KS: It is May 31st, 1998. We're at Dickey Ridge Visitor's Center, Shenandoah National Park, atop the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. I'm Ken Steeber, volunteer for the Park Cultural Resources. I'm interviewing Walter and Caroline Carter. Assisting in the interview is Walter Smith, author of The Last Orchard and member of the Board of Directors of Shenandoah Natural History Association and member and past president of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. Joining us is Gloria Updike, cultural history interpreter and Howard Struthers, editor. Walter, before we start, just want to remind you that we're going to, after this interview, we're going to sign the gift and release agreement which turns over this property to the park to use.

WC: Okay.

KS: Okay. I also want at this time to advise the listener to refer to The Last Orchard for a detailed history of the area and particularly for the maps in there for reference. Let me see. Walter, can you tell us a little bit about the Carter family?
WC: Well, my father was born over in Frederick County, over in Stephens City. My
mother, Sue Hansbrough, was born in Frederick, I mean Fauquier County, Orlean. And
my father came to Front Royal to work at the Riverton Mills. My grandfather
Hansbrough moved from Orlean in, I believe, 1895. He was a doctor.

KS: Where did he move from?

WC: From Orlean, in Fauquier County.

KS: Oh, okay, I see.

WC: And Mother and Dad were married, I believe in 1909, I think. And Dad bought the
orchard in 1915, I believe, 1915 or ‘16. And, let's see, he had asthma real bad, so he got
out of the milling business. That may have been what decided him to get in the orchard
business; I couldn't tell you that. And he ran the orchard until he died in 1932.

KS: Is that how long the orchard was in operation? From 1915 to '32?

WC: No, it was already an orchard when Daddy bought it. It was three orchards here.
The Lewin (??) Orchard, the Mills Orchard and the, what was the other one, Martin?

WS: Your dad added to what they had started, actually.

WC: So he planted the top of the orchard.

KS: In other words, the orchard really expanded when your dad took control of the
business? I see. And when did he go out of business? Was it in 1932 as you mentioned?

WC: Well, as far as --when he died, Eli Vought was living on the place, and he
continued to live there. I was a freshman at Virginia Tech. And that was in '33, I think.
And I finished school in 1937 and then I took over and ran the orchard. Eli Vought still
lived up here. He lived in town.

KS: And did you work for Eli? Or did you work--was your foreman?

WC: He was my foreman.

KS: I see. Very good. Did your dad have any experience in growing apples?

WC: Not as far as I know.

KS: Now, he wasn't a tenant? He didn't live on the farm, did he?

WC: Oh no, he owned the farm.
KS: As an investment?

WC: I assumed, yeah.

KS: Do you remember what the condition the farm was in when he bought it?

WC: No, that was before I was born.

KS: Before you were born, well yeah, that's right. Now, have you heard ever your dad talk about how the farm was when he first got here? For example, what the roads were like up here, what was the nearest town, when electric came.

WC: There wasn't any electricity up here.

KS: Well let's go back to your recollection. What's your first recollection of the operation of the orchard?

WC: Riding up there with Dad and opening the gates.

KS: Is that what your job was, to open the gates?

WC: Yes, there was five gates from Front Royal up to the orchard. And I always wondered why Dad wanted me to come with him.

KS: And that was the reason.

WC: That was the reason.

KS: Now, what's some of the other recollections you have? Do you recall them doing any of the harvesting and maintaining of the orchards?

WC: Oh, in the fall of the year I helped pick when school was out.

KS: How old were you when you started working on the orchard?

WC: I would say twelve or fourteen.

KS: That young?

WC: Well, I mean just helped them a little bit, I didn't work regularly.

KS: You worked in the fall after school.

WC: And on Saturdays.
KS: And on Saturdays, okay. Do you remember any of the procedures that the people would go through on the farm, like for example the pruning and spraying of the trees? Or any of the actual work on the farm?

WC: I remember towards the end of August every year they mowed the orchard with fanscythes. And then they started picking apples in early September. Then in the winter time they'd prune them and they started spraying as soon as the, I would say by the middle of March, and sprayed until about the middle of June. At that time, there was seven sprays a year. Of course there's many more than that now.

KS: I think what they do is like pre-bud, and post-blossom and first drop and things like that. Is that right? Still holds true today, then.

WC: Yep.

KS: Did you have many laborers who worked on the orchards?

WC: Well, ‘course at spraying season, they had about five and then at picking time and packing, they had quite a few more.

KS: Did they hire the people locally?

WC: Oh yeah. Mm-hmm. Harmony Hollow and Browntown.

KS: The local people then. I see. What was the market for apples then?

WC: Practically everything was exporting.

KS: Okay. And how were they packed?

WC: In barrels.

KS: Were the barrels made locally?

WC: Yeah.

KS: They had carpenters locally who made them?

WC: No, there were cooperage factories that made barrels.

KS: Oh, I see. Where was that located?


KS: Was that in Front Royal?
WC: Mm-hmm.

KS: I see. Were there many apple orchards in the area at the time? I know--

WC: At that time, there were.

