

Interview

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(This interview is on tape)

Mr. Hurst was born in a home that was located about a half mile north of the present stable area. You can reach his homesite by going down the road where the garden areas are for residents then proceeding past them to the second dirt road to the right. His homesite is on the right and one can still find the remainder of the bricks from one of their two fireplaces there. He was the son of William H. Hurst, Jr. (1874-1939). His grandfather was William Hogan Hurst, Sr. Mr. Hurst was a carpenter. He married Velma Poplin of Stanley County, North Carolina. Velma taught in the Camp Lejeune Schools for twenty five years and at the N.C. School for the Blind in Raleigh for thirteen years.

Home life

A typical day began with the cutting and hauling of wood for the cook stove and fireplace. The animals were then fed and watered and the cows were milked. His family owned mules, horses, pigs, and a milk cow. All families did not own cows. The men and boys had to plow, plant and tend to the fields. Oats, cotton and tobacco were grown at that time. Fences had to be constantly repaired along with building repairs. The girls cooked, cleaned, and sewed. His mother made all their clothes at first and later ordered their clothes and shoes from the Sears Catalog. There were open wells and hand pumps to get water. There also were three mills in the area where they took their corn to be ground into meal.

Both their kitchen and dining room had a fireplace and were separated from the house but were connected by a breezeway. They had an iron cook stove. Flour came in a wooden barrel (196 lb.). Molasses was sold by the gallon and sugar came in a fifty pound cloth bag. In 1941, when the base took over, only fifty homes had electricity.

Entertainment

Children did not have many toys and the few they had were homemade. The girls had homemade dolls made of cloth and stuffed although a few had china dolls. Boys' baseballs were made of cotton thread that was wrapped and sewn together. Boys also hunted and what was killed was taken home to be eaten. It was also a time of enjoyment because it was a chance to be with others. He recalled the one bicycle that the whole family shared. It had wooden rimmed tires. The tires were clincher tires with inner tubes. The bike was made by the Wright Brothers who made the first airplane. He told about a toy that the boys had made called a Flying Jenny. They would cut a tree about six feet off the ground and would place another tree that was about forty feet across that like a seesaw. They would then put saddles on each end. The boys would get on both ends and someone would start them spinning around and going up and

down. It would go about thirty five miles an hour. They really loved to play on it but their parents put a stop to their fun when one of the boys was hit in the head and was knocked unconscious for three days.

Christmas

Christmas was a family time. He never recalls having a tree. He said that no one ever expected much for Christmas so you always appreciated what you got and didn't push for more. They usually got one toy, raisins, an orange, an apple, and three or four pieces of candy. All their decorations were homemade. When they got older they received socks or something else they needed.

Travel

In his youth, they traveled by horse and buggy, by boat or walked. They had two horses. In 1916, they got a Model T Ford for \$467.05. (Mr. Hurst has the original bill of sale for this car framed and hanging on the wall in his home today.) They owned this car for ten years. They went to the store about every three weeks. It was twelve miles from their home to Jacksonville. The road went up Piney Green to where Country Club Road is now to Hargett Street.

Beach

Onslow Beach was called Hurst Beach at that time. He remembers that on the second Saturday in May there was always a beach party that everyone attended. They traveled to the beach by boat.

In 1935, his older brother began to develop his beach property. There were sixty five cottages, a grocery store, cafe, bowling alley, electricity, and a ferry. Seventy five foot lots sold for \$350 but when the Base bought the lots they were paid only \$65.

School

The first school that he attended was a one room school. It had one teacher and individual desks. These desks were two seater desks. There was a work table, wood burning stove, hand pump for water and an outhouse. Grades one through nine were in the same room. The subjects he took were reading, writing, and arithmetic. Later he took geography and economics. In 1915, school lasted five months but by the time he went to high school in Jacksonville schools were open for eight months. High School at this time was only eleven grades. He recalls that one year he had to drop out of school for the entire year when his mother was sick with diabetes. It was his job to keep house. He was the middle child, and his father felt that if he let one of the older children stay home, they would not go back to school and the younger ones were not yet able to do the work. Many children did not finish school in those days because they were needed to work at home. Before the schools consolidated, the only way

someone could go to school was to move in with a relative in Jacksonville.

Impact of Move

Mr. Hurst went on to say that there were 652 families that had to move. The Marines gave people different dates to move depending upon where they lived on base. His family was told that they had to move by May 1. They moved to their cottage at the beach but thirty days later they were told they had to move again. He worked in a store for a short period of time and then the family moved to Wilmington where he worked in the shipyard. They stayed there for a while and then moved back to this area.

He told us that people were bitter at first but not for long. He said things were a lot different than they are today because if the government told you to do something then you did it and didn't question it.