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(SNP016) Everett Breeden interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Sharon G. Marston

Everett Breeden

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

NARRATOR: Mr. and Mrs. Everett Breeden
INTERVIEWER: Mrs. Dorothy Smith
PLACE: Tanners Ridge
DATE: November 14, 1978

TRANSCRIBED BY: Sharon G. Marston
COMPLETED DATE: May 12, 1981
D.S.: Mr. and Mrs. Everett Breeden who at present live in Tanners Ridge. Well Mrs. Breeden what was your maiden name?

B.: Thomas.

D.S.: Thomas. You are one of the Thomas'.

B.: Yea.

D.S.: Then you lived near Big Meadows...or

B.: Well we lived right inside of the park.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Still inside Tanners Ridge?

B.: Yea.

D.S.: Yea. Just a little further up.

B.: Yea.

D.S.: And Mr. Breeden, where did you live?

E.B.: Right up there...that house...that old house used to pass up there. The old house.

D.S.: The one that's on the...

E.B.: The first house up.

D.S.: Yea. The one's that's on...Yea. Uhhuh. So neither of you moved very far away did you when you moved down here. This really isn't down here...you are still up in the mountains aren't you? Yea. Now how many were in your family?

B.: Eight children.

D.S.: Eight children...that was pretty normal wasn't it...with the..

B.: Yea, they used to have big families around.

D.S.: Yea. Well, the children helped with all the chores...didn't they?

B.: Yea.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Did you have any special chore that you were supposed to do.

B.: Well of the evening sometime...I'd have to carry in the wood...you know the wood to cook with. Carry in the wood and then bring up water from the spring...that was a good little piece.
D.S.: Uhhuh. How about during the day...did you have any chores during the day?

B.: Well, not many...only when it comes time to plant...you know...plant corn and everything...we all had to go in the field and do that.

D.S.: When you planted the corn and all the things...did you have a horse?

B.: Yea.

D.S.: And a plow...that you plowed it?

B.: Yes.

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

B.: We just let them stay there. And sometimes...it was rocky...it was awful rocky and sometimes it was so rocky that I've seen my mother pick...go in another place and pick up the dirt and put it over corn that...cover it up so it would come up.

D.S.: That was pretty generally the rule...that they had to do that. Yea. How much land...what was your father's first name...


B.: Everybody called him Sill.

D.S.: How much land did we have?

B.: We did the rent.

D.S.: You were renting. Uh, then your father helped take care of cattle, that were...that came up.

B.: Mr. Long, and Willie Brubaker and Willie Long and all of them...he taken care of...their cattle.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you have to help...with that at all.

B.: No, I was too 'fraid. I always was afraid of anything like that.

D.S.: How much land did you have Mr. Breeden?

E.B.: About 40 acres here.

D.S.: 40 acres.

E.B.: 'bout.
D.S.: Now was that...a good part of it in woods?
E.B.: Yes it was and rough too you know.
D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh...when you did your gardening...um well I want to ask this of both of you. How big a garden did you have?
E.B.: Oh, I don't know, about...I imagine about a quarter of an acre.
D.S.: About a quarter of an acre.
D.S.: And how big a garden..
B.: I reckon...I don't know nothing about it...but I reckon about that.
D.S.: So you planted corn and what else...
B.: Well we had a corn field besides the garden...Yea we used to have a corn field besides the garden. We'd have to plant the corn you know to feed the hogs to get them fat in the fall to butcher them, for winter. But then we had a little garden then also where we planted all kinds of things...
B.: Beans...everything to can you know. And when the berries got ripe we was always in the field a picking berries.
D.S.: Did you dry the berries?
B.: No, we canned them.
D.S.: You canned them. Some places dried them. And they said they turned out every bit as good as if they were fresh picked.
B.: We did dry beans. Uh, not beans...apples.
D.S.: Apples...well you didn't dry beans.
B.: Yes, indeed we'd dry beans...we had plenty of beans...we always made enough in the fall...summer and fall...to last us through the winter. Always had hogs of everything and always had 3 or 4 hogs...you know to have meat. Had the cows...tomake us milk and cheese and butter. Had chickens to get eggs and everything and uh
in the fall we'd make applebutter and 'kraut.

D.S.: I want to get into that. And what.

B.: ..'kraut

D.S.: Sauerkraut...uhhuh. How did you make the sauerkraut?

B.: We'd just cut it up and put it in a barrel and have something to put salt on it and have something heavy til you get it full and then we'd cover it up and leave it for a while and then when it would get just sour enough to eat.

D.S.: Yea. Just salt...did you add any water to it? You'd push them down, right.

B.: It'd make...Had a little "maul" you know to mash it down with.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Did you...did your family make sauerkraut too?

E.B.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: Right and the same way?

E.B.: Same way.

D.S.: Uh, did you ever keep any cabbages over the winter.

B.: Yes, we'd keep cabbages...yes we kept cabbage.

D.S.: How did you do that? How did you do it.

B.: I don't remember...

D.S.: Did you dig a trench?

E.B.: Dig a trench...put dirt over it...dig another trench put dirt over it.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

E.B.: It kept pretty good...

D.S.: Uhhuh. And you put the cabbage in head down with the root up, right?

Uhhuh. I understand that the cabbages were tremendous. They were big. Is that right?

B.: Yes.

D.S.: Yea, and sweet. Have you been able to grow as good cabbages since you've been here as you could there?
E.B.: No, they don't do as well
the ground dry too....wasn't too dry when the cabbage come up but
something got in them..I don't know what it was.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did there seem to be as many bugs? Then as there are now.
B.: Well, when I was growin', there wasn't no bugs. No there wasn't no
bugs. I never knewed of no beetles..you know what I'm saying. I
never knewed of none of them around...until after we got married
and moved down here. And then...so long a coming around...but we
could raise the awfullest beans and things and nothing like that to it

D.S.: Yea. Right. Now you mentioned applebutter boiling. Did you have
fun when you did that?
D.S.: Yea. Right. How about your shucking corn? Did you used to make a party out of that.

B.: Yes, we would have corn shuckings. And Uncle Dick used to have them.

E.B.: Yea.

D.S.: What would you do at the corn shuckings?

