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(SNP061) James E. Hickerson, Sr. interviewed by
Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Sharon G.
Marston

James Edwin Hickerson

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

NARRATOR: Mr. James E. Hickerson, Sr.
INTERVIEWER: Mrs. Dorothy Smith
and _____ Carol _____
PLACE: Hickerson Hollow or Hominy Hollow
DATE: May 16, 1978

TRANSCRIBED BY:
Sharon G. Marston

COMPLETED DATE:
October 19, 1981

This is Dorothy Smith interviewing Ed Hickerson

D.S.:who lives right now right outside of Front Royal but had lived in Hickerson Hollow. Am I correct..and it was also called ^{Hickerson} Hominy Hollow..Right..Alright now Mr. Hickerson can you describe roughly uh..how..uh who was your nearest neighbor?

J.H.: Well I guess the nearest neighbor was uh Selman..Mr. Selman..Melvin Selman.

D.S.: Uhhuh, how far away were they?

J.H.: Oh, less than a half mile...

D.S.: Less than a half..was that about how far the people generally were..about a half mile apart?

J.H.: Well about a quarter to a half.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you, uh do a lot of visiting within the hollow.

J.H.: Well yes they did quite a bit.

D.S.: Uhhuh. What would you do when you visited?

J.H.: Well, uh, just talk and spent the day and took lunch.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you visit within other hollows? Did you go to see people in other hollows?

J.H.: Not too much.

D.S.: Not too much. No. Uh, how did you..did you plant a garden.

J.H.: Oh yes.

D.S.: What did you raise?

J.H.: We raised practically everything that we'd eat. Cabbage, potatoes, beans, carrots, ^{turnips} ..everything in the garden.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Were the cabbages nice and big?

J.H.: Yea, and we didn't have to worry with any bugs at that time. Didn't have no bean beattle or..

D.S.: No. No. How did you keep the rabbits out of the garden?

J.H.: Well we never had any problem. Generally had a few dogs and people rabbit hunted.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Did you..how did you take care of the vegetables over the winter?

J.H.: Buried them.

D.S.: Buried them in a trench?

J.H.: In a trench.

D.S.: And would you put straw or...

J.H.: Generally straw or leaves one..in the trench with straw or leaves.

D.S.:And how did they come out when you took them out?

J.H.: Oh they'd be just as solid as when we put them in there.

D.S.: They never froze did they?

J.H.: Well now the cabbage did freeze but it didn't hurt them as long as you didn't bother them when they were froze.

D.S.: I see.

J.H.: *Bury the cabbage two rows* down, and then two and then one, *they did* freeze *but it didn't hurt 'em* as long as you didn't bother 'em

D.S.: Then what would you do defrost them sort of

J.H.: *Yes if they were frozen,* let them thaw..

D.S.: Umm..now that's the first I had heard of that. That they might freeze.

J.H.: See it didn't bother them a bit as long as you didn't bother them until you got ready to use them..then take them out and thaw...

D.S.: Yea. Did you have many apple orchards?

J.H.: We had 40 acres...

D.S.: You did..what kind of apples?

J.H.: Well we raised the yorks, *Albion Pippins, Jonathan* and quite a few varieties. But that was the main variety.

D.S.: What did you do with the apple?

J.H.L Well shipped them..some of them overseas. Sold them around locally.

D.S.: Where would you take them when you shipped them.

J.H.: We had a big packing house inFront Royal. You loaded it on the car there and they shipped it on ^{to Liverpool} that was the main market.

D.S.: Uh, to Liverpool. That's .. that's interesting. Uh they did the packing of them

J.H.: Well we did the packing.

D.S.: How did you pack them so that they would go that long distance.

J.H.: Well in barrels or baskets either one.

D.S.: Did you make your own barrels?

J.H.: No. They was made locally but we didn't make them.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you dry any of the apples?

J.H.: Yes, we dried some.

D.S.: Did you use some for moonshine?

J.H.: Well I don't think they used any apples for that.

D.S.: Oh, what did you make your moonshine out of.

J.H.: Well it was made out of grain, barley and rye...mostly rye.

D.S.: Oh, I see. Yea, uhhuh. Did you make any applebutter?

J.H. Oh, yea..made applebutter.

D.S.: What was the applebutter boiling like? Was it fun?

J.H.: Well it was fun, but it was a lot of work too.

D.S.: Oh yea. yea. But did people come from all around to do it.

J.H.: Yea.

D.S.: And did you make sort of a party of it?

J.H.: Sometimes.

D.S.: Did you have lots to eat, and did you do any dancing?

J.H.: No not really...in ~~that~~ ^{my} time...maybe they did before that I don't know. From what I've heard.

