



Sarah Lee Ball
1908 - 2005

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Oct 12 1908 - Sep 2 2005

AAFA #0444

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BRANDON – Sarah Lee Ball, faithful member of Crossgates Baptist Church and the Kingdom of God, waltzed into the arms of her Savior Jesus Christ on Friday evening, Sept. 2, 2005.

Had she remained on this earth until Oct. 12, she would

have been 97.

Miss Ball was head of the music department for all the Jackson elementary schools under Supt. Dr. Kirby P. Walker.

A former resident of Ridgeland, she had lived

among other places, in Harrisville and at the time of death, in Brandon.

Memorial services will be held this Saturday, Sept. 10 in McComb at The Highland Funeral Home....

Charles W. Capps, Jr.
Archives and Museum

Delta State University Oral Histories

<http://library.deltastate.edu/archives/guides/oralhistory/dsu/ball.html>

Interviewee: Ball, Sarah — 18 November 1999

Interviewer: Tara Zachary

This is an interview for the Mississippi Oral History Program. The interview is being recorded with Ms. Sarah Ball at her residence in Brandon, MS on November 18, 1999. The interviewer is Tara Zachary.

TZ: Ms. Ball if you could just start out by telling me when and where you were born.

SB: I was born in community in Amite County about ten miles out from McComb, MS. It was called Thompson. I never knew what family it was named after.

TZ: Who were your parents, and what did they do for a living?

SB: My father was from this area at Thompson. His father owned a lot of land. He gave his son some when he got married to my mother. My mother was from further down south from Pike County at the Magnolia. She was near the Louisiana line. They were really great Mississippians. Her papa started to farm and land, but he loved cattle and animals. He was not long into getting into the cattle business. He was a great trader. He could buy cattle. Somebody once said that papa could look at a cow and tell how much it weighed and how much he could pay for it, and how much he could make. He was very prosperous in this business. He would ship them to New Orleans. He would take them into Summit and get them on a boxcar, and away they would go. He was an uneducated man professionally, but he was a very smart man. My mama used to say, "Sara Lee the boss is smart." She had another was of putting it. She was bragging on him. Then he began to do concrete work. He would do sidewalks and automobile parking places. He went on from there. He was a man that could do most of anything. He pretty well could. He became a road contractor of gravel roads in the early days when they were slick with red clay. He was very successful with that. He was hard hit by the depression, because he was in cattle. He also dealt with timber and cotton. The bottom fell out of everything. At that time he had an uncle that was a great landowner. He was a big landowner in southern Pike. He gave papa two farms and two houses. I think papa was supposed to pay for them

later. My mother did after he was gone. He pulled back up. He had a hard time during those years.

TZ: What was your father's name, and what was your mother's name before she married?

SB: My father's name was Iddo. That name is in the name, but he was named for a family the Iddo Balls right behind. There was an Iddo Lampton. One of the Lampton's married Uncle Sam. My grandfather did. He was one of the Youngbloods at Tylertown My mother

TZ: What was her name?

SB: Her name was Ada Bell. She was ready to go to M. S. C. W.. It was I. I. and C. in those days. She had blue bloomers made. They had to wear blue bloomers. They had to wear a costume. You know. This is something different than a costume. Anyway, she was couldn't go in the last minute. They had the quarter to back out, and she didn't get to go. She took piano except it was an organ. They had no piano. She learned to play on pipe organ. I don't know how she did it. She was determined to learn how to play. Papa married her, and got her a piano. Then she was determined that I was going to learn how to play. I did learn how to play.

TZ: Do you know what year your parents were married or around when they were married?

SB: Yes, around. She was born in 1880, and he was born one year after that. He was nineteen years old and she was twenty. She was one year ahead of him. They married around the turn of century because their first child came in 1902. I came in 1908. They gave every two years about that way with seven that lived.

TZ: You said you had seven in your family. How many brothers and sisters, and where did you come in the line?