KS: Oh, so yours was one of many, then?

WC: Yeah, that's right.

KS: I see. How did you get your apples to market? What was, did you take them to Front Royal? Was that the gathering place?

WC: Loaded them on trains and shipped them to New York, they’d put them on a boat to Liverpool, England.

KS: Is that right? Do you remember any of the improvements that your dad made to the farm? I'm sure from what I read, it expanded quite a bit during your dad's ownership.

WC: Yeah, he built the two packing sheds. And as far as I know, he installed the system of spraying, to get water to spray with. Take over at the house, the water was caught in a reservoir there and pumped to another reservoir on top of the orchards. And then every other road had a hydrant and they would start at the top and spray down.

KS: Just like a city. That's very interesting. Your dad did that?

WC: Mm-hmm.

KS: What other improvements—improvement building—how about the number of trees? Did you expand that?

WC: Yes. He plowed what we called a young orchard, which is what's at the top. He planted that, cleared that and planted the trees there.

KS: So you always had trees coming into maturity as you went along.

WC: Well it wasn't a question of that. I won't say the trees never died, but to my knowledge there wasn't very many of them that died.

KS: They lasted a long time.

WC: Yeah.

KS: I see. Did you grow anything other than apples for market?
WC: There were peaches. I remember them. Now there were damsons in there too, but I don't remember the damsons.

KS: I saw in a map, in the book that Walt Smith did, of a plot for cherries. Did you have cherry trees?

WC: Dad planted, I don't know how many cherry trees up there, but they were, they just, I reckon the frost got them. But anyway it was some reason they never amounted to much.

KS: Now your dad didn't live on the farm.

WC: No, no.

KS: But you had tenants, I believe.

WC: That's right.

KS: Do you remember any of those folks?

WC: Well, Eli Vought was, Dad hired him I think in 1926. And he was there until the late '40s when he left and I hired a boy named Robert Kenney. And his brother was also there.

KS: We have an interview of him in the archives.

WC: Oh is that right?

KS: Yes. Just came across it recently. It's a detraction from what we're doing, but I thought you might be interested in knowing we did have an interview of him. Now you say you worked up here after you got out of school. What was your major in school?

WC: Business Administration but then I took some extra work in Horticulture.

KS: And then you operated the orchard then. What was the main downfall to the orchard business? It wasn't only to yours, but the orchard business in the whole area seemed to go on a decline I guess in the mid-'30s or late-'30s, was it?

WC: Well, of course in general the Depression, but then the main thing that affected this region was when the British deflated the pound and then apples up until that time always entered England duty-free, but England at that time put a tariff on the American apples and let the Canadian and New Zealand apples in duty-free. So in just a year or two--

KS: So that just about killed the industry.

WC: That's right.
KS: I see. I read a comment one time where somebody said fruit for the most part was either made into liquor, fed to the hogs and a few of it went for eating. Do you think that's a true statement, that much of the apple crop go into any liquor?

WC: Not that I know.

KS: Not that you know? They did have stills operating in the area here. Was that mostly corn liquor?

WC: I assume so, but I--

KS: You have no knowledge of that.

WC: I have no knowledge of that.

KS: Well that clears up one thing anyhow, for sure. (laughing) In running the farm, what was some of the difficulties that you encountered?

WC: Well, in my time I would say labor because there was no one living up here. You see, this had been taken into the park, so what labor we got had to walk up from Harmony Hollow or walk over from the other side from Browntown.

KS: I see. How about your tenants, the folks that lived here? They were basically, they acted the part of foreman, is that right? How were they? Did you have good foremen?

WC: Oh yeah. Eli Vought.

KS: Eli Vought. That's Maude's husband, right?

WC: Yeah. No, father.

KS: Oh, father. Oh, that's right. We have an interview of Maude, too. So we're covering--

CC: Well, Maude's husband worked too, didn't he?

WC: Well, Clem Fox, yeah.

KS: Okay. Does anybody else have any questions at this time?

WS: I don’t.

KS: Well, one of the plans today is to go on site and perhaps continue this interview out there. Everybody agree? Are we set to go?
GU: Can I ask a question? How big was the orchards? How big was the orchards at its peak size?

WC: In trees, there were 125 acres.

GU: Do you know about how many trees that was?

WC: I think it was between five and six thousand.

GU: And my other question was did you call it Skyland Orchard?

WC: Mm-hmm.

GU: That’s the name I’ve heard.

WC: Yep, that was--

KS: Was it always Skyland Orchard or did your family name it that?

WC: I assume Dad did, I couldn't say that positively, but--

WS: He put it in his first deed, Skyland.

WC: Is that right?

WS: Yeah I seen it in the courthouse before.

KS: Okay, that's a piece of information I never heard before. By the way, that was Gloria Updike. Thank you, Gloria. Let's continue this on site, we get out in the sunshine and fresh air.

[17:15 –17:18, tape breaks, picks up midsentence]

WS: Where the old country road crosses Skyline Drive and begins to turn south into the current picnic area. We are currently, I believe on the edge of the corn field. Mr. Carter, do you recall what was here?

