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Interview no. 1582

Sam McNeill

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Sam McNeill

Interviewer: Mike Bowman

Project: Bracero Oral History Project

Location: England, Arkansas

Date of Interview: September 25, 2008

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Transcript No.: 1582

Transcriber: _____

Farmer in England, Arkansas, who employed Bracero in late 1950's. Employed 90 Mexicans. Housed in old school. Dispute over wages settled by Mexican Consulate. He learned well digging techniques. Worker purchased gun and accidently shot himself in leg.

Length of Interview 43 minutes

Length of Transcript 22 pages

Name of Interviewee: Sam McNeill
Date of Interview: 25 September 2008
Name of Interviewer: Mike Bowman

MB: Testing, one, two. Okay, I guess we're just gonna skip the microphone and use this. Okay. I apologize again. You were talking about making the transition from mechanical to –

SM: To mechanical from mule drawn equipment.

MB: Mule drawn equipment to mechanical.

SM: Sharecropping. And just progress in Arkansas on the cotton farms that just changed over.

MB: And what year was this?

SM: In the early '50s.

MB: And this was here on this farm?

SM: On this farm, yes. I think we had 30 mules out here in the lot and enough men's hands to work them all, all the mules. So we got a barn out there. It's still a concrete mule lot. That would keep them out of the muddy water, and we had a stockpot back there. You didn't have to sit around and pump water on Sunday. You'd just go out in the pond and drink, but we did have a stock tank in the lots where we had them penned up. They could get water there. And we'd bring them in at noon. They'd give them some corn, and they'd get watered. Then you'd harness them back up after noon, and go back to the field. The colored people, they knew how to handle their mules. They would get overheated they'd rest them occasionally when they were cultivating in the summertime. Anyway, we had a problem getting the cotton out of the field because we had fewer people on

the place. And since we're way out of Little Rock, we did have people hauling hands from Little Rock down to here.

MB: They were doing what?

SM: To pick cotton because they were scarce. And there was a lot of cotton between here and Little Rock and they wouldn't have to go as far to pick cotton. So, we decided to try some Mexicans. So we had a guy had a truck. He went down to the border and picked some up and brought them up here. Ninety Mexicans. We had an old schoolhouse that we put 90 bunks in it to take care of the people. And we built a mess hall, and we had kerosene stoves for them to cook on. They were right interested if they saw some of your soybeans in the bin, they'd help themselves to them and figure out if they could cook them, just like they would be shelled peas. I don't know how, I never did ask them if they tasted all right, but I bet they did. You use a lot of hot sauce, you can make anything taste good. So, we had a commissary here on the farm. And when you had ninety strangers come and they'd wanna buy something, it took care of all the people on the farm that you could muster to look after them, wait on them, and help them pick out what they wanted and take their money. And they pretty well knew how to convert our dollars into their pesos. And everything that they bought here was in dollars and cents. So that wasn't too great a problem, but the fellow that ran the store, he'd always get sick about the time he knew we had the Mexicans. And we'd be together and they'd bail out and take care, but he just didn't like that much responsibility. So everybody [that] could read and write and speak English would get in there and take care of those people. And on weekends, they'd go to England or Richardson (?), a little cotton town, and they would go out there and spend some money. One of the funny incidents, or sad in a way. One of the young Mexican boys bought a pistol from one of the merchants somewhere in England there and he was carrying it around in his jeans. He accidentally shot himself in the groin! He missed all the vital parts, I think, but we had to get him to the University of Arkansas Hospital in Little Rock and they treated him. He lost

several days being up there when he couldn't pick cotton. So, [inaudible] and one day I was riding to go across the field to pick cotton and it was the funniest thing, I saw these, looked like tire treads, going across and down the dusty road. And I figured out finally that they find the old tires and whittle out a pair of shoes out of those tires and put it on their feet and wear it. Just looked like different treads, different tires going across the field. That was the lighter side of some of the things. I always thought that the more Mexicans you had, the more problems. Sometimes they'd come up and want a wage increase. Whatever it was, we always paid by the pound for picking cotton. And the country was sitting on \$3.00 a hundred weight or whatever it was, \$3.50 maybe the next year. One time they wanted to see the consulate. One came from Memphis over here. They sent them, I guess, [inaudible] them down to us, too, a little bit. So all in all our experience with the migratory labor was pleasant. After we initially hauled some of them here, we sent and got some people down on the border to haul them up here and look after them. They would bring one or two truckloads up to wherever, however many we'd get that year, close to 90, and they lived across the border to Mexico. And one of the things they wanted to buy while they were here in the States, while they were up here, was pitcher plumbing. They wanted to put out a well. You could drive a well in the ground, two-inch pipe, get a two-inch stream of water if you hit the right spot. They'd buy a screen which is about five, six feet long that'd go on the end of it and they'd drive it down to where they hit a stream of water and they could pump the water out. And they would. They'd take them back to their villages. That got them water instead of lifting it out of a well.