D.S.: Nobody played any fiddles? or banjos? Did you have the custom that if you touched the paddle to the side of the kettle you got a kiss?

J.H.: Yea. Had that?

D.S.: That made it fun didn't it? Yea. Uh, how about school. Were there schools

near you?

J.F.: About a half mile...this school was here *right below* I went through the seventh grade there.

D.S.: You did. What did they teach?

J.H.: Yea. Well they taught the whole course...spelling, reading..arithmetic was the main courses..dictionary..

D.S.: Uhhuh. How about History did they teach any history?

J.H.: Yes they taught history.

D.S.: And geography and things of that kind. Um, that was a pretty good course then, that you got. Was it nine months of the year?

J.H.: No, no not then. About uh..I believe it was about six months. At that time. And it increased later~~on~~. But they didn't have but six months when I went to school here.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Were you anywhere near the Snead's.

J.H.: No.

D.S.: Do you know where there farm was?

J.H.: No, they never had a farm here in this neighborhood.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.H.: Probably over in Rappahannock

D.S.: Oh, uhhuh.

J.H.: Judge Snead later did buy an orchard back here on the mountain...the government.. sold to the government later on.

D.S.: Uhhuh, yea.

J.H.: But that was way after the park had come in.

D.S.: Oh.

(Do you know who owned that orchard before Judge Snead bought it?)

J.H.: Walter Carter. From Front Royal.

(Walter Carter. Did you know them..were..did they own it when you were living

there?)

J.H.: Oh, yea. I knew them. They was the ones that originally owned it and I think Snead bought it from the estate..I'm not sure about that. *Maybe they* owned it in between _____ but Walter Carter owned it.

D.S.: I see. Do you know anything about how the house was. What it was built like?

J.H.: What..

D.S.: Walter Carter's..

J.H.: No. He lived in Front Royal in a big stone house.

D.S.: I see. So he just had the orchard, there. That was all?

J.H.? Couple tenant houses..

D.S.: Couple tenant houses, yea. Did a lot of the people work for orchard growers?

J.H.: Well they did in the fall of the year. Harvest time. Practically everybody that worked worked in the apples.

D.S.: How much would they get? How much money would they get?

J.H.: Well about the top money was \$3.00 a day.

D.S.: Wow..that was good.

J.H.: Two or three dollars...now I have picked apples when I was a boy for \$1.25 a day. Thought that was big money at that time.

D.S.: Sure.

J.H.: And get \$3 you was making real money.

D.S.: Right. How about the sawmills. Did many of the people work for the sawmills?

J.H.: Well not too many...there were some..but they didn't involve over two or three or four. They would move into a neighborhood and saw for maybe six months or so and then move somewhere else.

D.S.: Yea. Yea. Now what store did your family use and did you use?

J.H.: Well it was *a* Selman's store.

D.S.: Where was that located?

J.H.: Right down the road here. It was about a mile from our house.

D.S.: About a mile. So you would take in things like hams...

J.H.: No they didn't buy hams..it was just a country store.

D.S.: Did you take in eggs?

J.H.: Oh yea. Eggs. We sold quite a bit of meat but that was ⁱⁿ Front Royal.

D.S.: What kind of meat?

J.H.: Well, hams, shoulders, side meat...we always butchered quite a few hogs.

D.S.: Yea, when you took these things to ..in did they give you credit for them or cash?

J.H.: Well you could get either one. You could get cash, or you could get a slip of credit see...

D.S.: Sure.

J.H.: You didn't deal as much in cash at that time...it was a memorandum you know.. you owed them so much or they owed you so much.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Would you buy then with that...what would you buy.

J.H.: Well you didn't have to buy much..maybe salt and pepper and sugar and coffee.. and that was about it.

D.S.: Shoes?

J.H.: Yea, you'd have to buy clothes.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Did you buy material..did you make your own clothes?

J.H.: Well the women made a lot of ^{their} clothes...but the men wore ready made,

D.S.: Uhhuh. Were shoes very expensive?

J.H.: About \$1.50.

D.S.: Oh, those were the days.

J.H.: Get a pair of shoes last you pretty near a year for \$1.50.

D.S.: Oh, wonderful. Gosh.

J.H.: I'm talking about 65 years ago. Something like that you know.

D.S.: Yea. Where would you sell the moonshine?

J.H.: Well there was bootleggers that hauled it around..sold it locally and...

D.S.: Yea. How much did you get for it?

J.H.: I don't really know how much they got for it..different prices I think.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Oh, tell me did you make sorghum?

J.H.: One person in the neighborhood did make it, but we didn't make any.