B.: Well we'd feed the shucks to the cows.

D.S.: Yea. only would you have fun.

B.: Oh yea, you could have fun. Playing around in the shucks.

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

B.: What did? I forgot...

E.B.: What did happen then. I don't...

D.S.: Did you get a drink?

B.: No, cause my mother wouldn't let us.

D.S.: No drinks up there. Nobody made any moonshine?

B.: No.

E.B.: Not right around here. there wasn't any made. Some around making... we didn't have much. Not right around here.

D.S.: Because that made a lot of sense. to make the moonshine. it was a good money crop.

E.B.: Yea. it was.

B.: We never did have nothing like that at our house

E.B.: We wasn't allowed to have it much.

D.S.: Oh. Okey. Alright now you when you were a little girl did you have any toys?

B.: A few. I'm going to tell you the most I had.... you mean my baby. a rock wrapped up in a piece of cloth. I remember one time that I had a sister one time that lived in Dark Hollow and me and my other sister we'd always go up there you know. And we would hunt
us a rock that was heavy enough that we could carry it good and wrap it up and carry it clear to the top of Sugar Hollow. And lay it down there and we'd go to Dorothy's and when we'd come back we'd pick that rock up and carry it back home. Yes indeed.

D.S.: I think that's very sweet. That is lovely. And that was your toy.

B.: Yes indeedy. And we'd have playhouse at the old creek a little above us. Dishes that had been broke and we'd go up and have a big rock with moss you know up...and we'd have that for our coffee. That moss on the rock. We'd think that was the prettiest place in the world when we played there.

D.S.: Oh, it was. It was pretty. And what an idea using moss as the carpet. What was your house like?

B.: What do you mean?

D.S.: Was it made of logs?

B.: Not log...I don't know...Well the first old house was the house I was born in...was made of log. But then after so long a time it was in pretty bad...I remember when the children used to go to bed upstairs and there would be a hole in the and I remember when there used to come a snow and the snow would come in and go all over the bed and the snow kept us warm you know.

D.S.: Sure it would.

B.: Yes indeed it would. And that was...would get out from under the cover...when they would get out from under the cover and the snow but then after so long a time Mr. Long built us a house. And it was a whole lot better than what we did have. It wasn't what some people had, but we didn't know what some people had.

D.S.: No. How about the furniture...Was that pretty much hand made? Did
your father make that?

B.: No.. didn't make nothing.. we didn't have too much furniture. We just had a little stuff, just enough to make out with. And

D.S.: And I bet you all sat at a great big long table to eat didn't you?

B.: Yea.

D.S.: Right. What was your typical breakfast?

B.: Gravy and eggs and coffee and butter. That was the most what we had.

D.S.: Now, to get your money to buy the coffee and the sugar you would take things to the store and get credit for them?

B.: Well, we'd take eggs down and get.. you know.. take eggs and get.. and then kinda in the summertime.. my daddy.. they would give him some work to do on the ground.. cleaning off you know, and he'd take the money then and he would buy.. I know flour.. to last us through the winter. And sugar.. and well some coffee and everything with. We'd get enough stuff that we could just keep.. stay in in the winter.. we didn't have to go out to get nothing.

D.S.: Sure. Where was the nearest store?

B.: Pine Grove.

D.S.: Pine Grove.

B.: Babe Gray had a store in Pine Grove and we.. sometimes.. every once in a while they'd go to Stanley to the stores.. Mr. Robinson was out there...

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Did you know Deaconess Hutton?

B.: Yea.

D.S.: She's a wonderful woman isn't she? Yea.. Uhhuh. Uh, did you go to church? in Pine Grove?

B.: No I went to church up here. They used to have .. before they
sold it...they usta have church up here. We had an lady up here. Mrs. Walton and I don’t know whow long she did stay and uh...Mr. Wheeler about two...you don’t know Mr. Wheeler...

D.S.: No.

B.: Well she was a minister you know. He and Mr. Gibbs was the first to come up there to see about it. And uh, there weren’t no place for nobody to stay...only everybody that come...come home and stay...they’d stay there you know...we’d keep them. And Mr. Wheeler’s wife died..........and uh, he come over home one time and mammy....... said to him..said Mr. Wheeler why don’t you and Miss Walton get married. And he said I never thought about it. And it wasn’t long til they was married.

D.S.: All they needed was a little shove huh? Oh gosh. Uh, did you have any toys that you played with?

E.B.: Ball.

D.S.: Ball. You played ball. How about pitching horseshoes? Did you do that?

E.B.: Yes we did...

D.S.: Did you playjacks?

E.B.: No.

D.S.: No. Uh, if you didn’t have any horseshoes..did you ever pitch rocks.

E.B.: Well, some, yes’m.

D.S.: Yea. Good rock would work just as good as a horseshoe wouldn’t it?

E.B.: Yea.

D.S.: Sure.

B.: Everybody had a horse..

D.S.: Yea. Everybody had them.

B.: Nearly everybody up here owned a horse...had to use it to plow.
D.S.: Yea, and nearly everybody had a cow?
B.: Yea.

D.S.: One cow, or two?
B.: Well, it was one most of the time...and after we married we had
two sometimes and other people had two after...you know...after we
got married but when we was little...nobody had but 'bout one.

D.S.: Yea. Did you make butter?
B.: Yes, indeed.

D.S.: How about clabber?
B.: Yes, made cheese. Yes indeed.

D.S.: Yea. And you made butter and cheese too?

D.S.: Yea. Did you keep it in the springhouse?
B.: Yea.

D.S.: Yea. Was the springhouse near your home?
B.: No, the springhouse was right fer from our house up there. But
after we got married and moved here...we had a springhouse right
above us.

D.S.: Yea. Great, but when you were young...that meant a lot of hauling
from the springhouse to your house. Whee, boy.
B.: Yea, yes indeed. It's a right fer piece up there to the springhouse.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you all ever make any pumpkin butter?
B.: No, no we didn't.

E.B.: We've cooked it I reckon...we raised it...very good.
B.: Do you like it...I mean just to cook it.

B.: 

D.S.: And you made your own soap didn't you?
B.: Yes...yes...