MB: So they would learn how to make a well here?

SM: They observed our wells here, and then we explained what you had to have. You had to have a point or a screen to put in the ground first. Then you go up 50, 60 feet deep. You'd drive a two-inch pipe. You had a driver. We told them how to make a driver. You had something like an old axle that went down inside the

pipe, then you had a piece of metal, bigger, and you filled it full of lead to add weight. We showed them how to make them a tripod with a pulley on it. Group of men, we drove our own wells here with the colored people. And that way, when they got home they could make them a well. And so, that's something. They were looking for new ways to improve themselves. So, they cooked. They like tortillas. I guess every man did his own cooking, or group of men cooperated and split it up. They seemed to enjoy it. Of course, when it got cold, we hoped that we're through over picking on the cotton and through before they wanted to get home. They wanted to go home about the first cold, wet spell we had. Get back to their own families.

MB: Let me go back just for a minute to the very beginning here when you said there was a group of men around here decided they were gonna go to Mexico to get some workers to come back up here. Who made those decisions? Was there an organization or a cotton gin?

SM: Well, maybe the gins helped do that- helped organize. We had a little coffeepot gin out here ginning their own cotton and the neighbors' cotton around the country, but it was important to get your cotton out of the field and hire pickers, and so association of groups of people, maybe there was several gins involved. So and so needed 60 heads (hands?) or 90 or 80, but I think some of the groups that had an old tenant's house needed about five to six men. It was pretty efficient. You didn't have much problem with five or six. The more people you had, the more troubles. They wanted everybody to have his own input.

MB: Was this part of the Bracero program or was this a decision that people made on their own to go to Mexico?

SM: Well, I really wasn't sure. You might have had older people that hadn't been using more Braceros. We just used them about two years. We got in between the end of the hand picking with local labor or hauled in labor from Little Rock. That

was beginning to phase itself out, time for change. The advent of the cotton pickers what came. A fellow named Russ built a cotton picker in Pine Bluff and we bought one of those. And it wasn't as successful as we thought it would be. Then the next picker we bought was a John Deere, a one-row picker. And that helped us get the cotton out. The next picker we bought was an International two-row. We didn't have anymore Braceros.

MB: What happened to the labor around here that made you decide to go to Mexico and get the labor?

SM: They'd retired. The older people that'd grown up here, they just weren't able to do things. Their kids, they did have to pick and chop when they were home getting their education. They'd go to high school and then they're out on other jobs for young people that were willing to work. Many of them have gone to the northern cities from here. Chicago, Cleveland, Dayton, Detroit. They went there to get jobs and they competed and stayed. And now you've got people who are coming back here since they've had a career in the cities and working in the factories. They have retirement and they've come back to Arkansas to live in the community. By then, if the family owned 40 or 80 acres of land, they had enough money to build a house. They like the Southern atmosphere I guess, even though they had to go somewhere else to make their living.

MB: What about the black people that worked on the farms? Did they retire?

SM: Social Security or some people drew welfare and we let people live in the houses as long as they wanted to because we had them here. After they were gone, we tore most of the houses down. We still got one, two, three houses that people live in that have been old retainers, so to speak.

MB: Now when the truckload of the Bracero workers came here, where did the truck go and how were they distributed around the farms?

SM: Well, we had a main house and a schoolhouse that had 90 bunks in it. Room for 90 people, and that's where we put the people we brought here. A lot of the other people, if they got some, maybe had a tenant house that they put 6 people in, or eight or ten, depending on how many hands they were gonna use. So people just sorted out from their own needs.

MB: Now, you said that you had 90 working on this farm?

SM: Picking cotton, yes. For about one or two years max.

MB: And you said they lived in a schoolhouse?