D.S.: That's a lot of work too, isn't it? Yea. Uhhuh. What did you do for fun?

J.H.: Oh, played ball and...

D.S.: What kind of ball?

J.H.: Anykind.

D.S.: Sort of like baseball...

J.H.: Sort of like baseball.

D.S.: Played marbles?

J.H.: Yea. Played marbles?

D.S.: Pitched horseshoes?

J.H.: Oh, yea, I pitched horseshoes..and they had a big time.

D.S.: Sure. Did you do much fishing?

J.H.: We used to fish at night. Gig ^{the fish} at that time you know wasn't against the law. We'd get a lot of fish.

D.S.: Yea. Sure. Right.

J.H.: And the creek was right much larger then than it is now. See .. stayed up all summer.

D.S.: Yea. This same creek?

J.H.: Same creek.

D.S.: Oh, then you've been right beside the creek all your life...right?

J.H.: *That's the creek,*

D.S.: What's the name of the creek?

J.H.: Happy Creek.

D.S.: Happy Creek. Oh, that's nice. Um, how about dancing did anybody do any dancing?

J.H.: Yes they had a dance once in a while.

D.S.: Where would they have that..in the barns or in the houses?

J.H.: No in a house. And had a dance and dance all night and have breakfast and then go home.

D.S.: Oh ho...was the dancing sort of like square dancing?

J.H.: Yea, it was square dancing.

D.S.: Yea. What was the music do you remember? Any of the tunes?

J.H.: Oh, I don't know..^{used a} fiddle..banjo..Turkey in the Straw and Yankee Doodle and all such things as that.

D.S.: Did you ever hear the tune Money Mush?

J.H.: No, I don't...

D.S.: Samuel Fox who lived up here mentioned Money Mush? And Leather Britches...

J.H.: Yea, I heard that.

D.S.: Oh, which reminds me..did you used to dry beans?

J.H.: Yea. They dried them out in the field you know. We'd have dried beans.. pick enough to last all winter.

D.S.: They dried right in the field?

J.H.: Yea. Dried right in the field. Then they'd pick them off and hull them.

D.S.: When would you pick them?

J.H.: Well about corn cutting time. We always planted them in the corn and you didn't have to worry with them at all...no bugs... anything..then just before we ~~cut~~ the corn we picked the dried beans.

D.S.: Hey that was a lot easier than the way they had to do it other places, wasn't it.
Yea.

J.H.: Wasn't any problem much..

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you ever sell any of your dried beans?

J.H.: Sometimes, yea. Most of the time...our ^{vegetables} vegetables...course sell some ¹ in the summertime, but in the wintertime somebody run short of something..somebody else has more than they'd use..they'd give it to them. No charge.

D.S.: Yea. Uh, did you dry cherries?

J.H.: Dried cherries, dried corn and ^{had} what they called snap bean, put them on a string to dry them you know...green bean..put it on a string

D.S.: Then how would you cook them?

J.H.: Well you soak them maybe over night and then cook them the next day. Be almost regular green bean.

D.S.: Boy, that sounds good. Did you get a lot of huckleberries?

J.H.: Not through this section. Now up around Rileyville that was the huckleberry section. They shipped them by the car loads...

D.S.: Did they set fires particularly to make sure they had huckleberries?

J.H.: I always heard they did.

D.S.: Yea. I heard it too. Yes. Uhhuh.

J.H.: There was a few huckleberries around through here not ... plenty of blackberries,rasberries, strawberries, and all kinds of fruit. People had two or three peach trees...didn't have to buy any fruit at all.

D.S.: Yea. Did you ever do any peeling of the bark? For tanneries?

J.H.: Well not when I was big enough..before I was grown they did. When I was just a boy..then they made ties..railroad ties you know...
(make those out of chestnut trees?)

No, they was oak. The railroad ties would be oak. Then there was a stave for barrels would be out of chestnut. ^{sure} And it was always timber..we could get timber most any time of the year.

D.S.: Sure, right. Uh, how many were in your family?

J.H.: Well there were 12 children.

D.S.: Big family!

J.H.: Yea.

D.S.: Was it a fairly large house?

J.H.: Well not too large, but it was large enough.

D.S.: How many rooms?

J.H.: One, two three...about seven rooms.

D.S.: Oh, that's a good sized house. Yea.

J.H.:^{a big} place for that time.

D.S.: Was it a log house or...

J.H.: Part of it was log.

D.S.: And the other part was stone?

J.H.: No. The other part was frame.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Speaking of stones..uh, how did you plant the corn? Did you plow?

J.H.: We'd plow the field up...most of the time ^{laid} it over and layed it off,
and planted it by hand, it was no corn planters in them times.

