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Iron Hill School Oral History Interview

Interview with Shirley M. Smith Earl

Interviewer: Roberta Perkins

Transcriber: Marcia Adams

Tape 1, side 1

Roberta: This is Roberta Perkins and today's date is Thursday, February 21st, 2008. I am here in Newark at the home of Mrs. Shirley Smith Earl and she is going to help us with our oral history interview. Thank you very much.

Mrs. Earl: You are quite welcome.

Roberta: Mrs. Earl I am going to start by asking you if you could tell me a little bit about who your parents were, their names, and siblings.

Mrs. Earl: Okay. My father was Allen O. Smith and my mother is Jean W. Smith, she is deceased. I have three sisters and my brother is deceased. One of my sisters Mary right now and Betty Clayton and I have a sister named Carolyn Hackett.

Roberta: Where are your parents from?

Mrs. Earl: My father is from Newark, Delaware, and my mother is from Maryland, Cedar Hill, Maryland.

Roberta: What years did you attend Iron Hill?

Mrs. Earl: From '56 till about '61.

Roberta: Let's kind of start with your experience, your first, you know your remembrance of Iron Hill, you know, what generally what was the school day like?

Mrs. Earl: An ordinary school day was first we started off with prayer then the teacher would have each class started off with maybe the first grade would start with their reading; the second grade would maybe start with arithmetic or the third grade would have something else. Every day that's how we started. One class at a time she would have and there was usually four classes, four to five classes.

Roberta: Who was your teacher?

- Mrs. Earl: My teacher, her name was Minnie Ryder.
- Roberta: Did she ever have trouble getting the other students to wait till she got to them to start the classes?
- Mrs. Earl: No we never had any kind of trouble because we respected her and you know she was a good teacher. She was a very good teacher.
- Roberta: What did you like about her?
- Mrs. Earl: Miss Ryder, she was kind and a nice woman; she really cared about us and besides, she was a cousin too. We were related.
- Roberta: And how is that?
- Mrs. Earl: I think it was from my grandmother, I'm not sure if it was my grandmother or my grandfather. They were related on the Smith side.
- Roberta: So did that affect how she interacted and how she taught?
- Mrs. Earl: No, I don't think so. She treated everybody fair.
- Roberta: Where did she live?
- Mrs. Earl: Miss Ryder lived in Newark.
- Roberta: What were your school times? Your hours?
- Mrs. Earl: Our hours were I think it was from 8 to about 2:30, I'm not quite sure but I think we went from 8 to 2:30.
- Roberta: How did you get to school?
- Mrs. Earl: We rode on a bus, we had a bus or sometimes if you didn't ride the bus we walked because it wasn't that far from where we lived.
- Roberta: Who was the bus driver?
- Mrs. Earl: Mr. Moody, I can't think of his name. We had Moody and we had Miss Marian Williams, she was a bus driver too.
- Roberta: Was she a bus driver at the same time or was it like Mr. Moody for several years and then Miss Williams?
- Mrs. Earl: Yeah, I think so.
- Roberta: Tell me a little bit about was it Miss Williams or Mrs. Williams?
- Mrs. Earl: It was Miss Williams, it think.
- Roberta: Did she live in the community?

- Mrs. Earl: Yes, she lived on 896, what you call 896, they had a farm out there, the Williams had a big farm, a dairy farm out there and she lived there and her children went to school there too.
- Roberta: Are there any more Williams' around?
- Mrs. Earl: She has a daughter, her name is Shirleen. Shirleen went to school with us. That is one I can remember – Shirleen.
- Roberta: Shirleen?
- Mrs. Earl: Shirleen, yes.
- Roberta: Interesting, so how did Miss Williams come to drive the school bus, did she substitute for Mr. Moody?
- Mrs. Earl: I really – she might have but I can't really remember that very well but she was one of the bus drivers.
- Roberta: What was it like getting to school in the winter time?
- Mrs. Earl: We just waited at the end of the road and caught the bus. We had to walk to the end of the road.
- Roberta: The end of the road where you lived?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes.
- Roberta: Now where did you live in relation to Iron Hill?
- Mrs. Earl: Well we lived on a place, now it's called Smith Way but it didn't have no name back then so it was just a regular old road out there but then they named it after my grandfather, you know the Smith Way Road.
- Roberta: How did that come about?
- Mrs. Earl: Because that's where all the Smiths used to live out there on that road. It was my grandfather that first lived out there and when they named the road, that's what they named it, Smith Way Road.
- Roberta: What was his name?
- Mrs. Earl: Allen O. Smith, the first.
- Roberta: So do you remember when it was changed, when it was named Smith Way Road?
- Mrs. Earl: I can't remember that.