SM: In the bunks of the schoolhouse. And then we had a mess hall we built, put tables and places for the kerosene stoves. And then we had the kerosene, some heaters that you put around to provide heat. We didn't expect them to get out and cut wood or something like that.

MB: Now I've heard that the government had requirements about their living conditions. Were you aware of those requirements or anything like that?

SM: Yeah, we had pitcher pumps over there and a place for them to shower, and we had the stoves available to cook on, and for heating purposes too, kerosene stoves. We pretty well knew what to expect and we made do with what we had till we could do better.

MB: Did you ever have anybody from the U.S. government or, you had mentioned, the Mexican consulate, come up here to inspect the facilities?

SM: Out in Memphis, they had a consulate over there, and we had a few questions and problems, so he came over here. We got everything, I guess, as far as I know, straightened out, and when they got ready to go home, they went home.

MB: What type of problems did you have?

SM: Somebody'd want more money than the going wage we were paying. With that person, it's still been that way ever since. You have somebody short of labor hiring two, three, four Mexicans and when they hear better pay somewhere else, they're heading that way. So they got a great mind for working, but I was out of it after two years. And that's been in the early '50s.

MB: Do you know how the consulate worked out the problem? You know, how the problem was resolved?

SM: I guess he could talk those people into – that was there – being treated well enough here, that they ought to cooperate. They're here a short time.

MB: Okay. I talked to a gentleman yesterday who said that when the truck would come to town, that it was his job to take up passports and that he would make notes that this person was No. 1, this person was No. 2, so on and so forth, and he kept a ledger. Did you have any type of paperwork or any type of processes like that that you remember?

SM: No, we had nothing like that. If we had anything, our store burnt in 1978, and the IRS was checking on me. And when the store burnt, I was out in California on a trip. It was in early spring. The little girl that was looking at my books said, "I wish I could see his books one more time." [Laughing.] And she was from somewhere over there in east Jonesboro, and she didn't understand that we bought rubber boots because we wore them to work in with the rice and cotton, and said her dad never did charge anything like that and all. Finally, she married a Air

Force boy and finally, before I returned, she and her husband got in a lawsuit with the government, the IRS.[Laughing.] So I thought, “Well, every dog has his day.”

MB: That’s right. Tell me what kind of work they did. Were they good workers?

SM: Yes. It’s piece work you do, picking cotton. We wrote it down or you had the crew leaders that wrote it down. You’d pay him to do that.

MB: Who were the crew leaders?

SM: Well, the Mexicans that could speak English. They might have been Texas Mexicans. They might have had free range over both sides of the border down there, you know.

MB: So if there was someone in the group that could speak English, they were automatically the crew leader?

SM: I guess so. We couldn’t understand them, they couldn’t understand us if they were from way out in the village down there.

MB: What type of job responsibilities did a crew leader have?

SM: Well, he would try to get them to the fields. A few gonna have to drive them. Most of the time they walked on this farm. He’d take them to town on Saturday night. They’d give him a little money out of their wages. They’d pay a fee, and they were the ones that bought the pipes for pumps to carry back to old Mexico.

MB: When you say they went to town on Saturday night, how’d they get there?

SM: In a truck.

MB: Who provided the truck?

SM: The first year I guess we got them up here on a trailer truck that was a seed truck at the cotton gin. But on Saturday night, if they wanted to go out there in the seed trucks, I guess the man that owned the truck or had his driver take them would charge them a fee, \$0.50, right when he goes. If he took 50 people out there at \$0.50 apiece, that's a nice little piece of change, \$25.00, and gas was cheap then. You couldn't do it for that now though, can you?

MB: So when they got to town on Saturday night, what would they do?

SM: Look in the stores and wander and look. Then it's time to go home about 10:00, and you'd start gathering them up to bring back out to the farm.

MB: Would they purchase anything in the stores?

SM: Well, we had a little commissary over here. Yes, they got some foodstuff like bread, but they like their tortillas. I see them shopping now in Long Oak, the Mexican people that are working up on some minnow farms or other type of fish farms. They like hot food, sauce. That's just normal, I guess, of their upbringing and taste.

MB: Did they ever buy any products? The gentleman yesterday said that when they would go to town that they loved to buy pocketknives.

SM: Oh yeah. That's where the gun came in.

MB: Okay.

SM: Well, you know, guns, that's something [they] never had the money for and up here, they'd buy them and take them home.

MB: Did they buy clothing?

