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(SNP036) Virgil Corbin, interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Sharon G. Marston

Virgil Corbin

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

NARRATOR: Virgil Corbin
INTERVIEWER: Dorothy Noble Smith
DATE: January 3, 1979
PLACE: Nicholson Hollow
Corbin Cabin

COMPLETED DATE:
January 15, 1981

TRANSCRIBED BY:
Sharon G. Marston
D.S.: We are interviewing Virgie Corbin who grew up in Nicholson Hollow and... well, he's the son of George Corbin and lived until he was 21 in Corbin Cabin. Am I correct?

V.C.: Right.

D.S.: Okey, now how many children were in your family?

V.C.: There were four.

D.S.: Four children.

V.C.: Four children.

D.S.: Did each of you have a special job that you were suppose to do? Like was it your job to take care of the chickens, or your job to take care of the hogs.

V.C.: Well, uh, we sort of pitched in you know... it was a family affair and we did the chores around the house like uh, oh carrying wood and water and feeding the hogs, or chickens.

D.S.: Uhhum. You had a lot of chickens didn't you?

V.C.: Yes, we had chickens. Maybe in the evening you would have to go and drive up the cows and uh...

D.S.: Yea, right. You had one cow?

V.C.: We usually kept a cow, yea.

D.S.: Uhhuh. How about horses?

V.C.: Yes, my father he kept a horse part of the time.

D.S.: Uhhuh. What do you mean by part of the time?

V.C.: Well, uh, probably he didn't have one you know all the time.

D.S.: Yea. Was the horse used for plowing or for riding or for what?

V.C.: Well, it was for used for riding and plowing.

D.S.: With all the rocks it was pretty hard to plow...

V.C.: Very hard to plow. We had to dig up a lot of our ground for farming.

D.S.: Yea.
V.C.: Course it was some of it that you could plow. With you know what they called a shovel plow.

D.S.: Yea, Oh yea. Uhhum. Did you ever do the kind of planting of corn right beside the stones?

V.C.: Well, it was hard to meet the stones, it was so many of them ,

D.S.: True. That's very true. Uh, you said in this little article here that you had two great uncles that were in the civil war. Uncle Henry Corbin and Uncle Boot Corbin.

V.C.: That's right.

D.S.: They were on the side of the south?

V.C.: Right.

D.S.: Were they like in the Battle of Mannassas...did they fight under Jackson? Do you know?

V.C.: It was probably under Jackson.

D.S.: Yea, uhhum. Were they alive...did you know them.

V.C.: Um..I didn't remember Uncle Henry or Uncle Boot.

D.S.: Oh, uhhhum. Too bad! It would have been fun to get their remini...

V.C.: Wouldn't it though.

D.S.: Yea. And your grandfather was Madison..

V.C.: Madison Corbin.

D.S.: And he remembers cannons going off...

V.C.: Right. I remember him telling me that. That he was four years old and remembers hearing the cannons go off..

D.S.: This was from...Corbin...uh Nicholson Hollow?

V.C.: Well, I assume it was from Nicholson Hollow..course now, I'm not sure.

D.S.: Yea, uhhum. well, of course there were battles all around this area.

V.C.: Yea, Battle of Mannassas,Bull Run...

D.S.: Yea..wouldn't it be wonderful if he were here now to tell us about
how he went about getting the supplies while the war was going on?

V.C.: Wouldn't it though.

D.S.: You know there is one thing...speaking of supplies...I'm wondering if...

now during the depression...was your family very badly hit during the depression?

V.C.: Oh, yes, yes. We were badly hit by the depression...of course...

D.S.: You were raising your own vegetables.

V.O.: We grewed a lot of our own food and like I say we kept a cow and had some hogs and it all helped out.

D.S.: Yea, right. So I have a feeling that the people in the mountain were not as badly effected by the depression as the people like in the city.

V.C.: Well, probably not. No.

D.S.: About supplies...uh, what store did you use...the one down in Nethers Mill?

V.C.: Yes we used the store at Neathers Mill...it was two stores there...One by Mr. Jenkins...Jenkins brothers...and another store there that in my time that was run by Mr. Dick Neathers, they called him.

