

Vivian Roland: No Street Lights in Elkton

VR: The last time we moved into a little garage apartment on a lot that had been a historical house, where a lady named Miss Lilly Reason lived. And of course, the man that bought the place built this garage apartment and then another two bedroom small frame house on that land down here on the corner of, I guess that's Market Street, isn't it? But anyway, at that time, when I came here, there was no street lights, there was no paved streets except Highway 31, through town, and it was dark, when you walked up the streets to the grocery store. And I'd say there was two or three grocery stores, a post office, and a tavern, and maybe a filling station. And the one that had the filling station housed where the bus stop was. And the Greyhound bus did come through here and stop, because a lot of people from this town rode the bus, back then, to Pulaski, to their jobs. That was about the only way, the only transportation they had, unless they had their own car, but not many people did that worked in Pulaski.

Vivian Roland: Old Highway 31

VR: When it, you come off the river bridge going north, you make, as you come off the river bridge on this north end of it, you made a right turn and it come around the bluff and come on up the hill, in front of what I told about, the tavern was on the right as you come up that hill. And of course there was stores then, after you got up to the top of the hill and on past the tavern, on the left side of the street. And seems like there was a building there that had a Mason Hall, up, upstairs over one of those buildings. And then further up north, on Highway 31, there was a Baptist church, and seems like the Methodist parsonage was on that street, it wasn't next to the Methodist church. But anyway, they did have that Baptist church after so many years after I came here. And then there was a school, on up further north, just off of 31, and it was on through the 12th grade.

Vivian Roland: Ooh, This is Really Tennessee

VR: Well, we'd go to Pulaski if we really wanted to shop, you know. And I remember the first year after we married and came up here, we went to Fayetteville to shop for Christmas. But, I can remember thinking, ooh this is really Tennessee, that old curvy road to Fayetteville!

Vivian Roland: Muddy Water

VR: That's another thing that I'd like to bring out, when we, when I first came here, I called it, every time it thundered, the water would get so muddy you couldn't even drink it, much less use it to wash clothes in. And of course I had an old wringer type washer and tin tubs, zinc tubs. But I think that people got to where people complained so much about it, you know, that they needed to do something about the water. And finally they got in with this South Giles Utility District, and that's when we got water. . . We stayed on what we called the spring water, and the cows would wander over the spring, you know, and all that. It was, it was awful.

Vivian Roland: Spring Street

NT: Now, has Spring Street always, right now it's a little dip down, has it always been that way or was it different?

VR: It went down that way, but then it went on to the river and they could ford the river down there below, see this big bridge wasn't here then, it was this old iron bridge.

NT: UmHm.

VR: And they could ford that, it was another road that went on down past this road now, and you could drive across it, because in the, when the, in the summer time it would get down low so you could drive across it. But now, well see, that little road that you can turn off after you get off the bridge over here, it went in, this road and Spring Street went across the river and went on over there and met in with this.

NT: Came out on the other side.

VR: UmHm. UmHm.

NT: Did the water level get low enough to where you could drive a car?

VR: UmHm. UmHm. Back then, they called it the sand bar.

Vivian Roland on Original Shady Lawn

NT: Now, do you remember when Shady Lawn was down here in Elkton?

VR: Over there where that church is now?

NT: Yes, ma'am.

VR: Yeah, I worked over there and kept books for them for a while, after. The Houcks owned it at first. They built it. And it was a Shell, you know the Shell people.

NT: UmHm.

VR: And they had a restaurant there and of course they, the owner's wife, she kept a nice place. And it had white tablecloths sometimes and sometimes checkered tablecloths. And then they sold it to a Mr. Willie McGee, of course he's dead now, all of them are dead now. And he wanted to know if I'd keep his books for him and get, you know, social security and pay roll taxes and withholding tax and all that, and I kept his books for him. Back then I had more knowledge than I do now [laughter].