SM: Yes, I'm sure. Well, they made their own shoes. We figured that out. Out of old tires. That's sort of what they wore everyday. Now they might have had some cowboy Western style boots. They might have wore them a tad.

MB: How did the merchants treat them when they would come to town?

SM: Well, they treated them all right as far as I knew. They, I think they appreciated their business, coming in there to look. And I don't think thievery was any problem, and I didn't know about it if it was.

MB: When they went to town on Saturday night, did they get involved in any type of entertainment?

SM: Nothing I knew of. I didn't go to town with them.

MB: Okay. Well, again, the gentleman yesterday told me they would go to town in his area and they would sometimes go to bars and –

SM: Drink? Might have picked up women for all I know. That'd be the normal thing for Mexicans, but they couldn't find any of their own kind up here.

MB: What did they do for fun?

SM: I don't know.

MB: I saw a picture somewhere where you had a group playing musical instruments and singing. Were there ever any activities like that in their spare time?

SM: Not that I knew of if they brought any. I think these were real (rural?)Mexicans that came up and wanted to make a little money and take some of it home. And I think they were thrifty with the necessities, and I think they do the same thing on down through the years. What you read about, they send a lot of money back to their people. In other words, they hope to make enough money up here. They remember their family and the poverty at home and they want to go back with a little money in their pocket where they can improve what they have. And I've been in Mexico a few times traveling, sightseeing, and you see they did a lot of things for themselves. They have the brick, the mud bricks that they make. I think they're a people with a certain amount of pride. I think they have a lot of pride, trying to better themselves.

MB: Now, you said when they went to town they would buy food to bring back to prepare.

SM: We had food over here at the little store. They could buy during the week, anything like canned goods or whatever.

MB: And they would prepare their own food?

SM: Yes, they did that.

MB: And they had stoves in the place?

SM: Yes, in the mess hall.

MB: What type of food would they prepare?

SM: I didn't pay too much attention. I know they cooked beans and they tried the soybean. I don't know if they ever got a taste for, or yenning for them, or not.

MB: Did they bring food with them in the field?

SM: I imagine what they did was cook something and fill up in the morning. And they'd get out there and work until they thought they were tired or ready to go back and cook again in the evening.

MB: Were they hard workers?

SM: I thought so. Anybody'd pick cotton thought it was hard work. [Laughter.]

MB: I heard stories about how they would generally pick more cotton than some of the other folks who were traditionally working in the fields. Did you have that experience?

SM: Well, we didn't have them side by side. We gave them their place and put trailers there and had somebody to dump the trailers, dump the sacks when they'd pick it. And that's how you got a lot of gin fires. If they had matches in their pocket, those matches would fall out and get in the cotton. When they ginned the cotton, if it went through the cleaning system and everything without setting it on fire, if you got it into those gin saws, could strike a match. That was something you had to watch out for was fire in cotton then.

MB: So did any of the Mexicans ever work with any of the black people or any of the white people that lived in this area? Did they ever work close together?

SM: Not really, that I knew of.

MB: Okay, so you pretty much kept everybody –

SM: Segregated, so to speak.

MB: Was there ever any resentment by any of the people who normally did work around here that you had this labor here and other people may not be getting those jobs?

SM: I don't think so. There [was] more cotton than there were people to pick it, I guess. That's how we got into mechanical picking. There wasn't enough folks to pick it all by hand.

MB: Now let's suppose some of the smaller farms had finished all their work and you still had a lot of work here on your big farm. Would some of those Mexicans come over?

SM: Well, I don't remember, but they could have been. I think they've got a time to go back home and when that time comes, they're gonna leave. And if we had some mechanical means to finish up the harvest, we could do it that way.

MB: Now you mentioned that they had their own grapevine in terms of so and so is paying more.

SM: Yeah, that's true up to right now. They get wind of folks with the cell phones, and their buddies. If they were driving tractors here for a day or helping some fellow put in his crop or cultivating it, if they got wind there's a better job, I think they'd probably hit you up for a raise.

MB: Did they get to choose which farm that they wanted to work on?

SM: You hired them sight unseen that come up here. You put them on [inaudible].

MB: Okay. If there's any time we need to take a break, let me know or we need to pause a minute because, I mean, I've got a million questions, but if you need to take a break, let me know.

SM: Yeah, well, let's take a break.

MB: Okay. All right.

SM: Maybe you'll make something happen good.