D.S.: Oh, then there was a real person by the name of Neathers?

V.C.: Oh yes it was Neathers around there. Neathers, Virginia.

D.S.: Oh, I didn't know that. I just sort of thought it was a name out of the Hollow.

V.C.: No, they had Neathers.

D.S.: Uhh...did you ever have to go down for the supplies?

V.C.: Uh...not too much...not too much. My father did most of that you know.

D.S.: I should thank that as a young boy, you would have wanted to get away from the farm once in a while and go down there yourself.
V.C.: Well uh, we stuck around pretty close home you know.

D.S.: You did a lot of visiting didn't you?

V.C.: Oh, yes, we did a lot of visiting. Mountain people were very close and neighborly and we did a lot of visiting.

D.S.: Yea. You visited in other hollows didn't you?

V.C.: Uh..not too much. I remember going to Corbin Hollow one time with my mother you know. It's quite a little walk to go from Nicholson Hollow to Corbin Hollow. Yes..uhhhuh.

D.S.: Yes, it was. And yet you didn't mind walking?

V.C.: No. No.

D.S.: Because when the Skyline Drive began you were 15 years old and you worked as a water boy?

V.C.: Water boy.

D.S.: Now what did that mean?

V.C.: Well..uh, of course I carried water for the road men and of course summer time..that was mostly what I did. Course I was a walking most all day. But between times I worked on the road. Like the fields.. where they was a making a field and uh..sloping banks and things like that.

D.S.: Where would you get the water from to take them.

V.C.: Well, mountain springs.

D.S.: Those good mountain springs. That was pure mountain wasn't it?


D.S.: Still is.

V.C.: Yea.

D.S.: But you would walk from Corbin Cabin up the Drive...

V.C.: That's right...
D.S.: Work all day and walk back down again.

V.C.: That's right.

D.S.: Didn't think anything of it.

V.C.: No.

D.S.: You know everybody now considers that a real struggle to go up Corbin Cabin.

V.C.: I believe so.

D.S.: Sure, because that is steep.

V.C.: Yea.

D.S.: Uh, there was a Dr. Ross and yet you mentioned that a Dr. Long came from Page County.

V.C.: Uh, that's right. Dr. Ross used to be our old family doctor. And by the way I was named after two doctors. We had a Dr. Virgil Hammer here in Luray that my father was well acquainted with. And uh Dr. Ross at Criglersville. So Dr. Ross was with my mother when I was born. And uh, Dr. Hammer he...first name was Virgil and Dr. Ross his middle name was Ardye. So they named me Virgil Ardye Ross.

His name was Charles Ardye Ross.

D.S.: Right. Well isn't that a fascinating thing. Do you know that Dr. Ross's son is still in Criglersville.

V.C.: Is that right?

D.S.: I interviewed him a couple of months ago. And he had a lot of memories. He said he rode around with his father quite often. Yea. You weren't alive during the flu epidemic were you.

V.C.: Well I was born in 1916. Yes...I wouldn't remember it no.

D.S.: You wouldn't remember it? No. No. Huhuh. Okey so...you raised corn, you raised cane...to make sorghum?
V.C.: Well I think probably my grandfather used to raise cane for sorghum.
D.S.: Madison Corbin?
V.C.: Madison Corbin.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you ever know Leather Nicholson?
V.C.: No he was my great-grandfather on my father's mother's side. So he was a little before my time.
D.S.: Yea he was. Okey now you were fifteen years old when the Skyline Drive was started. As a young boy, real young boy did you ever go up to Skyland?
V.C.: Uh..I didn't go to Skyland very much. I uh..uh..have been there you know..I haven't been..I didn't go there very much..now my father..he worked there quite a lot with Mr. Polluck.
D.S.: Yea, uhhuh. Then you missed out on the parties that they used to have.
V.C.: Yea..y..I missed out.
D.S.: Yea. Uh..you say you did hunting. What did you hunt?
V.C.: Well, when I was growing up it wasn't a whole lot to hunt in the park. Squirrels you know and pheasants and rabbits.
D.S.: Were there any turkeys?
D.S.: What would you do with them when you caught them? Did you eat them?
V.C.: Well, we used to eat squirrel you know. Squirrel or rabbit.
D.S.: Some people sold the rabbits.
V.C.: Yes, they used to sell the rabbits..trap them you know. People sell them at the country store.
D.S.: Yea. Did you ever do that?
V.C.: No, I didn't do that.
D.S.: Your fishing. Where did you do your fishing?