SB: I came fourth. Mama had three sons before I came. They lost the littlest son with diphtheria. So they were hopeful of a girl, and I came along. They spoiled me good. My next sister, Lucille, who finished Delta State also, and then Elle Louise. They wanted to take music from me. Mama thought since I was taking piano, so I could teach it to them. They felt that they hated me. I had to live a different life. We are very close now.

TZ: What year were you born in?

SB: I was born in 1908.

TZ: 1908, and where did you go to school? What was it like?

SB: I went to school when I was five years old up at the corner where the store was at. My grandfather had given the land for the church. Right behind the church was the

school. Up the hill there was a cemetery. He had given all that plot of land to the community. I didn't find that out till very recently. He never talked about. I was at the reception, and the preacher told me how much they appreciated it. It is if it looked back in those years. He had studied the minutes of the church, and they found out that way. Anyway, I went to church. I wouldn't sit with the first graders. I wanted to sit with my brother who was six years older. He and his best friend had homemade desk, and I had to sit in between them. Then we had homemade desks. The schoolhouse was unpainted. It had a low stove, where they would put stove wood, you know pine, to warm us in the winter. They had homemade benches. We had one book. It was called the Primmer. It was a teacher of math. It started out with the family. They had a picture of mama and the baby in her arms. Mama loves baby. Baby loves mama. Then next page would be Papa loves baby. Baby loves papa. At the first it would have Mama loves Papa. Papa loves mama. They had the family. Then we had the ducks. Mama and papa had ducks. They had four ducks, and they would have four ducks in the picture. That was teaching math. It was a very good book. I must have memorized it. I loved it, and I loved to read. About twenty-five or thirty years ago before I couldn't understand why Johnny couldn't read. I learned to read. In the summer we had a woman who lived down there from up north. She talked so different from us. We thought up north, they must be very smart to talk like that. She had a summer school for us kids. We wouldn't stay in the schoolhouse. We were under the trees. I think we must have been in the second grade reader, but I didn't know that. We read that whole reader that whole summer. It was summer school. A bunch of girls would go over to the store and buy lots of candy. (Tape cut off).

TZ: You were telling about this summer school.

SB: When they went over to the store, I had begun the story. Then they came back after I had finished the story. They said to the teacher, "Did she read that whole story?" I decided I must be pretty good.

TZ: This was like a one-room schoolhouse?

SB: A one room school house with one teacher. If I didn't know a word, I would trot up to the stage. He taught up on the stage for those who took Algebra and Latin. My brother would say I can't tell you the name of that word. I am going to ask Mr. Burns. I would priss up to the stage, and I would learn what the word was.

TZ: So then how long were you at that school? When did you go up to?

SB: We moved to the neighborhood that my mother came from where the schools were more advanced. When I got down there, I was in the third grade. It was called Silver Springs. There was a church and a school down there. My grandparents were buried there. We were there. We moved a lot because papa was trying to find a good place to settle and to buy good land. We then moved to Summit to a town school. That was quite a jump for a country girl. I was in the fifth grade, and I was ten years old. In the fifth grade, we moved to Summit. I was in school there until I was in the eleventh grade. Then papa wanted to try the delta land. He had heard it was so rich you know. Everybody got rich in

the delta. We took twenty-seven mules, and we came home with none of them. We lost everything up there.

TZ: Where did you move to?

SB: We went to Shelby where I finished high school in one year. That led me to good ole Delta State Teacher's College because we were up in the delta. No money to get on a train or go anywhere. We had a car. My oldest brother had been up to Mississippi State. It was something else then. I have forgotten what. It was A and M. He was so sad because there was no money for me to go to college. He went to the work, and he worked all night till he paid thirty-seven fifty enough money for the enrollment. One months board and seventeen fifty for tuition. That was in 1925. That was quite an adventure. We went in good spirits. There were five of us that went from my class. We thought we would be there. That is five. So when we got there, there was seventy-three who came that year. Of course there was a crowd that came the next summer. So the 1925 has a higher number of students who did come. Everybody who came we were like a family. The teachers were all single. There was no housing for single teachers, and they lived in the dormitory with us. We were all like a family. I used to play to sing. We would gather around the piano. The teachers would gather around with us. It was really fun if you look back at the time. Everybody knew everybody. We were interested in what everybody was doing.

