

SPOTSYLVANIA PRESERVATION FOUNDATION Inc

Eugene Buck Brumley Interview
By Christine Walsh

Oral History Project

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Signature of Interviewer_____

Date 2/01/2001

Signature of Informant_____

Date

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Today is July 31, 2000. I am over at Eugene Brumley's house here on Lafayette Boulevard.

He used to live at the Five Mile Fork area in Spotsylvania and we are going to do our interview

and start shortly. My name is Christine Walsh and I am with the SPFI organization. Spotsylvania Preservation Foundation. O.K., we are ready to start. So, I am going to ask you,

Eugene ... would you like me to call you Buck?

Yes.

Tell me how you got the name "Buck?"

I was named after my great uncle, Buck Lewis, because he weighed so much when he was born. My mother said it was about fifteen pounds or a little over. I was thirteen, so when I was born they said, "Well, it's another Buck Lewis. "

Well, you were certainly ...

I am 6'3."

You are 6' 3"? Oh, my goodness. Now how many brothers and sisters did you have?

I had two sisters and no brothers.

No brothers.

So I'm the best little boy my mother had.

I have your article here from the Free Lance-Star, from October 27, 1999. And when I was reading this article, what came to mind was your photograph here at three and also that you were, you worked for Bond Bread Company, and your hours were incredible, you know, how many hours you worked. But tell us about growing up in Spotsylvania....

Well I grew up here and was born in '24 and I started to remember things when I was ... in about '26 And I know when a car came down the road, it would be a "T" model. An old Chevrolet with no bearings in the wheels had a shift kit, but the Model T was clutch driven. And we'd run out along side the road and watch the cars go down the road. Everybody had a dirt road. Dust just fly. My mother couldn't hang the clothes on the line for the dust. Everybody had a mailbox, of course, you know. And my Dad had a blacksmith's shop and plenty of horses. Everything was farmed with horses. Tractors hadn't come out and when they did come out they were force-wheel tractors and they packed down more land than they plowed. And then they started tarring the roads in Spotsylvania and these tractors would tear the roads up. So my

Daddy made rims to go on these tractors for these farmers. And horses started disappearing. Of course he had plenty of blacksmith's work 'cause it was sharpening tools and tempering metal, you know, and shoeing a lot of horses, too. And then he built a store in 1933. And then he had a blacksmith's shop and a grocery store. And they would farm seventy-two acres of land right around there. And right in front of the old blacksmith's shop, I found Northern people, they'd stop there and go look. Well when you were plowing in one of them fields, I don't know what subdivision is in there now, you'd hit something with your mules and it'd throw you over the plow. Come to find out there was a road cut through there. Didn't go the other way, Harrison Road didn't go that way, and Jackson set there all night before they carried him to Guinea. And that's what they were looking at, taking pictures of. They found it fascinating. Then he went to Guinea, you know ... and my wife and I were going there ... I never seen or went there ... that's in Caroline County, Guinea is ... and the bed's still there he died in and the blood stain's still on the floor. You ever been down there? You seen it?

No. I haven't.

It's Jackson's Shrine. It's got a sign up in Thornburg how to get there.

No, I have to get over there.

It's worth seeing.

I'm sure it is.

Little small cabin. They put him in there. See he was ... some kind of a railroad there that they ... and they were going to put him on a train and carry him to Richmond but Richmond was shot all to pieces, you know, so...

Yes, I know that. I know. So...

But anyway, I remember when cars came about ... and Chevrolet cars and Plymouth cars, no big cars.

And then I remember when Benny Pitts went in business ... theaters, was a small thing called

Pitt's Theaters. And he had them in the old Virginians ... and he was raised up right over here

next to Five Mile Fork where he grew up at. And he became a rich man but he died a pauper

because he had nobody to take care of him. He died in a home where it cost ... somebody said

years and years ago it cost him one hundred dollars a day like that was terrible, but that would

be like one thousand dollars a day now, maybe two thousand ... I mean, but anyway...

That would eat up your money, wouldn't it?

Yeah. Eats your money up. His son-in-law took it over Walter or Larry ... and he tried to run it.

And Tommy Pitts, his nephew, run it for a right good while, but then it went through bankruptcy.

I don't think they declared bankruptcy ... they sold it. But we were talking about Spotsylvania County.

I know when they had court days, those came on Wednesday. And another thing was when murders in

Spotsylvania County were heard of. And I was seven years old ... and Shell and Jackson killed

the Colemans, the parents to ... used to be the circuit judge ... and threw them in a well

and nobody could find them

I have heard that story, yes.

And then Maxie ... my Granddaddy, had died, but he died when I was about, wasn't quite seven

or eight or something like that ... and Maxie Blades and Lee Eddington ... was ... Maxie Blades

become sheriff after my Granddaddy died ... he fell out of his bed dead in bed one morning, you know,

that morning ... and they had to go to New York bring Shell and Jackson back on the train and

I know they did electrocute them.

And did they put him in the jail?

No, Shell and Jackson, it was two black people worked for the Colemans.

And they murdered them and put them in the well because ... something about money.

And the girl, who now is married to a Beasley boy, was kin to my uncle and used to raise thoroughbred horses, I think her name was ... I believe it was Riddle ...

I don't know. She's married to a Beasley now, but she's still raising some thoroughbred horses over there ... that was the old Coleman home. Now that was the worst murder.

It was in all the crime magazines and everything.

That must have been terrible. Tell us about your Grandfather, the sheriff, Carl Carner.

Carl Carner? He finished college. Him and Emmett Carner, his brother, and he came back here

and there wasn't no such thing as bridge engineers and he didn't have enough to do.

And Emmett got elected as Commonwealth's Attorney, and of course it was a clique thing.

You know how it is at the Courthouse. Of course, you're from England and I don't know if

you have any of these Staffords and Moncures. And anyway, Grandpa, he got on as sheriff

and nobody ever run against him and he kept it as long as he wanted and when the ... he was in on the "301 gangsters that would travel old 301 and catch a ferry at Dahlgren and go cross to Maryland. Would lose 'em. No communication like you got now, you know. And there was a movie about "301 gangsters. " I went to see it. And somebody found a

...

maybe it was a million dollars in a hollow tree down here at the edge of the Potomac River.

That's in King George. And anyway, Mr. Garrett sawed the tree ... one of his men sawed it down.

It was a beechnut tree. Going to saw it for lumber and he struck something in that log ... in the tree ... that was hollow. He told about how he sawed it down, it fell down and a steel

box was in there. It was the "301 gangsters " had stored money in there. I'm getting off the story entirely. You recording what I'm saying?

I'm recording. So tell us about what your Grandfather would tell you about the old jail at Spotsylvania Courthouse, and where you ever there?

Yeah. He used to lock me and my cousin up in it. And sometimes he'd lock Frances up in it.

She got in it once or twice. And he would carry us over on Sundays when we went to see my

Grandmother to eat Sunday dinner. And she'd cock for all of them all the time.

And he'd tell us, he would say, " I'll see you all in the morning, " you know, like he was going to leave us in there. And I don't know, he was pretty busy.

And another thing, all these "301 gangsters " and all these bootleggers, they'd take your car, you know. And he had a long shed built ... where my Grandfather would store his cars in.

And one night ... I wasn't there but my cousin was. He was just a baby, though, he just remembers by his Mother telling him. People came back after a car, Shot that old blockhouse

all to pieces ... and didn't hit nobody, didn't hurt nobody, but tried to steal that car.

So they found out later on, underneath the floorboard of that car was welded in there all kinds of money, in the floorboard, and they were trying to steal that car. And then they used to have shotgun weddings, too.

And how long was he the sheriff for?

I really ... somebody could look at the Courthouse, would know at the Courthouse because they ask.

He was sheriff when my Daddy was a young boy, and I was seven or eight years old when he died,

so he must have been sheriff for thirty-some years.

That's a long time.

And he chewed tobacco ... sat up in the Courthouse and chewed all the time a trial was going on and never spit.