Roberta: That's okay. Sometimes people talk about how situations occurred. Now, of you and your siblings, are you older, middle?

Mrs. Earl: I'm the oldest one.

Roberta: Let's go back to the school day, from what you can remember what did the school look like? Say we are picturing, you are walking through the school door, what do you remember the school looked like? What did the boys have to do? What did the girls have to do when they first came in?

Mrs. Earl: When we first came in there was a coat rack and we used to have to hang up our coats and there was a hallway as you go in the front door, okay there was a girls' bathroom on one side and a boys' bathroom on the other side.

Roberta: Okay, so which side was which?

Mrs. Earl: The girls' was on the right hand side, the boys' on the left hand side. That's where we hung our coats at – in the bathroom. Okay then everybody would get there and we would say our Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and then we would have our prayer and when classes would start she would do one class at a time and I can remember a blackboard on this side, on the right hand side and there was a blackboard in front us. There was a smaller room where the piano was, I can remember that. Miss Ryder's desk was on the left hand side. On the left hand side we kept flowers. We had to take care of the flowers. She had flowers there and there was a book shelf at the bottom of that. There was another room, it was like a small utility room right there.

Roberta: Was this as you come in the school and you are going to what would be the front of the class, is that where the flowers...

Mrs. Earl: The book shelf, where the windows were, there is a set of windows there was the book shelf. I mean a bookcase and we used to have flowers there and the girls would usually take care of the flowers and stuff like that.

Roberta: Were these in soil?

Mrs. Earl: Yes, we had live plants. She always had live plants there.

Roberta: Whose idea was that?

- Mrs. Earl: I think it was Miss Ryder's a long time ago and she would give us the plants to take care of and stuff like that. Something to do.
- Roberta: Did she incorporate that in a lesson, or a class? Did you ever talk about the care?
- Mrs. Earl: No, the girls would go and take water and make sure they were watered. We had to do the blackboards you know, we had to clean the blackboards and stuff like that and that was it. That's what we did.
- Roberta: You said that there was a book shelf under?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, that's where the book shelf was.
- Roberta: What was in the book shelf?
- Mrs. Earl: Well the books were, usually the books that we used like the "Dick and Jane" books we had we knew how to use those so that was our books. The math books we had, any books that we had was in that book shelf.
- Roberta: So they were more workbooks for your classroom. Was it like a library also?
- Mrs. Earl: We had a little table, I can remember a little table in the back we had library books on. That's where we would have our library, in the back, like when you got done with class one day you would go back there and read a library book or draw or whatever you had to do but we had library books.
- Roberta: Was there still a wood burning stove or a coal burning stove when you were there, that would have been in the back of that little utility room.
- Mrs. Earl: No, I think we got a little modernized then. We had a little furnace back then. I think that was in my dad's time, they had that potbellied stove, yes that was my dad's time. Miss Ryder, she would, lunch time she would bring us milk. She would order milk I guess from the milkman where she lived at used to bring the milk and she used to bring the milk to school and we used to have the milk in the bottles and she made sure we had that every day.
- Roberta: What about lunches? How did you have lunches?