TZ: Before we get too much into Delta State, what was Shelby like whenever?

SB: Shelby was a nice little town. We had to live in country, because my daddy managed this plantation.

TZ: Which plantation was that?

SB: I beg your pardon?

TZ: What plantation did he manage?

SB: It didn't have a name, but it belonged to Mr. H. L. Wilkason. The Wilkason was big landowners in that vicinity. We were there for two years. At Shelby I was taken in. I was a senior. I was elected me president of the girl reserves that year. I appreciated that being a new comer. We loved the church there. That is about all that we had much connection with because we lived out about ten miles.

TZ: The way you were able to go to Delta State was because you brother worked.

SB: Would you ask me again?

TZ: So how was it again that you were able to go to Delta State? Was it your brother?

SB: Oh yes. He went on back to Florida. He had gotten a job down in Saint Augustine where they had a building boom. He was studying engineering, but I don't know what he

was doing down there. He might have nailed nails for all I know. He told me, "He said I will save you twenty dollars every month."

TZ: Wow, that is a lot of money back then.

SB: Yeah, for my room and board. I don't remember about the rest. I never did have much money to spend. My friends would say let's go get a coke, and I would say good I have a dime.

TZ: So you started in the fall of 1925?

SB: Yeah

TZ: What was the campus like then? What did it look like then?

SB: It had three buildings. You left town from the railroad station and went straight out from the railroad station. You faced where we would have our classes. Where Mrs. Doolittle had her first school and to the right was the girls dormitory and the left was the boy's dormitory. That was it. That was Delta State. Though while I was there, I was there for two more years I was there. I finished through three summers my senior year. They built Cleveland Hall was the first one they built. They built that one. We got to enjoy that one. I think that was the only one that we had before we left.

TZ: So do you remember President Broom?

SB: Oh yes.

TZ: What do you remember about him? You are the first one I have talked to who would know.

SB: He was very, very unique.

TZ: Why do you say that?

SB: He was just lovely. I find myself getting teary over Mr. Broom. We just had him one year. He was jolly, and he loved us. We knew it. We hated to see him go. He died. It is hard to explain what Mr. Broom was like?

TZ: So then Dr. Kethley came.

SB: And we loved him, but Mr. Kethley had a wonderful sense of humor. He was a great jokester. I remember once going up. He was signing something for somebody. I was playing the piano. He said, "How can I sign this when I got to keep time with you?" He would do things like that. To describe Mr. Kethley in a few words are difficult because he was outstanding. I later taught in Jackson with his sister. She had been a missionary. I just came to love both of them very much.

TZ: So you lived in Cleveland Hall while you were on campus?

SB: Yes, we had moved and I stayed at home out in the country. I got on the school bus that came and brought children to the public schools. The bus dropped me off at the University.

TZ: So you never lived on campus?

SB: Yeah, we didn't move down there till about Christmas. I have forgotten. Then my family moved back to Pike County. That is when I stayed in the dormitories. The money that you are talking about, as soon as my daddy got back down to Pike County. He got back into the cattle business. He could send me money. In the mean time Ms. Frierson whose husband was the office manager, and she taught French and taught voice. She was the first person who ever told me what public school music was. They had it in New Orleans where they had been. She told me that she thought that would be my field. Sure enough that was. I remember the day I left after my voice lessons I was just thrilled because I did feel like I knew what I wanted to do. Mama just knew it was piano. That I would teach piano like she taught piano. I didn't want to teach piano. This thrilled me.

TZ: Wow, she really had an impact on your life.

SB: Yes she did.

TZ: Who were some of the other teachers that might have been influential to you?