WC: It was corn. I remember quite a few years, it was in corn.

WS: Do you remember where the woods started? Can you tell from being right here?

WC: No.

WS: No, okay, let's drive ahead a little bit here and see if we can see--

WC: We always referred to this as Fox's Field.
WS: This was Fox's Field, okay. And you remember the first gate being here.

WC: Somewhere in this area.

WS: Somewhere in this area. Okay, so I'm indicating that as Number 1 on the map. Let's drive down a little further and see if we can determine where you turned the corner. Maude Vought recalled that you turned the corner and you went into the woods down here.

WC: Well, I would say we ran the woods about here.

WS: Okay. Now there's a barbed wire over on that tree over there.

WC: Well, I would say that would be the Fox Field.

WS: Okay, and so the gate was here so you could get through the barbed wire here, is that correct?

WC: Yeah.

WS: Can we go down to this crossroad here?

KS: Now, we're going into the picnic area, right? Dickey Ridge picnic area?

WS: Now, we're into the edge of the picnic area, and to the south is the main ridge and to the north is, at about fifty feet north is a piece of barbed wire on a tree, which would have been the edge of the corn field. Walter, can you tell where the road was on top of the ridge? Was it right on the peak of the ridge or was it on the side, do you remember?

WC: I couldn't tell you.

WS: Okay. Well, at the other end it appears that it comes out from going over the top and that's why I was wondering. Well, we'll go on down to the picnic area and we'll drive down to the other end, where the road comes out now, so we can stop--

[19:43-19:45, tape breaks]

WS: The southern end of the picnic area, where the old county road crosses the new picnic road that goes out to Skyline Drive, and we're trying to establish the site of the old country road, as I believe it, based upon examination of the 1927 maps. See, Walter, when I look at it and it appears to me that that's the road down there, it makes a left turn going out down to the farm. That's what--do you remember the kind of bearing, making a turn in the woods? No?

WC: That's sixty some years ago.
WS: Yeah, okay. Well, I just, looking at it, it's an old road is what it is and then this--

WC: Well, then it'd have to be then, if that was an old road, because it wasn't but one road out here.

WS: Yeah, yep. And it's on the 1927 map. We got a car behind us. Anyway it looks like the road comes right down there. That looks like an old road bed.

KS: Today, on the old road bed, you'll see that it's a foot path, a well worn one, that follows along the old road bed.

[20:57-20:59, tape breaks]

WS: We are now at Number 3 on the map. We're on the old farm road. We have just crossed Skyline Drive and we're beginning to head down the farm road to the old Carter orchard.

KS: Walter, you have memories of this, you're just mentioning it.

WC: I remember when I finished school, every August when they were mowing off the orchard, they would mow the side of this road and I would have to call the park office in Luray. They would send a man down. He said, "Where'd you cut last here?" and I'd show him. He said, "Well, don't cut any further this year." (chuckle) Went through that every year.

KS: Wouldn't cut any more than they allowed you, right?

WC: (laughs) Right.

WS: They didn't like you cutting in the park too much.

KS: Walter, you have memories of this, you're just mentioning it.

WC: I had to get their permission.

WS: Yeah, okay.

[22:01-22:02, tape breaks]

WS: And we're stopping on the farm road at Number 4 on the map and it is the property boundary between the old Fox Farm and the Carter Farm.

KS: What's that monument in front of us, Walter?

WS: There is a marker here that indicates that the Snead Farm Trail and the old farm road goes to the left. Now, the road to the right was built in 1959 and it leads up to the
FAA tower after the Sneads leased the right of way and the top to the FAA. It also leads to the reservoir for Dickey Ridge Information Center now that's up there.

GU: And you said it's the boundary between the Carter Farm and--

WS: And, well, the original Fox Farm. And then subsequently, of course, between the Carter Farm and the Shenandoah National Park.

GU: Right.

WS: Because before this was sold to the park in '62, this was the park boundary right here and you got all this red on the post, y'know? I will just point out where the wire fence is which, in *The Last Orchard* is called "hogs on the roam." Walter, do you want to--well, I'll go out and point out where the wire fences are, I just want to make sure it's the wire fence that we've been talking about.

WC: Okay.

WS: You want to just shut that off a minute?

[23:32-23:34, tape breaks]

WS: Well, I'll just make a note here. Walter, would you like to mention why that wire fence got put up? Well, don't go too far, because we're going to be stopping up here in a little bit.

WC: In 1938 or '39, we had a hail storm on the 30th of June that ruined my crop of apples. And in order to get the apples out of here, I bought a hundred shoats, turned them loose in here, figured they would eat the apples.

KS: Now what are they, shoats?

WC: Hogs.

KS: Hogs, okay.

WC: And they, after about two or three days, they got tired of the apples and they went out in the woods eating acorns. And the park people didn't think very highly of that, so they mentioned it to me. I said, well, if I had some of this wire that ya'll have, the old remount (??) wire, government wire that they had pulled up somewhere else. I said, “If I had that, I would fence this place in.” They said, “Well we can't do that.” So a couple days later, one of the park rangers said, “I'm gonna be in Luray tomorrow,” so I figured that as his way of telling me to help myself. So I took the men, we went down and-- (chuckle)

KS: We’ve got a remount area?
WC: Got enough wire to string up, keep my hogs in.