V.C.: Well, it was mostly trout fishing... mountain trout. We had a creek that went by Corbin Cabin... Hughes River... old native trout was in here... we used to do a little trout fishing. But...

D.S.: Yea. What did you use for bait?

V.C.: Well uh... you know those fishing worms like they dig out... we'd use them and then there was a little uh... worm in the shallow water out on the outer edges of the creek that would make a little house... make sticks around it... and we called that stick bait and the trout would really bite for those. Yea... it would make just a little house with little cedar sticks... and inside there... and they would make excellent bait for trout.

D.S.: Oh, boy. Wonderful. Uh, back to your visiting. Say... when would you do, that. Like on a Sunday?

V.C.: Uh... Sunday, or week nights. Uh, most anytime.

D.S.: Uh, would you store up extra... or make... buy extra sugar and coffee and salt and things like that before winter started?

V.C.: Well, I don't know if they did that so much... you know they would go to the store occasionally.

D.S.: But what if the snow got deep?

V.C.: Well they probably had supplies on hand in case of emergency.

D.S.: Okey. Now you took your corn and your wheat down to the mill. Correct?

V.C.: Yes, they took the corn to the mill.

D.S.: Would you carry that on your back or on the horse?

V.C.: Well, some of them would carry it on their backs and those that had a horse would carry it on the horse.

D.S.: Strong people weren't they? Yea. Where did you go to school?
V.C.: That's a good question. I didn't have very much schooling. I would say that I didn't have more than eight months schooling in my life.

D.S.: You are kidding?

V.C.: That's right.

D.S.: Where was that school?

V.C.: Well, uh we had a school down Nicholson Hollow but uh...well they had it occasionally...about three or four months out of the year. And I believe I went one session there. And then they had a school right up close where we lived...after I had practically growed up. I went there a little bit. And that's about the extent of my schooling.

D.S.: Isn't that...that is too bad isn't it? Have you found it a handicapp not having the education?

V.C.: Oh yes, I would have liked very much to have had a better education. But I have to get my education the hard way.

D.S.: But you did learn to read? And write?

V.C.: Oh yes. Oh yes.

D.S.: And arithmetic?

V.C.: I'm not too good at arithmetic.

D.S.: Well, they have calculators for that anyway. But uh...do you recall any particular herbs that your mother used..like when you got sick?

At any time, if you got a cold...what would she give you?

V.C.: No..I don't recall taking anything. But they did use herbs back then...in those days. I don't recall my family taking much...

D.S.: I've heard of one horrible thing that they used to give the children. Turpentine with sugar. Did you ever get that?

V.C.: No I never got that.

D.S.: Doesn't that sound terrible. And yet some people say they are still
using it. Oh, works great for a cough.

V.C.: Now something they would use...now Dr. Ross he would recommend that.

You would take turpentine and camphor...do you know what camphore is?

You would buy the camphore gum you know and dissolve it in whiskey...

to make the camphore...take turpentine and make...turpentine, camphore, and

and water and make a rub out of it for a chest cold and that was

very good.

D.S.: Yea, uhhum. hum. Uh...ginseng did you ever pick any ginseng?

V.C.: Yes I've found a little ginseng.

D.S.: Did you use it yourself or did you sell it?

V.C.: Well, we mostly sold it you know. Brought a pretty good price in

those days.

D.S.: That's right. Still does.

V.C.: Still does.

D.S.: Did you ever hunt for mules or mulets.

V.C.: Mulets? Yes I believe so.

D.S.: Yes. There are suppose to be a lot of them over there.