Do you remember any of the prisoners that were in the jail?

I know one, but I don't want to call his name. I remember the first night I went to see Harriet.

Talk about your wife, yes.

I borrowed a boy's car. He let me have everything he had. He was eleven years older than I am.

He married a girl I went with. She went with him and he worried about it. She'd marry him if

I quit going with her. I come up there at Snell's and I seen something laying in the road. And I had a spotlight on it. And later on I had a car the same way, same model and everything.

I threw the spotlight down there ... was two men laying in the road with no face.

No face?

Shot right in the face with a shotgun.

You saw that?

I saw it, and the blood all over the road, and it got on the tires. Because the car was '39 Ford...

'40 Ford... and it had white side wall tires and he ... after they caught who it was and he said

he stood on the man's porch and watched me and if I'd gotten out of my car, he'd a shot the hell

outa me. And I so I couldn't get the sheriff But we built some houses for Sheriff Blades, my

Daddy and I, and I couldn't get in my head ... all you had in them days was these turning box

phones I couldn't get into my head how to get to Sheriff Blades, so I went on home. And I

got in bed, 'course I didn't go to sleep. But I finally went to sleep and I woke up and there was Sheriff Blades standing over top of me. My Mother had opened up the store to him

and Id never got up, And he said, "Boy, did you run over top of two men last night and kill em?"

" I said, "You know, Sheriff Blades, that I didn't run over top of nobody. But it was two laying

in the road dead with their face shot all up. " And so anyway he come back at night and they'd

caught Cecil Pritchett. One man was Deal and the other man's name was Brown, and he shot right

in their face with a shotgun. And they found him up to Phillips' at Post Oak ... the first house

on the right hand ... second house on the right hand side. And that's where he was at when they

went in the front and the back, 'cause he was bad. He died at the penitentiary. He's got a lot

of kin people also living up at Blockhouse Road ... Pritchetts.

And he was a mean man. And he came in the store one night back many years ago.

And he had his son with him. They was drinking their own squeezing, you know.

And he went down on main street in Fredericksburg and tell his son to pull up.

And he shot every light out in main street in Fredericksburg and he'd come by the store once and we'd never closed up or nothing. He'd want to start a fight with everybody and so he went on over the hill and we said, "Thank God he didn't kill nobody.

" And we didn't know he'd shot out all the city lights before he got there. Cecil Pritchett, he died in the penitentiary.

He was in the old Jail? He was in the old Jail at the Courthouse?

They had a time doing anything with him. If they'd come to feed him, he'd spit in their faces.

You said it was your ... who was the cook who fed the...

Who was the clerk?

No, who was the cook who made the meals?

My Grandmother.

What kind of meals did she serve them?

Just what she fed a man who worked on a farm ate. Everybody eat home cooking- She was a real cook.

So they were well fed?

Yeah, well fed.

So they were well taken care of?

Yes.

Did he just spit in everybody's face?

They'd hold a coat up between them when they carried something in therefor him to eat. He didn't spit in my Granddaddy's ... but in Maxie Blades' face because Grandpa had died.

But Maxie Blades took him ... Maxie Blades weighed about 450 pounds. His wife ran a post

office at the courthouse. You know where Mrs. Chewning's store is at?

Yes.

Right across the street was a little office and Williams, or Williamson, the dentist's office was there. Then they went down the road and built a brick building. And that was Mrs. Blades, a real pretty woman, looked like my Mother-in-law. And their boy turned

out to be a... I don't know what you call it... big tall boy. Only child they had.

He was about six foot, I reckon, good basketball player, a good athlete

And tell me about your teacher, your teacher was Mrs. Harris?

Mrs. Dorothy Harris.

Now, is that the same teacher whose house is at the Courthouse?

The old Harris house? And who picked it up was Mary Massey. And they lived right there

on 208 as you turn to go... anyway it makes a sharp turn, 208, off of 608, isn't it ...

606 Well, that's where Mary Massey was raised up. And she taught me in the second and third grade. Nanny Goodloe, come from right down here, she taught me in the fourth,

and Miss Penny taught me. She was from the Northern Neck and she taught me in the fifth.

And the sixth grade I failed because I didn't go to school half the time. That was a Miss Apperson or something and she never taught any more. She had twentysix kids and five passed out of the twenty-six. Miss Molly Art came back from Five Mile Fork ... you know where the Cancer Center is? One of the finest teachers in the country.

You can find people in the eighties she taught and....

Where was the school that you went to?

Old Chancellor School. It's called Chancellor Community Center now.

One part of that old building is still there and the rest of it's tore down.

So, you have good memories of school?

Yes. Elsie Goodloe and her sister taught the seventh and old man Bolton was principal ... and then Miss Crickenberger ... and, yes, I know most everybody there. See when you got to high school, the teacher would teach two classes and then the second or third grade was just like the rest of us, just a single class.

So, how far up in education did you get?

I finished old Spotsylvania High School.

She did too.

Your wife?

She sat in front of me.

Oh, you go back a long way.

That's where we met.

You go back for a long time and unfortunately she's not around right now.

She was one fine woman.

Yes, beautiful lady.

See that basket sitting up there?

Yes.

While she was so sick, her sister took it down and put thirty-eight dollars worth of flowers in it. That basket ... my Grandmother married my Grandfather, Carl Carner, after he finished college and didn't know what he was doing. But my Grandmother was only fourteen years old when he married her. And a colored man cut them slats and wove that basket and gave it to my Grandmother for a wedding present. She gathered eggs in it all her life.

Beautiful basket.

It's a willow basket. I sold baskets at the store from people in the mountains. I knew these people because we turned around in Madison County Courthouse and

I knew a lot of basket weavers. And I sold a lot of baskets at the store.
I had a country store. I had anything you wanted in it ... before they bulldozed it down.

The country store where you had the blacksmith shop?

Yes. Bulldozer came and dug up black dirt where we used to have the forge.
And I just looked at it from a long way away. It made me feel so bad.

You have good memories of that...

I remember even their horses. I can tell people what kind of horses they brought to Daddy.
And my Daddy taught me about horses. I don't mean no harm, but I don't think there's
nobody
in this country can judge horseflesh like me.

That's interesting.

How you tell when a horse ... talking to a horse, talking to a dog is nothing.
Every horse I ever had understands everything I said, except for one you seen awhile ago.
She come from Mexico and she had to learn English. Now, don't laugh, but she had to
learn English.

Because she came from Mexico?

Yes. She came here from Mexico.

Tell us about your Grandfather and the weather. He told you how he could tell the
weather
by the way the moon was... the shape of the moon?

My Grandfather's brother told me that. He said that when the moon was at quarter or
half and was tilted up, it would hold water and it was going to rain. But if the moon
was slanting down, it was a dry spell. And all the time it was ... nearly every time.
And then he told me if the wind was blowing in the daytime so bad you could hardly
stand up, when the sun goes down it will settle. If it doesn't settle, it's not going
to settle until the next morning when the sun comes up. And it will do it. I watch it.

It was right all the time?

Yes. And there was another man over at Five Mile Fork named Rodgers, and he quoted
the
weather for the Free Lance-Star. And he tells you when it snows every year and how he
told
that, it was how many fogs you had in the fall ... and that'd be how many snows you
were
going to have in the winter. We have had it here in the winter so it was as much as three

feet deep, sometimes more. I've seen drifts here eight, ten feet high. I've seen a bulldozer break down trying to get down the road to open up a path and farmers near you poured milk

down the hillsides until it looked like ice cream. Because they couldn't get it nowhere you had to milk the cows. And when they got the road open so people could come, people

come out o fFredericksburg everywhere to go look at that mound of ice cream.

That was in 1936. I was twelve years old. You just could see the tops of the fence posts sticking up and then the sleet is on top. We couldn't let animals out of the barn or they'd fall and break a leg or something because there was an inch and half of ice on top of the snow. And you just slide everywhere. And because we'd milk over here ... twelve cows... we sold B-Grade and Hilldrup sold A -Grade. But it was a lot of work to A-Grade... whitewashed inside the buildings and I don't know what all. We were just as clean with our milk as they were, but B-Grade went into butter and ice cream and A -Grade went into bottles. Gordon done milked many a cow he was a strong man when he was young.

