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(SNP121) David M. Taylor interviewed by  
Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Mara Meisel  
and Rebecca Popp

David M. Taylor

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Interview with David M. Taylor  
Part of the Shenandoah National Park Oral History Project, SdArch SNP-121  
(SC# 4030)

Interview conducted at [not named, but presumably at Shenandoah National Park,  
where David Taylor was working at time of interview]  
by Dorothy N. Smith on October 26, 1977

Transcribed by Mara Meisel, April 2007  
and Rebecca Popp, May 2007

Key

[I:] Interviewer, Dorothy N. Smith

[DT:] David Taylor

{\*} Unable to understand word

{\*\*} Unable to understand more than one word

I omitted the frequent use of "uh" or "um" by interviewee, as well as some "you knows." I also omitted some of the reassuring "yeahs" or "sures" spoken by interviewer while interviewee was speaking.

^^Note: David Monroe Taylor (born ca. 1928) was the son of Salathiel Clark Taylor and Minnie Lam. The family was living in Jolliet Hollow, Page County, in the 1930 census.

Total Interview Length: 00:51.26 min.

[Begin audio file, 00:00:01]

I: Let's start with, what are your most vivid memories of when you were a child?

DT: Well, I remember when I was very small -- I was born on the top of Jollett Hollow, which is the park -- and, well, my father, who worked for the WPA at the time, the time I remember now. Well, he would have a long ways to walk to fetch his truck to go to work. Sometimes he was working over here on the Massanutten Mountain, and that would be a long ways to ride on a truck. He rode the back of a dump truck, even in the winter time, to work that far. And, well, I went to school in a one-room schoolhouse.

I: Where was this school -- how far away?

DT: That was a couple miles [that way]; it was a one-room schoolhouse.

I: Was it, like, down at the bottom of a hollow, or...?

DT: Maybe, I'd say three miles from where I lived. I lived right at the foot of the Meadows School Road.

I: Um-hmm.

DT: That's where my home was.

I: Yeah.

DT: And of course Hiram Meadows lived up the mountain. He drove a car that took the children to school and bring 'em back, you know.

I: Oh, how wonderful. Then you didn't have to walk it.

DT: No, most of the time, sometimes you would walk it, but in the winter months, the colder months, he would take us to school and bring us back.

I: How many were in the school? Do you recall, roughly?

DT: Oh, it couldn't have been over, I'd say, 15, 18, something like that. 'Cause it was a small, one-room schoolhouse.

I: Um-hmm.

DT: So I didn't go there but just a couple years until we was moved out. Well, CC trucks moved us out. Moved us over to the Ida Valley Homestead.

I: Now, while you were still living in park area, how far away were the houses? Your nearest neighbor was, can you recall?

DT: Well, it was over half a mile I'd say, to my nearest neighbor, yeah.

I: Then wasn't it hard to move into Ida Valley, where you were all so close together?

DT: Well, it was, took sort of a while to get adjusted to it, but I liked it out there after I got there.

I: Of course you did.

DT: 'Cause there was more children around my age to play with, you know, and to go to school, of course we still went to a small school there at Ida after I got to Ida but went on up to Luray school after I got out of 6th grade, and went to Luray School, of course, then I graduated from Harrisonburg School.

I: Well, now, your family didn't do any farming?

DT: Oh, yeah. My father did some farming.

I: How could he do that with the other work?

DT: Well, the older boys - see I'm the youngest of the boys - and the older boys would do that and he...

I: How many were there in your family?

DT: Well, there was six boys and three girls.

I: {Whistles} That's a big family.

DT: And two of the boys died while we was still living there at Ida. They're buried in the park, at the top of Meadows School Road.

I: Was that in the one of those epidemics that went through, that you know of?

DT: No. The one was 11 months old when he died. And he was a very healthy baby, they said. But he got pneumonia and he died from that.

I: Was doctoring hard? Was it hard to get a doctor?