V.C.: Yes, in old orchards, you know back in those days. Get quite a few of

them.

D.S.: Speaking of orchards. You had a good orchard didn't you?

V.C.: Well, my father didn't have an orchard my great-uncle...he had an

orchard and then Mr. Neathers that lived at Neathers Mill he had an

orchard right close to my grandfather. And of course we could get all

the apples we wanted. And...

D.S.: Yea. I thought that you all had an orchard.

V.C.: No, my father didn't have an orchard. Nothing more than an old tree
or something.

D.S.: Yea. Do you know what kind of apples they were?
V.C.: Well they had Yorks, and what they called Pippin. Mr. Neathers he had Yorks and Winesaps.

D.S.: How about Myllum?
V.C.: Oh Myllum...yes. Yes. There was another guy..Weakley..Mr. Weakley..he had an orchard that wasn't far from us. That was mylums. They were delicious.

D.S.: Yea. They are. They are a wonderful apple. Do you know if any of the people knew how to do grafting?
V.C.: Probably, probably some of them did. I never did any myself.

D.S.: So what would you do in the winter?
V.C.: Well, there wasn't a whole lot to do. Maybe get some wood, sit by the fire..

V.C.: Keep warm.

D.S.: That was a nice snug house to keep warm in wasn't it.
V.C.: Have you ever been to Corbin Cabin?
D.S.: Uhhum. Yea. Um, you'd have to take care of the chickens, regardless of the weather, you had to take care of the pigs?
V.C.: Well, our..well what they would really do in the mountains. They would maybe buy some pigs in the early spring and keep them through the spring and summer and fall, fatten them up and butcher. And then they probably wouldn't get any more until the next spring. That's usually the way..

D.S.: Yea. Okey so after you butchered them what did you do with them?
V.C.: Well, they salted down most of the meat..of course they made sausage
and what they called pudding.

D.S.: The eating was very good wasn't it?
V.C.: Yes it was. It was very good.
D.S.: Did you have to dig those trenches to put the vegetables in for the winter.
V.C.: Well, we had a little root cellar.
D.S.: Oh, you did?
V.C.: Yes, we had a little root cellar.
D.S.: Most people just dug trenches.
V.C.: Yea. We had this little cellar that we'd put the canned foods in you know, potatoes.
D.S.: Turnips, cabbage.
V.C.: Whatever you had.
D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Yea. Did anybody grow tomatoes? I never have heard...
V.C.: Oh yes. Yes. We grewed tomatoes.
D.S.: Um... what were you going to say... do you know how your mother made sauerkraut?
V.C.: Well, I know about how they made it. They would cut the cabbage up you know with knives on a table real fine and put a layer into a barrel... maybe an oak barrel sprinkle some salt over it, and then they would have a... what they called a mallet or peckle something like that made out of wood and they would pack it down real tight... just keep putting in layers like that until it was full and that pickled it.
D.S.: Wait a couple of months..
V.C.: Yes that's right.
D.S.: Be good wasn't it?
V.C.: Oh yes. Yes.

D.S.: Oh, I've always heard, maybe you can confirm this...that the cabbages were the best cabbage that have ever been grown anywhere.

V.C.: Well, probably that is correct.

D.S.: Biggest and sweetest...yes. Was it a money crop in your family or did you just grow it to eat.

V.C.: Yes. We just mostly growed our vegetables to eat.

D.S.: Okey, then what was the money crop, that you had? Was it the eggs?

V.C.: Yes, we would sell a few eggs.

D.S.: And chickens?

V.C.: Yes, probably some chickens. Maybe sometimes sell a little of the pork you know, that we would have more than we needed ourselves.

D.S.: How about your clothes? Where did you get your clothes?

V.C.: Well, uh some probably from Luray, and Neathers too.

D.S.: Your mother didn't make them?

V.C.: No, my mother didn't make clothes for us children. She made some clothes I believe for herself.

D.S.: Shoes. Did you have shoes all summer long or just in the winter?

V.C.: No, we went barefooted in the summer.

D.S.: But you did have shoes in the winter, right?