Yes, I had met Gordon and Ann Hilldrup. They were very, very nice people.

I interviewed them. In fact, I'm going over to see them on Thursday.

So, now, let's get back to our interview and we'll talk about those pigs and the cows and all those good old days. Talking about the pigs.

Are you ready to continue, Buck? So, let's proceed.

Pigs and people trailing on groceries and everything else... then

we had stud hogs that we'd ... they would pay us back with pigs. So we had so many hogs ... we had fifty-some one time. And we'd take them up to the slaughter house which belonged to O. C. Zeizhel, who was on the Board of Supervisors one time.

But my brother-in-law a lot of time did the butchering and he was married to my sister at that time. And we'd take them up there, scald them, scrape them, cut them into pieces. And we took ham and all, everything, and we'd grind it into sausage ... and pure sausage... none of the scraps or nothing like that.

And people would come from everywhere to buy it.

It was delicious.

And then when we found out my brother-in-law, he knew how to kill... we sold right much lamb. But you have to skin a lamb in a trough because if wool hits the lamb, it tastes like a wet dog smells. Ruins the flavor. See, most of the lamb comes from Australia here now and anyway, we sold a lot of lamb. We sold it to the doctors and lawyers and a lot of sausage to people because it was pure sausage and we learnt, you know, we cut it in hunks.

How much did you ... ?

Oh, we never got over twenty, twenty-five cents a pound. And beans were three cents, butter beans, five cent a pound. Fat back was five cents a pound. A can of pork

and beans was anywhere from three to five cents, and they were called "Gibbs Pork and Beans, " made over in Maryland and the best pork and beans you ever eat. Gibbs bought it and now Hanover's got it, Canning Company. I remember when Dr. Pepper come out and I remember when ... you had that drink, "10, 2 and 4 " on the bottle.

And you also ran a dance hall.

Yes, at the Old CC Camp Barracks. When Roosevelt took over, there was going to be a car in every garage and a chicken in every pot. Well, he paid them boys fifteen cent a day and put them in, like an Army uniform ... you remember it? And they had camps all around, just like Army and they just made enough money to buy a pack of cigarettes, cigarettes were ten cents a pack And my Uncle Earl Carner was superintendent of most of them camps. He had about three years of prep school, instead of college. But he could go anywhere and get a job as an engineer on the road, you know. I never did tell you about the Spotswood Inn, that was headquarters there during the ... when they were shooting Spotsylvania Courthouse all to pieces, that was headquarters for the Union Army and later on, Grandpa Carl Conner's, the sheriff, brother Beal Carner bought

Yes, to Richmond wasn't it?

Yeah. And he had a bed and breakfast there.

They said they had delicious food.

Oh, yes. Her name was Grace Carner and she had two daughters. Both of them went to Hollywood, you know, try out for character parts and they came back. And I don't know where the oldest one is at, but Joyce was the prettiest woman you've ever seen. And she married a man who was an alcoholic and she turned alcoholic and they're dead.

Oh, what a shame.

Well, I don't know where the oldest girl went to. She's probably dead, too. But Beal Carner weighed five hundred and some pounds. And my Granddaddy and his brother were little skinny people. But Old Man Carner was a big man. I've got pictures of him somewhere, but I don't know where they're at. I don't have any idea where they're at. But see, my wife put stuff.. and I can't find... the title to the home or car or nothing because she puts it away.

Well, well, I hope you find it eventually, but tell me about the dance hall.

Well, we had the building inspector's mother played the fiddle. It was nine Dickensons who lived down at Snell's and all of them but one could make music and sing, too.

Musical family!

Well they come from the Payne side, because their Uncle tuned pianos, and he was also one of them fine barbers. He cut my hair a lot of times. He worked at the barber shop. And they played at the dance hall for us and I think, to get in the dance hall, I think it was fifty cents or a dollar... but we had it every Friday night and my mother sold food in there and then we had...

What kind of food did she sell?

Just hot dogs and hamburgers. Didn't have french fries.

That was good, good food.

All kind of drinks.

No junk food.

Yes. Junk food People behaved them days. You might have a drink or two, but you had nothing hear of .. but we always had an officer there. Deputized by Sheriff Blades and never had to arrest ...

You never had any problems? That's great.

And then we hired ... as I said, we had the slaughter house ... we used it, but it really belonged to O. C. Zeizhel, and the blood run in the creek and the creek ran into the Massaponax Creek and Massaponax Creek run in the Rappahannock River, so, they finally shut it down, you know. But they didn't even shut it down ... went out of business before the environmental people got a hold of it. But didn't nobody pay no attention to nothing like that in those days. We didn't know asbestos would kill you, salt would kill you, and of course, didn't know tobacco would kill you either. I seen many an old woman smoke a pipe.

I know, and cigars. I know you love horses. You were raised with horses and mules and you did a lot of horseback riding. I'm sure you rode all the way into Fredericksburg.

Many a time. Andrew Sean, Jeff Ashley and I, and sometimes Gordon Hilldrup. And we'd come back at night. Sometimes I didn't go with them. And Jeff Ashley had a horse that would single foot and that horse would get the rhythm like Passo horse from Mexico and they'd hit that rhythm and I could lay in the bed and tell that Jeff was in the crowd. And that mare you looked at awhile ago can do the same thing. Single foot, rack and pace. And you could work her to the plow, work her to the buggy, do anything you'd want. She'd cut a cow and you could rope off of her.

Smart, smart horse.

She was half quarter horse and half Tennessee Walking Horse. She was marked like Gene Autry's horse, the one he used to...

What was the horse's name?

Her name was Nell. And the mules we had were the most beautiful mules in the world and they were full sisters. One was thirteen, fourteen months older than the other one. They were Mary and Patsy. They were gray and very rare ... blue roans on their rumps. My Daddy sold them for five hundred dollars when you could buy a mule for fifty dollars apiece. And Mr. Goldman, up at Block House, was living in Westmoreland County, and he had to have them and he bought them. And then later on sold the place down in next to Shilo and moved up to where you live at, on Block House Road. He's dead now. I can't think of his first name ... I can see him right now ... he was a chain smoker. Smoked one cigarette right after the other.

One time my Daddy, up around Lake Anna, was riding a horse ... it was a really, he said, a quarter horse but he didn't know it ... they didn't register quarter horses in 1942. And in 1961, if it was born, it became permanent, but before that they sent a field man from Amarillo, Texas, to measure them see if they come up to par to be called Quarter Horse. It was a real strict breed. And one time my Daddy was riding home from seeing some girl on that road that goes back to Lake Anna Park, used to be called Brookstown. Everybody back there was Brooks, Lloyds and Hairfields. They didn't mind cutting and shooting. And when Daddy came up there one night, the horse shied and he couldn't get by. I said, "How old were you, Daddy?" and he said, "About eighteen." And the horse's name was Prince and he said, "I went back down the road and tied it to a swinging limb." If you tie a horse to a swinging limb, he can't break loose, you know, it'll jerk him around. And he said he came back up there and he said he struck a big head match and somebody raised up and said "Ha, Ha, Ha" and he said, "I tell you the truth, I come near fainting, I come near dying. I could feel my heart go up in my throat."

He said, "Your Grandpa, (that's my Grandpa Carl Carrier) had put some Lloyd man to watch him, make sure the possums didn't bother him or nobody else. He said, "Get the coroner here. It was a case in which a Brooks had stabbed a Lloyd seventeen times. He was laid on the roadside dead. Right there below that store on the corner about a mile ... go about a mile, make a right and that's called the Carrier Plantation. And I hear these old people talk about it and I heard my Mother say that she loved water out of that spring to wash clothes and for drinking water. So I've gotten four or five jugs out of it and it's the best tasting water I ever tasted. And now it's been cut all up into lots and shacks all around in there. They tell me it was eleven hundred acres in the Carrier Plantation. My daddy and them said they raised tobacco there. See, Spotsylvania raised a lot of tobacco, people don't know about that."

