Looking Back:
Phate Hodges
Remembers Old Times

Mrs. Phate Hodges.

Article by Russell Morlock

Long before there were cars, Phate Hodges walked along the dusty unpaved roads of eastern North Carolina on his way to school or perhaps to work in the cotton fields, which were the "money" crop then.

Now, 90 years later, Phate reminisces about his early life, giving us insights into what life was like in Pitt and Beaufort counties around the turn of the century.

Phate lives in a small brick house across
from Runyon Hills, in Washington, North Carolina. His old homeplace is a couple of blocks away. He owns quite a bit of land which he has farmed all his life, raising tobacco, mainly. The hard work of farming shows in his weathered face and hands.

He is quick to smile as are so many people who have lived close to the earth. He smiled as he greeted us at the door and invited us into the living room where we began to talk about his early life.

Phate, Mr. Armstrong, and I were joined by Phate's wife, Mrs. Hodges, and his daughter, Mrs. Annie Ree MacIehorn. We were fortunate to talk not only to Phate but to these two ladies, who added greatly to the story, by helping Phate remember details from long ago.

When were you born?

March the 4th, 1893; it was 90 years ago.

Where was it?

A little ol' town they called Grimesland.

Annie Ree: "It's in Pitt county."

Well, what are your earliest memories of home?

Well, what most of all I remember then was going to school. I weren't but about eight or nine years old then when I was going to school. I left there [Grimesland] and come down and went to Greenville and went to school.

What subjects did you take?

I didn't have any, [didn't] mess with any studies. I don't know of anything. Didn't take no particular subjects.

Spelling?

Spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic—that's it. That's all we took.

How did you get to school?

I walked. I'd say it was somewhere roughly around two miles. It won't quite two miles.

What did your father do?

My father, well, he was kind of what you might call a farmer. Of course, he didn't do much farming. But that's all you could call it—tobacco, tobacco business.

Mrs. Hodges: "They called Phate's father a house carpenter. He built and repaired houses."

So your father was a carpenter as well as a farmer?

Yes. He worked on the outside. What you might call a carpenter. Used a hammer, saw, and square. That's all they had then.

Yes. But he farmed as well?

Yes, with the time he had, you know.

What did he grow?

Well, tobacco and cotton and corn.
Yes, in the fields.

What did you do?

I didn't do too much 'cause I was so young. [Laughing] Picking cotton is the biggest thing, pick it out!

How did you pick it?

It burrows about this thick [showing with his fingers], you know. You seen cotton, ain't you? You just take it and pull it out. Put it in a sack.

You carried the sack with you?

Put it back around your neck; then, when you got it full, you emptied it.

What did your mother do?

House work--cooking, cleaning, doing things like that.

What kind of food did you eat at home?

Well, sweet potatoes was one of the biggest [staples], sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, collards, things like that.

Annie Lee: "Ask him how he likes peas. He don't like peas."

How do you like peas?

Peas? Well, I don't care nothin' about peas!

Mrs. Hodges: "He says when he found out they were going to have peas for dinner, he wouldn't go to the house. And his brother said he could pick 200 pounds of cotton, and he couldn't get a hunger for peas to save his life."

What kind of meat did you eat?

Well, a little hog meat was most of what we ate. Hog meat was about all we ate.

You killed your own hogs?

Well, he [Phate's father] did; I didn't. I was so young. I didn't know then, but I done what I could, you see.

How did he cure it?

Cure it? Well, they just salted it up; that's all they done.

Mrs. Hodges: "Now and then, they let it lay there for three weeks. They washed that salt off and put it in the smoke house and built a fire in there for smoking. Now you can get smoked meat, but it's a liquid put on there. But then they put it in the smoke house in what they called a smoke house, and they put a little smoke. You'd build your fire and smother it with an apple tree; it was better smoke. You couldn't smoke it with just anything. Hickory was used a lot."

[Let me tell you] how I cleaned that hog out here. [We would put the] meat in water in a barrel; that was an old timey way. And put him in the barrel and scrape the hair off of him. Take a knife and scrape him down.

Did you jog him in the barrel?

Yes, up and down. [Then] scrape the hair
off, and then maybe the next day put him in the house and put him in a barrel to cure. [Then] salt it up.

Mrs. Hodges: "Before they done that, they really hung the meat up overnight. Next day they took it and cut it up. They cut the hams off, shoulders off, and they cut what they called the backbone then."