KS: Ah hah, I see.

WS: Keep that park happy.

KS: And remnants of that fence is still at this site? I see.

WC: Still here.

KS: Excellent.

WS: And now we've stopped at the site where the harrow is being devoured by a tree. It's up here to the right and I think, Walter, that you indicated that you didn't remember anything about a harrow being up here along the road.

WC: No.

WS: Do you recall, then, what was on the down side of the road here? At this point? We've just come in the boundary.

WC: Apples. Trees.

WS: Okay.

KS: Now the harrow is a farm implement, right?

WS: Yeah, the harrow was to break up the soil after they plowed it.

KS: Right, and you say it's being eaten up by a tree, in other words just being covered--

WS: In other words, it's a tree growing right in the middle of it, and so no one could steal it if they wanted to.

KS: Okay.

WS: And it's an old fixed-tooth harrow. I don't know who left it there. Maude doesn't recall it, either. Maybe the Kenneys had a harrow, but anyway.

WC: Well, this was an open field. Above here, and that's where they pastured the cows and horses.

WS: Okay. So, uphill was an open field, as we've indicated on the map here. And downhill was the orchard.
WC: Old Mark Orchard.

WS: Old Mark Orchard, Mark Mills’ orchard. Probably the original orchard on the farm. Yeah.

[27:12-27:14, tape breaks]

WS: Stopping at mark Number 6 on the map, which is the site of the, what was called the tenant house, or the Mark Mills’ house, which had some shanties built for the Skyline Drive workers in the ’30s. The shanties as Maude Vought has described them were tar paper shacks with two to three rooms and the families lived in them.

KS: When you talk about when you refer to shanties and workers, are you talking about civilian workers or CCC boys?

WS: Civilian work force. Is that right, Walter? You recall what they were?

WC: Yeah, they--contractor had the first ten miles of the Skyline Drive, they were his employees.

KS: Was this prior to the park coming, or during the park?

WC: No, that was when they were building the drive.

KS: Okay.

WC: I mean, the park land had been bought.

KS: Okay, I understand.

WC: And this was the contractor that moved in.

KS: And they lived right here?

WC: Mm-hmm.

KS: Okay.

[28:24-28:25, tape breaks]

GU: Were the people who lived in the shanties, did they pay rent to you? Or your father, I guess.

WC: No, they didn't pay any rent. They just parked them there. (chuckle)

GU: Just let them live there?
WS: Something else I'd like to show in the-- is this on now?

KS: Yes.

WS: I'm gonna show Walter a photograph of the house taken in 1957 when the Sneads owned it, but I have some other photographs that I just recently found that aren't in the book, taken before the porch was put on, and I believe the Kenneys are in the photographs. I don't know whether you recognize the Kenneys there.

WC: Yeah, that's Robert Kenney.

WS: Which one?

WC: (Carter indicates) That.

WS: Okay, so that one there is Robert. Okay, so, he's the one who lived in the main house.

WC: That's right.

KS: For sake of information, this is Photograph A and Robert is the third one from the left. Can you identify any other people in that photo?

WC: I can't be real certain. I believe that's Robert Kenney's wife.

KS: And that's Photograph B and it's the second woman on the right.

WS: So that would be Virginia?

WC: That's right. And that would be Robert's mother, I believe.

KS: And that's the woman on the left. And who's the man holding the child in the back?

WC: That's Robert Kenney, same as that one.

KS: And who's the child?

WC: Now that I couldn't tell you.

WS: Now his brother Luther--Luther and Frances lived in this house.

WC: That's right.
WS: So I was wondering whether it was their child. Their children were born here. So you don't see Luther in those photographs?

WC: No.

WS: No, okay, well, I've got to try and track down--

[30:37-30:39, tape breaks]

KS: That's the end of Side A, please fast forward and flip sides.

[End Tape (CD), Side 1, 00:30:43 min.]

[Begin Tape (CD), Side 2] (Begins at 00:30:45)

KS: Mr. Carter, this is--we're really on the road heading down to the orchard area and the homes, right?

WC: Right.

KS: And you used to--you were saying it was about a five mile trip from Front Royal, from your home up to here, and that how Skyline Drive made it so much easier.

WC: Yep. I think it was 1936, I believe, when we started using the Drive. They'd finished it up to here and that was really something, to get rid of the old road and the park had to let me use the Drive to haul apples out and come up here, because they had blocked my old road.

KS: Do you recall who was the superintendent at the park then?

WC: No, I don't.

KS: Was it Lassiter? I don't remember myself.

WC: I remember the ranger down here at the Front Royal entrance was named Chick. He was from California. And I remember that he was used to people respecting the park boundary and none of the people at that time--they were used to night hunting, coon hunting up in these mountains. And he would go out in the woods at night, trying to catch coon hunters.

