the blue door “Charley washed

March ____” (the date I forgot) and it was there when the house was torn down.

Tom (the third brother) would sit slumped in his chair. Burch would say – “Roll up and go it – Tom”. Burch was straight and tall.

We were happy to sit by the log fireplace, eating sour kraut, roasting potatoes and onions in the hot ashes and sometimes eggs. We didn't have radios and TV's but the boys could all play the violin or banjo. Us girls would try to dance but Daddy didn't like it. We had a trundle bed that we would pull out for the younger ones to sleep on, then push in back under the big bed in the daytime

Jim was real proud and bought real nice clothes. In those days the men would wear leggings and overshoes. They rode horseback and the leggings and overshoes kept the mud from splashing their pants. Jim would pay me .15 or .20 cents to wash his leggings and overshoes. I saved quite a lot of 'pin' money. One time he bought a pair of \$5.00 button shoes for me (shoes were usually \$2.50 or \$3.00). Nelia Campbell wanted to borrow them to catch a beau.

Daddy made a large cradle out of hardwood and varnished it – was so nice. Billie would sit in one end and rock Flora to sleep, singing “Sweet By and By” and “Promised Land”. I think Flora or one of her daughters has the cradle.

The Campbells and Taylors would go up to Daddy's mill dam and Campbell's meadow to go in swimming. The Campbells could swim and dive like ducks, but poor little me was afraid of the water and would just go in 'knee-deep'. One time Essie was running after Billie and Mrs. Campbell why she was running. Essie said Billie's bowels were running off and she was trying to catch them.

We would go up in Campbell's meadow and pick greens, dock, mustard and cress. They were delicious cooked with meat. Then we would go up on a little hill covered with all kinds of wild flowers and huckleberry bushes and pick the berries.

Our dishes were just a mixture of this and that, our 'silverware' was metal with wood handles. They would get real dull looking and on Saturday evenings I would take them out to the wellhouse where the dirt was moist and rub the knives up and down and they would shine like new.

Then we had oil lamps, about four or more. I would clean the globes and lamps, fill them with oil, then they would shine like new. Also, of course, I would trim the wicks.

Daddy made an ash hopper for Mother. We would save the ashes and Daddy would line the hopper with straw to hold the ashes. Then we would begin to pour water over them and the lye would begin to run. We would save it till we had a big iron pot full, then build a fire under it and Mother would put ham bones, meat skins, etc. in and the lye would “eat “ all the meat off the bones. When boiled down was real pretty yellow soap that would surely cut the dirt from old dirty work clothes, sheets, pillow cases and what not.

Then it would come kraut making time. Daddy made big wooden tubs or barrels to put it in. We would gather dozens of heads of cabbage and Tom would help chop the cabbage in the barrels. Mother would put just the right amount of salt in it, then put boards on it, weighted down with a big rock and before many weeks would pass we would begin to smell that good old kraut – get into it and it was – delicious. She would also make cucumber pickles. She would wash big loads of clothes, milk three or four cows and work in the garden, besides the regular housework. We always had a good

garden in the summer and would have plenty of food for winter – canned stuff, a bin of Irish potatoes, one of sweet potatoes and the big jars of kraut and pickles.

The Taylor boys and girls would walk to school at Chalybeate Springs “rain or shine, 1-1/2 or 2 miles, carrying our lunch and a pack of books. We wore old shoes (no overshoes) and they would be wet and spongy. Our schoolhouse was a log structure on top of a hill. There was a spring in a rock at the foot of the hill. Mother would make lightbread, pies and cakes, and fix two peck baskets of lunch, one for the boys and one for the girls. They (the baskets) would be full of biscuits of ham, jam or jelly, apple or berry pie, or cake. Most of my old schoolmates have passed away, Nola Campbell Squibb, Tom Hunt, Anna, Matt and Lottie Mitchell, Erma, Leota, Leona and Lizzie Walker, Blanche, Charley and Smith Kiser, Monte Sylvester, and others. We had many teachers through the years – Jud Hunt, Alma Conley, Dick Squibb, Mary Bacon, Ida McAdams, Mary Smith, Maud Keebler, Sam Wilcox, and Will Keys. We had a lot of fun along with our studies and a lot of mischief. We would have spelling matches at the end of the week. There would be two sides – one on each side of the room. One time I made two “tallies” on spelling 'raisins'. One time a boy said that “I was the prettiest girl he ever saw”, now don't laugh (nuff said).