- Mrs. Earl: Well most of the time everybody brought their lunches like on special occasions we would have parties and stuff and our parents would supply us with hot dogs and sodas and stuff like that but most everybody brought their lunch like a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or maybe tuna fish sandwich or whatever.
- Roberta: Did you have a refrigerator?
- Mrs. Earl: Refrigerator? I'm trying to think, did we have a refrigerator? I don't think so. We didn't have a refrigerator. We had a – it's a room where we used to keep paper supplies and I think everybody used to put their lunches back in the room where we kept papers and stuff.
- Roberta: Is that that little room where there's a door to the back door and there's a room there, there's a little utility room?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes.
- Roberta: Okay.
- Mrs. Earl: Where we kept our lunches, jump ropes and balls and bats and all that stuff was back there.
- Roberta: What kind of games did you play?
- Mrs. Earl: We had hopscotch, baseball, the swing, then we had seesaws and dodge ball. We used to have a thing where you could get on it, it would be like a May Day pole and we used to get on that pole and swing around and swing around until somebody falls off with a busted knee and stuff like that. We had the games like I said like baseball, we always played baseball and dodge ball. The girls always had the jump ropes or hopscotch. Out there on the sidewalk we had our hopscotch and stuff like that. That's the kind of the games we played.
- Roberta: Did you have special event days?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, we had May Day when we played like some other schools would come sometimes, maybe Christiana or whatever schools would come you know we would have different ? play with the other kids. Yes we had May Days, that was a big thing, May Days.
- Roberta: Were there any other?

- Mrs. Earl: I remember just the May Days and sometimes parents would give us dances on a Saturday night. We would have dances on a Saturday night and they would give us stuff like hot dogs and stuff like that.
- Roberta: Were the dances at the school?
- Mrs. Earl: At the school.
- Roberta: So what did you do with the desks?
- Mrs. Earl: Just move them out, slide them back and then everybody had a dance floor.
- Roberta: So how were they conducted, I mean were the parents chaperones?
- Mrs. Earl: Oh yes we always had chaperones.
- Roberta: Did you like those?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes we had fun when everybody could get together. We did have fun. I did, I like to dance.
- Roberta: Do you remember anything special?
- Mrs. Earl: Halloween sometimes, like we had like the Halloween thing, you know, we had that and another thing we used to do, I can remember we had an old barrel outside and we used to have and we would go in the woods...
- Roberta: An old what?
- Mrs. Earl: An old barrel, an old barrel that we used to burn trash and stuff in today.
- Roberta: Oh, barrel.
- Mrs. Earl: Yes.
- Mrs. Earl: And we used to get sometimes Miss Ryder when we had special days she would get us, we would have hot dogs and the boys used to go in the woods and get the sticks and we would roast the hot dogs and the marshmallows on that old barrel. That's what we used to do with that barrel, and another thing we used to do, we used to go in the woods and get sassafras tea. We used to go out there and get that and we would bring it back and we would wash it off and then Miss Ryder you know would let us boil water and we had tea. We had sassafras tea.
- Roberta: Now how did you do that? Was it the leaf, was it the bark?

- Mrs. Earl: It was the bark we would go and pick it in the back, in the woods out there.
- Roberta: What does sassafras tea taste like?
- Mrs. Earl: It tastes real good, it's got a nice smooth taste to it. It's got a nice very smooth taste to it.
- Roberta: Now did she have you do that for a special occasion, was there a science educational part of it or was it just an extra treat?
- Mrs. Earl: Just an extra treat we had.
- Roberta: Did you know that that was back there before she showed you?
- Mrs. Earl: Well most of it we knew was back there. Back in the woods.
- Roberta: What about tests? Do you remember, I mean did you have tests from, did Miss Ryder give you tests?
- Mrs. Earl: We had tests like, we would have like spelling tests. We would have them quite often, that's the only test that I can really remember was the spelling tests. We had so many words and we had to write them down. It was great. That's the only thing I can really remember was the spelling tests. We had those all the time, every Friday we would have a spelling test. We had that on Fridays.
- Roberta: Do you remember anybody coming from like the Department of Education a couple of times a year or something like that?
- Mrs. Earl: It was a man named **Dr. Octabach (sp?)** he used to come there.
- Roberta: What did he do when he came there?
- Mrs. Earl: He would like usually talk to Miss Ryder I guess about how the school was going and so forth. Like I said he used to come once a year, I'm not sure.
- Roberta: So when he was talking with Miss Ryder what did she have the students do.
- Mrs. Earl: We used to do our homework or outside you know depending on what time of day he came.
- Roberta: What about health care? Do you remember whether the school had a dentist or a doctor that would visit?