DT: Yes. It was pretty hard, 'cause... I do remember now. I was small at the time, but I remember that when I got pneumonia one time up in there, I was very

sick. They got somebody. I don't think my father had a car at the time. Course he had cars before, and my brother was chopping wood and he cut his foot open with an ax, and so they had to put him in Charlottesville Hospital. And he had so many operations on that, cost my father so much that he had to sell his car, his cows, what cows he had, to pay the hospital bill. But they did help out with the farming. Well, he had several acres of land there – where it's all growed up now – where you wouldn't think anybody ever farmed there. But he had several acres there that he farmed, and then over acrost the Powell's Mountain right back of our house he had I don't know how many acres of it was back, he cleared off and farmed corn back there.

I: So he raised corn and what else would he raise, do you know?

DT: Corn, tomatoes and, well, all kind of vegetables for canning and everything, and well, we picked berries you know and everything, canned them for winter time.

I: Did they dry the berries, do you recall?

DT: No, they didn't dry 'em, they canned the berries and made jelly and preserves and things like that. And well, there was always plenty of apples around. They'd get in their apples in the fall, you know, and make apple butter and apple sauce and put apples away, you know. Always seemed to have plenty to eat, even those who wasn't makin' much money, farming and wild fruit they would gather, you know, seemed to always have plenty to eat.

I: Oh, yeah. Did they hogs, and chickens?

DT: Oh, yeah. He had a couple horses also.

I: Now you said he had cattle. Did you eat the beef?

DT: No. We only had milk cows.

I: Milk cows.

DT: No, we didn't raise any beef cattle at all.

I: Um-hmm. You know, that seems so strange. I haven't heard of anybody raising any beef cattle.

DT: Well, there was a lot of 'em raised up in there, but we didn't have any. Now I know that was some families that was out of the park that, well they had big herds of cattle up in – on above where we lived. Now this was Ashby Herndon's father, I can't remember what his name, his first name was, but he had a big herd of cattle up in there that he would take up ever' spring and then bring them out in the fall.

I: Yeah.

DT: I did have, I'd go to church every Sunday, and maybe sometimes during the week. But we'd always walk to church.

I: How far away was that?

DT: That was at least three miles. And go to Sunday school...

I: You had a preacher there, a regular preacher?

DT: Yeah.

I: So when there were funerals and weddings you didn't have to wait around for a preacher to come, he was already there.

DT: Right. Yeah, this preacher was from Philadelphia. He came there when he was a young man, I think, and he's still living there, he still at the same place. But he's 90-some years old now. But they say he still gets around pretty good. So I imagine...

I: Does he have much of a memory, do you know?

DT: I would think so. He was a very smart man.

I: Yeah, it would be fun to get in touch with him, wouldn't it?

DT: Yeah.

I: What is his name?

DT: John Dubosque. Now, don't ask me how to spell that last name, 'cause...B.O.S...

I: I think it would be D.U.B.O.I.S, "Dubois."

DT: ...B.O.S.Q.U.E., I think is the way it's spelled. I'm not sure about that.

I: Ok.

DT: But now, anybody in the Jollett Holler area can tell you where he lives at, 'cause he's been there for over 50 years; longer than that, I guess. Yeah, he's been there much longer than that, 'cause like I say, he came there when he was a young man and he's been there ever since and he's in his 90s now.

I: He must have really loved you all.

DT: Well, he seemed to, and everybody seemed to like him. Of course, there was a few around who gave him a hard time, you know, ones that lived back up in the mountains that they sort of gave him a hard time, but he never would leave. He stayed with it and seemed to enjoy it. I'll tell you, we really enjoyed having him, too. Everybody seemed to like him.

I: With your apple butter boiling – this is a change of subject, but – do you recall whether they would do it all night long or whether they would do it in the daytime or when they would do it?