No, I didn't know.

It was air cured. In other words, you had barns where so many boards were on hinges. They pull them out so the air would go through. And then my Daddy said they'd put it on wagons and go through and come out over at Ladysmith and stay all night over there, down below there, before you'd get to Doswell, and next day they'd make it to the tobacco market where it was put on auction. And then they'd haul groceries back to that store where ... I don't know what's there now ... Grandpa Brumley and brother Dick Brumley, built this store and they sold buggies, and harness and dry goods. And the man over there, he bought some of the old antique scales and stuff just to keep, you know. But that school box come from the store and that clock on the mantelpiece come out of that store. They sold the clocks. But in the school boxes, they kept thread in there ... forty, fifty, sixty, seventy-five, you know, size three, and I put legs on them. I built this house.

Well, it looks like it's very sound.

Yes. My wife, I reckon enjoyed it. She came here in nineteen and sixty-two and she died in ninety-six and August the fourteenth she will be dead four years. But she was witty and I never was lonesome around her. She said Id live to be about fifty when we got married She said, "You don't have no mercy on your body. "

You're now seventy ...

Seventy-six on August the twentieth. She was fifty-two days older than I was.

You married an older woman.

I told her she was and older woman. She was pretty, though.

Tell me about going through the Depression. I know...

Oh, the Depression! I told you, you know, people would give to people and people were really hungry. I knew some people, they had a sack of flour and they'd pick berries and make what they called blackberry mush and huckleberry mush. Blueberries grow wild, you know, and they'd eat that without bread. I've seen them do it.

And then they'd eat fatback, which you could buy out of the store. We sold a lot of fatback. That's when they cut all the lean off and it's just fat. You could buy it, like I said, that was about five or six cent a pound. And then the beans. We had a drawer underneath the counter. We had pinto beans and butter beans and lima beans and navy beans. Pinto beans was bigger than a white bean and had red stripes and flecks all through it. Some people didn't like them. And then they came out with pork and beans. That was made by Gibbs, and I think we sold that at six cents a can. That was a regular number two can. Now they're not number twos, they're 301s, but you think you're getting a number two can but you're not. Nobody uses number two cans anymore. And then I remember when RC Cola came out ... I remember when Pepsi Cola come down from the north. That was a Yankee drink.

That's what they called it, a Yankee drink?

Yes. And these tourists, when they'd come down from North and get all mixed up, they had the sign on the wrong side of the road at Five Mile Fork, it was pointing to Chancellor Battlefield. And they'd ask Daddy, "Do you not have a Pepsi, do you?" Daddy would say, "What the hell's wrong with these people? All these Yankees want is a Pepsi. "

And today, it's so well known all over the world.

We were like Merle Haggert, we drank Coke!

Your mother was very generous to the people during the Depression?

If she knew they didn't have anything, before we had the store in the twenties she'd go out there and slice off ham and middling, what you'd call bacon ... a streak of lean and streak of fat. And she'd give it to them and sometimes Granddaddy would salt down ... well, he would all the time salt down herring and sometimes salt down beef.. what you'd call corned beef But anyway, then when we got the store, she wouldn't let my Daddy know it, but people had thing right in front of the counter and she'd walk around put a sack of flour in it. Everybody carried their groceries home in cardboard boxes or burlap bags and she'd give them a sack of flour and maybe would cut off a hunk of fat back and give it to them. Shhhh ... that's what she'd tell me. Daddy was a little on the tight side.

So, she had to keep it quiet.

Did you ever hear of Wayne Newton? She gave him many apiece of candy when he didn't have any. Wayne Newton lived right up the road next to Zion Church.

I had no idea about that.

His Mother was Pamunky Indian and his Daddy was a Newton, which was full of Cherokee.

He lived here?

He lived right up on number three below Zion Church. Mrs. Bill Pollard come up with the trade name "Chicken in the Rough, " do you remember that? And then later on, old Col. Saunders came along with his chicken. Well, Mrs. Pollard was a good cook and she had a little chicken house where you could buy chicken. And he washed dishes for her. But his brother is a better musician than he is, but they don't speak to each other. They don't get along at all.

What area did he live in?

You come up number three highway and before you get to Chancellor Elementary School, there used to be a house there. I don't know whether it's torn down. That's where Mrs. Pollard sold just fried chicken and baked chicken, and people came from all over the country to eat it.

It was delicious.

I worked at Massaponax Sand and Gravel over nine years because Mr. Lucy was President and knew all my people. I came down and worked in the office, but they found out that I was a carpenter and I told them that I'd rather be outside. So I built that plant up there near Falmouth, I built an office and built another place in Ashland. I could do carpentry you know, and I could do body work on cars, too. Of course, they didn't have horses to shoe! I could shoe horses, too.

You did everything.

I could plumb a house, too.

I believe you are a person who would know how to make a wagon wheel.

Yes, I could do that, too. I know how to shrink the iron tire, weld it. You put flux on it to weld it. We had a tire shrinker so we didn't have to be cutting much. You heat it until you see sparks come out the forge ... take tongs ... it would take two to carry it over to the shrinker. And pull down on the handle ... it would shrink it and roll that tire over ... you dump flux on it real quick and that made it stick and you'd hammer it out smooth. And then the spokes ... we had a spoke shaver. You took the drawing knife to start on the wood corner. You'd put the spoke rim on it ... and ream it. You could cut the wheel down and then you wouldn't have to buy new spokes. How you cut it down ... with a ... we called it a compass. It was a wheel that would measure. You went around the tire and decided what size you wanted to make the tire after you got through putting the rims on.

Sounds interesting.

When you temper metal ... your axe or hatchet ... this girl here, her Daddy could make the best knife you ever seen. He built me a knife that was one inch long. My wife lost it. She had it on a gold chain around her neck. But anyway, you temper metal, you know you could dip it in motor oil. We didn't have that much motor oil to throw away, so we dipped it in water and when you seen that blue right at the end, well, it still had heat. That was as hot as you were ever going to get it. I can even build an axle and a hatchet.

I am sure you were very busy. You never got bored, did you, growing up?

No, not at all. I took my baby carriage and built a wagon. Just like my Daddy built wagons. I hooked his bird dog to it and she would pull every pound in her. She was a setter and the only trouble I had with her when I was hauling wood, she'd lay down and get all tangled up in the harness. Daddy used to laugh about it, "Your dog's just like a horse. " She'd just flop down, get all tangled up, I'd have to straighten her out. Then she'd pull all the wood to the house. We had wood was out beside the barn where we'd split it and stack it. I'd feed hogs. We fed them milk feed. We'd mix it in water. And then Betty Lewis Bread was Fredericksburg. That was before Bond Bread or Wonder Bread. They had stale doughnuts in cases and everything and my Daddy would buy it for a dollar a box and sometimes they'd bring about two or three big boxes up there and dump it in front of the store. The bread was called "Betty Lewis. " Made by the Becks. And one Beck boy is still living. I think he's on the City Council, isn't he? That's the grandson. Anyway, we'd put it in barrels where it would ferment like wine. We'd take a bucket, put it down in there. The more fermented it was, the more the hogs liked it. It was creating yeast, you know. And you'd say, "Poor hog, fatten him up. " But before we slaughtered them, we fed them a lot of corn, too. And I remember in nineteen thirty-six ... the snow got so big...

Now, we're going to talk about where we were when the tape cut off. Where we were talking about feeding the hogs.

We fed them milk feed and swill, you called it, when you mixed it with bread and let it ferment. And then, when we got ready to kill them, we fed them corn to make the meat harder and more firm. And of course, we raised the corn ourselves. We used to feed it on the cob. The hogs would bite right off the cob. And then if you are feeding them corn, we didn't feed them swill or slops, we'd just give them water. You used to do the same thing years ago with a steer if you were going to use him for meat. You'd bring him in and give him plenty of hay and plenty of grain. You'd give more grain than you would hay because it would make the meat firmer. And like beef, people don't understand, you kill a beef, it ought to hang in a cooler at least a week before you cut it up. Makes the meat taste twice as good. It's what we called aging the meat.