D.S.: Lye soap...that's good soap. Nice and soft on your hands. I got some once. Yea. Mrs. Cave gave me some. Do you know the Elzie Cave's.

B.: Yes, indeedy.

E.B.: Yea, Yea.

D.S.: Uh, there was a lot of visiting back and forth wasn't there?

B.: Yea. Yes, and people used to go...people used to visit and stay all day. And then they'd go. And have a good time...a sitting and talking. And now people ain't got time to visit...nowhere. Now...everybody is in such a hurry.

D.S.: Uhhuh. I know it, yea. And yet everybody says you were all working so hard all the time, and you did work hard...but when you had a lull...okay...Yea. You weren't that troubled with weeds in the garden were you.

B.: Yes indeed.

D.S.: You were? Uhhuh.

B.: Yes, we had one old kind of weed they called it puzzle...and it would spread and get that deep. Every morning mammy would say to us...ya'll go out in the garden and pick puzzle for the hogs...to feed the hogs. They'd be fat nearly off of puzzle. And oh, I hated when it was time for pulling puzzle...I hated that...but I did it. We did ______ we'd pick it out of the garden that a way..

D.S.: Yea. You had to pull the roots and all

B.: Yea and weeds and pull the weed and carry it down the hogs.

E.B.: That was killing two jobs.

D.S.: Yea. Right. Sure was. Uh, did you fatten the hogs on milk ever?

B.: Yes, we'd give them milk too.
D.S.: How about your getting flour and cornmeal? Did you raise any wheat?
E.B.: No wheat.
D.S.: So how did you get flour?
E.B.: We'd just go to the store and buy it.
D.S.: Buy it. But cornmeal you made...you grew enough corn so that you could take it to the mill. Right?
E.B.: We bought cornmeal every week.
E.B.: Up at Pine Grove had a mill...we'd walk down...take some corn...white corn you know. carry it down that steep mountain you know from here to Pine Grove. And had it ground down...Mr. Will Gray had one...a mill to make cornmeal. Made good meal you know.
D.S.: Uhhuh, that's what I thought.
E.B.: Carry about a half a bushel down maybe...
D.S.: Yea, now did he charge you or did he take a part of the corn...
E.B.: Take a tole they called it.
D.S.: Yea, about ten percent wasn't it?
E.B.: Somewhere around there.
D.S.: Yea. Did you use a horse to go there...or did you carry it?
E.B.: Carried it most of the time. We had a horse though...we'd go to Stanley with it...sometimes. In the summer, but snow would be deep. Four or five of us would go together you know down...break a track you know...
D.S.: Sheee..work.
E.B.: Yea..rough going it was.
D.S.: Yes. When snows came, you got heavy snow didn't you?
E.B.: Yes. Yes we did then. You could walk over the fence up here anywhere and wouldn't know it hardly. That's right. Last year, was about the first winter...winter before we'd had for a long time.
D.S.: So, what would you do when the snow came heavy? Uh, how would you get back and forth? You didn't did you?

E.B.: You had to stay in a while you know.

D.S.: How did you take care of the cattle?

E.B.: \textit{Make a track.}

B.: Mr. Long would \textit{take his cattle} in the fall take all of their cattle out...down off the mountain then. And then bring them back in the spring, after the grass came back.

D.S.: Yea, but your horse and your cow needed attention.

B.: Yea, but they put a little path...got enough hay in for through the winter...corn and things like that.

D.S.: Uhhuh. And you just let them eat it as they wanted...right? Uhhuh, you didn't have to dig a trench to get out to the barn or anything?

E.B.: Just made a walkway to feed them...fotter sometimes you know...not the regular corn you know...feed our hogs and stuff...had a little fotter that we'd feed the horses and cows you know, and some hay you know.

D.S.: And the chickens, too, had to be...feed and you had to get to them.

E.B.: Same thing over and over you know when you go to spring...eat that up and you go to making it over.

D.S.: Elzie Cave was telling me about one snow that they had that he dug a tunnel to get out to the barn. Because you couldn't get to the top of it so he just dug a tunnel...right straight through into the barn.

B.: Well, I don't know whether that was the time when my sister...she lived out on Dark Hollow then, but she...they got diptheria you know and uh, mammy would stay up there with them and uh she had two children dead in the house at one time, with the diptheria. And uh, everybody was afraid to go there and they brought the coffins and
set them in the yard and mammy had to take the children and put them in outside in the yard. And then when I got grown my sister had a baby then and I had to go up there and stay with her. And it come such a snow and her little one—the one she had before she had this last one baby—taken sick and wasn’t—couldn’t get a doctor or nothing nohow. And he died the next morning. Nobody wasn’t there but me and her sister-in-law. And they put him down in the room and he had layed there for a couple of days before they had to take a beam out of the church to make him a coffin. And when they got where they could get to the graveyard the wind had blown every bit of the snow away for the funeral.

And uh...

D.S.: Umm, yea.
B.: Pretty bad I’ll tell you.
D.S.: Awful, yes.
B.: And I don’t know whether that was the time or not, but they taken snow...well there was such a snow that my brother-in-law had to get up on the kitchen roof and get the snow off to keep it from mashing the roofin’.
D.S.: Oh, wow.
B.: And me there homesick and they didn’t know nothing about this baby being sick nor nothing—dying or nothing—and a bunch of the men would get together you know and go in Pine Grove you know to the store to get bread and crackers and they got down in there and they... from over...Kiblinger Store...had got a word that that boy had died. And then that was the way they found it out.
D.S.: Did they...they didn’t do any embalming did they?
B.: No.
D.S.: Did they all stay right there at the grave site until it was com-
pletely filled.
B.: Well I don't know.. didn't go up there.. was so bad couldn't nobody come only the neighbors just around there that took him and buried him.
D.S.: Did they put markers..monuments up or did you use rock?
B.: Rock.
D.S.: Yea. Would you write on the rocks or ... 
B.: I don't know.
D.S.: No. They were all in the Thomas Cemetary?
B.: No, not in the Thomas.. that was at Dark Hollow. Have you seen the Thomas Cemetary?
D.S.: Yes, uhhuh. Speaking of being sick, was Dr. Ross your doctor?
B.: Dr. Ross? No, Dr. Ross wasn't my doctor, but when my sister had one of her children.. there ain't nobody that was around here that had a doctor... when my mother... she was the only one that went to deliver... would always go and deliver all the babies around. And she went then to my sister.. had a baby and it was born breech born and she just couldn't.. and they had to get Dr. Ross then. But no other why they never thought about it. I know a time that people's had babies the snow was so deep that the men would come after mammy to go you know and she'd have to put on pap's old clothes and he'd get up on drifts of the snow and pull her up on til he could get her down there that she could get to the place, where the baby was born.
D.S.: Uh, boy, wonderful that she had that knowledge though. I imagine that she knew a lot of herbs, didn't she? A lot of good things .. vegetables or things that were growing to help with colds and all the rest of it.
B.: Oh well we had all kinds of old stuff like that.

