Old Frackville Tales

She has many fond memories of Frackville and talked about some of the businesses which are no longer in town. Irvin's Hotel was a popular place at one time. The Arco Gas Station is now on this site. The Hildebrand Hotel on North Balliet Street was the most popular place for dancing and she remembers the Pat Richardson's Band being one of her favorites. The famous brother basketball team also played many basketball games at this hall in later years. She reminisced about shopping at the Scott Store and at that time it was located on the corner of Lehigh and Frack Streets on the site now occupied by the American Bank. She talked about Thomas Reed's Store on the corner of Frack and Balliet Streets and recalled when her husband had "Giddy Caton's Shoe Parlor and Poolroom" on North Lehigh Avenue.

Mrs. Florence Caton of 413 East Oak Street was born in Grier City and moved to Frackville when she was eight years old. She attended the Franklin School and her teacher was Miss Ethel Morgan. She worked for the William Bellas factory which was located at the far south end of town. This had burned down in later years. She also reminisced about the shows at the Opera House which was what the Jim White Theater was referred to at that time.

She remembered Eva White Rubright being the pianist here at this time. Frackville also had its own group of entertainers who performed here. They were famous for their minstrel and comedy shows that the whole town looked forward to seeing. We all know her husband, George Caton, of the famous Caton Brothers Basketball Team. This was a family of seven brothers who had everyone in the county interested in the game of basketball. Mrs. Caton followed her husband's career closely and always attended the games. She talked about the special excursion trains for the out of town games and showed me a ticket to such an event. The price of excursion fare and entrance to game was $1.05. All Caton boys worked in the mines except Charles who worked for the collieries but as an outside laborer and six of the brothers passed away victims of miners' asthma. They played hard and they worked hard. Many times they played a game after working a shift at the mines with only a few hours' rest. Charles is the sole survivor of this famous team and is still residing in town.

Mr. and Mrs. George Caton celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in August 1963 and Mr. Caton passed away in May 1972.