We would get home about 5 o'clock, starved and tired. I would put a pot of potato soup on, make cornbread and biscuits – Daddy always wanted biscuits to “sop in his meat gravy”, Mother would have beans cooked, cut up a dish of onions, etc., etc. Mother would have a gallon crock of sweet milk on the table and she would pour for everyone but Daddy and he wouldn't drink a drop and wouldn't eat any butter, but he loved his streaked meat and ham.

Sam Harold would borrow Charley McAdams' hack and the Campbells and Taylors would come with him to Jonesboro, about an 8 mile drive. Old Rooksie Armstrong would go along and get drunk (saloons were in Jonesboro then), he would 'cuss' and shake his fist and scare me so much.

The Sellers lived just a little way up the road from us. There was Frank's family, Joe, Elizabeth, Julia and Hattie. Lizzie, as we called her, taught school in an old house across the road from ours, and that was my first school days. Then they all married and moved out, except Joe and he married Margaret Keys (Mag, we called her). Us kids would go up on Sunday afternoons and she would tell us stories. They had a big fireplace and a big solid rock hearth. The Sellers would cook mush (they called it “mursh”) would cook it on the hearth and stir it with a wooden rolling pin and they thought you had to cook it half of a day. They had one daughter named Mildred. There was a white pine in the yard and Mag had it cut down. Said she heard that when it got big enough to cover a grave that her daughter would die. Joe said before he married Mag that he would court Lula but was afraid the Old Man (Daddy) wouldn't like it.

Campbells would bring their cows in front of their house to the road and milk them. So you know there would be 'piles' of cow manure everywhere. Essie and Cleo Campbell were having their 'boyfriends' down one night. So Dora Campbell and I thought up a trick. They hitched their horses in a corner below the yard. They both rode Texas saddles (open on top you know). So Dora and I got a shingle each, two paddles to scoop with, and we put the manure in their saddles and in the stirrups and hid behind the trees, waiting for them to come down. They wondered what that stuff was but they soon found out. Wasn't that mean? Ha! Those were “Good Old Days” for mischief makers.

Once a week I would wash a great big washing and about sundown would dig me a can of worms, get my fishing pole and hike up to the meadow at daddy's milldam to fish – and did I catch the fish – 18 big suckers. Granddaddy Vaughn was visiting us and they were eating supper. I hadn't come

from fishing, it was almost dark and the fish kept biting. Granddaddy was worried. He would say – I tell you, you had better go and see about Lul (that's what he called me) she may have fallen in and drowned. When I came home I just walked to the end of the table where he was eating, held up that big string of fish. He was so pleased and said "My G" - that was his trademark. We had a good time eating fish. One time Granddaddy was visiting us. He lived in Greene County and Burch and Jim decided to go home with him. He always walked and they said they would have to start out early to give Granddad time, as he was old and slow. So they started out and they almost had to run to keep up with him. He was tall and had long legs. They enjoyed their visit. While there Grandma cooked squirrels in a pot on the hearth and they were delicious.

Every year in August there would be Camp Meeting at Sulphur Springs camp ground. About a month before we would begin to get ready. Everyone had to have a new outfit from the skin out. White dresses, petticoats trimmed in lace and hamburg, "drawers" and stockings and of course, new shoes.

Then, a week before Mother would make big loaves of lightbread, stacks of pies, and us girls would make cakes. We would buy a quarter of beef and dress about a dozen chickens. Then it came time to pack the dinner. We had an old round top trunk and it was full of all the food, with a big white tablecloth to spread on the ground. Then the eating would begin. There was a little colored lady that was always at Camp Meeting, Josie Gray, and everyone loved her. They would have preaching and singing "The Unclouded Day" and shouting. I'll never forget, the main preacher was George Cox. The people would come in and camp in sheds, with straw for beds. One year Herman's mother had a camp.