V.C.: We had shoes in the winter.

D.S.: Did you go down ever to uh...Judd's store?

V.C.: Oh yea.

D.S.: What was it like?

V.C.: Well it was...I guess exciting in those days. Country store.

D.S.: Yea. It was quite a walk though.
V.C.: Oh, that was a walk. Yea.

D.S.: It was. Alright now. Your church. Did you have a church anywhere near your home?

V.C.: Well, uh, it wasn't very much church life. Uh, there was a little church down Nicholson Hollow where my Uncle preached. Unc Warren Corbin.

D.S.: Oh. Uhhuh.

V.C.: Yes. Then over at Old Rag in that Hollow, they had an Assembly of Christians. My uncle. My great-uncle Hughie Nicholson he preached there. I really didn't get to services very often. You know. Nicholson Hollow we didn't have it very often. I do remember going occasionally.

D.S.: Yea. When people got married..did they wait until the minister came around to have a wedding?

V.C.: Yes, usually. Usually. They would either have the minister come a-round or they would go to the minister's home.

D.S.: Oh, alright. Now how about funerals? Would they have a minister there for the funeral?

V.C.: I don't remember too well about that. Whether they would have a minister for the funeral. I do remember my mother. When she died. They didn't have the funeral at the time she died you know..but I believe my great uncle preached the funeral down at Nicholson Hollow at the little chapel later on.

D.S.: Yea, uhhum. What did your mother die of?

V.C.: Childbirth.

D.S.: Ah, that's too bad. And let's see that's when Dr....um...who...Dr.
Dr. Long...

V.C.: Yes, Dr. Long.

D.S.: And so... your mother died, but her child lived.


D.S.: Then how in heaven's name did they take care of the baby?

V.C.: Well, my father's sister took the baby for a while. And of course you know raised the baby... cows milk.

D.S.: Uh huh. Yea. Cause that would have been something for all of you to try and take care of a new born infant... without a mother around to tell you what to do. Oh golly. Did you ever have any dances?

V.C.: No, we didn't. We didn't have any dances. But uh, they did have them around in certain places.

D.S.: Uh hum. And you never went to them?

V.C.: No. I was never to a dance in my life.

D.S.: Gee, you've missed a lot of fun didn't you. Well there was music in your home wasn't there. Didn't somebody play the guitar?

V.C.: I believe my father used to do that a little bit.

D.S.: Yea, uh huh. How about a fiddle? Anybody around come over and play the fiddle, every now and then. Or a banjo?

V.C.: I don't remember. I'm not sure about that.

D.S.: Oh boy. Okey so let's get on to something that was fun. When you did your apple butter boiling.

V.C.: Oh yea.

D.S.: Now all the neighbors would get together, right.

V.C.: Yea. Right, right. They would get together and and peel apples for maybe several days or nights and then they would have a large copper kettle outside, and they would probably start that morning and boil
it all that day and all that night and sometimes the next day before it was finished.

D.S.: Uhhum, right. And you had to keep stirring?
V.C.: Keep stirring, all the time and feeding in apples.

D.S.: Now this is all going on and people had to eat once in a while so how would they eat while this was going on?
V.C.: Well they would have to take turns stirring you know.
D.S.: And would the people all get together and bring food so it was sort of like a party?
V.C.: I don't remember. I don't remember that. How they arranged about the food.
D.S.: Uhhum. Didn't anybody play music while you were having applebutter boilings.
V.C.: I don't remember of any.
D.S.: And nobody drank any moonshine?
V.C.: Well they probably had a little of that.
D.S.: Sure. Yea. I mean you just can't work all the time.

Um. How about Christmas. When Christmas came would you get anything at all? Or not.
V.C.: Oh, yes. we would get some little things. Uh I remember back in those days Sears Roebuck would have a stocking full of toys and my father would order us one of those stockings of toys and I remember one time seeing the boxes they came in and I asked what came in those boxes. And they said shirts came in them.
D.S.: Oh darling.
V.C.: Then we would hang our stockings up at night...on Christmas Eve night
and of course they would put an orange and some nuts and candy and stuff like that and then we would have those little toys.

