11-12-1975

(SNP044) Rev. John Dubosq interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Peggy C. Bradley

John G. Dubosq

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Recommended Citation
John G. Dubosq interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, December 1, 1977, SdArch SNP-44, Shenandoah National Park Oral History Collection, 1964-1999, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University

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D.S.: We are interviewing Rev. John Dubosq, who has been in charge of the Naked Creek Mission since he was a young man, from what I understand. Is that Right?

J.D.: That's right.

D.S.: And, when you came here, you came direct here from seminary school. Is that right?

J.D.: Came here, from Philadelphia school of Bible.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: I've been down here now since 1932, and I ....... Then I, in 1932, lived upon top of the mountain here. The old Meadow's School, use to be a school house up there.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Always called it the Meadow's School, all the people lived on the mountain went there to school.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Were you the teacher of that school?

J.D.: No, I wasn't the teacher of that school, I was a preacher up there.

D.S.: I see. Uhhuh.

J.D.: I was the preacher, and so ...., I ...., I moved from there when....., when they come in and took all us and ......... I started a school and-a, .... a school was started. And, they took over all that....., that kind of work, see? I...., I found out....., who they were, what they were, what class of people they were.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Uhhuh. They were a very, very attentive class of people, I had seventy-five in Sunday School.

D.S.: Seventy-five?
J.D.: Yes, up on the mountain, up there, that was a miracle for up there.
D.S.: Had they had any Sunday School up there up to that time?
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: They had? Before you came?
J.D.: Before I came, I tell you they had Gert Cave, use to come in there to preach.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Maybe once a month.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: You know, and the Methodist preacher, I forget what his name is, ah...., he use to preach down here at the Methodist Church, down here...., down in the hollow here.
D.S.: In other words, this particular area, which is almost out-side of Elkton, isn't it?
J.D.: Uhhuh.
D.S.: Ah, was a very religious group of people?
J.D.: Some, yes, some of them were. A lot of them was religious and that was all. (Laughed)
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: They would fight, they use to fight, my...., terrible fights they had up there.. On the school house porch, that had, that is where Herbert Breeden, that was where he killed his cousin ...., I don't know what was his cousin or a nephew or what he was.
D.S.: Do you know why he killed him?
J.D.: I don't know why, the two of them had a grudge against one another.
D.S.: Oh, Uhhuh.
J.D.: See, a grudge, well he..., but they were going up to a meal. He said, if anyone dares lay a hand on Mr. John, I'll kill him; that was Herbert Breeden, that's what he said, you see.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: But nobody touched me, they never bothered me. I came down from, I preached up there. I had seventy-five in the Sunday School.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: And preaching, and the place was always packed.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Whenever I had preaching they would come in from all around there. Would come in there to the meetings clean from way over, way over, over from the otherside. I ..., I don't know how far, say about ten miles.

D.S.: From Simmons Gap, would they come from Simmons Gap?

J.D.: No. I..., I don't remember Simmons Gap at all.

D.S.: No?

J.D.: But they did come in from..., from over there,... I'll tell you were if I can only think of the name down in there. The,... what was his name? I forget the man's name, they named it after him and he, they had a school, made a school down there by his name. We use to preach there. That is where I met my wife ... down there....

D.S.: Oh!

J.D.: ... at that school.

D.S.: Oh, uhhuh.

J.D.: I forget the name, what was the name of the school? I forget the name of the school now. I can't think of it.
D.S.: Then you married a local girl, is that it?
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: What was her maiden name?
J.D.: Her name was ......., ah!, I forget right off the bat. (Laughed)
D.S.: (Laughed)
J.D.: I can't think of it. I should think of it.
D.S.: (Laughed) When you do, you just mention it.
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: Did they have large families? These people?
J.D.: Yes, they all had large families.
D.S.: Yea, they did.
J.D.: Yes, they all grew out there, there was the Meadows family they were in there. Meadows came in from over around Stanley, see, they came in there.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: That was where Gert Cave, way down in there. He use to come in there and preach too. When I got started up there he stopped coming in there, see, I was in there.
D.S.: Was you a Episcopalian?
J.D.: No, Non-Denominational.
D.S.: Non-Denominational?
J.D.: Yea.
D.S.: Uhhuh, yea.
J.D.: Independent Fundamental.
D.S.: Oh, I see, yea. Now, you were saying that they had large families.
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: Did they grow good big vegetable gardens?
J.D.: The growed all the stuff that they ate.