D.S.: No, no. But you were able to plow it.

J.H.: Oh yea.

D.S.: Did you use horses?

J.H.: Yea, Oh, yea.

D.S.: How many did you have?

J.H.: Had six work horses.

D.S.: You had six! That's a lot...what's the need of six?

J.H.: Well...well hauling timber and maybe plowing at the same time. It was a
small...

D.S.: Uhhum..How many cows?

J.H.: Well we had 12 part of the time..anywhere six to 12.

D.S.: Did you ever eat any beef.

J.H.: Oh, yea. We butchered a beef every year. Two of us would go together and each
one would take half...then you could hang it up out in the smoke house and they
could hang there all winter..the weather was different then, but you couldn't
do that now...when you wanted beef, you'd go out there and cut it off and let
it thaw. Stay frozen all winter.

D.S.: Hey...^{automatic}~~what about a~~ freezer?

J.H.:.....freezer...couldn't do that now. It would spoil.

D.S.: No.

J.H.: ^{WINTER} Weather has changed..Used to be snow the last of November or the first of December and it would stay there to February. Always be a thaw in February.

D.S.: Yea, uhhuh.

J.H.: River would freeze over and you could drive a team across the river.

D.S.: Um...gee...yea...

J.H.: It would thaw in February and never freeze over but once. Thaw out .. be mighty cold after that but wouldn't be enough..be more water ...wouldn't freeze..

D.S.: Great. Then when the snow was there what did you all do, just stay in the house?

J.H.: Well we generally worked in the timber..when the snow was too deep we just tended to the feeding and milking. And that's about all.

D.S.: You must have had extra milk didn't you...with that many cows?

J.H.: We had plenty of milk but we fed it to the hogs. We'd skim the cream off and leave the milk for the hogs. Instead of buying feed. Course they wouldn't. ^{We} had what you called a ^{springhouse} you'd put it in there and let the cream form on it and skim that off and make butter, and feed the milk to the hogs.

D.S.: How about clabber. Did you ever have.

J.H.: Yea. I never did like it.

D.S.: You didn't.

J.H.: We'd make cheese out of it youknow. I liked the cheese alright. I've seen some people drink the clabber, but I couldn't do that.

D.S.: Yea, and I've heard a lot of people smack their lips over it.

D.H.: Yea...

D.S.: Yea. Uh, how did you meet your wife?

J.H.: Well ^{we} was raised up here in the neighborhood.

D.S.: Uhhuh. So how did you court her?

J.H.: Well, I reckon like anyone else.

D.S.: Well how did they court?

J.H.: That's kind of hard to explain.

D.S.: Were you chaperoned all the time?

J.H.: Oh, no.

D.S.: No!

J.H.: There wasn't too much of that done. Course they didn't take trips like they do now.

D.S.: No. Right. Where did you have the wedding?

J.H.: Bagerstown.

D.S.: What'd you go way off there for?

J.H.: Well, we just decided to go.

D.S.: How'd you get there?

J.H.: By car.

D.S.: Oh, you had a car by then.

J.H.: Yea, had a car.

D.S.: Were you able to drive up on to your property.

J.H.: Oh, yea, you could drive...up there all right.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. When did you get your first car?

J.H.: Oh, in the early twenties.

D.S.: Uhhuh, can you recall how much it was.

J.H.: I think it was less than \$500.

D.S.: Oh, gee, yea. But even so, that was a lot of money to raise.

J.H.: It was a lot of money at that time.

D.S.: Right. That meant a lot of hard work to get that 500 didn't it.

J.H.: Yea.

D.S.: Well after you got married did you build your own home?

J.H.: I built this house yes.

D.S.: Oh you built this house.

J.H.: We lived up in the park...moved here in '35.

D.S.: Uhhum. What were the funerals like?

J.H.: Well, I don't know ^{not} what...much difference now...

D.S.: Well did they embalm the bodies?

J.H.: I don't know just when they started that..they probably did. Ever since I can remember they been doing that. I can't remember about that..of course I was grown before *asymu died so I don't know.*
~~or not...~~

D.S.: I get it. Did the women do much crying?

J.H.: Well quite a bit. Yea.

D.S.: Cause I have heard that the women and children sort of..

J.H.: Yea.

D.S.: They did.

J.H.: That's right.

D.S.: And did you all stay at the grave until it was completely covered?

J.H.: No.

D.S.: No!

J.H.: No.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Okey. You are the first group that didn't.

J.H.: Well we never did.

D.S.: Uhhuh, yea. Uh, when you were growing up, what was the furniture like? Had your father made the furniture?

J.H.: No, most of it was bought.