How about milk?

Milk? We didn't have any. We didn't have any cows to mess with milk. We bought butter mostly and used it that way.

Annie Ree: People kept the milk in the well. You put it in the jug and let it down the well. You see, when they [her parents] were younger, they told us all that.

Mrs. Hodges: "But it wasn't a milk jug, like you might think about. You tied a string to it and let it down that well, and that well was a hole dug down into the ground."

How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Well, I had 12 or 13, I believe it is.

Mrs. Hodges: "You made the 13th!"

[Laughing] there was four sisters and the rest of them brothers.

They all worked along with your mom and dad?

Yes. [But] they worked off sometimes when they got a good job, you know, and when they didn't have one to the house, you know, they just went off. Somebody would hire them, and they'd work a day or two out there. That's all I can say about that.

Did any of you ever go very far away to work?

No, not too far away. Just what you might say out in the country.

Mrs. Hodges: "They called it the neighborhood is what they called it—the people who lived around you in the country."

Were there some real rich people, some big farmers, that lived around you back then?

No, there were just a few who you would call wealthy people them days. There were about one or two families had good farms, good houses to live in, and they went with the other [well-to-do] people. That's about all I can say about that.

When you started working away from home, what did you do?

What you call blocking out cotton with a hoe. Cotton was the biggest thing then. I can remember going over to Grimesland to get the cotton ginned. The Proctors [a wealthy family] got gins, and gins got the seeds out of there—from the lint.

How about going to church?

We didn't go too much to church.

Annie Ree: "About once a month was all they had church."
Mrs. Hodges: "The Proctors owned what you might say was Grimesland. It was just a little town; that's all it is. They had the store there, you see, and sold merchandise. They sold everything them days—what you wear, what you eat, I mean what you had to buy. You usually bought sugar, coffee, and flour and meat; sometimes you'd carry your own meal to the mill."

Annie Ree: "They had mills to grind your meal."

Mrs. Hodges: "Yes. They'd grind it by water at Williamston, used to, but they don't now, not that I know of."

Was the church right there at Grimesland?

No, that was off on the sidelines, [on a] creek, some creek, you know.

Everyone came from all around to go to church?

Yes, best I can tell you.

Was it a pretty big affair?

[Laughing] I reckon I don't really know!

Mrs. Hodges: "He don't know because he did not go to church much when he was growing up."

People didn't go to church then, but I went to church more than most of them people—any of them. I started to go when I was about eight or nine years old, going to church, Sunday school, what may be called a Sunday school, over in Greenville.

When did you move to Greenville?

I was about ten years old, ten or eleven years old, somewhere around there [1903].

At this point, Mrs. Hodges remembered a story from her girlhood days, before she married Phate.

Mrs. Hodges: "We lived in the house when I was growing up—and up until I was grown and near 'bout ready to get married—with two old men that fought in the war."

The Civil War?

Mrs. Hodges: "The Civil War, I reckon. We always called it The First War."

That was the North and South fighting, you know. It wasn't a regular war; it was a war, too, but I don't know the story. I didn't never learn much about that. You see, the North and South couldn't agree on things until they had to go to war to settle it, you see.

Mrs. Hodges: "But these two old men had come to live there. We all lived in the same house, you see, and we let the one old man come from the soldiers' home, the old soldiers' home in Raleigh—that's what you'd call it. That's where he was living, and we give him a chance to come live with this other old man in the room with him, you see. And he could talk to him, and he would talk to him. But we children wasn't allowed to say nothing much to him because he didn't love to mess with children no way. He wouldn't say much to you."

Those two old soldiers fought together in the war?
Mrs. Hodges: "Fought together in the war, so we let him come there."

He had no place to stay?

Mrs. Hodges: "Well, he had Raleigh and the old soldiers' home, but we gave him a chance to come down and live with this old man to be a company to him. Well, it is something really unusual, this man of whom I'm speaking of. He was a Bell, and he give us 190 acre of land, just give it to us. It was heavy timber, and we loved him for it. How it all happened, he and my daddy fished together a lot, and he was getting tired of the way things were going around his home. He had nobody but himself, so he asked my daddy, he said, 'What if I say you could have my farm if you take me in and take care of me for the rest of my life?' My daddy said, 'Well, I don't know what I'd say.' He said, 'Well, you can have it if you take care of me.' So we took care of him until 19 and 10."