D.S.: Do you remember what any of them were?
B.: No, he may.

E.B.: We used wild cherry bark...
B.: sassafrass tea...
E.B.: sassafrass...

D.S.: What would you use sassafrass tea for?
B.: Well they made up like a think your blood out in the spring and

E.B.: Couldn't use it only in uh...March...March and all

D.S.: Yea, and uh how about turpentine and sugar?
E.B.: Yes, they used that. That was good.
B.: Castor oil.
D.S.: Oh, yea.

B.: Me and my brother had pneumonia at one time up home and I remember mammy...she had to strap me in the bed because I couldn't take these drops. And she come and got strattle me...you know...and I remember she said...sat a strattle me until she poured that castor oil down me and I was a taking it worse...and I told her just let me up and let me take it but kept right there...she sat until I taken every bit of that castor oil.

D.S.: Did she make any poltices? Out of what?
B.: Yes indeedy. Mustard and things...not...I don't know how it was.
D.S.: Did she ever use the cornmeal and onion poltice, for colds?
B.: I don't know about the meal, but I know she had the onion.
D.S.: Ash cakes...did she make ash cakes?
B.: How...how you do that?
D.S.: With cornmeal...you put them in a cabbage leaf and put them in the fireplace.
B.: I don't know whether she... she might... but I know we used to roast potatoes and eat them...

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you ever have ask cakes?

E.B.: No, I don't remember... I don't believe so.

D.S.: I never have either and everybody says they are so good.

E.B.: They probably was.

D.S.: Yea. I bet they were delicious. Did you make sorghum.

B.: No.

E.B.: No, we never had nothing to make no sorghum. But we bought up there because I know people made it in Pine Grove... made it... add different places we'd buy it. Cane Mollasses we called it.

That's what we called. We liked it right good. And I remember it.

D.S.: Yea.

B.: I remember when uh, well I was about seven or eight years old and there was a boy in there getting a load of apples for apple butter. And uh, all the children wanted to go... my brother... I'm six years and a half older than my brother. Well all of them wanted to go and they said to take him with us you know... so we went... all of us... me and two more of my sisters and my brother and mammy and daddy and went up there and got a load of apples and I don't know we were a coming up there down the road and I was a sitting up on the seat you know in the wagon and I know now... my head must have been a swimming... it had to be... because I remember when I fell and I hear'd mammy a hollaring and the wagon had run over me and I had raised my leg up so when it started over my... I raised my leg over and it just got on my leg and skidded off. My leg wasn't nothing but a scab all over. And my arm... I held it in a sling for so long. And when did I goto the doctor with that... no... no indeed, they never did go to the
doctor for nothing.

D.S.: Yea. Now a days everybody runs to the doctor for each little thing. Right. Yea.

B.: And usta be so bad..why we didn't think about..usta..having to have a doctor. I know one time when the snow got so deep up here and my sister..she lived down here at the old hotel and she was taken sick and uh, my brother-in-law come up..he was coming to get Everett to help carry her to the foot of the mountain. And it was so snowy he didn't even know what it was to come to a fence post up there and remember what it was. And he come here and got a bunch together and carried her down..so they could get to off the mountain.

E.B.: Clear to the foot of the mountain.

D.S.: Why did she have to get down there?

B.: They had to put her in the hospital.

D.S.: Oh, what were the usual sicknesses..diptheria..you mentioned..

B.: Yea, just colds and

D.S.: Pneumonia..Measles

B.: Pneumonia..No sir there weren't much measles up here because..I was done married long before I had measles and he was a working for the park.

E.B.: In the CCC camp.

B.: In the ccc camp and he stayed up in the uh, tower..til what..

E.B.: Tower..fire tower..stayed up there week you know

B.: And we all got ready for a picnic for the children and my brother and his girl friend then..we went over there and taken something to eat you know..well he was so sick over there til he couldn't hardly eat. But didn't know what it was.
E.B.: I tried to eat something...I didn't know they had the measles in the camp before that, but I didn't know where I got it...If I had known it...I would have come down and notified the doctor at the camp......local man......said stay in the bed.

B.: So when we come back home...this weren't long til the first one and then the other got the measles and nearly about everybody in here got the measles because they didn't know what it was. And uh, my mother got the measles and she was that old before she ever got the measles and she was so sick with them and Miss Walton...the one I told you about...she stayed with her at night and gave her something...I don't know maybe sleeping pills to make her lay all night and not be striking and I don't know long before she got well.

D.S.: Did ever uh...was the story ever handed down as to how your family came here to the mountains?

B.: No.

D.S.: How about with your family? Do you know how they came here.

E.B.: No, I don't remember.

D.S.: Cause there are a lot of Breedens...

E.B.: Yes a lot of Breedens.

D.S.: And it's not a common name, excepting around here. Right.

E.B.: No, I have a cousin down in Jollett Hollow...down in Elkton...I don't remember how they got here...

D.S.: How about school. Was school very far away?

B.: Well there were the old school house was up here where the church is now. And they never had no school until I was nine years old before they ever did have a school here and then they had a half
a day at a time. And uh, I know the teachers that stayed at home and boarded up home. And uh, that's when we started to school in that old schoolhouse.

D.S.: Uhhuh. How far did it go? Sixth grade.

B.: It didn't go nowhere much but going to school you know after we got to going...see you couldn't get no teacher up here hardly. And if it hadn't been for Mr..