- Mrs. Earl: I think we had a nurse. She used to come and give us shots. I do remember that. They had health people to come out there and give us shots like vaccinations. That's where we got those when we were in school. They would come and give us that.
- Roberta: Did your father ever talk about when he was going to Iron Hill and you know any difference between his experience and you and your siblings?
- Mrs. Earl: I don't think Daddy did. No because they had that potbellied stove and all that stuff and that's the only thing I knew back in his days they had a potbellied stove and they had to get the wood and what ever else they had to do.
- Roberta: Did you ever listen to the tape that we did with your Dad?
- Mrs. Earl: No I never listened to my Dad's tape. No.
- Roberta: What about, and I apologize if you told me this, at the beginning of the school day, at the start of the day, did Miss Ryder have Bible reading? The flag?
- Mrs. Earl: We just said the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag and then we would say a prayer and that was it at the beginning of the school and like I said she would take one class at a time the first grade, the second grade, the third grade, the fourth grade and the fifth grade and sometimes you've got thirty or forty kids in one classroom with one teacher.
- Roberta: What about some of the other arts like music, you know, or just art projects?
- Mrs. Earl: Okay, she was a music teacher. She would play and we would sing out of old books she had. Art – we had art supplies so we drew or did everything like that. I'll tell you what she did, I can remember our first savings account. See we had a savings account, we had these little books with a savings account in it and each Friday we would put so much money, a penny or whatever we had – nickels or dimes – and she would take it to the bank and at the end of the year, the school year, she would get our little money and everybody had what their savings account was.

- Roberta: Did the savings account encourage any students to like get part time jobs or anything.
- Mrs. Earl: No it was just something we had to do and something we saved money for the summertime we had a little change that we wanted to spend. But we lived in the country and we didn't go to the store very often you know. Maybe every now and then we would go to the Acme in Newark or something like that but it was stuff that we had or take it to Sunday School when we would go on a Sunday School trip or something we used our money.
- Roberta: Did she discuss why she had you, the students, start these savings accounts?
- Mrs. Earl: No she never really said. We just did it.
- Roberta: Did it give you a different perspective on money? About saving money? Did it make you think about it?
- Mrs. Earl: Not really. When you're kids you don't think about saving money, you think about spending it.
- Roberta: So did you like the idea?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes.
- Roberta: I think everybody did. What was it like living in the community of Iron Hill when you were growing up?
- Mrs. Earl: Everybody knew everybody. Everybody got along very well.
- Roberta: Do you remember any problems, you know?
- Mrs. Earl: No because it was just like everybody knew everybody and everybody got along. We didn't have any – even the white kids, you know, we got along with them because everybody knew everybody.
- Roberta: What was it like having, now you had three other siblings in school when you went, so what was that like? Or was it something you need to think about?
- Mrs. Earl: I need to think about it, they were my sisters, that's it.
- Roberta: So who's the oldest? You're the oldest?