And they don't do that today?

No. They kill them and throw them, wrap them up in a piece of white cheesecloth. They say they age them, but I don't believe it. We aged them a week. That walk-in box in over in the store, where we hung beef in.

In what store?

Powell's Friendly Market. It came out of the slaughter house. My Daddy, and I believe, Mr. McCarty, made it out of cypress. And put two walls ... and all it's got in the middle is sawdust ... that's all they had in those days to insulate it. And you got it so you can unbolt it and take it to pieces. And they bought it and put it over in the store. But that's an old box. That box was built back in the twenties.

You were telling me that your father was a blacksmith for the Park Service, Fall Hill and Bloody Angle. Did he have any stories to tell you about that?

No, no more than you know, when I was a boy, you could dig anywhere and dig up something from the Civil War. Like a bayonet ... and a boy up the road one time found a gold locket in the ground and the picture was still good inside it, A Picture of a girl. He said he found out it was from a Southern boy from Georgia. I can't recall who did it, but they found a can of sardines in the ground, preserved. And they took it to the Civil War Roundtable in Fredericksburg and x-rayed the sardines and found the sardines were still good inside it. I didn't even know they had sardines during the Civil War. They had beans and hard tack. Do you know what hard tack is?

No.

It's a pressed biscuit, so hard that it almost breaks your teeth off when you eat it. And they had it in the CCC Camps for the guys to carry when they were working out on the road. My uncle used to give me some of them sometimes. Boy, they were hard! It was a good tasting biscuit. It was what you called a pressed piece of dough. About that thick. And come in squares. Called hard tack.

I never heard of that before.

But they did x-ray those sardines and they were still good.

Did anybody ever eat them?

No, I don't reckon they did. But I used to dig up bayonets when I was a boy.

Did you save any of these things?

Yes, we'd save them and we cut down one tree over there where Jackson sat in that road I told you to go to Guinea when he was wounded? We cut an oak tree over there... it was one of those oak trees with little small acorns on it ... it's got a name but I can't think of it ... I think it's white oak or red oak ... I don't know which it is ... that thing was just full of minnie balls made of steel. They must have really fought hard right there. Because, see, when we sawed it down, there was no such thing as chain saws. We had cross-cut saws you'd pull like this and we'd be sawing through bullets all the time. We'd chip them out and I took them to town when I was a boy and sold them to somebody ... but I've forgotten who I sold them to.

But arrowheads were everywhere too, from Indians. I found a lot of arrowheads here. Most all of them were made out of white stone and cut perfect. And I had two or three of them, but I can't find them now. She probably put them somewhere ... my wife. She never threw away anything. I was ... the other day ... dusting yesterday ... and there was her class ring and my class ring in that old pitcher ... and she told me that pitcher in there was a cream pitcher and it went way back to her Great Grandmother, who worked with the Indians. And there's a teapot in there that goes back to her Great Grandmother and another pitcher on the cedar chest went back to her Great Grandmother. And all that stuff will be thrown away, I reckon. But I've got a platform rocker in there ... some furniture left ... I finished it and my cousin covered it ... and I've got an old clock over the fireplace that came out of the store ... they sold clocks at the store in Brokenburg ... Lake Anna, you all call it now.

And it was called Brokenburg?

And years ago, it was called Brookstown. Cary Crismond could tell you. I think he has Alzheimer's disease, but if he didn't have it, he could tell you more than I could ever tell you. I reckon Cary's eighty-eight, eighty-nine years old. He used to tell me a lot of stuff I asked him about. He could tell you a lot of history. Mr. Stokely Coleman's mother was the Postmaster in Spotsylvania when I was a boy. Stokely Coleman used to be Commonwealth's Attorney and his cousin was the Circuit Judge. I can't think of his first name. Richard Little Coleman.

There you go.

And of course, my father-in-law lived to be way over a hundred years old, too. He'd be about one hundred and two or three. He lived over on number one highway, where it turned off at Spotswood Inn. Before I met my wife, I didn't know him from Adam. I was riding too many horses and breaking too many bird dogs.

Is that when you were into boxing?

Boxing. I started when I was sixteen years old and my Mother signed for me to play basketball, she thought.

She didn't want you to get hurt?

I wouldn't have told my Mother about boxing. Now, my Daddy, he loved boxing, but I wouldn't tell him because he'd tell everybody in the country. And a colored boy drove me. I wasn't even old enough to have a driver's license. And he'd carry me to these places for boxing. His name was Stonewall Johnson. I boxed in Golden Gloves, but I figured, you know, that I'd just as well quit because I got hit right there and broke three ribs.

Did you ever fall off a horse?

Oh, I had a horse drag me one time from here clean over to Shannon Airport, hung in the stirrup. I kept talking to her and she stopped and I tried to get my foot out...

How many miles is that?

About two miles ... two and one-half miles.

Did you get hurt?

I had to take my pants off, dump the dirt out of them. It hurt my feelings more than it did anything else. But see, she got to running and she got to swaying like that ... she would have struck a tree with your head. But I broke an Appaloosa, do you know what they are?

Yes.

I broke an Appaloosa for Sid Faller at Bealeton. A man give her to him because she killed his son. And she was buckskin with brown spots, very rare.

She killed his son?

Killed the man's son that give her to him, Sid Faller. And Sid Faller didn't tell me that. said if I didn't break the horse he was going to throw my bread out of his store ... he bought about a hundred loaves a day ... a big country store. So I took the horse.

And he wanted my me to name her. I named her Squaw Bonnie because she was, you know,

an Indian pony. And it took half a day to get the saddle on her. I put her in a garden and then I took the tractor and disked up the garden so in case she did throw me it wouldn't hurt too bad.

There were no houses around here then?

There was a farmhouse right there and the barn ... and anyway, I finally got the saddle and everything on her and put this foot in the stirrup, and put my hand up to tickle her and she'd buck. When I did get up on her, I couldn't turn her loose. But in a week's time I had her looking at cows. I'd ride through the back way to Lee Hill Farm ... Sidney B. Shannon used to own the Sheraton and he raised show cattle ... but if they were leggy, or short legged, they'd cull them out and we'd cut them cows. She'd get to looking at them. I got to riding Indian style, no bit in her mouth, you know, just rawhide. She naturally had "cow " in her. I don't know where it come from, but after they tracked it back, they found her daddy was a real famous Appaloosa horse named Frosty. And so he told Claude Harlow, a boy on my route, tell "Chitlin' Switch" "... he called me "Chiltin' Switch. " Every time I'd go in the store, he'd give me a can of chitlins. I didn't know they canned them ... and I'd take them and give them away, so they called me "Chitlin' Switch. " That's what they named me. And sometimes he called me "Fuzzy " because I had real curly hair.

In a week's time I was sitting right out there and I took a picture of her to send to him. And one Sunday morning I was laying in bed there ... big barn right there ... four horse stalls and a great big place for hay in the loft, too ... I heard something rattling and I looked over there and there was a whole load of hay going in, and a whole lot of feed on top of it, called Red Rose Feed. I'd never seen it but he sold it in the feed store ... and he gave me one thousand pounds of horse feed and sixty bales of timothy hay, He said, send the horse to Mary Washington College, that's what he'd tell the people up there. So, one time all the cowboys from Walter Chrysler... you know Walter Chrysler owned the ... Chrysler Company owned Northwale Farm ... ever heard of it? In Warrenton?

No.