He died in 1910?

Mrs. Hodges: "Yes, 1910."

Was your father a farmer?

Mrs. Hodges: "Yes, he was a farmer; he farmed the land after he give it to us."

What was the main crop? Was it timber?

Mrs. Hodges: "No, we didn't bother with the timber. The timber was sold after he [the old Confederate soldier] died, so he [daddy] farmed cotton, corn, and some tobacco, not a whole lot, but some tobacco."

Did you help with the farming?

Mrs. Hodges: "Yes, [laughing] I got out and blocked that cotton off a many a time, and I helped pick some of it."

When you say "block it off," what do you mean?

Mrs. Hodges: "You see, you just went over it with a hoe, and you chopped here and chopped there."

Annie Ree: "Well, what they done, they sowed it, and then they chopped it the width you wanted the stalks to stand. You are thinning out. A hoe is about the width you want to chop."

When you were picking cotton, would there be a wagon pulled by a mule for you to put the cotton in?

Mrs. Hodges: "To haul it to the house there was. Phate pulled a bag of cotton down the rows many a time—may seem funny to you all—with our oldest son. When he was about from 16 months to two years old, he'd get on the bag of cotton, and Phate'd drag him along!"

Yeah!

Annie Ree: "What they used to have, they had two bags that yielded 200 pounds of fertilizer. They put a strap on it and put it on your shoulder and you'd just drag it."

So you'd use a fertilizer bag for the cotton sack?
Annie Ree: "Yes. And you used to tie you some strips on it, put it around your neck, and drag it."

Mrs. Hodges: "We could pick them up, just like 800 pounds of fertilizer, and throw them in the cart."

Did you have cows and horses?

Mrs. Hodges: "We did."

We just had old carts with wheels, great big ole wheels on there. Horses and mules pulled them.

When is the first time you had a tractor?

Well, now, 'bout 20 years ago.

Annie Ree: "It was around the 1950s first time he had any tractor around here."

What did you think about that tractor when you got it?

[Laughing] I thought that was something. You know, I could plow all day with a team and only cover about two acres. But when I got the tractor, I could turn out about eight or ten acres. That's a difference, you know, four or five times as much.

Mrs. Hodges: "I'll tell you what he thought about it [the tractor]. Rest [of us] were eating dinner, and he slipped out ahead of them and got on that tractor and was going to ride it for himself. He wasn't going to wait for someone to teach him how! That's what he done when we got that tractor."

Mrs. Hodges remembered something else about young people picking cotton way back.

Mrs. Hodges: "Well, way back yonder in my grandmother and granddaddy's day, they had to pick [the seeds] out of their shoe all the cotton that got crammed in their shoe. They had to pick that out every night before they went to bed."

It's hard to pick those seeds out?

Annie Ree: "You wouldn't know unless you tried it."

What's the most important thing you remember growing up?

Well, I say picking cotton!

Do you want to see anymore of that cotton?

No!

Mrs. Hodges: "He could pick 200 pounds a day."

But I had a brother younger than I was, you know, about two years younger than I was, and he couldn't pick that cotton like I could. Pick twice as much as he could, but he just couldn't pick it with his fingers. I could do it with my fingers, you see, more than he could.

You were fast?

Yes, fast. I always had a fast way about me. I had brothers. Mary a one of them could hold me a light in working. Now that's a lot to say! That sounds like I'm braggin'! [Laughs.]

I believe it!
You believe it?

Yes. You are 90 years old; I reckon I better believe it!

Mrs. Hodges: "I tell you what he and his brother did. His brother was about 20 months younger than he was, or two years, something like that. But they would get out and wrestle like anything. I'm telling you I was afraid they were going to get hurt after we were married."

Did you like to wrestle with your brother?

Yes. We used to wrestle; he was a lot heavier than I was.

Who'd win?

Well, I think I'd sound like braggin', but he had a hard time ever what you call putting me on my back. I'd get him 'cause I was quick. He'd stand there like a dummy, you might say. I'd go in and throw him on the floor! I would just mostly get him by the neck and throw him over my shoulder.

Mrs. Hodges: "He [the brother] weighed around 160 pounds at 16 years old, so he was right good size."

Where did you meet your wife?

Ha! Ha!

Annie Ree: "In school mostly."

Mrs. Hodges: "In school in Red Banks School in Greenville. I mean right close to it."

About three miles out in the country.

Red Banks is about three miles from Greenville?