KS: Did he get 'em?

WC: Not as far as I knew, and I told him one day, I said, sometime about twenty years from now they're gonna find a skeleton up here in these mountains and they'll say, "There's Chick." (laugh)
KS: How were the people--we're detracting from our tour right now--but what is your impression of the people who lived here?

WC: They were real honest and they would do anything for you. But they didn't want to change their ways and Chick didn't understand that.

KS: Was there a lot of hostility towards the park on their behalf?

WC: Well, at first, see they actually had to move, bodily move people out of the park. The land was condemned and they were paid a fair market price for 'em, but you take some of these people that moved out of here, they had been born here and their fathers before them and they made their living partly by bootlegging or odd jobs and--

KS: These were the people that you hired to work in the orchard too, weren't they?

WC: That's right. That's the way they made their money, odd jobs or seasonal jobs.

KS: Was life hard for them living up here?

WC: As we look at it today, I would say yes, but it wasn't as far as they were concerned because that's all they knew.

KS: Now, I assume like most people here, they raised their own food--

WC: Oh yeah.

KS: Did their own canning--

WC: That's right.

KS: And took care of themselves.

WC: That's it. That's exactly it.

KS: Were they very religious people?

WC: No, because there weren't any churches around here, but I mean morally they were good people.

KS: Good people.

[34:46-34:36, tape breaks]
WS: The interesting part here, when I lead hikes out here, Gloria, is I point out that that's the last orchard and that orchard down there was actually started by Mr. Leary even before Mark Mills started.

GU: Is that the--

KS: Now we're looking onto, we're heading up to the farm area and we're looking to the right now, left, I'm sorry, to the left. We're looking at an orchard that still exists.

WS: We're looking at a, through the break in the woods, created by the power lines--the power lines were brought up here about 1957 when the Sneads renovated both properties and that's when this power line was put in. And down through the break we can see what's left of Harmony Hollow Orchard which was called something else, I'd have to go back to the book to remind myself, I think, Van Dusen (??) and Van Dusen bought it from, I think it was not Leary but somebody who married into the Leary family and he planted the orchard just before Mark Mills did, which I think it was around 1893, but the dates are in the book of *The Last Orchard*. So, but this is the only place on the farm we can see an orchard, and so it's kind of neat looking down here. Also in the book I talk about the old hollow road that the Foxes talked about and the hollow road that came up, I think was the original road before even the county road was used and came up this way, crosses this power line here. And I've indicated that on a map in the book. And it went up into the area to the left, the woods area which I think was the original farm site.

[36:22-36:24, tape breaks]

WS: Now we have stopped at the old spring--site of the spring house for the first house.

KS: That was owned by who? The first house?

WS: The first house, now I don't know when the spring house was built. I don't know whether it was Mark Mills who built the first house, I don't know whether he was using the spring. I'm not sure. Do you know, Walter? When this was--this was here as far as you know.

WC: That's right. Long as I can remember.

WS: And it was covered, wasn't it? With a wooden roof or something, or was it all stone? I don't remember the Sneads told me. I have to go look at the book.

WC: I couldn't tell you for sure. I think stone, but I--

WS: Yeah, yeah. I seem to recall people saying it was a pretty nice spring house, yeah.

KS: And that spring, is it is still running today?

WS: Yeah, there's still water in it.
KS: What did that take, did that take care of? The home and any part of the farm?

WC: Just a couple cows. They had a pipe ran under the road in an old barrel.

WS: Down there?

WC: Mm-hmm.

KS: I still see a barrel down there, is that it?

WS: Well, I don’t know.

KS: There's a trough anyhow.

WS: Yeah. That area's been disturbed quite a bit because they built that new road down to the pumping station, down the bottom there. But that road was always there, I believe. Maude remembers that road, going down to the old log cabin. But this spring also was where Maude remembers that the Skyline Drive workers used to come here for water when they were building Skyline Drive. And this is also the spring where her brother came when he was eight or nine and her dad was plowing up there in the open field behind the first house and unbeknownst to his father he brought the horse down here for a drink of water and on the way back the horse kicked him in the head and he went into a coma and he died a year later in the Winchester hospital. So this is the same spring where he brought that horse, that story's in the book.

[38:48-38:50, tape breaks]

KS: You described this area as being open field, because now it's wooded, and a hundred yards down from here you're talking about another gate?

WC: Yeah.

KS: And this is another one of those gates you had to get out and open them for your dad.

WC: Right.

WS: And this would be going into what some people call the middle orchard.

WC: That's right. We always referred to it as the middle orchard.

WS: Middle orchard, okay. Which would be this one here. I've got Number 7 on the map.

KS: Number 7 on the map, okay.
WS: We've stopped at Number 7 along the farm road here just going into the middle orchard where there's some water coming down the hill. Are we actually inside the middle orchard? We've passed the gate now, have we Walter?

WC: I'm assuming.

WS: But your spring was inside the gate, or was it outside the gate?

WC: It was inside the gate.

WS: Okay, after we've gone through the open field, through the gate and--

WC: Right there was a wooden tank.