- Mrs. Earl: I'm the oldest, then its Mary and then its Betty. Then my sister Carla, she's my half-sister.
- Roberta: And you had a brother?
- Mrs. Earl: I had a brother yes but they didn't get to go to Iron Hill, just us three.
- Roberta: Now how many grades when you going to Iron Hill?
- Mrs. Earl: The first to the fifth.
- Roberta: When you were going? So where did you go after Iron Hill?
- Mrs. Earl: After I left Iron Hill I went to Louis L. Redding in Middletown. That's where we went.
- Roberta: How many grades?
- Mrs. Earl: Middletown was from the, well I think Middletown went from the first to the twelfth. I'm not sure.
- Roberta: But when you started, you started...
- Mrs. Earl: I started in the sixth grade. The sixth grade I went to Middletown.
- Roberta: And you went all the way through?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes. I went through high school.
- Roberta: What was that like, going from a one-room school to a school that had more than one room, more than thirty children?
- Mrs. Earl: I think it was a little scary at first but then you just get to intermingle with other kids so you know it was all right.
- Roberta: How did the children make you feel about having – how did they treat you?
- Mrs. Earl: Well they treated us just like any other kids, you know, kids going to school. You know you have some problems with the bigger school than you have with a little school but it was alright. It was fine.
- Roberta: How did you find the class work?
- Mrs. Earl: Class work was a little harder, you had more of it you know you were in class all day long with the same teacher **inaudible** but we got there.
- Roberta: So when you went to Redding you had to move from one room to another for your classes or did you still stay in the same room for all your classes?
- Mrs. Earl: The same room but like gym was something different.

- Roberta: Right.
- Mrs. Earl: But where you had the same classes all day long, eight hours, then when you get to high school it was a little different, when you went to high school you went to different classrooms.
- Roberta: How was that adjusting to that, going to different classrooms?
- Mrs. Earl: **Inaudible** You got used to it. You got used to it fast.
- Roberta: I know when I had to do that I always forgot something, going from elementary I always forgot something going from one classroom. Did you play with any of the other children in the community? Once you got out of school you know did you play with the white kids in the community?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, we played ball or whatever.
- Roberta: I mean did you ever wonder you know why children went to separate schools? The whites went to white schools and the blacks went to a different school?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, I knew why. Our parents told us why.
- Roberta: I was going to ask you why, did your family ever discuss that with you?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes.
- Roberta: What, how did they explain that to you?
- Mrs. Earl: They just told us how it was, you were segregated. The whites went to one place and the blacks went to another place. Like in the movies we had to set upstairs, water fountains, whatever, restaurants, you know.
- Roberta: Did they explain that to you because you asked or was there an incident that happened.
- Mrs. Earl: No, they just told us about it. They just told us about how things were.
- Roberta: How did you feel about that?
- Mrs. Earl: It really didn't bother me, it didn't bother me one bit.
- Roberta: Oh there is one thing I always wanted to ask people, do you remember what the outside of the school looked like, like the color of it, do you remember that?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, it was yellow and brown.
- Roberta: Okay.

- Mrs. Earl: Yes, it was yellow and brown. I remember the trimming was brown and the school was yellow on the outside.
- Roberta: That's what the colors are now. What about the woods is that about, as close as they are today to the school, is that about where they were?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, I remember everything about the woods. There was a baseball field where that big clearing is, that's where we used to play baseball, I can remember and there was a tree, in the front.
- Roberta: I think there is one, I am trying to remember there is one if you come out of the door there is one to the left.
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, I think that is the tree but that big field that's where we played baseball all the time. That was our baseball field.
- Roberta: Now this is to the left of the school if you are facing Old Baltimore Pike?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, it would be on your...
- Roberta: Right?
- Mrs. Earl: It would be the clearing right there, there's nothing there but grass.
- Roberta: But when you are facing Old Baltimore Pike...
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, facing Baltimore Pike it would be on my...
- Roberta: Your right.
- Mrs. Earl: Right, that's where we used to play ball all the time.
- Roberta: Okay. Was there a ditch there? I think there is a ditch there now, was that always a ditch there?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, I think so, I think that was back in the day...the school bus used to let us off on the road.
- Roberta: Okay.
- Mrs. Earl: Before they started coming up in the driveway. I can remember that, the buses, yeah. That's the way it was. We used to walk down that pavement and catch the bus.
- Roberta: How large a bus was it, like how many students did it hold.
- Mrs. Earl: A little teeny bus, like the little buses they have nowadays. Mr. Herman Moody always used to drive that bus. Reverend Herman Moody, he was a preacher too.

