

Lagatha Paysinger: Morrell's Mill

NT: Do you remember anything in particular about the years that you spent at Morrell's Mill? [back ground noise and voices]

LP: All the memories just flood my brain. I can remember so many people. I can remember helping, when my Daddy had to get an order of meal out. I can remember helping my Daddy, he taught us to, my sister Betty and me, the paper sacks that the meal was in, you had to squeeze the top of the sack, and loop these links of cotton thread, and I remember, I think I could still do that, because I did that so many times. Once you learn a thing, you know, it's hard to get away from it.

NT: Did the mill operate year round, or was it really seasonal in terms of?

LP: Well, it operated year round, because farmers would bring their corn to be ground for cow feed.

NT: Just a little bit at a time?

LP: Well, a wagon load. A wagon load. And they would sell it to the owner, you know, and it would be stored there, and then through some mechanism it would be shucked and shelled and ready to grind into meal. And at one time I remember my dad would, I remember him grinding whole wheat flour, making whole wheat flour. . .

LP: Where the farmers would come in, in trucks or wagons, they had to be weighed. So on the south side of this building, that was a store that my mother ran during the summer months, was the huge scale. And she would keep the weights for the, keep up with the weights so they could weigh full of their grain and empty of their grain, so they would know how to charge and all that kind of stuff. The mill itself was a sight to behold. It was a great place to play, the floors were so slick, because of all this stuff being pulled across them over the years. I guess they were pine floors. I remember knowing how to let the chute down so that we could pull the little sacks of meal, I think it was like 25 pound bags of meal, and we would pull those over. And the chute would go down to the back of the truck. And my Daddy would have a group, the order of meal, separate from what wasn't going out. And we would pull all this over to him and he would let it go down, but it was so much fun sometimes, to be able to let a sack of meal go down yourself, to see if the guy down there was going to be able to catch it. We would, when he had to get an order out and had to work at night, my mother would take us three little girls down there, and I remember her making us a bed on a stack of toe sacks, and we would sleep there until he closed the mill. And we had electric lights down there, we had electric lights at the house, we had electric lights at the store. But the turbines, the water had to be generating. You know, he had to be doing something like that first to have lights. Other than that, we had a lantern or kerosene lamp.