D.S.: Uhhuh. When you sat around of an evening what..uh, did anybody say where your family came from..how they ended up in the mountains?

J.H.: No, uh, not really. My father and mother..my grandfather is from Rappahannock County.

D.S.: Uhhuh, what was their name?

J.H.: Well his name was William.

D.S.: Hickerson?

J.H.: Hickerson..that was on my father's side?

D.S.: But they were also from the mountains, right? In Rappahannock..

J.H.: Oh, yea.

D.S.: What we are trying to do is find out how the people got into the mountains..

where they they came from to get there.

J.H.: Well, what I've always heard *was* old man ~~Dick~~ *Hickerson* lived on the river. So many of the families died with Typhoid Fever and he traded the river for this mountain land. So that's the way the *family* got up here. Now the Bailey's..grandfather's side...old man Bailey owned practically this whole hollow and he had quite a few children and he divided it up.. There was .. let's see .. one, two..about seven or eight farms and *he* *he gave land to his children* and that's the way they got here. *Great grandfathers* ~~boy's~~ name was William and his father was John and that's as far as I can remember back.

D.S.: Uhhuh, yea. Well that helps quite a bit.

J.H.: Now that was my grandfather and grandmother on Bailey's side.

D.S.: Oh, uhhuh. Uh, they had large families then too didn't they?

J.H.: Well, yes.. they had...most families then had *large* families...uh, more families lived here in this neighborhood they had 12 children..12 in the family.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Do you know if they had a doctor come when the babies were born?

J.H.: Very seldom.

D.S.: They used a midwife?

J.^H.: ..a midwife. Yea.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Were there any particular childhood diseases?

J.H.: Oh, well there was the regular thing..the measles, the whooping cough, chicken pox and things like that you had to go through with.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.H.: ..no...no uh vaccination for them then at that time.

D.S.: Did a doctor come up to the mountain to visit?

J.H.: Oh yea. If you needed him he would come.

D.S.: Do you know what his name was?

J.H.: Dr. Hansborough was...

D.S.: Was he from Front Royal?

J.H.: Front Royal, yea.

D.S.: How would you get in touch with him?

J.H.: Well you had to go after him. Later on, well about the time I was 12 or 13,
we got a telephone and...

D.S.: Oh, that made it a lot easier.

J.H.: Yea...In 1917..when the flu was around...when the doctor visited everybody..
each family that had somebody sick...when he was up in the neighborhood he would
go to everybody's house.

D.S.: Um...that was a terrible job for him wasn't it.

J.H.: Yea. And uh he'd probably go to two or three neighborhoods in a day you know.
He was kept busy.

D.S.: Yea. Right. Do you know any of the herbs that the people used?

J.H.: Well drank sassafrass tea in the spring of the year to thin their blood...

D.S.: Yea, uhhuh. How about when you had a cold?

J.H.: Well you got red pepper tea.

D.S.: Red pepper tea?

J.H.: Yea, it was plenty hot too. You'd drink it when it was hot..just as hot as you
could drink it and it was hot besides...

D.S.: Did that help a cold?

J.H.: Yes indeed it would help.

D.S.: Oh, boy. Did you ever..it sounds awful..have kerosene and sugar for a cold?

Or cough?

J.H.: Yea. Turpentine..

D.S.: You did..turpentine ~~and sugar...~~

J.H.: turpentine and sugar...

D.S.: Oh boy. Turpentine and sugar. And uh..how about poultices...did they use any poultices?

J.H.: Mustard plasters, yea.

D.S.: Mustard plasters. Uh, did you use ginseng for anything?

J.H.: No we didn't

D.S.: Uh, what would you do if you got bitten by a snake?

J.H.: Well you would get a doctor as soon as you could.

D.S.: Well if you couldn't.

J.H.; Well the first thing..if you got bitten on the hand or foot, you put some cold kerosene..until the doctor got there.

D.S.: Keresene.

J.H.: They claimed that helped..I don't know.

D.S.: D^I d you ever hear about them taking a live chicken and ripping it apart and putting it on...

J.H.: I've heard that...

D.S.: And they say the chicken turns just green.

J.H.: Yea, I've heard that..I never saw it...I had a brother got bit by a snake.

D.S.: What did you do?

J.H.: Well we called a doctor. Of course we put his hand in kerosene in less than a minute after he got bit and he was six months getting over that before he... the doctor got there in about 20 minutes....after we called him. And of course he slit the place....I don't know just which finger it was anymore..it was in between these two...he slit the place open and put the regular snake medicine they had at that time on it. But his arm had swelled up so they had to cut his

shirt off...when the doctor got there..it swelled so.

D.S.: Oh my gosh.

J.H.: And uh, he was six months getting over that.