- Roberta: Was he a preacher in your local church?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, I think he preached in Christiana.
- Roberta: Did he live in Iron Hill?
- Mrs. Earl: He lived in Christiana.
- Roberta: Christiana, okay. What do you know about him or his family?
- Mrs. Earl: Nothing. Mr. Moody was a preacher, that's all I know. Mr. Herman Moody was...was it Herman? Oh Lord I can't think, was it Herman Moody? There was a bunch of them, a bunch of brothers, some were school teachers and stuff. I know he did live in Christiana.
- Roberta: This ends tape 1, side 1.
- Roberta: This is tape 1, side 2 and I am continuing the interview with Mrs. Shirley Smith Earl and I was asking her about Christmas celebrations in school, what she remembers.
- Mrs. Earl: We used to make our Christmas ornaments out of little rings and stuff on paper. We used to have to decorate a tree, I think we used to have a little party afterwards during the day after everything was done we had parties and sometimes we would exchange little gifts of stuff that we had made.
- Roberta: I was going to ask you about the gifts. The gifts that you made, they were made especially to exchange with other students?
- Mrs. Earl: Other students, yes.
- Roberta: Did you draw names?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes we did. We did draw names we did draw names and with the little bit of money that we had we would maybe sometimes buy a little gift or something, a little doll or something or for the buys we would buy them a little truck or something like that.
- Roberta: What did you usually do at Christmas break, first of all how long did you have?
- Mrs. Earl: I think we had about a week. Christmas break we would just stay around and do nothing, mostly stay home and probably we would help clean the houses or something like that.
- Roberta: Was that a time you looked forward to?

Mrs. Earl: Christmas? Yes, but that's a whole lot of cleaning up.

Roberta: What about the general community? Did you visit other people's homes?

Mrs. Earl: Yes we did. We went to cousins' house or we had an aunt. Like we were talking about Miss Daisy Webster, we would go there for Christmas.

Roberta: What was she like?

Mrs. Earl: She was a nice old lady. Very kind. I remember her having Sunday, everybody it was open house she would have big Sunday dinners for anybody who would ever come there and she was a very nice lady.

Roberta: Where did she live?

Mrs. Earl: She lived in Iron Hill too on, the house is still there, where she lives at. She was like the, I guess Aunt Daisy, we called her Aunt Daisy, she was like the you know, she was like the head of the community back then in those days.

Roberta: There was a woman I think at one time that was referred to as Granny Smith? Is that right?

Mrs. Earl: Yes, that's my Dad's grandmother. She was our great-grandmother. That was Aunt Daisy's daughter. We say Aunt Daisy, that was her daughter.

Roberta: Okay, that's what the connection was. What do you remember about – what was her name?

Mrs. Earl: Mary.

Roberta: Mary Smith?

Mrs. Earl: Yes.

Roberta: What do you remember about her?

Mrs. Earl: Really by the time I started knowing Granny, Granny was, she was a nice lady. We used to live with her. My Dad and them, when times were hard we used to stay there at her house. She was a nice old lady, yes. Good cook, very good cook. They could cook up anything. One thing we always had, once the bread would be lifted and its like we were having home made bread and stuff there. They were both nice ladies.

Roberta: They cooked from memory, huh?

