



Rebecca Hill

Interviewed by Anne Kimzey

1. Making lye soap (01:14)

Hill: My momma was going down to [Bradley's [?]], [unintelligible [?]], and she had to go down to [Mr. Steven's Store [?]], and she had to come back [unintelligible [?]], lye soap when I get back.

Kimzey: <Laughs>.

Hill: And I [threw [?]] a little lye [unintelligible [?]], said "I'm going to make this soap." [I got it all mixed up together, around, and, um [?]], and got my water and [unintelligible [?]] up to my pot, [unintelligible [?]], I had all the stuff, [unintelligible [?]], and I made the lye soap. My momma came back, she said "[Unintelligible [?]], I got to make my soap." I said "No, momma, you don't got to make no soap."

Kimzey: <Laughs>.

Hill: "I done made the soap." She [unintelligible [?]], kissing me.

Kimzey: <Laughs>.

Hill: She said "Honey, you did better than I did." [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: And you've been doing it ever since.

Hill: Ever since, yes!

Kimzey: She let you take over the soapmaking?

Hill: [Well [?]] I sure did. [Unintelligible [?]], I don't ask no questions too much, I just watch, [unintelligible [?]] to see what's what.

2. Quilting (00:58)

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]] quilting hosts. [Unintelligible [?]], be like a table, [unintelligible [?]] set the table here.

Kimzey: Like a frame?

Hill: Yeah. [Unintelligible [?]] put the quilt on there, and sit back [unintelligible [?]], rock on your hands [unintelligible [?]]. So that's how I got my [unintelligible [?]]. [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: So were there a lot of women that came over and quilted or just her-

Hill: Oh yeah! [Unintelligible [?]] coming up. My momma, Aunt Jo, Miss Mary Wright, [Unintelligible [?]]. 10 or 15 women come and quilt about two quilts a day [unintelligible [?]]. [Unintelligible [?]]. People had to get quilts to stay warm in the winter time. Oh yeah.

3. Killing hogs (01:51)

Kimzey: How many hogs do you kill usually?

Hill: A year?

Kimzey: Um-hum.

Hill: Uh, [two or three a year [?]].

Kimzey: So you, um, do you get them when they're little piglets? You buy them or do you have them?

Hill: I raise them, I raise them.

Kimzey: Raise them.

Hill: I raise them. I get my sow [unintelligible [?]]. [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Do you feed them anything special to get them ready for the killing?

Hill: Oh yeah. [Unintelligible [?]]. All sorts of things in there.

Kimzey: And, um, you said you kill hogs on, uh, was it the full moon or-

Hill: I always kill hogs, uh, I kill my hogs when the moon is growing.

Kimzey: When it's growing.

Hill: Yeah. [Unintelligible [?]], the meat will be bright, the lard will be bright, [unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: No.

Hill: The skin [unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Oh, I see.

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: And what happens if you kill it when the moon is wasting away?

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]], a good time to kill them. [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Oh.

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]] go into your grease.

Kimzey: So you make cracklin' bread?

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]].

4. Curing meat (02:35)

Kimzey: So how do you cure your meat?

Hill: Salt.

Kimzey: Salt.

Hill: [Salt the way to cure it [?]].

Kimzey: Um-hum.

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]]. Now, salt will take the blood out the bone. [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Um-hum.

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]], see all that blood running on the floor.

Kimzey: You put the skin side up so it'll drain out?

Hill: That's right, that's right. [Unintelligible [?]] blood go through they skin.

Kimzey: <Laughs>.

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Do you put it in salt or just put salt on it?

Hill: I put salt on it.

Kimzey: Um-hum.

Hill: I put that salt, [unintelligible [?]], rub that salt, [unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Um-hum.

Hill: Rub that salt all over it, and then I [unintelligible [?]] salt. Let the salt [unintelligible [?]] into it. And, uh, then I [take [?]] my [unintelligible [?]], I get that salt, [unintelligible [?]]. [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: <Laughs>. Well, um, just- is this regular salt or is it a special kind of salt?

Hill: Meat salt.

Kimzey: Meat salt, ok.