DT: Well now I've known of some families that would do their apple butter boiling at night. All right. Our family usually would get together. Now they would have what they called apple peeling. Now this is where the neighbors come in. Now they would walk for miles, you know, just to get together and talk and peel apples, you know, get things ready for the apple butter boiling. So many bushels, I don't know just how many, but cut 'em up and get 'em ready, and then on the, get up early on the morning that they was going to boil apple butter and it would be an all-day job, you know, boiling apple butter and packing cans and things, you know, it was just...

I: It was great time to get together.

DT: ...It was a real, real good, well it was just about the only thing back in the hollow that way that they had to get together for, was things like that now. Say when their gardens was, gettin' ready to can their beans and things, they'd take all their beans, you know, and maybe have several bushels of beans. And they would

let their neighbors know that they was going to have a bean stringin' that night. And so a lot of neighbors would walk for miles and come to help with the bean stringin', you know, and get 'em ready for canning, and everybody seemed so willing to help each other. Well, you don't find that any more.

I: No, you don't.

DT: I mean, the people next door wouldn't walk over to help you if you wanted help. Or maybe if you go really beg 'em, they might. But they're not like they was back then.

I: No. Yes, from what I understand, if you went to visit somebody and they were busy doing something, they fixed you an appetizer.

DT: Right. That's the way it was then. If you had work to do and the neighbors, they didn't have, say, a lot to do, they would come in and work all day if need be, to help you out, and no charge to it. It was just, they was glad to come to get together and talk with their friends and neighbors they hadn't seen for a while.

I: How about the houses, what were they made like?

DT: Well, we had a weatherboard house. It wasn't a modern house like you see today, and it wasn't as warm as the houses you have now, but it was fairly...

I: It wasn't a log house.

DT: No, we didn't have a log house, no.

I: Did some of the neighbors have any that you recall?

DT: Well, there was a few up in there. Now, I think some of the Meadowses had log houses. But like I told you a while ago, Aunt Myrtle that lives there in Elkton, she could tell you a lot more about that than I could.

I: Do you know of any – now I know it went on – but I was wondering if in your particular area there was much moonshining?

DT: Well, I heard of some, but as far as knowing, I can't say.

I: Yeah. You were too young really to have noticed.

DT: Yeah, but I heard about it, and I think it was some going on at that time. I'm pretty sure there was some going on at that time.

I: Your place is too far away from Skyland wasn't it, for the people to take anything to Skyland to sell.

DT: Yes, it was. See, we was all the way at the foot of the mountain. But now I might have, there was some relatives that lived over near Skyland – now Delan Taylor, I don't know if you know of him or not...

I: No.

DT: ...but that was his home, Skyland. And he worked for Mr. Pollock for years. And his two sons, which is Cecil Taylor, that lives in Sperryville, he worked for Pollock a lot; and Bernie Taylor, and all of Bernie's sons live there around Elkton, and I could give you their names if you'd be interested. Now I know of four of 'em that was born at Skyland. It was Harold, Melvin, Irving and Ivan. And well, they're about the same age as I am, and some of 'em, one of them, or two of

them's younger than I am. And they was born up, right there at Skyland.

I: And they stayed at Skyland until Pollock left Skyland?

DT: Until the park moved them out. I don't know what year Pollock...I have met Pollock; I've talked to Pollock.

I: You have?

DT: Oh, yeah.

I: (Laughs) What was your impression of him?

DT: Well, he was right old when I talked to him. He had been sick a while, and he seemed, well he seemed to be a very intelligent man. I mean this was in 1949 that I talked to him. Yeah, 1949. And he, I don't know whether it was sometime during that year or '50 that he died. I'm not sure. But I talked to him. George Corbin and I went to his house. And he was living there in Luray, and we went and talked to him. I enjoyed talking to him, very much.

I: He was quite a conservationist, wasn't he?

DT: Yes, he was.

I: And while we were all very fortunate that he was there, he helped the mountain people quite a bit.