- Mrs. Earl: Yes, they didn't have no cookbooks. I can remember like the church was when it had socials, they would have them on Friday nights and I can remember they always had homemade ice cream and oranges and we had bought fruit and stuff and they would have dinners and stuff on Friday nights most of the time and Aunt Daisy used to have them all the time. I remember that. Homemade cakes and stuff like that.
- Roberta: What was your favorite? Did you have a favorite?
- Mrs. Earl: Oh we just liked the homemade ice cream. If you was a kid you liked the homemade ice cream. If you had a nickel you could buy oranges or apples. A piece of cake only costs you five cents back then. I can remember all that.
- Roberta: Did you ever participate in making the ice cream or do you know who made it?
- Mrs. Earl: I have seen it made but no one participated, you just seen it made.
- Roberta: So Mary Smith was your father's...
- Mrs. Earl: Grandmother, she was my great-grandmother.
- Roberta: You don't remember a whole lot than (inaudible) other than visiting.
- Mrs. Earl: I used to stay with her. She was a small, little lady, I think she was a slave because she was very, very light.
- Roberta: Do you think so?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, she was a very, very light lady. She could pass for white I think.
- Roberta: Did she ever talk about herself.
- Mrs. Earl: No Granny and them never talked about it.
- Roberta: And you don't know where she lived before they moved here?
- Mrs. Earl: We were talking about that last week and I can't remember. I know my Dad's mom, they were from Spotsylvania, Virginia. That's where my Dad's mom is from I don't know where they came from, my Aunt Daisy or any of them. I really don't know.
- Roberta: When you went to Iron Hill, on the other side of Old Baltimore Pike, what was it orchards or did somebody live over there?

- Mrs. Earl: There was houses there. Other black families, I think this lady ran a boarding house if I can remember, I think it was a boarding house.
- Roberta: Do you remember what her name was? Somebody mentioned one time about a railroad, was there a railroad any where you remember at Iron Hill?
- Mrs. Earl: Yes, there was a railroad.
- Roberta: Because there is a sign at the museum.
- Mrs. Earl: The railroad was, on Otts Chapel Road there was a railroad there a long time ago. I think my Dad and them used to catch the train. I remember my Dad talking about catching a train from down here to Howard, where we used to go to school. There was a railroad there, yes.
- Roberta: So by the time you remembered there was not a railroad running?
- Mrs. Earl: No, it would go through there but it never stopped like when Dad...because underneath the pass over we used to go down there and go swimming. There was a swimming hole down there where we kids used to go and swim.
- Roberta: Did you, so did you learn how to swim there?
- Mrs. Earl: There was rocks and stuff.
- Roberta: When you say rocks and stuff...
- Mrs. Earl: It was just like a hole, I don't know what it was, it may have been a cow pasture back there but it was just something back there and we didn't have no where to go so we just used to go down there and swim. There was like bottles and all kinds of mess used to be down there and I can remember going down there. Under the railroad tracks we used to go back there and swim.
- Roberta: I'm trying to think of something else. Yes, if you can think of anything else you know I'll just kind of be quiet for a couple of minutes.
- Mrs. Earl: We didn't have too many stores. I know we had to go to Newark to go to the stores and stuff. We had to go there. There wasn't any stores our there or nothing. It mostly was just family out there.
- Roberta: Did you enjoy living in Iron Hill?

Mrs. Earl: We had fun times. Quiet.

Roberta: It's quiet now.

Mrs. Earl: It's very quiet out there. Like I said it's a different place right now you see all those houses and stuff out there.

Roberta: How does that make you feel? It's so grown.

Mrs. Earl: I like to see it growing up. I'm all right. I remember we used to go pick berries. We had a huckleberry patch.

Roberta: Oh where was that?

Mrs. Earl: It was where my grandfather and them lived there was huckleberry patches and we used to go pick blackberries. We had blackberry patches and we had fruit and stuff. We had apple trees and pear trees, grape arbors, we had all that stuff back then. Where my sister lives now there was our home place, that was where we used to live right there and I think it was one big family because everybody, my dad, my brother and sisters all lived out there too so we had a little bit of everything out there.

Roberta: I was going to ask you if you had like a garden.

Mrs. Earl: Yes we had gardens and my uncles and them had pigs and stuff and chickens, we had all of it out there, it was country.

Roberta: Who were your uncles? Now this was your dad's brothers?

Mrs. Earl: My dad only had one uncle, his name was Ernie Smith, he's deceased ? and the rest were his sisters. He had three sisters, my dad had.

Roberta: So the fruit trees and stuff like that that you had, were they pretty much just generally in that community now called Smith Way Road?