D.S.: Yea, was it a copperhead or a rattle...

J.H.: Copperhead.

D.S.:Copperhead, yea...

J.H.: Well people claimed the snake weed you know would cure it, but I know another person that got bit and they put that snake weed on and he got rid of a hand so I don't think....it may help some people and other's it didn't.

D.S.: Yea.

J.H.: A snake bit lots of times has more poison , *if it hangs onto you*
more and more poison in there than they do at other times.

D.S.: Yes, that's true. Yea. Uh, oh, what was I going to ask. There was something I was going to ask about the snakes...well, how about wildlife...did you have much wildlife?

J.H.: Well there was quite a bit. Now there wasn't many deer. Once in a while
through here
you'd see a bear, but no deer, at all.

D.S.: You did see a bear once in a while.

J.H.: Yea, and there was plenty of small game.

D.S.: Did you hunt much?

J.H.: Yes we used to...every fall take a day off and hunt. Hunt rabbit, squirrel..
we generally hunted squirrel in the summertime. Rabbits in the fall of the year.
After it got cold.

D.S.: How about possum..did you hunt possum?

J.H.: Well some time we kept some of them for their fur. We didn't eat them..some people did, but we didn't.

(Did you hunt fox)

Yea.

(Did you sell the skins)

Yea.

(How much did you get for them)

Oh, I don't know probably a dollar and a half at that time.

D.S.: Oh dear..

J.H.: *a coon* brought a pretty good trade..good 4 or 5 dollars for a good coon hide. That was a whole lot of money then.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you ever eat coon?

J.H.: Yea, we ate coon.

D.S.: How would you prepare it?

J.H.: Well, what you call par-boil it....first...and we *fried it* after it dried... old coon wasn't much stewing meat, but the young coon was good eating.

D.S.: Yea. Did you ever eat *Poke* weed?

J.H.: Oh, it's the best stuff in the world?

D.S.: It's good.

J.H.: Yea.!

(It's great)

D.S.: I love it. Yea.

J.H.: I've had quite a bit this spring.

D.S.: You have..mine haven't come up yet...good eating...

J.H.: Yea, that's...good eating

D.S.: Sure is..Did you ever make ash cakes?

J.H.: Yea.

D.S.: How would they be made?

J.H.: Well you need a fireplace for them.

D.S.: Yea.

J.H.: Put them in there and cover them up...

D.S.: ..made out of cornmeal.

J.H.: Cornmeal..

D.S.: Uhhuh. Bout how long would they take to cook?

J.H. Well it depends on how much heat you had. Wouldn't take them ~~long~~ ^{long}.

D.S.: Yea. They were good weren't they?

J.H.: Yea, you ever eat any crackling bread?

D.S.: Uhhum...

J.H.: That's real good bread too.

D.S.: Sure yea. Uh, your mother made her own bread, right?

J.H.: Oh, yea. You didn't buy bread then...them days...

D.S.: Did she make many cakes and pies?

J.H.: Yes, quite a few.

D.S.: Uhhuh, yea. Tell me what a typical breakfast would be.

J.H.: Well *we usually had* eggs and ham mostly..and some gravy...biscuits of course.

D.S.: And then....oh yea....That's right your mother had to get up in time to make biscuits for you all.

J.H.: Yea, back in them days you had three meals a day. Not like it is now.

D.S.: Right. Well you worked hard. What time would you get up in the morning?

J.H.: Four o'clock. Four o'clock fed the ^{stock} ~~the~~ fed the horses...they had to have time to eat..in the summertime we'd be in the field at 5 o'clock...working...

D.S.: Oh, boy. So then...

J.H.: We had to get up the year round to feed the stock....work or not...they had to be fed

D.S.: You raised cattle then too....steer...yea..

J.H.: Yea.

D.S.: How many roughly would you have?

J.H.: Oh about 25 or 30.

D.S.: Did you let them just roam?

J.H.: No kept them fenced in.

D.S.: You kept them fenced in.

J.H.: They roamed all over the field, but not all over the whole mountain.

D.S.: Cause I was wondering how you kept them close.

J.H.: They had a fence....around the field.

(Did you keep your hogs fenced in too or did you let them roam?)

Sometimes let them out in the mountain..chestnut time .. plenty of chestnuts them and they'd get fat...feed them corn a couple weeks...corn makes them solid, big solid.

(Did you collect chestnuts?)

Oh, we used to gather chestnuts by the bushel. You could go out then and pick up two or three gallons in just a little while.

D.S.: Yea, how about walnuts?

J.H.: Yea, quite a few walnuts. Both kinds..the black walnut and the *butternut* ~~nut~~ they called them.

