

Multi-Generational African American Farmers of the Midwest
Anna-Lisa Cox
Library of Congress AFC Archie Green Fellowship

Date of interview: August 24, 2021

Names/s of those interviewed: Cecil E. Tabler and his nephew David Butcher.

Primary Interviewer: Anna-Lisa Cox (ALC)

Secondary Interviewers:

Interview Location:

Transcriber: Breana Nolan

Abstract: Cecil E. Tabler lives on his farm in Tablertown. He originally had almost 200 acres of very good river bottom-land ground, which he had but had recently had to sell all but 48 acres of it because he could not afford the taxes on it. He was born in Tablertown during the Great Depression. He came from a large family, and they were so impoverished that he left for Columbus when he was sixteen, and was homeless for a while. He was determined to be a farmer, and with his wife's help they bought back the land his family had lost during the Great Depression (land that had been in the family since the 1830s).

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[0:00] Introduction to Dr. Anna-Lisa Cox and Cecil Tabler. Cecil talks about when he started farming and having to have more than one job. Explains how he and his wife decided to buy back the family land that was lost during the Great Depression.

[5:00] Cecil discusses why river bottom land is good land, bailing/storing hay, and the previous owners of the farm.

[10:00] Cecil talks about his family, the hardship of taxes, and how he helped teach his nephew about farming.

[15:00] He discusses the apple orchard and how he was able to meet people and create his own market for what he grew on his farm.

[20:00] Cecil clarifies how he would like his identity to be described.

[25:00] Cecil talks about how there used to be a store on the property and his dad's horse work.

[30:00] Cecil talks about working with his tractor, and about raising hogs.

[35:00] He talks about what kind of tractor he likes and people that he knows that did metal working

[40:00] Cecil discusses what he would like his great grandchildren to know about farming and remembers a time when he almost gave up.

[45:00] He talks about his wife being a nurse, family reunions, and getting drunk on moonshine.

[50:00] Cecil and his nephew David Butcher discuss making wine, why some people used horses for work, and cutting timber.

[55:00] Cecil talks about farmers leasing their land and hunting. Dr. Cox and Cecil Tabler sign off.