Well, it's Walter Chrysler's farm. And they had three cowboys up there on the fence when I got up there with her. I had Lee Hill's trailer, pulling her. And he had Brown Swiss Cattle, which are French cattle and they were white and you could milk them or beef them and they are tall, big things ... and they bred them down in Florida. They had double muscle like a rabbit. You could get more meat out of them that way. Anyway, he had about twenty young calves there in a lot. I didn't know who those cowboys were. And we had stopped down the road

at a Kentucky Fried Chicken and my daughter was little ... and he told her, see if she could work those cows. Well, I had a hackamore on her and I was cheating a little bit on the rope reins because my wife made the rope reins just that big so the horse could see behind as well as what was in front of you. She dyed one strand red and two strands were just cotton, you know. Well, one calf got loose and went through the fence, so I went up there ... you know, his son was up there ... and put that calf right back through the hole he came through.

Them cowboys were sitting there and said a few dirty words ... and got down off the fence, said, "That damn horse been rode for five years." And the old man said, "Fellas, you all are damn liars. That mare just killed a man about a year ago and I didn't think he could ever break her." So, that's the reason he gave me my one hundred and fifty dollars for breaking her and all that hay and feed, see.

I met one of them boys in Culpeper in Jamesway, that's a chain store. It was one of the Faller boys. He walked up to me, you know, and said, "You know what you are?" I said, "No, I been called nearly everything!" He said, "When I was a young boy, you were my hero. You broke that horse and you were the best bread man we ever saw. Everybody in the country said there's Brumley on that bread truck. You always had a kind

word for everybody and everybody liked you." Well, I was on that route before ... people would tell me to get them a size ten shoe, D last, and I'd know where to get them and I'd go buy them the shoes and carry them back to them. Bring shoes back from Mr. Sullivan's shoe shop, pick up paint at Sherwin Williams, carry it back on the route, when somebody said, "Pick me up a crate of eggs," well, I had a hard time with them. I sold City Bakery, which was Betty Lewis Pies. At that time we didn't have restaurant pies. And I sold to Dahlgren Cafeteria, Mrs. Lemons ran it ... and I had the whole stock because she'd pat me on the back and say, "You big devil, you full of dimples!" I said, "That's the reason you buy my bread from me?" She said, "Hell, yes!"

You sold three thousand loaves by yourself?

Some holidays, yes.

And sometimes you had to make two trips?

I always made two trips.

And you got up at two thirty in the morning? And you got home, at around what, seven thirty?

Six or seven o'clock, sometimes later. My wife wouldn't be here. She would leave my supper and everything in the oven. There weren't any microwave ovens in those days.

She would leave a note on the table for me and Debbie, that's my daughter who was little, to leave the oven on where she had set it for ten minutes so I could eat,

you know. Id eat by myself. And then times, Red Foley would come on, he's dead now. He was a country singer, Pat Boone's father-in-law. I would go sit and watch that. And Bill Holland was a stunt man in Hollywood...

I'm sure you didn't last long after ... you must have started nodding pretty soon after you sat down.

Sometimes she'd come in here, after my daughter got married and left home, and she'd reach up to take the paper off and tell me, "I thought Id better pick up the paper off your nose before you smothered. " She said the paper was blowing up and down. My wife was a big devil!

And you had one daughter?

That's all. She was the only one. Dr. Jones ... you know that place was so ... at Chancellor it was a hospital during the Civil War and he was a ... what kind of doctor? One who helped babies be born. Anyway, he shot himself... .. killed himself... .. after he retired ... found he had cancer and killed himself He collected antiques all the time ... I sold him some old stuff .. knew where it was at, you know ... and I would tell him. I had a drenching bit up there before they tore the old barn down ... before I went up there to run the store ... and that drenching bit would have been worth about three or four hundred dollars. You put it on like a bridle and it had a steel bit with a funnel alongside it and you'd just pour the medicine in the funnel slowly. The horse would lick it and have to drink it.

A boy over at Lee Hill called me one time to tell me a horse had colic. It was a stud horse ... right good horse. 'Righteous George' was the name of the horse. I told him "Don't let him lay down, keep him walking." He said, "Would you come over here?" I said, "Yes, III come over there." And I said, "Well, don't let him lay down. Put one of the boys behind him and whip him if he tries to lay down. " And we tubed him you know and put the funnel in there. And he was getting ready to pour spirits of nitrae in him mixed with water. And that's all you had then ... didn't have time to call the veterinarian. I said, "Don't put it in there! Don't put it in there! Let me listen. I put my ear to his flanks and I said, "Blow." I said, "I don't hear it. Don't pour nothing in there." And I said, "Pull it back and comeback again." So he pulled it back through his nose and comeback again. I said, "Blow." And I said, "Now you got it in his stomach." He had that thing right in the horse's lungs, he would have drowned him.

Oh!

An old veterinarian showed me how to do that. You can put your ear right up to the flank and if you blow you can hear it if it's in the stomach, but if it's in the lungs you don't hear a thing. And that horse kept walking and walking and finally got it straight. People don't really know what colic is.

Babies have it.

Well, a horse can't vomit and his guts will twist and kill him. I got one here right now, come from Brownville, Texas. Uh, Brownsville, Texas. And she got down and twisted her

gut. She got to wallowing and twisted her guts. What hurt her was I was I sold a colt off her by the World's Champion Reining Horse. In nineteen sixty two he was the World's Champion. And everybody got trotting in here taking care of that colt and they knew more that I knew. And I finally sold it ... the Auction Company sold it ... sells farms and cattle and all. Got the papers and all straightened out. She come from Pokadot Farm in Winchester and the horse was World Champion in sixty-two ... the daddy of the colt... and I didn't give much for the mare and nobody knew she was in foal for a long time, but I seen she was in foal.

My poor wife, she liked animals, but she'd never been around horses. But she could do anything with them, but she never rode in her life. She'd put fly spray on the horses. And that last horse, she'd pick her leg up and let her spray underneath her leg. If you went out there, she'd run you out of the field. We'd caution people, you know. People would feed her over the fence and she never bit nobody in her life. But she didn't want you in that lot where she's at! Anyway, my wife took to animals and, like I said, she could do anything with them.

You can tell, when you're talking to horses if he understands you. If he puts his ears back he doesn't understand and if he perks them up, he understands. If you look a horse right in the eye and he's got that far off look like an eagle, he can run. And then when you look down at his ankle bones, and if they are not tall, if they're short, he's a fast horse. Because he can fold them much quicker. An old Indian showed that to me.

Well, next time I get on the horses I'll have to look at those ankles.

See from his ankle joint down to his hoof, his fetlock, he'll be shorter in there than some horses. And that way he can fold quicker when he runs. And then if you look at him and he looks like he's far off, like an eagle, ... oh, I knew that Indian's name was Tut. And he ran a lot of horses and that's all I knew about him. And I stopped one day to see him, back about three or four years before my wife got sick and he was dead. But he had two boys running the store. He had a little country store and had a stable in behind. He'd go to the racetrack every week. He knew a horse. He'd pin fire them, too. Do you know what that is?

No.

They'd break down in front legs and he'd heat a piece of brass in the forge with a torch and stick it in the legs and smell the hair that was burning and that way, nature takes hold and makes it heal. And up in the knee joints, called stifles on a horse ... I hauled this horse back from Oklahoma, outside of Ft. Smith. I took about four days getting here and my wife and daughter was with me ... my daughter was twelve years old ... and anyway, I got it back here and my Daddy told me, "You done give all that money for that horse and you've got nothing. " He said, "Shoot, y those stifles are gone. "

So I went up to Northwale Farm, Walter Chrysler's farm, and Don Wade was the veterinarian there, and he told me, he said, "Where did she come from? " I said, this side of Bill Hedges' race track-, Blue Ribbon Downs, Salislaw, Oklahoma. He said, "You know what her trouble is? It isn't the ride, it's phosphorous deficiency. " We test the land here. They drive a tube into the ground and the agriculture department tell what it lacks in the soil. He said, "You go home and make sure she gets steamed bone meal, not the raw bone meal. Steamed bone meal and trace mineral salts. And he said to give her two thirds trace mineral salts and one third of a cup of steamed bone meal. I called him up and said, "Dr. Wade, that mare ate the whole thing, three cups. " "Good, put it there until she just licks it. " You know, my Daddy laughed at me and that old horse, but that mare got as solid as a dollar.