D.S.: Oh, that was...then you really did have fun at Christmas.

V.C.: Oh yes, we had plenty at Christmas.

D.S.: You had it made. Some people didn't. Did you do any of the Kris Kringling?

V.C.: No we didn't do that much uh...over there.

D.S.: Yea. That seemed to be more...over there.

V.C.: Yes, yes. I remember up in Ida...when we moved to Ida they did it.

They did quite a bit of it.

D.S.: Uhhum. Did you visit at Christmas time.

V.C.: Yes, I believe we did. I remember my mother's uncle, the preacher, he used to come down at Christmas time, you know.

D.S.: Uhhum. You had extra food on Christmas day?

V.C.: Oh yes. Yes. You had a big meal.

D.S.: How about firecrackers?

V.C.: Oh yea, we would get firecrackers. I remember we had these cap pistols you know. ust have those.

D.S.: Oh yea, those cap pistols. You had dogs didn't you? They had dogs. we didn't...yes we had a dog for a while, but we didn't keep a dog all the time.

D.S.: I was wondering how you kept the rabbits out of your garden?

People said well the dogs did that.

V.C.: Dogs and Cats I guess.

D.S.: Oh you had cats.

V.C.: Yes, we had cats.

D.S.: There weren't many cats up there.
V.C.: Well, usually about every home had some cats.
D.S.: Did they?
V.C.: Yes.
D.S.: Oh, okey. Hmmm. That's surprising. Pictures that we have of people, show only one family with a cat.
V.C.: Is that right?
D.S.: Speaking of the pictures...there are quite a number that have a ladder up against their roof, now was that because there might have been fires in the fireplace that would light the roof...sparks...
V.C.: Well that was probably the reason they did it there.
D.S.: Uh, was fire much of a hazzard? Were you all afraid of fires?
V.C.: Well, uh, we wasn't bothered too much with fires. Everybody was very careful.
D.S.: Did you ever start fires so you could have huckleberries?
V.C.: No, no, I never did. Uh, over on the mountain they...somebody would set the woods on fire..
D.S.: Yea. It did assure you'd have huckleberries. Did you ever have to pick huckleberries?
V.C.: No, I don't believe I ever picked any...uh huckleberries.
D.S.: Ah, so many people did and they got so little for them.
V.C.: Yes, I know.
D.S.: It seems almost tragic. Alright you knew that the park was going to come in. What was your reaction? Were you happy about it or did you feel upset?
V.C.: Well I believe that uh I was really uh happy about it in a way. Yes, it seemed like I wanted to get away.
D.S.: The younger people did want to. Yea, right. There wasn't much fu-
ture there for you unless you kept on working so very hard and you couldn't.

V.C.: That's right.

D.S.: There wasn't even that much wood left to sell, was it?

V.C.: No, no.

D.S.: No, alright so you found about this job as a water boy.

V.C.: Right.

D.S.: So you worked there how long? Two years?

V.C.: No, I was there about a year. A year, about a year.

D.S.: And then your whole family was moved to Ida?

V.C.: That's right.

D.S.: How did you like it at Ida?

V.C.: Well, I liked it very well. Yes, I liked it. I liked it.

D.S.: Didn't you miss the spring house?

V.C.: Well, not a whole lot.

D.S.: I know you have it down here, but let's have it in your words.

what did you find to do in Ida?

V.C.: Well, uh, we farmed some. My father and me farmed and we raised a lot of chickens. We had a very large bunch of layers at one time. And then he went from the layers to business and raised a lot of chickens. And of course I worked at the handcraft shop.

D.S.: Alright what is this handcraft shop?

V.C.: Well, it was mostly a shop where they made souveniers you know. Wood work.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Hand carved?

V.C.: Hand carved.

D.S.: Oh, you knew how to do hand carving.