Mrs. Earl: Yes, they were there.

Roberta: And so any body in any of the houses sort of helped themselves

Mrs. Earl: Helped themselves to the fruit, yes. We had apple trees, we had pear trees, a grape arbor. A peach tree, I can remember those.

Roberta: Do you remember taking care of any of it or helping to plant.

Mrs. Earl: It was just always there. I can remember as a child that it was there. We'd help eat it but we didn't help plant it.

Roberta: Did your mother make anything with the fruit?

- Mrs. Earl: They used to do a lot of stuff with the canning and stuff, yes they would. They would can. I can remember going in the hen houses to get eggs – you know getting those eggs out of there. Had to collect the eggs sometimes.
- Roberta: Was that any one person's chore?
- Mrs. Earl: No just whoever wanted to go in there and get them they would get 'em.
- Roberta: Would the hens let you have them?
- Mrs. Earl: Sometimes they would and sometimes they wouldn't. It depends on how they felt, if it was a good day.
- Roberta: When the weather was nice you were able to go outside, but if it was rainy or snowy or something like that was it difficult being inside?
- Mrs. Earl: No because we always did drawing or something or writing or just set around and slept most of the time probably. We had nothing else to do as kids. In the summertime was our big thing because everybody like I said all the kids from Pleasant Valley and all around where everybody would come and play baseball. Our biggest thing out there was baseball. We always had a baseball game.
- Roberta: Did the boys and girls play together on the same team?
- Mrs. Earl: Together, yes.
- Roberta: So what did you use for a ball and bat?
- Mrs. Earl: We had balls and bats. We had them. Sometimes we had a stick. An old tennis ball or whatever we could find we played with.
- Roberta: What did you use for bases?
- Mrs. Earl: Bases? We would find a piece of newspaper or something or a piece of cardboard or something for the bases. We could use a piece of cardboard or something.
- Roberta: Well I want to thank you.
- Mrs. Earl: You're welcome.
- Roberta: I really appreciate your time and I appreciate the information you're giving me on your sisters and some of the other members in the

community. This is the end of tape 1, side 2 and this concludes today's interview. Now before I forget I wanted to thank Mrs. Earl.

Mrs. Earl: You're welcome, you're quite welcome, my pleasure.

Roberta: This is Roberta Perkins again, we have some more information from Mrs. Earl. We have a little bit of a treat, extra piece of information here that she remembered so we are going to include that in the interview. Go ahead on with what you were just telling me after I just turned off the tape about your substitute teacher.

Mrs. Earl: We had a substitute teacher, her name was Miss Ethel Money, she used to come and substitute when Miss Ryder wasn't there. She was a fair lady too, she was kind of funny sometimes but she was a good lady.

Roberta: What do you mean by funny, how?

Mrs. Earl: She would say funny stuff to us, I remember her, she was a very nice lady. She lived on Pleasant Valley Road, that's where she was from. She would teach us. If Miss Ryder wasn't in she would come and teach us.

Roberta: Was her family part of the community?

Mrs. Earl: Yes they were related to the Grinnages.

Roberta: So what did she do when she wasn't substituting? Do you know? I think Miss Ethel was just a regular housewife.

Roberta: So did you have her substituting frequently?

Mrs. Earl: Only when like if Miss Ryder was sick or something or on vacation, Miss Money would come and teach us.

Roberta: Was she able to teach each individual grade?

Mrs. Earl: Yes she did the same thing Miss Ryder did. She taught us that way too.

Roberta: Do you know whether she was a licensed teacher or not?

Mrs. Earl: I really don't know.

Roberta: She must have been if she was brought in and when she wasn't working she was a housewife so she must have been certified by the state.

Roberta: Okay, if there's anything else that you know about or remember about Mrs. Money if you remember any of the funny things that happened.

Mrs. Earl: She was just a funny little lady she would say funny stuff to make us laugh some times.

Roberta: Okay, all right I think we will end it this time. I think we are finished this time, tape 1, side 2 and we are signing off for good this time.