WS: Inside the orchard?

WC: Right.

WS: Inside the orchard.

KS: Now, what area did you service with that wooden tank? Was that the farm and the--

WC: No, that was when we were spraying, down below the road.

KS: Was that the tanks that were set up for hydrants?

WC: No. No.

KS: Okay.

WC: That's over in what we call the Lewin orchard.

WS: Now, if we look at my sketch map in the book, it looks to me like I've got the first tank in the wrong place. See, I've got it outside the orchard.

WC: Well, you do.

WS: I need to move that over here.

WC: Right.

WS: Okay. Now the next tank, the big one, is way up atop, up above the packing shed. Here's the packing shed.
WC: Okay. Right. There were the same size tanks. They were wooden tanks.

WS: Okay.

KS: And they were the ones that fed the hydrants?

WC: No.

WS: No, the hydrants, we haven't got to that part yet. That's down by the main house.

KS: Okay, fine. Just want to make that clear.

WS: Yeah, we've got, yeah. But I'm glad we've done it, because we've just spotted an error here.

[41:03-41:05, tape breaks]

WS: We've just come to one of the last remaining apple trees along the farm road.

WC: Here's another.

WS: This is the one, that's the one I mean, Walter. That's it, that's pretty old and it still blooms in the spring, so it must be, what? Seventy years old.

WC: Have to be.

WS: I don't know how old apple trees can live.

KS: Now is that part of what you would call the middle orchard?

WC: Yeah, yeah.

WS: It looks like it needs a pruning. (laughter)

[41:40-41:42, tape breaks]

WS: Now, I'm on the wrong map. Let's see, I need to put a number on the map here, just a minute, let me backtrack here. Seven.

[41:54-41:56, tape breaks]

WS: We’re at Number 8 on the map, near the site of the middle orchard packing shed. The road forks to the left, goes around to the main farm and the barn. To the right it goes up onto a hill where there's a modern utility building. At one time the road went just to the west side of the packing shed. The road to the left went to the east of the packing
shed and the road to the right went to the right side of the packing shed and they rejoin on the other side. That's according to the 1937 sky photos, aerial photographs, that were taken. We're gonna go around--we're gonna continue on the road to the left and stop at where I think the packing shed was, according to the aerial photograph.

[42:55-42:56, tape breaks, picks up mid-conversation]

WC: Worked on them this past winter.

KS: After the farm didn't produce anymore, what did they do to the apple trees? Did they take any of them down or just leave them go?

WC: No.

KS: And then, actually what happened, and these woods that we're driving through right now, has really taken over and--

WC: Completely.

KS: Completely and did away with all the apple trees that were here.

WC: That's right.

KS: They're completely gone. Is this a wall we're coming up to?

[GU, WC and WS talking at once]

WS: I don't know whether you can cross this ditch.

GU: It looks real muddy past there. It looks real muddy.

WS: I think probably we'll have to stop in this area, I don't know how you're gonna turn around. I think we'll probably better get out and take a look. That's probably what we better do.

GU: It looks real bad.

[43:45-43:47, tape breaks, picks up mid-conversation]

KS: What is that, Mr. Carter?

WC: That was--why don't we call me Walter?

KS: Okay.

WC: I'm the same as he is. (laugh)
KS: Well the problem I'm having is between you, Walter Smith and Walter Carter. (laughter) But I--go ahead, I'm sorry.

WC: That was a wall around the tenant towns, or where the, Eli Vought lived. I think he built that wall.

KS: Oh, I see.

WC: And I had that barn built in 1936.

KS: And the barn's still standing.

WS: Yeah, I think Gloria--

[44:31-44:33, tape breaks]

WS: Okay, well, let's see. We have stopped at the barn site and we're going to take a look around here. Walter, what does this area remind you of here? What did this look like? If we'd been here twenty years ago, what would we see from this point?

WC: Well, there was a house there, that was--

WS: A house up there.

WC: And a barn and of course the packing shed was down in here.

WS: Down in there, yeah. The cement for the old packing, the one that replaced it, do you know the loading platform after the shed burned, that's still there. It's right behind those trees, actually it's easier to see when you go down Snead Farm Loop a bit and look back in. Did you want to mention, Walter, about that platform? You didn't have a loading platform there when you had a shed, did you, as I recall?

WC: Indeed I--

WS: You don't remember, yeah, maybe that was something Maude was talking to me about, yeah.

[45:46-45:49, tape breaks]

WC: Dam up and the pump was on that side of the house. And the pipe went clear to the top.

WS: Yep, all the way up to the top.
WC: And there they had another, what would you call it, cistern or something to hold water. And the hydrants were every other spray road.

WS: Yeah, which meant a lot of hydrants, actually, because when you look at the aerial photograph there's row after row after row all the way up to the top of the hill. So your father put in a lot of hydrants.

KS: Those hydrants still around?

WS: There's only one left that I've found.

KS: Okay.

WS: It's way up the top, it's hard to find. It's that photograph that's in the book and I don't think it's going to be there very long because the base is rusted. It's cast iron pipe and I think another couple winters it'll fall over and it'll be concealed by the leaves like all the others.