V.C.: A little bit. But I did most of the finishing. The finishing of the
D.S.: You mean the sandpapering?
V.C.: Sandpapering and shellacing and waxing and things like that.
D.S.: Yea. That was a good idea having people that knew how to make
..do these things..make them there. Did you make much money doing
that?
V.C.: Not very much. I worked for $16 a month under the National Youth
Administration. And then uh, I guess I got too old to be
any longer, so then they hired me by the day. Paid me a dollar a
day.
D.S.: Oh, you made more money then. Yes, uhhuh. So then where did you
go?
V.C.: Well, uh, later on in 1944 the Viscose in Front Royal was building
on..enlarging the plant..so my father he got a job down there and I
worked down there too. For a while.
D.S.: Doing what?
V.C.: Well that was mostly labor work.
D.S.: Carpentry?
V.C.: No, pick and shovel work.
D.S.: So in other words your lack of education made it hard to get a job
V.C.: Oh, that's right. That's right.
D.S.: But you seem to have done very well, for yourself.
V.C.: Yes, I have. Yes I have. Like I say..when you are brought up like I
was brought up you really appreciate the better things of life.
D.S.: Yea. It's one thing to appreciate them but another thing to get them.
And you somehow got them. You didn't get this all through pick and
shovel and..at the Viscose.
V.C.: No, no, I...
D.S.: What was your next job then?
V.C.: Well, I worked at Bentonville for a while at a chemical plant. Then I remember working here at Luray at the Page Mill for the Page Milling Company.

D.S.: Oh yea, oh yea. Uhhuh.

V.C.: Oh course uh, in 1950 I got married and moved to Falls Church and worked around the Washington area for about twenty-four years.

D.S.: Doing what?

V.C.: Well for a while I was following construction work but it was labor work but later on I taken up the painting trade. So I worked a good many years as a painter, hardwood painter.

D.S.: Oh, uhhuh. Inside or outside?

V.C.: Inside and outside.

D.S.: Wow, that's hard work.

V.C.: Yes, it's hard work.

D.S.: Well, I think you ought to be commended. Because not everybody managed to do as well as you have done.

V.C.: Well, I guess not.

D.S.: I think it shows the stick to it ownness that the mountain people had.

V.C.: Yes.

D.S.: Did the others that were in Ida..I know most of them have moved away. Did they manage to do as well as you did?

V.C.: Well, not all of them, no. Probably very few of them. I think quite a text in life is perserverance.

D.S.: That's right. Well you had to have your perserverance when you were there in the mountains so it just carried on throughout your life. If you had your way would you go back? To live in Corbin Cabin.
V.C.: I don't believe so. I...it would be nice in a way to have something like a summer home there...you know...a way of getting in and out. A better way of getting in and out.

D.S.: So you feel that the life there was a little bit too strenuous?

V.C.: Yes, yes.

D.S.: But it was a good one.

V.C.: It was good experience.

D.S.: Now tell me about what your children have accomplished?

V.C.: Well, my son he uh...he graduated from Luray High School, but he was mechanically minded and he didn't care about going to college. So after he got out of high school he got a job at the Alliance Manufacturing Plant at Shenandoah and he has taken four years of apprenticeship in tool and dye maker and he is a full fledged tool and dye maker now.

D.S.: Very fine. And you have a daughter?

V.C.: Our daughter she went to Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina and she finished there this last year. And uh, she teaches at a Christian school.

D.S.: Great, what does she teach?

V.C.: I'm not sure if it's first grade. I believe it's first grade.

D.S.: Well, you can be mighty proud of them.

V.C.: Yes, I am.

D.S.: It's nice of your son...staying fairly close. You see more of him don't you?

V.C.: Well, our daughter...she lives over near Edinburg.

D.S.: Oh, well that's not too far.

V.C.: No, that's not far.

D.S.: Oh, no. No. Well...we have had...you know I'm just wondering...there is
one question I did not ask you? What kind of a lock did you have on the door there at Corbin Cabin?

V.C.: I don't even remember that we ever locked the door.

D.S.: That's what I wanted you to say. Okey...nobody stole.

V.C.: Nobody stole.

D.S.: No. Uh, why do you suppose this was. That there was no stealing. Was it a fear of being ostracized or just the goodness of the people?