E.B.: Gibson

B.: Gibson and his daddy... Gibson, wasn't it...

E.B.: Yea.

B.: Kept them til they got a school you know and then we went...they never did go no further than the fifth grade though. We went...we was married and went through the fifth grade now...see now if we'd been at a school we could have went on through...we could have went on and we could have graduated...but we just went...just went to school to have that fun after we learned all we could.

D.S.: Was it hard to get to the school?

B.: Well sometimes the snow was pretty deep to get up there to go through.

D.S.: Uhhuh. How about shoes...did you have shoes?

B.: Had shoes but our feet was wringing wet nearly all the time.

Yes indeed.

D.S.: Oh, Did you wear shoes in the summer?

B.: No, went barefooted in the summer.

D.S.: Yea. Saved the shoes for the winter, right. Yea. How about you, the same way.

E.B.: Yea, the same way.

D.S.: Uhhuh, that seemed to be pretty much the same story. Uh, we just touched briefly on berries. Now you had huckleberries and what
other berries did you pick?

B.: Rasberries, and blackberries...strawberries...then we canned cherries.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Yea. And you never dried those either?

B.: No, we just dried the apples.

D.S.: Did you or did you ever know of people who started fires so they would be sure of having huckleberries?

B.: No, I never did know...

D.S.: You didn't, that was done pretty much...

B.: Huhuh, it was...

E.B.: It was. Yes it was.

D.S.: Yea, and of course the statute of limitations is over so you could tell us anything....

B.: Well, I hear'd of it...people setting fires for that, but I mean I don't know anything about who.

D.S.: Yea, uhhuh. Did you ever sell the huckleberries?

B.: My mother picked them and sold them for 8¢ a gallon...a gallon.

D.S.: 8

B.: 8¢ a gallon and carried them clear to woman who bought them. She carried them.

D.S.: Where was that that she had to carry them?

B.: Couple miles...lived in the park...

D.S.: 8¢..with all that work.

B.: Yea.

D.S.: Unbelievable...while we are talking about fires...we have seen several pictures of the homes up there and they had a ladder standing up against the roof and we are wondering...was that...ladder..pretty much was a ladder up there quite frequently in most houses in case of fire from the chimney?
E.B.: Probably was, yea. Probably was.
D.S.: I had a feeling that it was.
E.B.: Yea, probably was.
D.S.: Yea, because a lot of fires could have started that way couldn't they. Did many?
E.B.: We was always taught...my daddy...was...be careful of fires.
Don't start me fires, be careful always. I've fit a lot of fires...always go to the state...for the park you know. Lot of fires.
D.S.: What would happen if a home did catch on fire?
E.B.: Well, it almost would have to burn...at that time you know. There was one right here burned down I remember right here. When I was a little boy.
B.: And there was one......one crib......it's been a long time ago. and she was a boiling a ham you know for christmas and the house took a fire. And burned up everything they had. And...
D.S.: Would neighbors then help?
B.: Well they would. See the men was working at the Tannery and Miss Walton...she had a phone then and she called up there and they got up here pretty good but it had done...it was done.
E.B.: I went up there...thinking about the water and my daddy-inlaw and father was working from way on the hill...I told them...they don't got any water...let's get the stuff out of the house you know. He was tired and couldn't get his breath
but wasn't no good. I said let's get the stuff out of the house...we put it out in the yard...I said we'll have to lug it out of the yard...had to lug it out of there or it would have burned up in the yard.
D.S.: Boy. If a home were completely destroyed and all of the furniture
in it...would the neighbors help out by giving them things.

B.: Yea.

E.B.: Yes, they would.

D.S.: I think everybody pitched in so nicely to help out...

E.B.: Yes.

D.S.: In the event of sickness or anything of that kind didn't they. Yea.

Did you all...well how did you celebrate Christmas?

B.: We didn't have nothing much...to celebrate. Uh, we didn't have
nothing to get nothing...we might bake a cake or a couple pies. But
as fer as gifts you know...to give...we didn't have none.

D.S.: How about firecrackers...did youu...

B.: No indeedy.

E.B.: Not for a while...there come a time we did. Yea.

D.S.: Did you play the Kris Kringler's.

E.B.: Yes.

B.: Yes.

D.S.: Yes. How would you dress?

B.: Deed I don't believe I ever did go. Deed I don't.

E.B.: I did. Mama was running around you know trying to find me a dress.

D.S.: How would you dress?

E.B.: Had a big old dress...see the men would buy dresses then you know.

And the women would wear britches you know. Turn it around.

Trying to hide your face trying to see your face you know to see who you were.

D.S.: Yea. I think that was such a wonderful custom...I wish they did it
now, don't you? They don't though.

E.B.: NO, they don't do it no more. It's got out of style now hasn't it.

D.S.: Yea, right. I remember Deaconness Hutton talking about it and she
said I miss my Kris Kringler's...it used to be so wonderful...
they would come. Yea. Did you ever go to her church?
B.: Yes, I went before.
D.S.: Well tell me about her? Tell me your reaction? to her.
B.: Well I don't know as fer as I know she's a nice lady. She always seemed nice to me...you know...
D.S.: Yea. Did you ever get any of the .. buy any of the clothes there at that mission?
B.: Yes.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Yes. Did your mother make most of your clothes?
B.: Yes. Yes she made them. She made nearly about all of them.
D.S.: How about your mother? Did she make most of your clothes?
E.B.: Some. Not too much she was...her mother...
D.S.: How did she find time?
B.: I don't know.
D.S.: Did you ever learn?
B.: Excuse me.
D.S.: Sure...would you tell me about how you and your family did your laundry?
B.: Had an old wash board and it in a big old wash tub and one it that away.
D.S.: did you ever boil it.
B.: Yes, indeed. Have a big old black kettle and put them in with lye and boil. That's the way they always done all the time.
D.S.: Uhhuh. That was a terrible amount of work wasn't it?
B.: Yes, indeed. Well when you had a big family...
D.S.: Yea. Have you ever heard of the...uh using rabbit oil for an ear-ache?
B.: No, I don't think I ever.
D.S.: Well, Edward Nicholson was telling me that you take a rabbit and you boil the fat down and put it in a bottle and then if you had an earache you put a drop in your ear and he said it cured an earache just like that.