MB: Oh, you're doing a fine job. Again, I talked to a guy yesterday and he told me that he interacted with the Mexican workers and what would happen is they would teach him Spanish and they would teach him things. Did you or any of the other farmers around here strike up any kind of relationships?

SM: Well, we tried to learn some of their words at the store and learned leche, milk, that's just one of the words. You learn a little bit. It rubbed off on you if you stayed with it.

MB: Did they ever tell you any stories or anything like that about their home?

SM: No, I didn't get into that. We weren't in that close communication. I think they respected us and we respected them, [inaudible]. And certainly, they keep coming back. We got lots of them now and they're going all over the whole United States pretty well. I see people, I talk to friends in North Carolina. You've got Mexicans building homes or buying trailers and putting them on lots. And they send money homes to their families still in this generation.

MB: Now you said that you had 90 people living in a schoolhouse.

SM: Yeah.

MB: Sometimes when you have that many people living so close together –

SM: Yeah, that can cause some problems, I imagine.

MB: Were there any type of problems that you remember?

SM: No, they didn't have any. The accidental, the fellow shot himself with the pistol stuck down his jean top. But as far as we knew, if they had troubles, they'd keep it over there. About a quarter of a mile across here is where we had the old school house we built. We had a latrine and it had a force pump, what we call a pitcher pump, so I guess we met most the standards and all the recommendations they put out to us or they wouldn't let us have that many, I don't believe.

MB: Now the guy who shot himself, after he was taken care of, what happened to him?

SM: Well, I guess he came out here and picked cotton. And he went and caught the same truck back to the border, I imagine.

MB: So they didn't send him back for having a gun or anything like that?

SM: Accidental.

MB: Okay. Well, let's talk about the medical care. If anybody got sick or if anybody was injured, or anything like that, how were they treated?

SM: We sent them to the local doctors. Treated them just like anybody else. Fortunately, that didn't happen. Thank goodness, the one I think that got shot accidentally, we carried him to the University Hospital.

MB: And that was in Little Rock?

SM: Little Rock, yeah. And I'm sure I went up there maybe. I'm the guy that might have checked him in.

MB: Who paid for that? His treatment or anybody's treatment.

SM: Actually, everybody has farm liability insurance. We don't want somebody suing us for a big bunch or a little bunch, so we carried farmer's liability.

MB: Okay.

SM: And that probably took care of it.

MB: Did they use any special kind of tools or anything like that when they worked in the fields, or was it just bare hands?

SM: Well, that's it. Gloves and bare hands, picking that cotton, dragging that sack. You grew up there. Did they pick cotton by hand when you were a young fellow?

MB: A little bit.

SM: Not much.

MB: Not much. Not much.

SM: Yeah, folks got smart.

MB: The gentleman yesterday told me that what his Braceros would do is they would take two cotton sacks and somehow put them together so they could pick more cotton and get more money. Did you see anything like that?

SM: I don't think so. I've heard of it. They had the gift of picking cotton. Most of the colored people rather pick cotton because you'd get paid for what you picked when you do. If you're paying the amount there and everybody gets the same, chopping cotton, whether it's \$3.00 a day or \$4.00 or \$5.00, whatever it was, you paid your people.

MB: How many days a week would they work?

SM: Some of them worked six days.

MB: And I'm assuming Sunday they would take off.

SM: Yeah, and I'd say Saturday afternoon if they went to town. A lot of them just worked five. They had that day and Sunday to wash their clothes and clean up, cut each other's hair if they need it.

MB: Cut each other's hair?

SM: I imagine they did.

MB: Okay. Did they attend any church services or anything like that?

SM: We didn't have anything but the colored church right up the road. I'd say if you had a Spanish population in some of these little towns, the chances are they'd go to their Catholic church. I guess most all you Mexicans are Catholic.

MB: Did they worship among themselves on Sunday or anything like that?

SM: I don't know. I don't know.

MB: Okay. What was the average day like? What time did they get started?

SM: Well, you pick cotton when the dew gets off. Some of them gonna bead a little bit, pick a little down the rowing, but they'd get wet too. From dew till dew falls. Until the dew goes away in the morning until it starts in the evening.

MB: So that would be sometime around sunrise, maybe, or –

SM: No, about 9:00, 10:00 is when the dew gets off.

MB: Okay.

SM: You get out here and go get your paper at 8:00 now and there's dew all over your car and your windshield.