DT: He sure did. You know, I read a lot about that. I enjoy this book that he wrote about Skyland.

I: It was pretty accurate.

DT: Well, there are some things in there about Bernie and Cecil Taylor, too. Now I think now at that time that they was makin' moonshine. But, well, they had a little trouble, which is wrote up in the Skyland book.

I: How did your family, what did your family do with any excess eggs or chickens or anything like that? Where would they sell them?

DT: Well, they would have to take 'em to Shenandoah or Elkton.

I: That was a long trip.

DT: Yeah. That was a long ways to go.

I: They didn't do it often, then, did they?

DT: No. 'Cause we really didn't have that many that, see with, ok, after the two, it was still two died in our family, two boys, there was still four boys and two girls and Father and Mother, which was eight of us in the family. And so we just kept enough chickens and raised hogs and cows for our own use. You know, we just didn't sell the...

I: I wonder how, before your father started with the WPA, how they got money?

DT: Well, there was some farmers, I remember hearing him talk about it, that he worked for. He would go out and they called it grubbing or clearing fields that sort of growed up, you know, and getting them ready for farmland. Maybe 50 cents to a dollar a day would be really good, you know. At that time they could buy a lot more with a dollar than they can now. But it was still maybe a 10-hour day

that he would have to work for it. Well, finally when we moved Ida, he got a job with the Park Service here, and he worked for the Park Service over 20 years.

I: What did he do?

DT: Well he was with the park maintenance part of the time and then he was with the fire control [loud police radio drowns out word]. I don't know how many years he was with that. He was out there a long time. He stayed in some of these towers. They once had...

I: You know, when that's on, would you mind not talking, because I'm sure this can't pick up your voice plus that.

[Someone apparently lowers radio volume]

I: Oh, great!

DT: Ok. And he stayed at the Miller's Head Tower for a while. And that's located there near Skyland, where you can see all over the Ida Valley and {\*\*} and then he stayed over on the Old Rag Mountain, they had a tower up on, a fire lookout tower on that; several different towers throughout the park that he would stay in. During the real dry spells, you know, they'd want somebody to stay in the towers.

I: When your family was moved out, were all your neighbors moved to about the same area, so that you all still stayed as neighbors?

DT: No, there was only one moved from - there now, all right -- my Uncle Ivan, my father's brother, well he lived about four miles from us at the time we lived in Jollett Hollow, and well he was moved about the same time that we was. And, well, when we got to Ida, his house was only eight, ten blocks from us then. And then my mother's brother, which, he lived over the bottom of Skyland, somewhere over in there, I'm not too familiar where he lived at, at that time, but he moved as our next-door neighbor. And so it was two of 'em that moved...

I: But not your other neighbors that you had all been so close with.

DT: Well, just across the - our other neighbors, now, as far as in the park, we didn't have any close neighbors at all.

I: Well, I mean, these neighbors who would all come and get together to do the apple butter.

DT: Well, they would come up that far, I mean three, four, maybe five miles to do that. But now just across the - we lived close to this creek that came down - and just across there, which was, I had one uncle that lived over there and the next neighbor down the road was just across the creek, so of course that was out of the park. Now they didn't move. And so we was the last ones really, to the foot of the mountain now -- now we was right at the foot of the mountain -- and there wasn't anyone close other than those two, and after those, well, it was over a mile away.

I: I heard from someone who had been a frequent guest at Skyland, that though, you know, she was very proud of all the wonderful people who did live there in the mountains, how great they were, but she said they naturally had feuds, and the shame of it was that these that had the feuds were moved practic-- sometimes as next door neighbors there in Ida. Did you notice any of that?

DT: No. Not at all.

I: Um-hmm.

DT: No, the rest of them...

I: I was thinking, it could have been pretty rough.

DT: Yeah, it would have been, if it would have happened that way. But I don't know of it happening that way at all.

I: Um-hmm. Good.