E.B.: Might have done it........simple things like....

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. In all of your walking around which everybody did and they kept themselves very healthy doing it did you ever walk down to Camp Hoover?

B.: Yes indeed.

D.S.: You did/

B.: Yes used to raise possum...

D.S.: You raised possum?

B.: Yes. Uhhuh. And they...somebody wanted..George Buracker wanted

 E.B.: Yea, President Hoover...

B.: And he got two for President Hoover...

E.B.: Yea, President Hoover.

B.: And he got that and somebody else that was in the camp hear'd about it and they wanted some too. So they got a couple didn't they? And uh, you know I had hear'd that they...had the litters.....in a pouch..did you ever see it?

D.S.: No.

B.: Well I had hear'd it and I didn't believe it and we..I went up their one day and we picked up the little and she..you know like a little drawstring and I pulled that open and there was little biddy things just sticking around on each one of her little tits you know and we watched them til they grewed and they got so big they had to come out all over her. And after they got big they had to get off of her and that's the way that they done it. And I didn't believe that til I seen it with my own eyes.
D.S.: Sure. So it's from you that George Buracker got those possums?
B.: Yea.

D.S.: And he gave those to President Hoover. Right. When you went down there did you ever see President Hoover?
B.: No, I never did.

E.B.: I did. I seen him couple days. He'd be working over there on that road where they built Camp Hoover Road you know. It was back off the road a little bit you know. Cutting the trees along the road. To go up and meet my brother
We'd walk here and go clear down into Camp Hoover. Go down by the road
...we got $2.75...they give us for 11 hours..16 hours and they paid us an extra hour you know...$2.75 it was. We worked down by the White House...they was working on it...and uh, they let us go down by the...Marines talked to him you know going down...had to come back that a way a man ridin about it a horse you know...don't worry 'bout every morning...We go down work ten hours and come back and uh Rangers was guarding come on up through the lodge you know...do the same thing the next day. Never had no trouble...he talked to the...

D.S.: You walked to work every day. Down that mountain and then you walked back up again. After a day's work.

E.B.: Yea. Right. I don't know how we done that. Til they buit that road up there...we had...the first bridge in up there at Hoover's Camp right now...My brother Jeff had a big old old hog tractor haul the wood...sometimes he got the tractor and it would take him a couple hours to get it back
D.S.: Carry it down there.
E.B.: Drug it off the tractor you know... put em down where they was forty feet long.

There were five of them hauling and they got them all out there...

fourty foot...that big.

you know. Rotted out. But that's been a long time ago.

D.S.: Yes, it was.

E.B.: It didn't bother us a walking though...seemed like it didn't bother us none.

D.S.: Yea. You know. Speaking of a long time ago on trees...Um were you up in the mountains when the chestnuts were still...

E.B.: Yes.

D.S.: That was a good money crop.

B.: I know it was. We would go and get a sack ... in the morning and then after dinner walk down to the store and sell them and get you know some groceries and stuff.

D.S.: Yea. Right. You don't know how much you got for them?

B.: No, I don't.

E.B.: We got twelve... Fifteen dollars...come down to twelve and first thing you know to $5.50 in less than a week. Tea, that's how things would fall you know.


E.B.: They had on top of the drive in the evenings.

D.S.: Did you ever know of a produce man that rode around through the mountains and sold like kerosene and sugar and coffee? Did you
ever see him.

B.: From over in the...well one name of Gus August...he used to come from...where did he come from?

E.B.: Was he from Madison?

B.: He was from Madison...he used to come over here. And then there was a man from down toward...

E.B.: Hollow. Elkton it was...

B.: and then he got to coming up here, and a bringing stuff.

D.S.: Uhhuh. And then he would buy like eggs from you and things of that kind. Yea.

B.: I remember one time that Gus August had and nobody a beer...they didn't know what it was from up here had tasted, they didn't know what it was and I remember he opened a can and let each one take a taste and see what it was. But nobody even liked it. No sir...boy...didn't like that.

D.S.: You worked first of all for Camp Hoover? Right. To help build Camp Hoover.

E.B.: Yea, for the state then.

D.S.: Yea, then did you...then after that you started with the CCC's?

E.B.: I worked for...yes...I worked for the CCC's for three years and nine months.

D.S.: Three years and nine months. You were mainly a fire warden?

E.B.: Yes, I had to fight fires...a lot of fire fighting.

D.S.: You didn't help them with any of the road building?

E.B.: Yes, I helped with some of the roads...helped to cut the right of way for Hoovers Camp...I helped build and set up down at Hoover's Camp from up here on the drive down the mountain...through the winter you know.

D.S.: From Big Meadows down.
E.B.: Yes. On out through here we had the contract out to Hoover's Gap. Shifflet had it.... I had to work on that. Helped build it.

D.S.: Really.

E.B.: Deed I did.

D.S.: Ooh. What equipment did you use? Uh, what did you use ..

E.B.: Just

D.S.: Did you use...uh..

E.B.: Cross cut saws and tractors. Burned it out then...Had to burn it out.

D.S.: Yea. Uh, what camp were with in the CCC's.

E.B.: Uh, Number II out of Big Meadows.

D.S.: Number II. Do you know what you missed? The reunion they have every year.

E.B.:Yes. Well I get a letter on it.

B.: See they've got the road uh, locked up here at Tanner's Ridge they've got it locked...we can't get up there.

E.B.: It used to not be up to the cemetary up here .. we have a problem getting in the cemetary you know.

D.S.: Oh, they would let you through to go to the cemetary

B.: They would if you could get ..................... the keys. That man told us he would see about it. Cause we used to see about keeping the cemetary clean all the time. And then we went over there to see about it .. and... he told us he would see in a week and let us know as soon as he could and we never did..that's been about two or three years...and we never hear'd from him.

D.S.: Call the Park Headquarters. I'll give you the number, before I leave. And I'll give you the name of who to ask for...

B.: Jacobson...
D.S.: Well he's the superintendent, but there are other people that can help you. And uh, definitely you would be entitled to get through. Every time you wanted to. Don't worry.