MB: And so they would begin work at that point and work for what? Until lunchtime or did they work through lunch?

SM: I imagine they carried a lunch with them. They didn't want to have to go back and cook. That's where they ate the tortillas, I guess. Whatever.

MB: Did they take a lot of breaks?

SM: No, not that I knew of.

MB: How did the crew leader – what was his, again, job out in the field?

SM: He'd weigh the cotton, keep a record of it. Somebody'd have to – I don't know how we did it. I've forgotten. We probably paid off every day.

MB: Was the crew leader paid more?

SM: I don't know. He was compensated for his time. If he owned the truck – he was kind of the cut above since he could do English and do arithmetic.

MB: Was the crew leader, was he Mexican?

SM: Some of them were, yeah. I think a lot of them were.

MB: And so would the crew leaders live here?

SM: Right there in the camp with the rest of them.

MB: But after the workers went back, would the crew leaders stay here in this area?

SM: I think they went on back to their own homes in Mexico.

MB: Okay.

SM: That's why they carried those pitchers. Those go to put out wells in their community.

MB: And how long did you use the Mexican workers? And this was what? About 195- –

SM: '51 or '52 or '53, somewhere in there.

MB: How many years did you use those workers?

SM: About two or three. We'd do something better.

MB: What was the reason you stopped using them?

SM: John Deere made a two-row picker and International [Harvester] had a two-row picker.

MB: So it was mechanization that –

SM: Took care of it.

MB: Took care of everything. Okay. What about for the folks who –

SM: People at Lake City used them all summer to – for the – we didn't have them either, chemicals. Weed control. And those people kept people's cotton clean or fairly clean, or walked in a cut down the big stuff that'd tear up a cultivator or a cotton picker when it goes through the harvest in the fall.

MB: So they did other work than just pick cotton?

SM: Not here, but Lake City used a lot of migrant labor to cultivate, clean out the cotton, get it ready for the fall.

MB: For some of the farmers who may not be able to afford a tractor, did they still use the Braceros at that time?

SM: I don't know. I don't think so. It was time for tractors when they came in. People would trade up. Go to banks and say, "I got a pair of mules. I want to trade it on a tractor." You'd get a trade going. There was a lot of that going on. And they'd take the mules and do something else with them. Take them out of the cotton fields. And of course, people used horses and mules in the haying operations. They had a place for them. A lot of people used horse drawn equipment maybe up through the '50s, but then you got your kids growing up. Society thinks more mechanically and [inaudible] mowing machine and the hay rake.

MB: Was there ever a time while they were here and it rained?

SM: Oh, yeah.

MB: And they couldn't work in the fields.

SM: They'd sit around in their camp, I guess. Played cards. They may gamble. That might have been what they did. I never did go around them much. They had their privacy and I had mine. I think we all respected each other.

MB: Okay. Was there any other stories that you can think of or any other things come to mind?

SM: Not really. [Inaudible], to tell you the truth, laugh about something that happened come true on mine, but I had thought about it and I don't think of anything earth shattering.

MB: How would you evaluate the experience of their work and them working in this area and things like that?

SM: Well, it was a necessary thing. We needed the cotton picked, and we didn't have the local labor. There just wasn't none. So they served a good purpose while they were here. And they're still doing that here in America, if you stop and think. It isn't only the cotton fields in particular because we're pretty well mechanized, but you have the Spanish influence from the [inaudible] farming in the valley all the way up here. You'd have people that work in the hospitals, orderlies at some time or another, maintenance people. Dairymen used Mexican groups. When you milk cows three times a day, 7/24, they had some good jobs in the dairy, or, not to say good jobs, they were steady jobs, there every day.

MB: Somebody told me that they would pick the fields clean. That some of the other non-Mexican workers would leave a lot of cotton in the field, but the Mexicans would pick the field clean.

SM: I would say that, pretty good. But I think most of the people growing up here did a pretty fair job. The one reason I didn't pay all that much attention, when we got through with the cotton field, we put the cattle in there. They ate the little white pieces of cotton. That was part of our wintering process. We might plant some ryegrass with a plane that would give us a little cover crop and we'd turn the cattle out there, and that's how we figured they'd eat the cotton bolls. If you had boll weevil problems they were over with, and then the cotton [inaudible]. You add cattle on to them and we was gonna – over winter then, they'd have to go to the woods and get behind the bark on a tree or something.

MB: Well, all right then.

End of Interview