Down in the country near Bowmantown where we lived, Daddy Taylor had a small orchard, mostly apple trees, and the creek nearby ran around about one-half of the orchard. Daddy blasted rock with dynamite to build a rock fence about 3 feet high around the orchard. We would just love to walk on the rocks barefoot. Then just across the creek Joe Sellers had a thicket of trees, shrubs and flowers. In the Spring us girls would go over there and gather wild flowers, such as columbines (we called them harebells) larkspur, violets, crowsfoot, coonroot, heart leaves and other things. Also wild plum trees. I would fish in the little creek and catch small fish such as perch, silversides and hornyheads. They were real good mealed and fried. Also I would fish in the Sellers meadow and catch some nice fish. Once in a while we would catch a mud turtle. Those were "Happy Days" never to forget, just growing up.

One time Daddy borrowed a hack with two mules from Charley McAdams and loaded Mother and the older children for a trip to Hawkins County at Surgoinsville (a 30 mile trip) to visit Aunt Catherine. It took a whole day. We started real early and drove all day, arriving at aunts around sundown. I remember I wore a pink striped dress and Essie wore a dotted lavender dress. We had a good visit, but I was scared of the mountain road, with its curves and so narrow. We met a man on a curve with a bull. I don't know how he got by, for the road was so narrow. He said for us to be careful, for the bull had hurt a woman. Aunt Catherine had six children, Bertha, Maggie, Mollie, Amy, Sturm and Charley.

When Mother passed away Keen's Funeral Home in Jonesboro were in charge. Will Keen's father was driving the white hearse. He had long gray hair and beard, was driving two white horses and to this day it is very clear before my eyes. The hearse was white with curtains on the sides. Herman borrowed Charley McAdams old hack to take the family.

When Joe Duncan had the store at Bowmantown the Campbell girls and Taylor girls would go there. We would go upstairs where he had (among other things) ladies wearing apparel, hoop skirts,

bras, hats trimmed with poppies. We would have fun trying on all this rubbish. He also had an old Victrola. He would crank it up to play for us. He had a record of
"Come Home Dewey, we won't do a thing to you,
Grand Old Hero of the Red, White and Blue
With fifty million people, with nothing else to do
Wait for your coming and we'll make it warm for you."

Charley Way was a rural mail carrier, and he would come in the store to eat his lunch which was a can of pork and beans and a can of little sausages. He rode a horse.

We were living down at the "old home place" near Bowmantown when Herman and I were courting. Raymond Taylor, my little curly haired nephew, would play the piano for us. Then he would whisper to me: "Aunt Lula, that is "Sally in Her Petticoat." Herman would hitch his horse to the fence and it would paw and want loose. Then when we got married he rode his horse and I rode Old Mollie to the Presbyterian Church at Milbourntown and we were married by the blacksmith preacher. Next day Daddy went to church there and some boys were talking about us getting married. One boy said he didn't know who we were, but he knew that I wasn't a bit pretty. Daddy told him that he was my father and I didn't have a chance to be pretty. Essie and Ben were witnesses.

Herman and I, with Agnes, Lucile and Edna, moved to Wallins Creek, Kentucky. Herman worked in the coal mines and I kept boarders, and did they 'eat up a storm'. I would fry steak, make 40 biscuits, have butter, preserves, hot coffee, etc. I had Thad, his family, George S., Tom Mink, Dan Wilder and others. Thad wanted me to have a white cloth on the table all the time. Said him and George would pay the laundry bill, but he never paid one penny. I would take my little girls and fish in the Cumberland River. There came a big flood and the men had to carry us to higher ground. The water was up to the window ledges and my old sewing machine soaked in it till the water receded and we moved back in, after cleaning up the mess.

Agnes was born in the Shipley house near Sulphur Springs. Lucile was born in the Nelse Walker house near Sulphur Springs. Edna was born at Oak Hill in our little house. Elaine was born in the Alice Slemon's house and we moved to the farm later.

Velma Kate Shipley, you were born when we lived "down on the hill" at or near Jonesboro, in the bedroom across from 'the Parlor'. The room that S.T. liked so well. A darling little black haired baby. I think Dr. G.E. Horne was there. Doris was born in the room that leads to the front porch. Dr. Horne was there

Clarence was born in Kentucky. Daddy Taylor said "Hurrah for Clarence Taylor Shipley". Daddy Shipley said he hoped we would "fish out" a few more boys.

Lucinda Catherine (Lula Kate)
(1890-1983)