B.: Well Jacobson was the one that told us...

D.S.: Well he is a very busy man, and I don't blame him for forgetting. Because he is taking care of every very hard problem, So don't fault Bob Jacobson... I'll get you in touch with somebody else who can help you.

B.: I don't know how to talk to nobody like that nohow. I don't know how to talk to those strange people.

D.S.: Alright I will do it for you. Okey?

B.: Okey.

D.S.: You say you don't know how to talk to strange people...well you don't call me strange?

B.: Well, I felt like I know'd you all my life.

D.S.: Where are all you're brothers and sisters now?

B.: Well all my sisters is dead but one and she is in a nursing home in Harrisonburg. She don't know nothing...and my one of my brothers...my baby brother lives right up here and he's been sick about 14 years. But he was and he ain't worked none for about uh, that long.

And uh, I got another brother... he's around 80 years old... he lived with my sister out there on the Miles place. And uh see she got so she couldn't do nothing for herself ner nothing and she'd have to call me down. I was so sick then that I wasn't able to do nothing neither. And uh, he called me one day said listen now... I don't know what's wrong with her. She had tore the phone up you know and uh, I went down there... let me see did he come that day and say that... yes sir he said that... he come up here to let us know about it that she'd torn the phone up... and he told
her to sit right by the...and I went down there and she had torn her bed all to pieces and uh, I just said to him...I say you have to get her in the hospital. I ain't able to take care of her and you can't...I said she can't so I said now I'm going to give her a bath and you just call the rescue squad. He called the rescue squad and uh and we got her out of there and got her down there and uh she was awful bad off and the nurse called my daughter to come from Maryland and then the family and they went in there and cleaned up and things you know thinking she was coming home you know and cleaned up and scrubbed you know...and done everything and uh, she was better and uh it must have been the head of the hospital or someone called us and she answered the phone and they told us that she wasn't able to come home. They'd have to put her in a nursing home. And uh she said I'll have to wait and see Uncle Matt...what he says. So when...Matt didn't want her to go. I said to him, I don't want her sent over neither but I ain't able...I'm sick and I can't take care of her and I said you can't because he couldn't and so they got her in a nursing home to put her in. And uh, she never lived too long after that. And he's there right by himself...nobody around. I worried...I wandered then said how'd you feel if you was setting out in

I mean...well I told him...in the Lord just have to give a prayer and trust cause I didn't know what else to do. I'm just sorry for him, but I ain't able to take care of him, cause the children have to do my work and I ain't able to...course he come down here and stayed after my mother died...he come down here and stayed up until the day he retired. And then he went on down there to stay with my sister then after that.

D.S.: Uhhuh. You know speaking of that I remember Cletus McCoy kept telling
how families always took care of their elders. That was true wasn't it.

D B.: Yes. I just told Everett you know everybody has got elder kids... nobody didn't think about sending them away they just taken care of their older people. And it's just now... just lately that they got nursing homes and things, but uh...

D.S.: That's right... Uhhuh... Up til then everybody took care of...

B.: I know...

D.S.: Was there much problem with people that uh... oh weren't quite right mentally?

B.: Well, I had an uncle that he... his mind got so bad... he was a crazy man... and his mind got so bad, and he come over here and sit down in the floor and just cuss and carry on you know and uh say all sorts of crazy things to the real old people and his mind was awful bad; he got so they couldn't manage him; they had to send him off somewhere. But as fer as I know there ain't nobody else but...

D.S.: Hey tell me how did you court her? How did you court her?

E.B.: I don't hardly know how to explain it.

D.S.: Where did you first see her, in school?

E.B.: Yes.

B.: We didn't go after one another... We lived close together

E.B.: She just lived up in the park and we went together and I don't know. We courted I don't know how many years... off and on. Finally married her.

D.S.: Did you ever call on her of an evening?

B.: Nearly every evening.

D.S.: You did huh? All slicked up and pretty.

B.: And uh, stay there til about bed time and then he'd go on.
D.S.: Were you chaperoned when he came.

B.: We had to stay right in there with everybody.

D.S.: I don't blame you for not coming. After all he looks as if he...

What was the wedding like?

B.: I'll tell you what the wedding was like. My mother used to..take
chestnuts down off the mountain and trade them for old

Well she went and got some you know and there was a black
dress I remember..I never had a dress to fit me in my life. She'd
always make them too big so they would last me a couple years and
she got this here dress and I loved that little dress and it fit
me to the dot and we went over to Uncle Joe's, the one that I told
you his mind...

E.B.: About a mile ... mile and a half.

B.: We went over to Uncle Joe's and got married one evening. That was
all there was to it.

D.S.: Alright.

B.: We didn't know nothing else...

D.S.: So then did you build your own house or...

B.: Yea.

by doing it that way you didn't get any wedding presents.
You missed out on that.

B.: No......but.

D.S.: Yea. If you had learned how to sew you would have had a dress to
fit you.

B.: Honey after I got..I remember mammy got me a dress one time..after
I was gone..I remember it was a red dress. And I said to her..she was

I wasn't madde nothing up. And she..........and deed I had the dress
made and she when she come back. And I got so I could make anything
I could sew...I could look in books and tell you...
I had a nervous breakdown and I never could...now that's been since
I've been married here...but I used to make my children's clothes
and I never could get my mind to sew nothing no more nor nothing.
So I just quit trying...

Have you had a garden here? How big a garden?
E.B.: Oh, I don't...

B.: That little one right up there. And put a couple rows of things
over in the garden over there.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Do you still keep your vegetables over the winter the way
you used to or...
E.B.: Not as much. Only canning them you know.
D.S.: Yea. You know that way of putting them into the ground uh, turnips
and potatoes and did you put onions..
E.B.: Yea, a lot of onions.
D.S.: Onions, and cabbage...what else. That would be about it wouldn't it.
E.B.: Carrots sometimes we'd have.
D.S.: You could grow carrots in those rocks?
E.B.: Yes indeed.
B.: I've gotten plenty of carrots canned...Well we've canned them.
E.B.: Yea...
D.S.: We tried to grow carrots and we can't do it. The ground is so
rocky you end up with a corkscrew instead of a carrot.
E.B.: Right big ones...yes.
D.S.: Did you have any apple trees on your own property?
E.B.: Got a couple out here.
D.S.: You do. When you were growing up did you have any?
E.B.: Yea, we had plenty of apples. They belonged to
Mr. Long you know.
D.S.: Were they mylums?