V.C.: Well, I guess I believe that for the most part that it was you know... honesty and...

D.S.: The reason I'm asking that...did you read my article on Cletus McCoy?

V.C.: I believe so, yes.

D.S.: Where he was talking about anybody with long fingers.

V.C.: That's right.

D.S.: I was wondering if there was anybody with long fingers up your way, when you were growing up, but apparently not.

V.C.: No, we weren't bothered.

D.S.: Yea, uhhuh. Well, can you think of anything that I have not touched on.

V.C.: I believe you have covered it pretty well.

D.S.: Sounds fascinating. Uh, with your hunting what would you use...what kind of a gun?

V.C.: Uh, we'd use a shotgun...a 12 guage shotgun.

D.S.: You used a 12 guage shotgun...now shells cost money...where did you get the money for the shells.

V.C.: Well, you didn't have a whole lot of money in those days...guess my father he would usually buy the shells.

D.S.: So your father took pretty good care of you all, didn't he?

V.C.: Yes he did.
D.S.: Uh, later on your father had a car, didn't he?
V.C.: Yes, he had a Model T. Ford. That course he couldn't get it very close. He got about two miles of where we lived was about as close as he could get it.
D.S.: Sure, yea. Uhhuh. Even that, he could leave there and he knew nobody was going to steal the tires or anything.
V.C.: That's right.
D.S.: Okey, so you did a lot of visiting. Um, was there much? Maybe you probably wouldn't recognize if there was? But was there much marrying of like between close cousins?
V.C.: Well, there was quite a bit of marrying of cousins you know. Yes it was.
D.S.: Did you ever notice any children that weren't quite right.
D.S.: That was probably because of the intermarrying...
V.C.: Probably so, probably so.
D.S.: Yea. There weren't that many of them though was there?
V.C.: No.
D.S.: Okey, so if you had somebody that was like that, how would people treat them?
V.C.: You mean the children? Well, it was pretty hard you know to take care of a child like that. Uh, the primitive living like they had.
D.S.: Yea. But they did take care of them.
V.C.: In the mountains. Oh yea, yea, they did take care of them.
D.S.: Everyone took care of their own didn't they.
V.C.: That's right. That's right.
D.S.: Yea, Yea. Is there anything I have not asked you about?

V.C.: Well, you've asked me a whole lot more than I thought you would ask me.

D.S.: Oh, one question...your furniture. Was that hand made or was it mostly bought.

V.C.: It was mostly bought. Yes.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did snow ever come through the cracks in your house?

V.C.: Yes, I believe it was a blowing snow you could probably feel it in your face sometimes.

D.S.: That's why a fire felt good didn't it? I imagine you kept your woodpile pretty close to the house...

V.C.: Yes, yes we sure did.

D.S.: Yea...well, this has been a fascinating, wonderful time that I have had with you and you said you had nothing to say...to tell me.

You mentioned that you have taken four years of correspondence...Bible Schooling from the Emari's.

V.C.: Emari's?

D.S.: Emari's? Bible School in Oak Clark, Illinois. Why did you do that? Were you studying to become a preacher?

V.C.: Well, I have a desire to teach the Scriptures you know...I don't have much opportunity to do so, but I do have a desire of teaching the Scriptures.

D.S.: But you earned a Certificate with Distinction...

V.C.: Right, right.

D.S.: Now with very little schooling that was a tremendous amount of work on your part.
V.C.: Yes it was.

D.S.: 351 Lessons. How long did it take you to do those Lessons?

V.C.: Well, uh, I averaged a little better than a lesson a week. I believe. Something like that. Probably. I don't know. Maybe a lesson and a half. Something like that. Course, I was working most of the time during that time.

D.S.: Well, I think you should start trying to use this now that you have retired.

V.C.: Well of course, I am a writer too, I'm sort of a jack leg of an author. I uh, a good many years ago I wrote a Gospel Track and then I have a little booklet that I'm the author of.

D.S.: Really. Well, that's wonderful. Gosh, Well. I'm very proud of you. And I should think your family should be very proud of you.