DT: Now we moved – now, Bernie Taylor, he was moved from Skyland. And there was a house direct across the road from us, which was, I'd say, one block apart. Now, he was my father's first cousin. But they hadn't seen each other but maybe a few times, you know, during meetin' back on the mountain somewhere, you know. But he had seven boys, I think, so they became good friends and we really enjoyed that.

I: Yeah. Did your mother miss not having the spring?

DT: Well, I don't remember her saying too much about it. But she didn't ...seems that she liked it better up where we was, for a while, but then she got used to it there and she liked it real well there. Of course after they started selling those places up there, we moved out of the house they had moved us into and my father bought the Dave Buracker place. He bought that place and then he bought, Cleavy Deaver place and the Elmer Bates place, which they had tore the houses down on two of the places. And then he bought all the pasture land, you know. In Ida, they had one place for all the people at Ida to take their cows to pasture, you know, and so my father bought all that. That was when they started selling, the government wanted to sell it, you know. So he bought out, bought three of the places and also all the pasture that was for the whole Ida Valley at that time. And so after that, and him working for the park, and he did right much farming then, and I helped him. I was big enough to help him by then with the farming.

I: Right. You know, a lot of youngsters weren't able to really go to school because they were so busy helping with the farms that they couldn't. But you were fortunate that you were able to, that you had older brothers.

DT: Yeah. I was very fortunate in that way. I got to, well I started school when I was five. I'd go along, I'd want to be with my brothers, you know, they was all going to school and me being the youngest one, I'd go along.

I: You know you just touched very lightly on the doctor situation. When babies were born, did they have doctors come in or use midwives?

DT: Midwives. You'd never hear of a doctor calling for a baby being born. Not while we lived up in the mountain.

I: Yeah, that's mainly what my questions are about. Do you recall any particular – this is really stretching – I doubt if you really would even have noticed – but do you know of any herbs that they used to use to cure things?

DT: Well I know of some, but now, I'm not sure of what it was used for. They'd use this sassafras tea. Then there were several others, but I can't recall now. I remember my relatives talkin' about 'em. But, you know, but me only being seven years old. I just don't remember what used. Now, I do know they made mustard poultice, that was something that was homemade and it was good for the pneumonia.

I: And they would use the mustard seed?

DT: Yeah, now that was made in, at somehow. I don't know how they made it. I have no idea.

I: How would a seven year old boy know? He wouldn't, no.

DT: But, my father's sister, well she always says call me her boy, 'cause she says she saved my life 'cause I was very ill. That was when I was real small and I had pneumonia bad. And she made these mustard poultices and put on me. And they said that that would - heat, you know - that's a very heat, and that would somehow draw that out.

I: How I wish that that knowledge of herbs -- because it's all, now they're discovering how good they were. And they're making a lot of medicines out of the same identical things that were used then.

DT: That was used at that time. And I'm sure that some of these people that I told you about earlier that would be more able to tell you the names of those herbs and what they was used for.

I: Oh, great. Don't you worry. I'm gonna track them down. [laughs]

DT: Ok. If there is any way I can help you track 'em down, I know where they live at. And so I can help you out on that.

I: Sure. And maybe warn them that they're going to be getting a phone call. All right.

[Muffled microphone sounds; both laugh]

I: I'm just trying to think now. You all were able, your father had no problem getting clothes for all of you. Where would the clothes come from?

DT: Well, there was a store down, Trent Lam had a store down there. I didn't get down there very often myself. But, well, there's where he would meet his truck to go to work. I mean that was a good ways for him to walk, but he had some clothes and he'd buy clothes for us there.

I: Your mother didn't make...?

DT: Oh, yeah. She made clothes. Now some things like shoes he would buy down there. But she made a lot of our shirts and she made, well, a lot of the pants too. And, yeah, she made most of our clothing.

I: Did they make pumpkin butter, that you ever heard of?

