



Buford Mabry

### 1. "A Funeral Surprise" (02:11)

**B. Mabry:** [????] the Reverend Octavious Morant grew up on the [Sauncy] Plantation. And his spirit moved him and he began to study and soon he was an ordained minister and began by serving several small churches, including one in the Stateburg community. A member which is one of the a very, a young man of-a man of extreme height, who died. His body was sent down to a undertaker-didn't have anything that came [that fit in the] body. But rather than go to the trouble to order a new coffin, they just took the-they just took the body and forced it in and forced the lid down on it, turned the latch and dispatched it out to the Reverend's church, where he eulogized for some time. And having finished, he made his announcement. Now all us brothers and sisters will file forward and we'll pay our last respects to our departed...-parted member. With that, the Reverend reached over, turned the latch, and lifted the lid. And because of the body having been forced in, with the lifting of the lid, the body rose up with it. Now you can imagine the scene that followed. Well two of the sisters that had run down the road as far as breath would take them, were busily fanning], when suddenly in a last lone cloud of dust, came this figure with a [????] draped around his neck. And just as he passed, one of the sisters turned to the other and says,

"Louisa, who dat been the last of [????] pass' here."

"See, I ain't rightly know, but it put me in the mind it was Preacher."

"So when you look back up-look like our preacher to me, but if that ain't been him, surely he had been say what I take him to say."

"So I ain't clear, well what had he been seeing?"

"When he passed here, he been saying, 'Damn a church what ain't got but one door.'"

### 2. "The First Motorcycle" (Part 1) (03:28)

**B. Mabry:** We are here at the Oakland Plantation, ancestral home of the [Spans], the John [Spans].

Well when I was about ten years of age, one day my mother called me in, in the middle of the week and said, “Son, go and get that number two ten tub and fill it with water and take a bath.”

I said, “Momma, it’s not Saturday.”

She said, “Do what I tell you because you are being invited over to the Oakland Plantation where little Sam Tupper is having a birthday party.”

So in response I went out after taking a bath-I went out and caught up my little pony, threw a [gallon] sack over his back, called up, and away I took, coming from this direction <*Motions to his right*> followed by, uh, a couple of bird dogs and, uh, one of the foxhounds and I arrived over here at Oakland to find about ten or twelve other little boys and girls of my age whom had been fathered by some [canine pet]. So we had a collection of dogs of every size, description, and some of ‘em defied all description. Well, um, the uh-we had Ms. Wilhelmina Tupper, the mother of the family, was seated in a chair <*Motions to his left*>, right in front of the house and she was supervising our play, that consisted of such games as drop the handkerchief, bull in the pen, and little Sally Walker, including that most daring verse of, “I measure my love to show you.” Now that was high class courtin’ in those days.

Well, the play was in full force when suddenly, our little ears were assailed by the most incongruous noise ever heard in all of Statesburg and rivaled the first one of those jet airplanes, when we looked down that avenue <*Motions to his left*> and up from the [fish] road here came Kirby Tupper, a younger brother of Mr. Yore [????] and a uncle to your little Sam, riding the first motorcycle ever seen in all of Sumter County and you can bet your boots, when he came up that all play ceased and all little boys-he continued around here <*Motions to his right*> and got around to the back of the house, when we all grouped around him and that wondrous machine. Now, Mr. Yore Tupper, the father of the family was somewhere back in the house, hiding from the birthday party, but when he heard all the noise, he comes down, joins the group, looks down at his brother, said, “Kirby, what in the devil is that thing?”

Kirby said, “Well, [you know] this is a motorcycle.”

Well, Mr. Yore's curiosity being aroused, he said, "Kirby, how you ride that thing?"

"Oh, just like you do a horse."

Well now let me explain that the Tupper brothers had moved up from Summerville and were here engaged in part time farming, but more especially, raising and training horses. They were both professional horsemen. So when Kirby mentioned it riding like a horse, well he says, "Orr, you want to try it?"

[Old Matt] said, "Well, don't mind if I do."

Well Kirby steps off. Mr. Yore sits astride of it, takes the handlebar and he rocks it back and forth *<Motions with his hands>*. And he says, "Well it feels pretty good, so how you crank this thing?"

Kirby said, "You look down there. You see that pedal down there? Stomp it real good."

And that's what he did. *<Mabry makes like he's starting a motorcycle>* And that thing started up in there. Mr. Yore sat there and finally it settled down and said, "Well I got a feel of it. Now Kirby, how you make it go?"

Kirby said, "Now listen close now, we got a system in that ..."

*<Video ends>*

### **3. "The First Motorcycle" (Part 2) (03:44)**

**B. Mabry:** ...Kirby said, "Now listen close now, we got a system in that. When I count to three, I'ma pull this lever, you twist the handlebar. Ready?"

"Yeah."

So one-a-two-a-three-a pull-a twist and here went the machine. *<Mabry imitates the motorcycle starting>* And around the corner of the house he came and all the little boys and girls with their barking dogs following. Around the corner of the house where his wife was seated-a highly nervous type woman and when she looked up and to spy her husband on a strange contraption, leading an entourage of screaming children and barking dogs, she said, "[????] you don't know, get off of that thing!"