D.S.: Did you crack them before you sold them? Did you take the meat out?

J.H.: Well we didn't sell any...we got enough cracked to bake cakes and things like that for our own use. We never sold any.

D.S.: Uhhuh. There is quite a knack to opening those. And I've heard that people in the mountains really knew how to open them fast and get the meat out good.

J.H.: Well I don't know. We ^{always} used a hammer. There may be a better way but...

D.S.: No, I mean there is a certain place you hit them and open them right up...

J.H.: Oh, yea..turn them up on the end...a man that hits them on the side..has smashed the wal_lnut kernal..

D.S.: Yea. How about church..Did you have a church near you?

J.H.: Well we had services over here at the school house. Used that as a church, too.

D.S.: ...excuse me...every Sunday....or...^{J.H.:} I don't think it was every Sunday, probably every other Sunday....something like that.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Would everybody go?

J.H.: Practically everybody.

D.S.: Did you ever go into Front Royal for any..oh like if they had a fair? Or anything of that kind? Circus. Bet everybody looked forward...

J.H.: Oh yes. Yea. Circus day practically everybody would be there...

D.S.: Yea. How much..do you recall how much it would cost to get into the circus?

J.H.: Oh about 50¢.

D.S.: Oh gosh..Well you know your father coming up with 50¢ for 12 children and himself and his wife that was quite a lot of money.

J.H.: Well course some of them was grown. My oldest brother was 25 years older than I was. I was the youngest in the family.

D.S.: Oh, my heavens.

J.H.: And my father died when I was three years old.

D.S.: Then how did your mother manage?

J.H.: Well I guess she knew how..was used to it. Course the boys..some of them was grown by that time you know...

D.S.: And so all of you really had to do the work that your father would have been doing.

J.H.: Well yea.

D.S.: Ooh..I'm surprised you could be spared to go to school.

J.H.: Well evidently the busy work was over before school started. We was out...

D.S.: Yea. Would you go back if you could?

J.H.: I don't know. If everything was like it is now, I would...but I wouldn't want to go back now and things be like that..I

D.S.: Wasn't it pretty hard work.

J.H.: You didn't mind it..you enjoyed it...yea work...

D.S.: Yea. Did you take time to look around and say gee this is a pretty spot, I'm in?

J.H.: Well I don't know about that. It was more peace in that country at that time.. neighborhood and everything...now you don't hardly know your next door neighbor. And at that time you knew everybody, in the neighborhood.

D.S.: Yea. What happened when somebody was sick. Did everybody pitch in to help?

J.H.: Oh, yea. Yea.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea, they were pretty fine that way weren't they...if you'd happen to visit some family and they were shucking corn what would you do..help them to shuck it?

J.H.: Well generally done the visiting on Sunday and they wouldn't be shucking corn on Sunday. *Back then we* used to have corn shuckings and all the neighbors would go and help shuck corn.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh..what happened if you got a red ear?

J.H.: Hows'that..

D.S.: What would happen if you got a red ear?

J.H.: Oh, I don't know..there was a prize for a red ear..or who got the first red ear.

D.S.: Uhhuh. When would the people get together and just relax and have a few drinks and...

J.H.: Well most of that was done on Sunday...worked most of the other time.

D.S.: How was Christmas?, Did you spend Christmas?

J.H.; Well you didn't get much fer Christmas...at that time, like you do now. You got a few peanuts, a horn, and some candy and that was about it.

D.S.: Did you shoot off firecrackers?

J.H.: Yea, always had firecrackers.

D.S.: Yea, uhhum. Did you ever celebrate Fourth of July?

J.H.: Well have some firecrackers, but that'd be about the only way...we'd celebrate it. Firecrackers...

D.S.: You did. Thanksgiving?

J.H.: No, not on Thanksgiving. We always had a big dinner on Thanksgiving.

D.S.: You did. Did you have turkey?

J.H.: Most of the time.

D.S.: Was it wild turkey?

J.H.: No, it wasn't any wild turkeys then.

D.S.: There weren't?

J.H.: Once in a while there would be a wild turkey. But most of the time..tame.

D.S.: Uh...well can you think of anything that we haven't ^{talked} thought about, uh, hey did you ever sit around and talk about ghost stories?

J.H.: Oh yea.,.

D.S.: Can you remember any?

J.H.: Well not really...the older folks would tell us some ghost stories you know...

D.S.: And you can't remember a one.

J.H.: There was a ... down the road here there was a lady murdered...back oh, I don't remember just when, and they used to have court at Woodstock..Lollie May...she was on her way there to testify at a trial, and she was found murdered down there and people claimed they seen all kind of things....I never did.