B.: I don't think there were no mylums here...

E.B.: Not around here. There were in some places you know.

B.: I know there were mylums in Dark Hollow where my sister lived down there. I know we used to go out there and get mylums there.

D.S.: I got two.

B.: They good now...

D.S.: Oh, are they good.

E.B.:

D.S.: Sure. They are great. Uh, you don't know the kind of apple trees you had.

B.: I don't know...do you know....

E.B.: Wild apples is all I know. Around here...this fellow over here Mr. Abbott you know in Rileyville had a couple.

little dwarf tree you know...

B.: And prunes..there were a lot of prunes.


B.: You have prunes..we raised...

E.B.: We raised

B.: We raised..we had some..not too many this year..but last year there were so many that my daughter's husband mother and daddy..they wanted some and deed they come here and got a couple bushels..didn't they?

D.S.: Plums?

B.: Prunes.

D.S.: Oh, I'll be darned. Did you dry them or..

B.: No indeed I just canned a few. But I didn't have enough this year to can them. I gathered..we got about two gallons of them.

then, and I made some preserves and I sent Lucille you know.
D.S.: Uh, the old time canning... you would use the mason jars and would you process them in water?

B.: Uh, no... h uh... I...

D.S.: You didn't. How would they can them then?

B.: Oh, just put the stuff on them and just boil them and put them in a canner and tighten them up.

D.S.: And they kept.

B.: Yes, indeed.

D.S.: No processing. They did things so much better in those days.

B.: I used to when I was well... I usta do what work I had to do and I went to every neighbors house upthere and helped them can. I enjoyed doing it, but I can't go it nomore now.

D.S.: How would you dry your beans?

B.: Just put... lay them out sometimes... lay them out on the sheet and

D.S.: You never strung them around.

B.: Yes, I've strung them around and had things in the kitchen clear across... but you know the bugs have got so now that you can't do nothing and we had a few got dark and we picked them and hulled them out and they got just as full of bugs as anything. And I had to throw them away.

D.S.: Terrible. Yea, I don't know why we have more bugs but I think it's because gradually we've been destroying the insects that kill the insects. Speaking of killing, did you ever do much hunting?

E.B.: Yes, I have.

D.S.: What did you hunt?

E.B.: Rabbit and squirrel... groundhog... pheasant sometimes

D.S.: Yea. Did you have many pheasants.
E.B.: No, they are scaree now...they used to be right...

D.S.: Well, that's what I mean...there used to be a lot of them.

E.B.: Right smart, yea. But I ain't hunted any since deer...never did kill...never did shoot one. I wouldn't kill them.

They come around here...four or five come through here lots of times getting water I reckon...but I never did shoot no deer. I wouldn't give a cent for one.

D.S.: There were deer though when you were growing up, were there?

E.B.: No, no there wasn't no deer...no...

D.S.: Did you ever see any bear?

E.B.: Yea, they come around every once in a while...

D.S.: Yea, now, but I mean then.

E.B.: No no bear then.

B.: A bear come here...we had been down to the store and daughter was here...come from Maryland and she and while we was gone he come...and she hear'd him, but she said thought it was the wind a blowing. And uh, we had had just tear that thing...and broke the window and I don't know what all he did do. And uh, she said when he come, I hear'd him but I thought it was the wind a blowing and he went up here to his brother's and he went in...he got I don't know how much meat that he had got in and carried some of it out in the yard. And well my brother-in-law setting there one night watching there around here now. Some of them up here hunting and they say they can see bears over at her house. I don't know...

D.S.: Yea. They are more afraid of you than you are of them.

B.: Well I'd like to see what they look like if they are more afraid than
D.S.: They are...they are. We have a regular visitor every night and the minute we show up he runs and runs and runs.

E.B.: The other way.

D.S.: Yea, they are scared of people. That's why there is nothing to be afraid of with them. Uh, one question I wanted to ask you and then I think I've picked your brains...ooh, have I...how did you cure your hams.

B.: Put salt on them and...

E.B.: That's all. When you butcher put a lot of salt on them, freeze if you want. They turn red so cure always didn't before winter.

D.S.: So you usually did it in November.

E.B.: Yea.

D.S.: November.

E.B.: The last of November the first of December.

D.S.: Yea. Put salt on and then hang them up.

E.B.: Yea, hang them for a ...

D.S.: Yea, how long would it take before they were cured.

E.B.: Uh, take a couple months or better you know.

D.S.: Then what would you eat in the meanwhile?

B.: Sausage and we could cook that meat and if it wasn't salty enough put salt on it.

D.S.: Uh, you of course ate a lot of the wild life that you shot. Right and did your family shoot any wild life?

B.: Yea, I had a brother who liked to hunt better than anything in the world.

D.S.: Would you hunt with a gun or slingshot.

E.B.: Rifle or something. Groundhog...you know they won't eat them anymore.
We used to eat them...we don't eat them anymore. They get in my garden sometime but we don't eat them much. They are...like vegetable season you know.

D.S.: Sure they do. And they can't go to a store to buy it...the way you can. Did you do much fishing?

E.B.: Some, not too much. Too far up to the creek there. I fished...on Sunday some but very seldom you know. There is some trout in there to you know. Never did go the river.

D.S.: Yea. Did your family fish.

B.: No.

D.S.: No, well this has been so...you don't know. Is there anything you can think of because I have been doing all the questions. Any memories that have popped into your mind.

B.: No, I don't reckon so.

B.S.: How about you Mr. Breeden?

E.B.: I can't think of anything.

D.S.: Uh, are you kin to Wes Breeden?

E.B.: Yes. quite a distance...

D.S.: quite a distance...

B.:

D.S.: Oh really, uhhuh, Yea. Well, I thank you more than you know. And I do hope...

is good in some ways and yet I am absolutely shocked...I got a letter from my granddaughter the other day. She is sixteen and this letter is the most horribly written letter I have ever read in my life. And I am ashamed of it.