SB: Dr. Zeigal was our dean. I did take something from him. I think it was something like it was education is what they called it. I loved Dr. Zeigal. I remember once he came to Jackson to the teacher's convention, and we were introducing ourselves. He stood up, and he said, "That he was a freshman in 1925 when the school opened." When I got up, I said Dr. Ziegal and I were freshman together. One thing he said one time I was singing at the Rotary Club. He was speaking. He told the man at the Rotary Club that he thought music was just as important as mathematics. I thought, "man I like that man." He really knows what he was talking about.

TZ: It sounded good to you.

SB: I couldn't learn math. I was glad he thought music was more important.

TZ: So what was some of your favorite classes then?

SB: Well Ms. Doolittle had the greatest influence on me. I had practice teaching over there, because I was in elementary education. I was also an English major. I didn't want to teach English. She was wonderful in the way she handled children, which was so different. She was a very unique person. Dr. Zeigal got her to come there. He brought them from Kirksville, Missouri the teachers college up there. We did have a wonderful faculty. We really did. Ms. Doolittle was special. She was great.

TZ: What was the Hill Demonstration School like? What was it like to teach there at the Hill School?

SB: You know I didn't teach. She didn't choose me to come and be a teacher. She did some of my classes. One of my classmates from Shelby, Dorothy, she taught there. She thought it was just wonderful. She went out and became very successful in her field. Then she became a principal of her school. She was very successful. Teaching with her must have been very wonderful. All I have had was classes with her where she would sit and talk and tell us about instances. She told us the difference between being educated and being intelligent. She said that her mother was barefooted when visitors came one day. Her mother went out barefooted to meet the people. She would never in the world think that her mother was uneducated, but she was intelligent. I liked that.

TZ: You mentioned a while ago about how everyone was like a family on campus? Could you talk a little more about that aspect of campus life? Maybe tell us who some of your friends were? What you did? What was it like to live in the dorm?

SB: It was wonderful to live in the dorm. The first year, everybody were friends. The two girls that came to Delta State from Pike County. They became dear friends to me. It was Harriet Ikea and Avis Smith. Avis Smith became the most beautiful girl the year she was there. They were friends to their death. They are both gone. We kept up with each other while they were married. In a way we lost touch, but when they lost their husbands they came back. We were close together again.

TZ: What did you do for social activities?

SB: I am afraid that I don't remember. I don't remember that we had any really.

TZ: Did you have dances?

SB: No

TZ: School dances?

SB: No, we would dance in the hall over at Cleveland Hall. We would dance girls with girls. We had so few boys. I don't know if any of them could dance. They didn't have a social council over there. We didn't miss it though. We would go to the concert and hear them play.

TZ: What kinds of things like that did you have concerts and plays?

SB: Oh I remember we had a play once and I was in it. Robert Cogfull, a boy from Shelby, was in it. He skipped the senior year. He had to come with us. He had fifteen credits and came. He and I had the comedy parts in the play. We enjoyed that. I have forgotten what it was about. We had fun. That was one outstanding thing. Sadly, Coggy, got inflammatory arthritis. It killed him. It took his life.

TZ: That is a shame. You were in the Music Department. I know now they have concerts almost every week.

SB: No, we didn't actually have music department. They hired a piano teacher. The voice teacher was thrown in. We had no department. We had no majors you know. I didn't have a music major. My major was English. My minor was French. We didn't have any programmed program for music. That was too early for that. They didn't have that many recitals. There were only a few taking piano. I remember Ms. Frierson got us to Memphis to the Opera. None of us had ever seen an Opera. We went up twice to Chicago Civic Opera was coming south in those days. It was just like Fairyland to me. It was beautiful. We loved that. We were invited to go to the men's clubs and play the piano and sing. (Tape cut off.) We had a catholic. What do you call them when they are the head of the church?

TZ: A priest.

SB: We had a catholic priest in Cleveland who played the violin beautifully. He had studied in Italy. He would only be invited to these men's club when I would be. We would be waiting backstage for our turn. We would talk in French. He would encourage me. I learned about probably as much French from him than the teacher.

TZ: You are talking a little bit about the relationship of the college and Cleveland, and the things you did in Cleveland. What was Cleveland like then?