DT: No. My family never did, that I know of. But I've heard of a lot of others that did.

I: It must be good. Sounds good.

DT: Yeah, I've tried it. It is good. But I never thought it would be before I tried it.

I: Yeah. Did they raise cane to make sorghum?

DT: Not there, but after we moved out we raised it a lot, yes.

I: But not there?

DT: Not up there, we didn't. Because, well we didn't have anybody to refine it, you know, in that area. And when we moved out, we put out a large crop of that and we'd raise it and take it to Jim Huffman -- had a place down there where he would

refine it for us and make sorghum out of it. And we would have enough to last us and sell a lot of it, you know. But I never did care much for that. It's not as good as what you get out of the store. [laughs] But some people like it a lot better.

I: Yeah. What would a typical breakfast be?

DT: Ok. Usually have eggs and some kind of meat, maybe ham, shoulder meat, side meat. And a lot of times boiled milk gravy with it. And it was what I call a good breakfast, I don't know.

I: Yeah. That's a good breakfast. [laughs] When you went to school, did you take your lunch?

DT: Yes. We'd all take a lunch to school.

I: And what would you take along? What would you have? They didn't make sandwiches then, did they?

DT: Well, it was sandwiches, but it wasn't made out of this bakery bread. You know, my mother would bake biscuits, you call them. I mean you just split the biscuit, put your piece of meat in there and whatever you wanted on it, and then usually an apple butter -- you know, apple butter sandwich is really good with milk. I mean we'd take it to school and that would be all you'd need.

I: That's right. Marvelous.

DT: And so we didn't have any problem there.

I: Now come dinner time, was there room at the table for all of you to sit down?

DT: Oh, yes.

I: You had big tables.

DT: We had a big table. It was a homemade table. You know, we didn't go to the furniture store and buy a lot of furniture. It was a homemade table, but we'd buy all these nice tablecloths and put on them, they was good as -- why, you can eat as good off those as you can these new ones they got now.

I: [laughs] That's right.

DT: So we made out all right on it anyway.

I: Your mother must have spent a lot of time cooking.

DT: She did. A lot of time. So you would just have these wood stoves...

I: Which are the best.

DT: ...Well, women don't think so now...

I: I do.

DT: ...But they were. And then they heated with wood also. It took a lot of time gettin' the wood and...

I: Did they dry beans and then make...?

DT: Oh, yes. They'd dry beans and then they'd dry apples and, well, you dry

apples – have you ever ate any of those?

I: Uh-uh. I hear they are delicious.

DT: They are. And they call these beans snap beans, is what they call them. They would dry a lot of those and have them for, I don't know, any time.

I: Do you recall how they would dry them?

DT: Yeah. On, well, anybody that had a sort of a building with a flat roof on it. You could lay a white cloth or something clean, you know, out, spread your beans out on that and let 'em lay there through the day. And the sun and the air would dry 'em out.

I: In one day?

DT: Maybe not in one day, but it would probably take a couple days to dry 'em out. But they was wonderful in the winter time when you would start covering them.

I: And you think how much more nutritious those were than the ones that you buy now in the store.

DT: They were. And much better taste.

I: Yeah.

DT: And the apples they would do the same way. Now, you have a long day, usually if you cut your apples into small slices, you know, they would dry pretty well in a day. And then you could put those away and you could bring 'em out put 'em in water and cook 'em any time during the winter.

I: And they make the best apple pie...

DT: Yeah, it's wonderful. I had some apple pie a short time ago that was made out of that, with ice cream on it. Well, my cousin lives up in, they have a summer home up in Kite Hollow. She's from Maryland, but she comes up here and lives there with someone, and she goes along with the old-time way, you know. They got a apple orchard up there and she dries apples, dries beans, you know, and everything. She still likes that way of living. She's retired from the government. She worked in D.C. 30 years. She's retired now. She gets to spend the whole summer up there with the garden and orchard and everything.