Well, you certainly know a lot about horses. My goodness. So, before we conclude this interview...

I don't know if I've done you any good or not.

I think you've been fascinating. Is there anything you'd like to talk about that we haven't discussed? Does something come to mind that you'd like to tell our listeners?

I can tell one thing. I was a little bashful when I was young and I went to Zion Church and Preacher Stevens was the preacher. And I seen these cars... there weren't very many cars in those days... it was four or five cars stopped alongside the road, I was breaking this steer to work with a yoke, you know. I didn't have a pony. I had a little straight-legged beagle, which was very rare then times, she was in there with me and her name was Nellie. We had a wash tub thereat the well to water horses with. I didn't put reins on him or nothing, just hook him to a two-wheel cart and if he runs backwards, it don't hurt or if he runs forward it don't hurt. Id shut all the gates up and that steer would run and run with that cart and me and that dog sitting down in there holding on. Preacher Stevens got up therein the pulpit and preached about it. My face got just as red!

My cousins would touch me and whisper, "He's talking about you." But what it was, when the cart went over the top of the well, the wash tub fit just as good, right on the wheels and that thing was bumping and banging and the cart went all to pieces. And the steer was running, you know, he was scared. When he did stop it was in front of the barn and he was panting. From that time on, I named him Mike, and I hauled wood in with him. I rode him. I did everything with him. My Granddaddy made the yoke, my Grandpa Brumley. But I always thought that was pretty funny. The preacher got up in the pulpit and said it was the cutest sight he ever saw a little dog and a little boy working a calf, he said.

That's an interesting story.

I remember the first thing I said in school. Mrs. Bernard Dickinson, who had a dairy farm, the first year I went to Sunday School she gave me apart in the Christmas Program. I got up ... and she was standing over behind the curtain ... and it was "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, how I wonder what you are, up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky. " That's what she gave me to say and I have never forgotten it! And I wasn't even going to school.

It's amazing how certain things stay with you, isn't it? When you moved here from Spotsylvania, now you're in...

I lived across the road ... up at Lake Anna ... our barn was in Spotsylvania. We moved to Five Mile Fork...

And then you moved ...

And then we moved over here to Four Mile Fork. And my Mother and Father and sisters lived over there. Then I was close to work and everything, This was number 1 highway then. There wasn't any by-pass, wasn't any Route 95...

What do you think about the changes that are going on?

I think they're terrible! So many cars. I used to buy a new car every three years and you had about four or five ... used to be called Blanton Motor Company years ago ... the Ford motor company right over here ... anyway you used to have about four or five cars to choose from, Now you got four or five hundred. I never seen so many cars in my life. I don't like all these people moving in here. There's hardly anywhere to bury people now unless they are buried way up in there in the woods. And now it getting all built up around Lake Anna. There's just nowhere. Jeff Ashley told me before he died ... he come here and said, a week before he died, that Audrey had passed away and he wanted to come see me because he said, "I ain't going to live I have cancer of the pancreas, too. " He was a self made man, Jeff was. Had a big diary farm. Told me his wife taught school and retired. I didn't think he'd ever get married When he got married he was up in his thirties.

And you said he came to visit you? What was he...

Because he knew my wife died .

And he was talking about the changes going on?

He had a piece of land across the road and he could drive the dairy cows across the road, I don't know ... route 610 ... and put them in another field. He had to sell that field for two hundred and sixty-some thousand dollars, a little field, you'd think he'd get about three thousand dollars for it. Because he said people wouldn't even slow up for his cattle. You can't walk across that road now unless you get run over top of Too many people! I remember when over on number 1, it wasn't, oh, about one-twentieth of the traffic it is now and that was the only way to go to Richmond or Washington. You went down to Princess Anne Street and across to Falmouth. You weren't around here then, were you?

No. I was here ...

When they started building Route 95 they worked seven days a week and when they built the bypass, you know, war came. We used to join over here at the cross road and race to Hazel Run. It was dirt. Race horses ... straight away racing, you know. When we'd get down there we'd walk back because that was a long run. That was at least a mile and a quarter, or a mile and a half.

Now, when you moved from Lake Anna you were just a baby? You loved living at the Five Mile Fork area?

Yes. I knew everybody.

And when you moved to Four Mile Fork, how did you like that?

You mean here? Everybody here knew my people. My Daddy shod horses two days a week where the Fredericksburg Plumbing Shop is at now. At Fredericksburg Hardware, there used to be a blacksmith shop there and he shod there two days a week. And a colored man, his name was Jackson, he helped my Daddy shoe. There was a grocery across the street ... Jacob's Grocery. Then James Monroe High School ... it was called Fredericksburg High School then. I remember those old days. People had nothing then.

They had nothing but it seemed they were happy?

They didn't know about being happy. When old man Hash had thirteen children over there and he fed them all off apiece of land. And he was so poor he couldn't furnish his own fertilizer, so he sowed nitrogen on the land, which would bring a crop right up but

draw the land to death. He used sodium nitrate and he used it so much it that it drew the land to death. And Herbie played for the Boston Red Sox. He pitched about five years.

I went to school with the rest of them and they all played ball. Old man Hash, years ago before he come here, he pitched in the valley league over in Sheanandoah.

Herbie played ' for the Boston Red Sox and he's still living. Have you ever been to Sperryville?

You go to Culpeper, get on Route 522, you go down there about six miles there is a black log

cabin down here. He built it. But he had a boy's school. We used to sell them bread. He sold

that for three hundred and fifty thousand, which is worth a million now. He married Dick Weaver's daughter, he used to be the Buick dealer in Culpeper. He's married again. He got

married again when he was about seventy-eight years old. He's in his eighties now. But the

reason he didn't last with the Boston Red Sox ... the kept him as a pinch hitter ...

he hit more than y any pitcher ever played in the big leagues. He batted over three hundred, or three fifty or three forty. But he ruptured his spleen because he reared back and tried to throw a ball as fast as as Dizzy Dean. He said his curve ball could hit a hundred miles an hour. He was about my size. I guess he threw his arm away. I could

pitch, but never pitched a game.

I never showed very many horses. Id ride them in the ring ... pleasure riding ... once or twice a year. But people would say, "He thinks he could do it, he thinks he could do it. " But see, I didn't want to be showing off. I have forgotten more than they ever knew because

I lived horses.

You did live the horses.

And dogs.

And what about this story about the turkey shoots?

Oh, we had a lot of turkey shoots. And everybody said you couldn't shoot at night, but R. H. Shannon, who worked in the coal mine, learned about electricity that way. He fixed it so we could have shooting matches. We had a metal barn where we used to milk the cows, and kept an old pickup truck in it. And we had blanks, made them ourselves

by cutting them all square and then putting a cross on them. You couldn't buy blanks in those days like you can now. And we shot number eight shot and used federal monarch

shells. We sold them at the store. It was a cheap shell but a good shell. And we put

lights over your head and people would shoot ... we'd snoot for live turkeys. We'd have them in pickup trucks with slat bodies, like you have to haul cattle. And we'd have like twenty-five in there. We'd get through shooting ... we had to get through by twelve or one o'clock in the morning. And you took a live turkey, whoever got closest to the cross. They all had to use a twelve gauge shotgun. You couldn't shoot a smaller gauge because you'd shoot closer, you know. Some people had long tall shotguns that had thirty-six inch barrels on them. Some people would get together a really long tall shotgun ... it would be a single barrel Ivy Johnson. You see, Ivy Johnson was a famous single barrel gun and it was called a "long tall. "

This was your recreation, then?

Oh, yes. I cut up tickets.

So what did you do with all these dead turkeys?

We didn't kill the turkeys, they took them away from there alive.

Oh, so they were alive?