SB: Well that is hard to say. We loved to go downtown if we had a dime or nickel to get a coke or an ice cream cone. We came to know some of the people to say hello. We went to the churches. I went to the Baptist church. I came to know people there in my Sunday school class. We went to the B. Y. P. U. That was the young people's club. I remember one of our preachers had two sons that were in college with us out at Delta State. I got that wrong that was in Shelby. That was in high school.

TZ: So let's see what else we could talk about. When did your sister come?

SB: She came after I left. She really came the last summer I was there when I finished college. She came up to start. She may have already been there for a quarter. I get hers messed up with mine. Anyway she did most of her work when I wasn't there. She had two years of junior college at Summit. She was in sports. She was active in all the sports.

TZ: Okay so you went about the fall of '25, and your first year you lived at home?

SB: '25 to '26

TZ: '25 to '26 you lived at home?

SB: Then in '26 and '27, I was in college.

TZ: Right

SB: Then in '27 and '28, I was in college. Then in '28 and '29, I was teaching. I went in '28 to teach. I was wrong it was '27. It was after my junior year.

TZ: Where did you go to teach at first?

SB: I went out of Clarksdale. It was thirteen miles in Sunflower consolidated School. It had thirteen teachers. The way they had a music teacher was to take their twelve teachers and let one of them swap with me when I went to play. When I went to teach music in the first grade, the first grade would go and teach something in my room. The second grade teacher taught Art. They taught penmanship. They took them out to play. One taught Geography. I taught English. I was the sixth grade teacher. They didn't have a music teacher in the budget. That was the case in both of my first schools. Before I went to get my masters degree. I wanted to be just a music teacher. I couldn't until I went to Chicago and New York.

TZ: Your first school was outside of Clarksdale. Where was your second school?

SB: It was in Webb. It was a little town down out south of Clarksdale. It was called Webb Swan Lake because a lot of Swan Lake students came up to it. I came down to it.

TZ: And you feel like Delta State prepared you to teach?

SB: Oh yeah, I will get teary about that too, to say how much it mean to me.

TZ: I am glad that it made such a difference for you.

SB: I felt confident all of the time.

TZ: Were any other teachers at Clarksdale from Delta State?

SB: Not in the schools that I was in. No, there were not many getting out. Sara Duff Sistra came there when I left. When I left. I had not been in school with her, but Lucille had, my sister. She was the first one, but we didn't get to teach together. I recommended her, and she came.

TZ: Here is one that I haven't asked you about. What kind of rules did you have living in the dorms, being on campus? What kind of rules did you have to go by?

SB: We didn't have rules. We just taught. We lived in a teacher's home. It was about a hundred yards from our home to school. We didn't know that we had any rules.

TZ: What about when you were at Delta State? Were there any rules when you were a student at Delta State? What kinds of rules were there for living in the dorms and things like that? Do you remember anything like that?

SB: Really don't. It was not anything that we felt violated by. We didn't go out at night. Nobody dated. That wasn't done when I was there. Later on, some of them were dating. Some of the students would get in the window upstairs and look down at them when they were on the steps. There were no rules against that.

TZ: So there were mostly girls that you said. There were more girls than boys.

SB: Very few boys compared to the number of girls that came. I don't know any likeness of the years. I know where we taught there was a rule against dating high school boys. One of our teachers married one. They had a successful marriage. They broke the rules. We didn't have to get permission to go to town or sign out or anything like that. It was so few of us. It was really like a family.

TZ: Everybody knew where everybody was going. Were you in any clubs or anything?

SB: Oh yes, I was an officer along the way. I used to say I was never elected to anything, but the secretary. Though at Delta State I was elected president of the music club and the French club. The thing that I value the most highly was being elected president of Y. W. C. A.

TZ: Oh there was a Y. W. C. A. chapter there?

SB: Yes

TZ: What kinds of activities did you do in that club?