I: Do you recall the neighbors coming just to visit, like, of an evening, to just sit around and talk?

DT: Oh, yeah. They would come right often. Just, well, like I say, at that time it wasn't much else to do at night. I mean, no TV and no radio. And no telephone or nothing yet, you couldn't call anybody, and so the only communication you had was to go visit, you know. Sit around and talk.

I: Would they play music?

DT: Oh yeah, they would play music.

I: How would they play? Guitars?

DT: Guitars, banjo. My grandfather, he lived on up the mountain from us. Well, he would come down sometimes. He was really good on a banjo. We had some good times and we enjoyed it. Weekends, I remember, they would get together and play marbles; I guess you have heard of them. Play marbles and different things.

I: That was going to be my next question, what games did you all play?

DT: All games and different things, you know. Well, pitchin' horseshoe. Most of 'em up in there had horses; 'course we didn't have the regular shoes like you buy for horseshoe pitchin'. It would be just the shoes that came off the horses. Which was...

I: Perfect, that's what they should be.

DT: Perfect. We were using what we had.

I: So, you didn't work all the time?

DT: No, they didn't work all the time. But, it was a big part of the time that they had to work, doing some. They had to work hard, trying to store up for winter.

I: In the winter time the snow came, and then I guess you all went to bed early.  
(laughs)

DT: Yeah. Right.

I: Did your family have any geese or anything like that, so they had feather beds?

DT: No. They didn't. They got feathers from somewhere, I don't know. Some of the neighbors that did have them. We didn't have them ourselves.

I: Oh, but some of the neighbors did? I understand there is a special knack for taking those feathers out?

DT: There is, but I don't know. I never did do it, so I don't know.

I: No, I don't know either. [Laughing] {\*\*} that there's a lot of squawking going on. Those that knew how to do it, could do it real fast. I think that's wonderful. So your mother and father, really, once they got adjusted to the idea of the move, weren't that unhappy? Did they get what they thought was fair, in the park?

DT: Well I, I just don't know how to answer that. In one way they did, and in a way they didn't. I mean, I think the way that they understood that these houses, you know, that they had for 'em, that they was replacing what they'd taken from 'em in the park. I don't know of him gettin' anything. I've read in the papers where the park gave 'em 6,000 acres. But, I don't think he got anything for what he owned up there. And then, when he moved into Ida, then it wasn't too long before they decided to sell the places and they had to buy 'em or move out. So, I don't know. I just don't know how to answer that.

I: Yeah, I see, you don't know how to. I wouldn't know how to answer it either. I've heard three dollars an acre from some people. Maybe those people that weren't, who didn't take a house that got some money. That could be.

DT: That might be the way it was. Now, I can't remember all the details on it.

I: That if you were going to be moved out and build your own house, all right, then they would give you some money. I think that probably is the way...

DT: That might have been the way it was, but he didn't get anything out of his land up there.

I: And how many acres did he have?

DT: Now, that is a good question, because I don't know. But, he did have a right big place for his farm, farm land and some wood land where we would get our winter wood and everything. And for buildings, he'd cut his logs and get 'em out, get 'em to the sawmill somehow by wagon.

I: And you had horses?

DT: Yes.

I: Did you move the horses down there to Ida?

DT: No, he bought horses after he got the Ida {\*}. But, I think he got rid of the horses a while before we moved from up in the holler there.

I: Do you recall anything about the wildlife? Or if there was much?

DT: Well, only what my -- my grandfather was a great hunter, Walter Lam was his name. Well, there was quite a lot of wildlife up in there. He did a lot of huntin'. He liked 'coon huntin', well, all kind of night huntin' -- opossum, well, and skunk. They would get those and skin 'em and sell their hides and so. And then, for food, they would eat, they'd hunt squirrel and rabbit, and well, I never did eat any myself, but he liked groundhog. He would hunt groundhogs.

I: I wonder what they taste like.