"That's alright Mina, just keep the children out the way."

Because now he was approaching the flower garden that was on the far side there and there went-through which wound this path laid out in slanted brick. Oh you should have seen him as he maneuvered that machine through that um-through that um, flower garden to come out on the other side of the back where Mum Rosanna, the maid, was seated there shelling peas [against] the coming dinner and she was surrounded by this huge gaggle of geese. Well when he approached'em the geese began to squawk and back up. Mum Rosanna put in her word of advise, "Mind out there Mr. Yore. You sure you know what you doin' on that thing?"

"That's all right, just keep on shelling those peas."

Cause by this time he had completed a circle of the house and approached his brother to whom he said, "Now Kirby this is fine." Said "Now how you stop this thing?"

And Kirby simply said, "Twist the handlebar."

Now, ladies and gentleman, if-Mr. Yore, he knew horses from inside and out, from one side to the other, but when it came to machinery, that was a different thing. Had Kirby but said "untwist the handlebar," then things would have been alright. But no, he said, "twist it" and that's exactly what Mr. Yore did. He gave it a generous twist and with-with that motorcycle reared up on its hind wheel, shook it several couple times like a big mouth bass trying to throw a plug, when it hit ground it took off. Around that corner of the house we went where it was throwing dirt and rocks [????]. We children realized immediately there was no possibility of keeping up with it. We decided the best thing we could do was turn around and meet it. Around that corner of the house he came. His wife jumping up there, "[????]. Get off of that thing!"

"I can't, just keep the children out the way!"

Right through that flower garden, he missed the path, took down a couple of rose bushes, came out the other side right into that flock of geese. Mum Rosanna, "[????] you done run over one of those goose!"

"Darn the geese! Kirby how do you stop this thing?!"

"Twist the handle bar!"

And this he did and this time around that house that motorcycle was just touchin' high spots. Around he came, this time back through that flower garden. He came out the

other side with a smilax vine draped around his neck. Right through that flock of geese again. Mum Rosanna again, "Like I tell ya Mr. Yore, you run over on of those geese!"

"Damn the geese! Kirby, how you stop this thing?!"

"Twist the handlebar!"

And this time he did and he didn't even get started but right down through yonder he headed to the lot and when that machine started climbing the lot gate, that's when it lost its rider. Thank goodness that Kirby had the presence of mind to dip a bucket in the horse trough and drown the machine. I can see Mr. Yore now, gettin' up from there he dusted himself off. Comin' up he shook his finger at his brother's face. Said, "Kirby! Let me tell you one thing! Don't you ever again bring anything up here and get me on that I can't say 'Whoa' to and stop."

#### **4. "The Mountain Coon" (03:02)**

**B. Mabry:** This-I have down here at Pinewood, a good friend of mine, who's a great coon hunter. Charles [Artis] has for a hunting companion, one Drayton Elliot. And Charles knew for a fact, that um, Drayton had never in all of his life of hunting all over the Wateree and Santee swamps, never to have seen a skunk because they're just not native of this part of the country. One day Charles was traveling the upper part of the state and chance ran over and killed this skunk and immediately his mind went back to Drayton back in Pinewood. So Charles procured a well insulated sack and tied a handkerchief around his nose. He took a stick and maneuvered that body of that skunk into that sack, tied it securely, put it in the trunk of his automobile, and nonstop down to Pinewood and around to Drayton's house. Luckily found him home and spoke to him. Said, "Drayton?"

"Yes sir Mr Charles."

"Dray-I-I want to ask you to do me a favor."

"Oh yes sir Captain, what's that sir?"

Said, "Drayton, I happen to have here a...a...Drayton have you ever seen a mountain coon?"

"No sir." Said, "Where you get a mountain coon from?"

“I got him up in the mountains,” says uh. “I’d like to get you to clean it for me; I want to bake it tonight.” Said, “You know I’d do it myself but I’ve got an appointment up in Sumter.”

“Oh yes sir, where that mountain coon is?”

“Right here.” And Charles opened the trunk, dropped the sack on the ground, took off, not to Sumter, but uptown in little Pinewood where Charles went up and down the street tellin’ all of his friends about the trick he had played on old Drayton. Well, they enjoyed the joke for a c-couple of hours and then finally, um, Charles asked some of his friends, “Now how many of you all can guarantee me to keep a straight face?” And there was two volunteers. Back to Drayton’s house they went. When they arrived they found him on a seat on the back steps of his house in a complete change of clothing. So Charles ambled up and said um, “Drayton?”

“Yes sir Mr. Charles.”

Said, “Drayton, did you get around to cleaning that mountain coon for me?”

“Yes sir Mr. Charles. Well Mr. Charles, I want to ask you somethin’ sir. How long it had been since you had killed that thing?”

“What’s the matter Drayton, did it have an odor?”

“An odor?! For God, captain, I ain’t never smelled nothin’ like that since I been born to this world.”

Well Charles suppresses a laugh, said to him, “Well I’m sorry about that Drayton, but what have you done with my mountain coon?”

“Oh don’t you fret yourself about that captain. I done take care of that for you sir. You see captain, the way that thing been smelling, I figured it fix to expire, so I done take it up to your house and put it in your refrigerator sir.”