SB: Gosh we didn't know what activities were. We didn't do anything. We didn't know anything to do. We just met. I think we tried to do kindnesses, I don't know. I was also president of the B. Y. P. U. of the church. The summer I finished high school, before I went to college. I was burdened. I committed my life to Christ. The song leader had encouraged me. He had me convinced that dancing would spoil my Christian influence. I gave up dancing. That was a real dancing. It was a real sacrifice. We had gone to dances in high school at Summit. I was the best dancer in the tenth grade. Most kids in college knew it. They respected me for it. They didn't make fun of it like I was afraid that they would. I was never elected president until I was straightened up.

TZ: Did most of the students go to church? Was that encouraged?

SB: I don't know if we had to or not, but as far as I knew everybody usually went. I didn't say that well they don't go to church. Sunday afternoon was the time that the boys brought ice cream out. I remember one Sunday afternoon, Avis Smith, a dear friend of mine. We were left in the room by ourselves. She had a boyfriend at one drug store, and there was another boy at the other drug store that was not my boyfriend but we were friends. He was Dr. Carpenter's son. He liked boys as well as he did boys. Anyway he sent ice cream to me, and Avis's boyfriend sent her a quart. We had all this ice cream. It was one layer of one kind, and one layer of the other. So we ate and ate and ate. Avis's

boyfriend said "call me when you get to the lemon." I said here is the lemon. She got up and she ate it. Later we learned didn't send any lemon ice cream, it was something else. She was so sleepy, she couldn't tell one flavor from the other.

TZ: So there were two drug stores in Cleveland, and that was one of the things that you did was to go get ice creams?

SB: There could have been three. I can just remember two.

TZ: I don't think there is anything that I haven't ask you about. Are there any stories that you had from being a student that we haven't talked about?

SB: When I was a junior, Elena Bore came to Delta State. Have you seen her picture up at the school?

TZ: I don't think so.

SB: She was voted Ms. Delta State.

TZ: Oh I think I know what you are talking about. She died didn't she?

SB: Yeah

TZ: Yeah

SB: I took her under my wings because she played music. She played beautifully. We became very close friends. She had a very sheltered life with wonderful parents. She had two twin sisters. Her mother said once. She took me home one day. Her mother told her that I was just want Elena needed because we laughed a lot. She laughed a lot and so did I. We were both friends. We were both in the Y.W.C.A. She became a member. Dr. Kethley had us come in his office one day. He told us that he didn't prolong it. He said, "I just want to let you all know that you are the kind of girls that you want to get." (Tape not able to understand). To lose her was a great loss. She was just twenty-four. That is high memories for me. She was a dear and beautiful too.

TZ: I have seen her picture. She was beautiful.

SB: She was so loved here, so were her teachers, and so were her parents. I was at Northwest when he wrote me about it. I just couldn't believe it. She had always had a heart. So when the twins came up, the mother had told them. They came up here all of the time. This boy fell in love with her and gave her an engagement ring. She was supposed to marry. When he went to teach, there was a girl down there that took him away. He asks her to give the ring back, that he found somebody else. He loved her more like a sister. She threw the ring at him. We all think, the family and I think that killed her. She got pneumonia and lung disease. What is that?

TZ: Pleurisy

SB: She didn't have the strength to come back.

TZ: That is a shame. Well you were talking about living in the dorm with your friend and the ice cream. What were your dorm rooms like? Can you describe how they were set up? Do you remember how they were set up?

SB: How many what?

TZ: What your dorm rooms were like? How were they set up when you lived in the dorm? What was the layout of it?

SB: I never at Delta State roomed but with one. As far as I felt every thing was normal. I have seen a lot of modern ones that were more elegant or expensive. I never doubted me. I just took it all as it came. Everything was just fine, as I was concerned.

TZ: Everyone ate together at the dining hall?