DT: I don't know, but they said it was very good. But, I've never tried it. I don't know what they would be like.

I: Did you see any bobcat?

DT: No, I don't remember ever seeing a bobcat.

I: Oh, one other thing I was wondering. And I think this is something you would remember if they had been talking about it. Now I think of an easy one when people would sit around, would they tell ghost stories?

DT: Oh yeah, that was...

I: Can you remember any?

DT: Oh no, not to tell 'em the way they did. I wouldn't want to go into that.

I: Why?

DT: Cause it's been so long. I haven't been told any ghost stories and so. But I remember that they would tell, that would be one of the main stories that they would be telling. (phone rings) Excuse me.

I: I don't want to nag you and this will be my last question. If you could possible remember just one ghost story? As a little boy you must have just sat there fascinated.

DT: Well, now the ones that I heard were long ones. But yeah, I remember one. Now there back at Skyland, now I don't know just where it was at, but I remember telling this one...

[tape break, 00:45:14 min.]

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I: [Apparently setting up microphone] How's that there?

DT: Ok. And Bernie Taylor and Elmer Bates and there was, Cecil was probably with them, and several men. And they decided to go to that place one night. Well, boys runnin' around, you know, back in the mountains, and they went to that house. Well, they had heard a lot of ghost stories about the house. It was supposed to be a haunted house, you know. They made a deal with Elmer to go in, and to make sure he had been in the house – see, everybody was afraid to go in, you know, at night, especially – so in order to get him to go in, they had offered him so much. I don't know whether it was cash or what, but it amounted to five dollars, I think, for him to go in that house and drive a nail in the floor. They would know that he had been in there if they went back the next day, or they'd hear him in there, probably. But he went in. And he, not having a hammer or anything, he took a rock with him. He had the nail, but he took a rock with him. So he – it's dark in there and everything, you know -- and he stooped down, and driving the nail, I guess he was looking around everywhere to see if he could see anything, you know. And he was scared. He was just a young fella. Well, it so happened when he got up, he had drove the nail through his overcoat. And that ripped – you know what a noise it would make – and it scared him so bad that they said that he ran. He left them, didn't say anything, and he went out the door and ran all the way home, jumpin' fences. He didn't stop till he got home. So...

I: [laughs]

DT: [laughing] It just scared him near to death, you know, which I imagine it would.

I: That's a beautiful story. I just have a vivid picture of the people just sitting there listening to these things.

DT: And there was many more, which I can't -- my grandmother used to tell so many of them, about these old rocking chairs that would rock theirselves, you know. And, well, they lived in the house. I don't know whether it was just stories they'd tell to get the children stirred up or what. But it would kind of get 'em stirred up a little, you know.

I: Yeah, sit there all bug eyed.

DT: Yeah.

I: Well, you have given us so much information. You don't realize what you've done.

DT: Well, now I didn't think that I was helpin' much, but I was tryin' to answer the question as best I could. And so I hope it'll be of some help to you.

I: It has...

[sound of tape getting turned off]

I: I took a box about this size up to Darwin [probably Darwin Lambert, local naturalist/historian/author], filled with notes. And Darwin said, "Why, it would take me years to just go through all this. I'm not about to." And so that was that. That's it. And one more little thing that you're not going to mind at all, 'cause I always do rotten jobs, your picture.

DT: Oh, no.

I: [laughs] I do do terrible jobs.

DT: Well, where do you want me for the picture, standing up or sitting down?

I: Yeah, let's see.

DT: Well, if you want me in that direction, or I can sit up closer, or I can sit over there.

I: All right. Yeah.

DT: Yeah. {\*\*}.

I: I said you're a very smart man. Trying to save the park money, I used not a brand known. That'll work. This is an old one of the park's. It takes a long while for them to... see that didn't come out, that first one. That was {\*\*}. These instant ones that they show...

[End audio file, 00:51.26 min.]

End of Interview

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