Hill: Meat salt. [Unintelligible (?)] table salt, [unintelligible (?)], at the house, [unintelligible (?)] in a sack.

Kimzey: I see.

Hill: You got to have [this here (?)] meat salt to cure [unintelligible (?)] now.

Kimzey: [Now (?)] how long does it stay in the salt?

Hill: [Unintelligible (?)], five or six weeks or so. [Unintelligible (?)], wash it real good, [unintelligible (?)] red pepper, cayenne pepper, put all over it, and uh, hang it up, [boil hickory bark out there (?)], make me a big smoke up under it and smoke it to get [it to brown (?)], [unintelligible (?)].

Kimzey: Out in the smokehouse?

Hill: I'm talking about the [meat will (?)] get brown.

Kimzey: Oh, the meat will get brown.

Hill: Oh yeah, oh yeah. [Unintelligible (?)] as brown as anything.

Kimzey: Does that give it flavor also?

Hill: Oooowee, [cook a piece (?)]. [Unintelligible (?)]. It's good, [unintelligible (?)], [unintelligible (?)].

5. Canning vegetables (00:52)

Hill: These [things (?)], [these things (?)] I canned. Peaches, [I can take blackberries (?)], I take blackberries, and I get some apple, I can them. [And (?)] I can the beans, then I can tomatoes. And I can tomatoes, okra, corn [to yellow (?)].

Kimzey: Right.

Hill: And that's what I [unintelligible (?)] for my soup.

Kimzey: Ok.

Hill: And I can- now I can all that together. I go out and pick my butters- I pick [unintelligible (?)] butterbeans for the [unintelligible (?)]. I raise a whole [patch (?)] of butterbeans, [patch (?)] butterbeans [unintelligible (?)]. [Unintelligible (?)] tomatoes, okra, and corn. I love that. And it's good too.

Kimzey: <Laughs>.

Hill: [Unintelligible (?)] butterbeans.

Kimzey: I'm sure.

Hill: You can cook you a plate of cornbread, you got it made! It's good now.

6. Corduroy quilt (00:41)

Hill: [See that [?]]?

Kimzey: That's corduroy, [isn't it [?]]. That's a heavy one, wow.

Hill: I- I did that! [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: And how do you know what- how do you know, um, which way to make- do these handstitch-

Hill: I just sit down and [unintelligible [?]], put it on my hands. [Unintelligible [?]].

Other voice: [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Yeah.

Hill: [Something natural to me [?]]. [Unintelligible [?]], quilt it, quilt it out.

Kimzey: So you- you piece it together by hand too, don't you?

Hill: Oh yeah, [unintelligible [?]], all of it by hand. Everything by handwork, [unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: There's some people that do it on the machine now.

Hill: Handwork.

7. Making souse meat (01:14)

Kimzey: So how do you make souse meat?

Hill: Cook my- my [unintelligible [?]] hog. I cook the head, cook the feet, cook the [unintelligible [?]], all of that stuff. I cook it up, and make my souse meat.

Kimzey: Do you boil it? [Unintelligible [?]].

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Do you just put it in a big pot?

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]].

Other voice: [Unintelligible [?]] big black pot [unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Oh, outside.

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]] pick the [unintelligible [?]] really good. And I get it cold, have my [unintelligible [?]], sage, black pepper, salt, onion, and I grind it up. Put my [unintelligible [?]], [unintelligible [?]], stir it over [unintelligible [?]]. [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: So how do you eat it? You put it on crackers or do you eat it-

Hill: No! [Like it is [?]]! <Kimzey laughs>. [Unintelligible [?]] crackers, [unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: I know somebody said they like to eat it on crackers.

Hill: [Very good [?]], [unintelligible [?]].

8. Snakes (00:29)

Kimzey: Are there any poisonous snakes around here? Or not?

Hill: I don't know honey <Kimzey laughs>. I don't want none to bite me, [unintelligible [?]]. I don't know.

Other voice: [Unintelligible [?]].

Hill: [Unintelligible [?]].

Kimzey: Copperhead?

Hill: Copperbelly.

Kimzey: Copperbelly.

Hill: Um-hum.