SB: Yeah, Ms. Macintosh came from Belhaven to be our dining and kitchen monitor. I remember we were served like a family. There would be six at a big table. They were served in oblong bowls. I remember we would get a big bowl of spinach. Nobody would eat it. We would pass it around. We ate it at first, but we didn't like it. I have never eaten spinach before. She would take the bowl and empty that bowl. She would eat every bit of it. One day I stayed after lunch, and I said, "Mrs. Macintosh" Ms. Mac is what we called her. "I noticed that you really like spinach. What is it that you like about it? It must be good. You eat all of that spinach." She said, "Well I'll tell you the way you can learn to like it. Take when we have spinach, take a big bite of corn bread, and a small bite of spinach." That is one thing I learned at Delta State is to like spinach. Also I didn't know how to hold my knife and cut meat. She showed me how to do that.

TZ: What else did you learn at Delta State that you think you wouldn't have gotten if you haven't gone there? Anything else that you think you learned because you went, not just your education, but life lessons that you learned by going there?

SB: As I said my education gave me confidence. I had a deeper appreciation for everything. The teachers, when Dr. gave us thirty-two pages for that written test. I was used to twelve or thirteen pages. I also gained a lot of knowledge. You could put that under education, but for what I learned in the dining room was social. I don't know if I had contacts socially with people out in the town. I would go to the clubs. The women's club had me to come. No that was at Shelby. I had touches like that in the town, which I have really forgotten. We were invited for Sunday dinner out in homes in Cleveland. There was a lot of Cleveland students that came in those early days.

TZ: There still are.

SB: I know when we went out of that college, we really wanted to give Delta State a good name. We were really allowed that vision to work so hard. Where the people would love Delta State and send their children there. The people who hired us. I am very proud of that.

TZ: I can not imagine what it must have been like to be the first ones to go there. That must have been like everybody was watching to see how it was going to go. If it was going succeed or not? Did you feel like that?

SB: I was the first music teacher that went out. What did you ask me now? From the very beginning the children liked what I did. They liked music. They liked singing. With the high school kids, they were cotton fields. They had cabins where they lived. I remember a song. "I am in love with you, honey. There is no one else for me, honey." I taught that to those kids. I thought if I had done "Ave Maria" I couldn't have done better. They wouldn't have appreciated Ave Maria, but they appreciated that because it had rhythm. I let them sing popular songs till we got in to the group. We had to come a long way. I appreciated that. I love doing that. I have taught some of them speech after school. My mother had me from childhood. I know they didn't have any money to pay a teacher. I taught them piano after school. They were good. I just loved it. Dr. Kethley, I don't know how many, came to visit my school the first year I was there. I had them sing in the auditorium. I had children to sing together and children also to do things by themselves. I don't know at Delta State, and at Shelby. I taught Speech after school there too. People who lived down at Swan Lake and below town where on the plantations. They would have us down there. One of them ran for governor one year a delta man. I wanted so much for him elected.

TZ: Was it Scott?

SB: Sturdivant

TZ: Oh okay

SB: I went to her house. It was during the depression. Webb is the place where they cut our salary first. We got forty dollars of cash a month. Thirty of it went for board, and ten of it I could have. We got eighty-six dollars our salary was cut to eighty-six from a hundred and thirty-five. Which they raised me up there. At a hundred fifteen, I thought that was loads of money. They were on the depression too. The people had the voice on the economy. It wasn't the man who ran for governor. It was a cousin or brother. Elegance and a butler to serve us a great big platter like this. It was magnificent full of fried onions. It looked so beautiful. Everything that was on that table was raised on the land. They had land. That was raised there. The butler was probably the chauffeur. You felt like you were in wealth. You had great napkins like these. I had experiences like that I appreciated. We were very self-made people. We had not had wealth. We were never well off. Those experiences just like last night they brought some kindergartners to us to have them sing to us. The teachers, we had them showing the birds in the cages. The

teacher said, "It is good to have experiences." That it meant so much to them to come. That is what education is.

TZ: It is not just in the classroom.

SB: I remember one time when I had one of my final exams at Northwestern in philosophy. In what area did you change as a result of this course? You change. Then what was the outstanding thing? I wrote on that I changed Tony the Negro. I had to really go somewhere.