Yes, nobody ever seen nobody shoot a frozen turkey back then. Frozen turkeys and cured hams. We never shot for hams. We always shot for turkeys. It was called a turkey shoot. But back before we had blanks with a cross that you shot at, they put the turkey in a box and stuck his head up. In colonial days, the one who shot the head off got the turkey. That was cruel, wasn't it?

Yes, it was very cruel.

A lot of cruel things went on in colonial days. But then they invented shooting at a cross, you know, that's the kind we had. And everybody would call us up and tell us, "We got twenty-five turkeys, thirty turkeys to sell." We'd buy them, see. We'd say you got to feed them until we come get them. We'd go get them on Fridays. We'd go get them in a pickup truck with slat sides and the top covered over with wire. And then we had a long wire stiff hook that we could catch them in the foot and pull them out so you could get whichever turkey you wanted. We didn't say which turkey you'd snoot for, we'd just give you a turkey.

It was fifty cents a chance.

Those were the tickets.

Yes. You paid fifty cents to shoot. And sometimes it was fifty, sixty people who would want to shoot. But we wouldn't do all that, we went up to thirtyfive or forty because you couldn't let all them people shoot. We got finished about one o'clock at night. People

never said much. You were shooting up against a barn, it was a metal barn, so it didn't hurt it too much. And I never heard of frozen turkey being shot for at a turkey shoot until way in the 1970's. Then they got to shooting for hams, too.

So, tell me about ... you were saying something earlier about Rt. 208 being put in...

Rt. 208 was just a bare two lane road and then they made it a dual lane, but I don't know what year. I was tied up in Culpeper. Maybe it was in the late 1960's, early 19 70's when they dualled that road.

Do you remember when it was a dirt road?

No, it was solid cement when I came along as a child. Id never seen a cement road. And then, later on, they built Rt. I highway out of solid cement. There's cement under that road. They didn't use blacktop then. Then they got so they could take the byproduct of coal and stuff .. they'd melt it down and put blacktop on roads and then throw sand ovetop of it. It would stay that way for years. But the blacktop you got now is put on there with heat and asphalt. It stays pretty good. It will get a pothole in it where you put a layer on it, then another layer, then it freezes and a pothole gets in it. We don't have winters like we used to have. The water level was bad until this year. I've seen water

stay in the yard this year because we've had more rainfall than we've had in many a day. We used to have a lot of farms in Spotsylvania, but they're scarce now.

It was all farms.

Right around the Five Mile Fork store there were sixteen diary farms in a five mile radius. Now, I don't know of any. I don't know of any. Some few raise beef cattle, George Thornburn, you've heard of him, I reckon, he milked a hundred and some cows, and then Gordon Hilldrup milked about that many, and Jeff Ashley milked fifty or sixty, and the other Ashleys, his brothers, they milked about seventy-five or eighty. Now all the old farmers are gone.

So it was nice, open countryside.

Yes. If you went out bird hunting. I could pull up in my old pickup truck, no need to knock on the door, go up to a house and get written permission, or nothing. They'd recognize the truck and they knew you'd hunted enough that you weren't going to shoot a cow. But if some bad egg out of the city come and go hunting, there'd be trouble. But nobody ever bothered people because everybody knew everybody. I could walk down the street in Fredericksburg and speak to nearly everybody, lawyers, doctors and everything. Go into the barber shop and know everybody in there. Used to a big barber shop right

down at the foot of the hill before you get to Caroline Street on the left.

So, is there anything out in Spotsylvania besides the farms, like you had the general store?

There were a lot of general stores. And they run supplies up around Branch Springs at Belmont, hooked on to Louisa, you know, but a lot of hauling over Route 208, lead and zinc mine next to Contrary Creek, which would be over in Louisa County. But a lot of trucking went down that road, Route 208. Was wagon teams. One of drivers was a preacher of mine. He worked a team to work his way through college. Worked for my Daddy, it was a T-Model Ford, it was lead and zinc. And they hauled the raw material down here to Fredericksburg where you see the banks at the station, that's where they backed to dump in the bins. That's the only way they had of doing it. The wagons had a four-by-four, two-by-four and you'd load them so they'd be off balance. And one man could push it up, slide it in the river. It took all day long for the trip.

I'm sure it did, yes. A long time.

Yes, it's a right good ways down there, about fifty-five miles. My Daddy said that Route 208 was mud up to the axles. And when it'd freeze you'd hear the wagon cracking and said they'd get these lard tins like you get ... five gallon tins ... and stop on the side of the road and pick up light wood knots. You know what a light woods knot is? It's a little limb from when a little pine tree dies, it's pure turpentine. And they'd shave it with a knife, put it down in there, get afire started and they'd have afire up on top of the wagons all the way into Fredericksburg from those little light wood knots. Burn them. Pure turpentine. So when you'd get to Fredericksburg, wouldn't be anything white except your teeth and eyeballs.

So, we are about to end our interview with you.

Hope it's worth something to you.

Definitely, definitely. I know that there's a lot that I've learned.

Charles Williams used to be the Commissioner of the Revenue and that's how Mary Williams got the job. And then, after Mary Williams got cancer and died ... she was a good athlete ... she was a Bourne ... good basketball player. And she married Jack Williams, Charles Williams, the Commission of Revenue's brother, and then that girl married

their son, Debbie somebody ... I just can't recall her name, Williams ... she's the Commissioner of the Revenue now. See, when Charles Williams was the Commissioner of the Revenue, he told me he drew exactly ten thousand and now she's drawing eightysome thousand Is the old courthouse the sheriffs office now?

Yes.

When you go in there, you can see my Granddaddy Carner's picture. They got him on the wall and they want you to look at him.

Who were his deputies at that time?

At that time they didn't have any thirty or forty deputies. He had Maxie Blades and Lee Edenton. You heard of Sturgeon Creek Marina?

That's Lee Edenton's boy runs it. Sturgeon Creek Marina. You know, you go put your boats in.

Yes.

He's made a lot of money there, after coming down here from Post Oak.

So, you can go in the Courthouse and see your Grandfather, Sheriff Frank Carrier.

And his gun's there too.

His gun's there.

Somebody stole the shotgun out of my truck because the gas man forgot to lock my truck up.

It was a sawed off barrel that he took stills with. It was a Parker, made in England.

It was a high priced shotgun. A Parker shotgun is worth a fortune. And somebody knew it and stole it out of my truck. And I had that, and his pistol and they got the holster somewhere now. The holster was sort of beat up. He used to go after somebody who was bad, and they'd say he'd tell them to come on and go with him. And they'd ask if they were under arrest and he'd say, "No. " And they'd say, " Well, Sheriff Carner, you ain't taking me. " And he'd say, " Well, I tell you what. I can send Maxie Blades back and Lee Edenton. They're not very timid, and they're a little bit on the rough side. "

They were bait.

We'll bring you five hundred. My Grandfather, they said, could kick higher than his head because he'd wrestled in college.

Well, he sounded pretty tough.

Yes. He was tough.

Well, we're going to conclude our interview now and I really appreciate ... I'm sure you're exhausted.

I'm not exhausted because Mrs. Mastin came here ... I didn't know she was coming. I was talking to her yesterday or the day before and the phone went dead She'd do anything in the world she can for you. A little woman. And Eddy Joe is the son who married my Granddaughter and he's small, but he's a nice looking boy.

Well, thank you so much.

I don't know if you got anything worth anything. I just told you what I know. How tight times were. Times were so tight that people would take things and give to other people and I don't think you got that in there, but when we threshed wheat or barley, or shucked corn, people would come and help you and then you would help them. No money was passed. Just labor.

This is what I've heard on my interviews so far, how everybody helped each other. And that was great, just great. Thank you so much.

And I know we bought salt fish for a half a cent apiece and would salt them down and I got a ten gallon crock in the basement now used to salt fish down in. I don't eat them anymore. I used molasses, black pepper and salt ... which you put the salt in there until you can drop an egg in there until the egg will float but I stopped doing that, I put dry salt and dry pepper and then put a layer of molasses in and turned their bellies up and put another layer in there.

Well, thank you so much.