[46:56-46:58, tape breaks]

GU: Was the water system here with the hydrants unusual for that time?

WC: Well, I reckon so. It wasn't to me, but it was the only one I'd ever seen.

WS: Yeah, I was talking to Raynor Snead about orchards in Rappahannock County and I don't think he knew that he'd ever heard of anything like that.

WC: There weren't too many orchards on the mountainside like this. They had wells or some way they could pump water.

KS: Y'know, we talked about apples, we talked about hogs. What other animals did you raise up here?

WC: Didn't raise any animals.

KS: Did you have any horses?

WC: Oh, had two horses, pull the sprayer. And then in the picking season we'd bring--we had a farm over near Waterlick and we'd bring several other horses over here to pull wagons, haul apples in.

KS: Did you have any tractors or equipment like that? Was it mostly done with horses?

WC: Absolutely.

KS: And the wagons.
WC: Right.

KS: I see.

[48:18-48:20, tape breaks]

[very dim audio of several speakers for a few seconds, obscured by wind]

WC: No, it--

CC: Went into, a good size reservoir, as I remember.

WS: There's one behind the cooling blocks, there's a little reservoir up there, Caroline.

WC: That's a water trough. And the spring is up in there a little ways. And a pipe came out there to the watering trough. And when we were spraying we'd just stop that pipe up and fill the, whatever you call it, reservoir up there. And a pipe went from there over to the pump.

WS: The pump, yeah. The cement foundation is still over there.

WC: And that pumped the water to the top. And at the top there was about five or six acres of level ground. We called that the young orchard. That was Golden Delicious, I remember that very well. Dad planted that. And the place that they pumped the water in up there was just about the size of this. And that one mistake I saw in your book, you mentioned a tank up there. It was dug in the ground.

WS: Okay, was it a wooden tank in the ground?

WC: No, stone.

WS: Oh, it was stone. Yeah, that does need to be changed. I think I said it was, yeah--

KS: We have another question, Sherry (??) you have another question regarding wildlife?

UF: Yeah, did you have any problems with wild animals eating the apples in the orchards?

WC: There weren't any deer, bear and I was just telling Ken that the first wild turkeys I ever saw was just one Saturday, I brought my son up here, he was just a little fella, and it was a foggy day. And I look out there and I see these turkey heads, I thought, jeez, somebody's turkeys out. And I thought well, there's nobody up here, they must be wild turkeys. So we got out of my car, of course we couldn't catch them.
UF: This first one was the watering trough, the first square cement piece? That piece, for the horses, you'd bring out to it?

WC: Horses and cows.

UF: And the cows.

KS: You watered them right here. Did you have many cows here?

WC: Just two or three.

KS: Just to keep for your own home use?

WC: Mm-hmm.

HS: How many horses did you have?

WC: There were two up here permanently, but then when we were picking apples, we had a farm over near Waterlick and we'd bring a team or two over here to help out.

HS: They were all draft horses?

WC: Yeah.

KS: Did the tenants who lived here, did they do up their own food, the canning and things?

WC: Oh yeah.

KS: Had a garden here, I take it?

WC: The garden used to be right down, up in there.

KS: The garden was right down--now which would be the front of the house, looking at it from here?

WC: This would be the front.

KS: This would be the front, so looking at it--

WC: This is the side. That was the front.

KS: Okay, looking at the front, it was down just below the house. Was it a big garden?
WC: Pretty big.
KS: Pretty big. Did they have many children living up here with the tenants?
WC: Oh, they had quite a few. (chuckle)
KS: They all grew up here.
WC: Yeah.
KS: Where did they go to school?
WC: Down Harmony Hollow. They walked about two miles down the hollow.
KS: Two miles down, two miles up?!
WC: That's right.

[52:32-52:34, tape breaks]
UF: Inside the barn, upstairs, on the far side, there's a metal—
WS: Turnbuckle?
UF: Kind of a turnbuckle, that goes from the end of the barn wall down into the floor. We wondered what that was for.

WC: That must have been put there after.
UF: Okay. (chuckle)

WS: I think there's a support up there—I think there’s a support up there, yeah. There are a number of changes. Do you recall there used to be a window up there, Walter? Do you remember this end of the barn at all?
WC: Not particularly.
WS: Yeah, okay. The photograph of the barn in '36, right after you had them build it, shows the window there and there's some people up to the left of the barn. And then later on, the window got taken out and you can see that they added a door up there. And we had talked about them, your men, bringing the hay in and off-loading it up there in a truck. Up in the top?
WC: Mm-hmm.
WS: And so that--there’s a hay carrier up there that leads out to that door and I believe on the basis of what you said and Maude doesn't remember it either, that the Kenneys must have installed the hay carrier and maybe they put in that support as well.

WC: That's what I was thinking, that because we didn't have any hay fork there.

WS: Yeah, yeah. So that wouldn't have been in use very long, because you sold it in '46 to the packing company, so it would only be used from '46 ‘till they went bankrupt in '51 something, so it wasn't long. And then also the cooling, the vegetable--

WC: Storm, I mean, what was it?