D.S.: In otherwords you didn't believe so much in ghost stories is that it?

J.H.: Most of the time it's imagination.

D.S.: Yea, I'm sure it was. Yea. Uh, do you know of any particular diseases aside from the flu that people..that adults had...

J.H.: Well scarlet fever...that was pretty rough. I had that when I was 26 years old.

D.S.: Oh my.

J.H.: *I had a*....right sore throat *and a high fever - you* feel awful.

D.S.: Sure, and what did they do for you.

J.H.: Well the doctor give you medicine...I don't know what kind. I had to stay in bed...had to stay in til after it pealed off too.

D.S.: Did they keep you separate from everybody else in the family?

J.H.: Oh no not necessarily now and I was the only one in the

family that had it.

D.S.: Oh, boy that's strange isn't it. Cause that's highly contagious.

J.H.: ...more in the neighborhood that had it, but I was the only one in our family that had it.

D.S.: Did the men go to the various wars? Like did you hear anything about the Civil War in your family?

J.H.: Oh yea, yea. Grandfather was in the Civil War...grandfather was killed in the Civil War...Grandfather Hickerson. Grandfather Bailey I always heard never got a scratch.

D.S.: Oh. Uh, how about World War I?

J.H.: Well there wasn't any of our immediate family in World War I. Now World War II I had 12 nephews in it...all of them got back.

D.S.: They did. Wonderful.

J.H.: A couple of them were wounded...but not real bad. ~~My...~~

D.S.: My do you think that the people adjusted to moving out of the park? How did they adjust...did they settle down happily or were they unhappy?

J.H.: Well I can't speak for any of them but myself much because they built homesteads for them you know...one at Ida Valley up in Luray, and another one over in Rappahannock...Flint Hill....when they moved them out.

D.S.: Uhhum. Did they like it? Did you...you didn't move there?

J.H.: No, I was one of the ones that didn't have a place to go.

D.S.: Uhhhuh. Did you keep in touch with these people?

J.H.: No really wasn't any of them from this immediate neighborhood...further back on the mountain.

D.S.: The people from the neighborhood, where did they go?

J.H.: Well... *several moved to Front Royal and Brownstown, and down the hollow.*

D.S.: So they just sort of moved right down in...and were they given the land then to

end CDI

then to move on to. They had to buy it...

J.H.: Buy it...

D.S.: Oh, and that was expensive wasn't it?

J.H.: Yea. Well it wasn't expensive then as it tis now. You take this mountain land now, you can get any price practically at all...people just begging for it.. enough to build on.

D.S.: Sure, right. Well can you think of one single thing that I have forgotten to ask...can you Carol? Anthing you want to know?

(Can't think of anything righr now. How far away were the Carter's from you? The people that ...Walter Carter... Did you go visiting there at all?

J.H.: No, they lived at Front Royal...

D.S.: He said they just had tenant houses on there.

(Oh, that's right.)

J.H.: There was uh two different people that owned the orchard and it was sold ... Bob *Burham* the one orchard, and Mark Mills owned the other and they sold it...went out of the orchard business and then Mr. Carter he uh..raised a lot of peaches and stuff and finally Judge Snead and I think finally he sold it to the park andnow whether he bought it from Walter Carter or not...now I don't know. The park owns it now.

D.S.: I was just thinking you didn't have to do any spraying of the orchard...

J.H.: Yes we sprayed...two sprays...put on one when it was just beginning to show *the pink* and put on another when *the buds showed.*

D.S.: You did.

J.H.: Put on two sprays...bout all you had to spray...orchards always *how to*

(What did you spray with?)

J.H. *Arsenic & lead*

D.S.: Oh, just think what that does to the birds. That was a large orchard that you had.

J.H.: Yes, it was a right smart job...picking apples all year.

D.S.: Yea. So with the orchard and with all the cattle and with...how many hogs would you generally have?

J.H.: Oh, we'd butcher six or eight hogs...we generally had two or three left ~~sum~~
winter, sometimes you'd have fifteen or twenty.

D.S.: How many acres did your father have?

J.H.: They had over two hundred I don't remember exactly how much it was.

D.S.: And then he'd give some to like your older brother when he got married or...

J.H.: No. No, my father was dead before any of them got married.

D.S.: So where did your older brother settle?

J.H.: He settled up there next to us...he bought a place and then he died young..when he was thirty some and then my brother next to me and I bought his widow out.

D.S.: Oh my gosh...well...I think this has been a most wonderful interview. Now you know what we have....I brought some maps along..that was what I was carrying...carefully. And I was in hopes you could help us locate where your home was and where any of the others were.

J.H.: I don't know.

D.S.: Well let's see...we'll find out.