Yes, that's about right.

Mrs. Hodges: "Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church and the school was all right there."

How many people were in the school?

Oh, I'd say about 40 or 50.

Was there just one teacher?

Didn't have but one teacher, just one teacher.

Was it a man or a woman?

Woman! Men didn't need no schooling then.

Did she ever give you a whipping?

No, I never got a whippin' in school. I got one whack cracked on the finger, like that, ha! ha! I had a little girlfriend, you know, set with me. She always wanted to set with me and teach the lessons, you know. And we were sitting there talking. She [teacher] came along and whacked me on the fingers and said, "Hey, cut it out!" I remember that; it was a long time ago. [Laughs.] You said you liked to dance and take your wife to dances?

Yes.
Mrs. Hodges: "He didn't take me. He went without me 'cause I didn't like to dance."

Dancing— I love to dance!

Where would you go to dance?

Well, several places we went in the country and town.

Annie Ree: "Most of the time it was in people's homes or in the barn."

What kind of dancing did you do?

Oh, well, just get out there and dance. That's all I can tell you— I don't know.

Annie Ree: "He used to play the banjo."

Yes! I could play that ole banjo!

How long has it been since you played one?

It hadn't been too long. I give it away, give it to William. I'd like to have it back now so I could play on it. I had music, you know, some kind of music was in me. I just love music!

How old were you when you first started going to dances?

Oh, I don't know. I expect I was about 25 or 30 years— well, more than that because I didn't go first off: I went to church then.

What is the funniest thing that ever happened to you at a dance?

I can't tell you!

What's the next funniest thing?

[Laughing] Well, I don't know. Just dance, that's all I could tell you.

Mrs. Hodges: "I'll tell you if you want something to laugh about. I tell you something. The funniest thing I ever saw, I would go with him once in a while. And I saw this man and woman walk out of the dance hall out on the street. Their car was parked there on the side of the street, and she got on one running board of the ole car— they had running boards then— and him on the other, and they kissed each other across that car. And that's the funniest thing I ever saw!"

Was there much drinking at the dances?

Yes. People drink mighty bad. Homemade whiskey! I'll say! If somebody would ask me right now what was the worst thing in the world now is whiskey. It is doing more harm than any one thing I ever heard of.

Did you ever help make any whiskey?

No. I had nothing to do with the whiskey business. I never drank but very little whiskey in my life.

Did you ever get drunk?

No. I drank enough to feel it, you might say to take effect.

You didn't like it?

No! No!
You saw what bad things it made people do?

Yes. I had brothers soaked in it! They'd get drunk and cut up and talk ugly.

You didn't have any use for it?

No, I didn't have any use for whiskey. But my daddy, he kind of liked whiskey, and he would get too much once in a while. When you get too much, you are in a bad state. But that [whiskey] didn't bother him bad as some of my brothers.

Did everyone from all the farms around come to the dances?

Well, not so much. They had them mostly in town, the regular dances. They had a hall where they had the dances.

Mrs. Hodges: "Well, what happened a lot of times, you'd build a new house, and they had rough floore. They didn't have slick floors then. The timber that they'd put the floors down was rough, and they had to dance to slicken their floors down. That's what they claim they had them [dances] for.

"What they did outside, they'd build up logs. They cut logs, you see, and roll them up together, set them afire. And there was a lot of men who wanted to stay out there on the outside and talk instead of going on in there and dancing. There was people who didn't want to dance, you see. Younger ones was in there dancing, but the old ones was outside talking."

Did you always have some music?

Mrs. Hodges: "Music? These men had to get about half drunk to play!"

What was the music like? What kind of music?

Mrs. Hodges: "Well, they had a fiddle, a lot of them that I went to. I didn't go to many because I didn't believe in it and neither did my mother. Most of it was fiddles. But what he [Phare] is talking about is that he and his brother used to pick the banjo and the guitar together at our homes on Saturday nights all the time."

Would they sing?

Mrs. Hodges: "Sometimes they would; sometimes they wouldn't. But mostly they'd play."

I'd play the banjo and my brother would play the guitar and my other brother would play his violin. We'd get in the house and play together a heap of times, play some right good music!

Would you sing?

Well, no, I didn't do much singing. I never did practice too much singing. I like to sing, but it didn't mean nothing.

Annie Ree: "He told me he played that organ too, that old organ he had."