GU and UF: Cellar?


WC: Root cellar, now you're coming.

WS: That was something that you said wasn't here either.

WC: Yeah.

WS: So the Kenneys--in fact, in the Kenney tape that we have, Virginia Kenney mentions they built the root cellar.

KS: Oh, I see.

CC: You know who painted some pictures of this barn, was Charles Newton. I took pictures of it.

WS: Really?

CC: Yeah, and you might find--has Charles died?

WS: I don't know Charles Newton.

CC: But he had a lot of barns that he took all around this area. And down at BRAC they might have some record of it.

KS: That's the voice of Caroline Carter.

WS: What is BRAC?

CC: Blue Ridge Art Council.

WS: Oh, okay.
KS: Right in Front Royal.

CC: Right in Front Royal. The new one, down the corner of--

WC: Right at the square. Next to the First Union Bank.

WS: Yup.

GU: Now I was wondering, if you don't mind me asking, why did you sell the farm?

WC: Because it was too much trouble to get labor up here.

GU: Oh, okay.

WC: Because, see, the park was all around us and there weren't any people living up here. So that presented quite a problem.

KS: I would take it, then, that the park closed down a lot of the roads that would, had one time been accessible to this area. The only way in was Skyline Drive.

WC: That's right and, well, it was before. There wasn't but one road up here.

KS: Okay.

WC: And Skyline Drive blocked that.

KS: See, some of the problems that we encounter in the other sections of the park is that the closing of the roads cut off a lot of the people who lived from one side of the mountain to the other.

WC: Mmhmm.

[56:40-56:41, tape breaks]

UF: If you remembered when the park took over and people had to move out, do you remember anything about that time?

WC: Oh yeah. They had to bodily move some of them out. And then they burnt their houses.

KS: Now when you say bodily, you mean they just physically picked the people up and removed them?

WC: They had to bring the sheriff up and carry them out.

UF: Was anybody right nearby did that happen to?
WC: No, I never saw them. But I heard about it. And I do remember the old Merchant (?) places down in front of the, where the visitor's center is, down the foot of that hill, I remember when they burned his place.

UF: Well they burned that?

WC: Because I had just come down from the orchard and as I went through the entrance station I saw smoke up here and I turned around and started back up here thinking it was up here and I was told the Merchant place.

KS: Now, did he resist leaving?

WC: No.

KS: Some of the CCC boys told me this story, regarding burning. They said at first, they burned the houses that were visible from the drive to remove them because they felt they were an eyesore and not necessarily to get rid of them, but just to clean them out because they were viewed from the Skyline Drive.

WC: That could very well be, because I expect they could have seen this Merchant place.

KS: And some they just took down and reclaimed the wood on some of them.

WC: Some of that I couldn't say anything about that because I don't know.

KS: I see.

UF: Now, your tenants here, Lemuel Fox Jr. and his wife Maude.

WC: Yeah, they lived in the first house.

UF: Now the other Fox family had to move out when the park took over, but they didn't right? Because they were on your place here?

WC: That's right.

UF: Okay.

KS: Now when did the park take this land, it was recently wasn't it, in the ‘60s? When did they add this to the--

WC: No, it was in the ‘30s.

KS: Oh, they did take part of it developing of the park.
WC: Yeah.

KS: Oh, I see.

WS: The top part.

KS: The top part.

WS: There’s thirty some odd acres up there.

KS: Okay, now when did they take this part we're on now?

WS: Sixty-two, it was sold by the Sneads to the park for the water rights for the information center.

KS: Why didn't the park, I mean this is hypothetical, why didn't the park take the whole farm instead of just a part of it?

WC: At the time, they, in the ‘30s, when they were taking the land for the park, it was because of the orchards. See, they didn't pay but two or three or maybe four dollars an acre for this mountain land. And an orchard was of considerable more valuable than that.

KS: I see.

WS: Maybe you want to sit down?

KS: Okay, yeah.

WS: You doing okay, Walter? Or do you want to get back to the car?

KS: Why doesn't he--

[01:00:14-01:00:15, tape breaks]

KS: What did you use the barn for mostly?

WC: Just the cows and horses.

KS: Just the cows and horses. Okay, and store hay up there on the top?

WC: Mm-hmm.

KS: Okay, fine.

[01:00:28-01:00:29, tape breaks]
KS: The animals here from your farm in Waterlick, was that a big farm over there?

WC: Two hundred and fifty acres.

KS: And what did you grow mostly over there?

WC: Well, cattle and one time sheep, and hogs, and wheat, and corn.

KS: So it was a regular, prosperous farm. Did you manage that too, along with this operation?

WC: Mm-hmm.

KS: Oh, excellent.

WC: And in the summer time over there, when they were making hay--

WS: Vehicle up here.

WC: I would get the people from here to--

WS: Oh!

WC: Come over there and help make hay and when they'd drive back at night, they'd bring a pickup load of hay with them.

KS: I see.

[End audio file, 01:01:14 min]

End of Interview