Mrs. Hodges: "Yes, he used to play an organ."

I learned how to play a little bit on the organ. I didn't learn to play much 'cause I didn't take too much time.
What were the roads like back then?

These was dirt roads, holes in it.

Mrs. Hodges: "Bumpy."

Were they muddy?

Yes, muddy when it rained.

When did you first get a horse and buggy?

Oh, well, now, that is another question. That was before we was married. I bought a horse.

Mrs. Hodges: "Nineteen and twelve, I think, or thirteen, one or the other. Because we were married in 1913."

Did you like riding together?

Mrs. Hodges: "Yes. We often went riding together."

I bought the highest priced horse I could find.

How much did he cost?

Three hundred and fifty dollars.

Must have been a good one.

It could run a mile a minute--three minutes, I take that back. That was the limit of most any horse.

What kind was he?

He was a big red horse, had a high head, was way up there.
Mrs. Hodges: "And he was so gentle. You could drive him up to the barber shop in Greenville, and he would stand right there and wait till he [Phate] got a haircut."

And not even tire! He would wait for me. Let somebody ride up beside us, he would stand right there beside me.

What did everyone think of that horse?

Well, most people wanted that horse [laughs].

You wouldn't part with him, though?

No. I didn't never hit him with the whip. I kept my whip in there, you know. I could take that whip and pop down side of him. He'd squat right down, and he'd get up and go, ha! ha!

Just threaten him, and he'd move?

Yes. He was the hog of society, that horse was. People wanted that horse mighty bad! Well, that's all I know about that horse, ha! ha!

Do you remember the first time you saw a car?

Mrs. Hodges: "Nineteen and twelve—if he don't remember. And they took us to Red Banks Church."

It was a Ford car!

Mrs. Hodges: "My daddy [later] had a Cadillac car, but this was in 1912. It was my first cousin and her boyfriend took us to Red Banks Church."

What did you think of that car?

Well, I liked the car all right.

How was it to ride in a car for the first time?

Well, I'd say it rid mighty good.

Mrs. Hodges: "It was wonderful, I think, to know you were riding instead of walking."

As soon as you saw the first one, did you make up your mind to get you one?

Mrs. Hodges: "Just had a horse and buggy then."

No, no, not the first time. I didn't have the money to buy it then.

When did you first buy one?

About 1925, I think it was, when I bought a car—after I moved down here, you see. I bought a second-hand car.

Your wife thinks it was 1920 when you bought it.

Nineteen-twenty? Well, I reckon that's about right.

What kind was it?

Kind? Ford. Wasn't much but Fords then, anyhow. I broke my arm cranking it.

How did that happen?

Well, I was cranking it like this, you know [moving his arm in a circle]. It backfired.
That's how you fall back. Popped me on the arm. My arm hurt me so bad I could hardly stay still, and I said I gotta go to the doctor. I went to him and asked him about it and he said, "Your arm's broke!"

Annie Ree: "It [the car] had cellophane curtains."

Mrs. Hodges: "When you went off in the wind, it felt like it [wind] was just flocking in, spite of all you could do."

Were there many cars around then?

No, very few cars. I was scared to go across a bridge, near 'bout, ha! ha!

Wooden bridge?

Yes, wooden bridge.

Did the cars scare the horses?

Mrs. Hodges: "Yes, some of them would run away. Yes, I am telling you when a horse was running away, that was a frightful looking sight!"

Could you drive over the roads very well?

Pretty good. I think the first new car I bought was $700 and some.

Annie Ree: "That was that Model A, wasn't it? Wasn't it the Model A we went to the mountains in?"

I think so.

How fast did it go?

Annie Ree: "It took all day to go to Asheville. I remember I was 11."

I can't hardly say, not too fast. Forty or 50 miles per hour. The first time I had a new car, I think was I was driving from Greenville to Washington. We had moved down here [Washington] then. I believe that took about 30 minutes.

That's not bad. What was Washington like when you moved here?

Well, Washington hadn't improved too much! Ha! ha!

Mrs. Hodges: "Greenville has improved [grown] a lot, but I can't say whether Washington has improved [grown] or not."

I think Washington was the fourth biggest town there was when they came over here from, you know, England.

What did it look like?

Well, I wouldn't know nothing about it then! That was way back.

No, no, when you came here!

Oh, well, they had right good roads, right good streets. Some of them were good; some of them weren't.

Were any of them paved?

A few of them, not many.

What was the first thing you did when you came to Washington?
I went to building a house, I think.

You told me you lived in a logging camp?

Yes.

Annie Ree: "It was a packhouse."

When I bought that land, there was logging people there that had a camp. We called it a packhouse. Used it for tobacco then.

Did you start farming right away?

Yes, went to farming right away.

Did you have to clear the land?

Mrs. Hodges: "Well, not too much of it. Most of ours was cleared. He cleared a little of it after we were here, but most of it was clear. We moved here, it was in 19 and 19."

You moved here in 1919? What do you remember of the First World War?

Mrs. Hodges: "The most I remember was when the war ended in 19 and 18. I heard the whistles, the whistles a blowing and things like that."

In Washington?

Mrs. Hodges: "No, in Greenville. We were out in the country then, and that's where I heard the whistles. We knew then the war was over in 19 and 18."

What did you first do when you came here to Washington to live, to eat, and to have food?

Well, anything I could! Ha! ha!

Mrs. Hodges: "He farmed."

I [went] to farming, tending tobacco. I tended four acres of tobacco, I think, the first year.

Did your daddy teach you how to grow tobacco?

Well, he showed me and told me all about what he knewed, you know. He had been around in curing tobacco for other people too, and so he taught me how to cure it and how it was to be cured and everything. And I sold tobacco here. I don't know what year it was, but I believe it was the first year I tended that tobacco.

Annie Ree: "Nineteen-twenty, you used to say."

Tobacco was selling for four and five and six cents a pound, ordinarily.

Well, what did the people think of that?

Well, they wanted some of them seeds, and I said it ain't in the seeds; it's in the tobacco! Ha! Ha! I didn't have much help but the children because the people down here had never tended much tobacco. They didn't know much about tobacco, you know. Greenville was the tobacco [center]. Greenville is one of the biggest tobacco places, I reckon, in the world is what they say.

How did they want it cured?

Well, you fix a tobacco barn and furnace. You cure it and put wood in there. Put a
furnace, I call it, a furnace and put flues, we call 'em flues, great big flues, you know.

Out of cement and bricks?
Annie Ree: "Flues was out of tin."

Did they run through the whole building?
Annie Ree: "Around the building. In- side, on the bottom. And they heated that up with wood and was almost like a fireplace then."

And you put a certain heat on that tobacco until it gets a certain state, until you dry it out, you see. You see, you get it a little higher, a little higher till it dries out.

How long did you leave tobacco in the barn?

Well, I'd say almost a week.
Annie Ree: "Five or six days, near as I remember."

Did you have to stay up all night?

Sometimes I did. What we did do was keep a watch all night long.

What did the tobacco look like when it was cured?

Bright. Cured out pretty yellow, almost as yellow as that curtain there [pointing].

What did it feel like? Was it dry?

Yes, it was stretchy tobacco. They called them ropers.

Annin Ree: "Well, if it was good tobacco, they would call it that."

What was the difference between the ropers?
Annin Ree: "It was just a pretty, slick, smooth, a big, nice leaf."

How did you go about growing it? What did you use for fertilizer?

Just bought ordinary fertilizer. I plowed it with a team, a one-horse plow.

How did you weed it?

Well, cut the weeds out with a hoe.

Lot of work?

Yes! Ha! Ha! Working—that's all there was to it. You see a lot of work!

You told me one time you got hurt while you were plowing, something about a horse kicking you?

I don't remember.

Annin Ree: "He had one run away with him, I think, but I don't think he got hurt too much."

Did you ever get kicked by a horse?

Ha! Ha! No, never did get kicked.

Did you ever have one run away with you?
Yes, had them run away with me.

What did you do?

Catch 'em, put 'em back in!

Mrs. Hodges: "I tell you one time he went off with two of the team, two horses hooked to a wagon, and somehow or another they got away from him. And he jumped in the back of the wagon and went up and caught them reins and stopped them horses!"

I pass by Phate Hodges' home every day; sometimes he is sitting under the shade tree reading the newspaper, but more often he is busy around the yard or garden with a shovel, bushaxe, or hoe. When I see Phate, something he told me keeps coming back to mind. I hear his words, like fatherly advice, words which bear a person up. He said, "I often used to lay abed awake and think about God, to think about how things should be, and in all my life I've never tried to do a man wrong. I've tried to do right by every man I ever knew."

Russell listens intently to Phate Hodges.