D.S.: They did?

J.D.: Yes. Lonnie Breeden, Lonnie and Joe Breeden, see, they..., they lived right below the school house. They..., they raised all their own vegetables and then when I came down, they started to build, .... started to fix up a house. Mrs. Frank use to preach, use to have school there.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: In the school house.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: She lived right below, just below the school house, which they had built at the house.


J.D.: When you go in there (Laughed) it was built out of logs.

D.S.: Oh, yes.

J.D.: It was all log.

D.S.: Well, most of their houses were built of logs, weren't they?

J.D.: Yes. Yes.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Log, log cabins, lots of them, some of them had. They would come in there ..., she..., she... They chased her out.

D.S.: Why?

J.D.: Why? See, Meadows use to come in there and he lived right...., he was custodian of the school, well, he lived right below the school and below where Mrs. Frank lived at. Well, she..., she would teach school, she was a school teacher, and she..., she left the school and moved away to Philadelphia.

D.S.: Why did they run her out?
J.D.: Ah, they didn't like her.

D.S.: Ah, then they didn't have a school teacher.

J.D.: If they didn't like you they would run you out.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: That's the way they were.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: That's the class of people, and, so, she went from there up to Philadelphia, then I came down. When I came down here they let me have the house rent free.

D.S.: Oh, Great!

J.D.: See, and the people had already came in and white washed it. It was white washed all the way through, upstairs and downstairs.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Two stories, .... the house it was, it had, oh, I guess eight or nine rooms.

D.S.: Mmmm.

J.D.: Yes, and they, ... he would come down...., and every time he would come down he always would bring me a big bag of groceries.......... 

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: .... and, a lot of clothes for the people.

D.S.: Oh.

J.D.: Have been giving them clothes since 1932.

D.S.: Who, where did these clothes come from?

J.D.: From all over, come from all over the country.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: People would find out that I was down there, and they would send in these clothes.
D.S.: Oh. Then would you give them to the people or sell them?
J.D.: No, give them to the people.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Didn't charge them for nothing.
D.S.: I see.
J.D.: So finally when she did come down to visit them, they accepted her alright, but they didn't like her, see.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Some how or other they had gotten, got against here someway; and her husband and her. But he was a carpenter, painter; carpenter and painter, too. He lived in Philadelphia. They moved everything up to Philadelphia.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: All their stuff that they had. He moved, then I moved in there, in the house. The people all around came in and helped. They painted with lye, with white wash, and lime. Whatever they could get their hands on. Every room was all white washed.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: So, we had, we lived in that for three years.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: And three years time, why we got acquainted with the man that lived right over here. His name was Meadows, George Meadows, and-a, he use to come there and he would, he use come up and bring clothers up for the people on horseback.
D.S.: Oh, yes. Uhhuh.
J.D.: Well, didn't have any other way to travel.
D.S.: Well, there were no roads.

J.D.: No, travel, no..., no. Roads just about wide enough for a horse to walk up the mountain.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: He would come up there, and he lived up there. He lived way over that way, to the left of the school house, he lived down in the valley, and he lived over that way, see. He took a liking to me somehow, (laughed) I don't know how. He said, if any man dare lay a hand on Mr. John, he said, I'd kill them.

D.S.: Uhhuh. They were then pretty feisty type people, weren't they?

J.D.: Yea.

D.S.: They were, I wonder why?

J.D.: Ah, I don't know. Before them, that the people moved in up there, Indians lived there.

D.S.: Ah!

J.D.: See?

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: They lived over on this side of the school house, see, down way down. There is a grave yard up there for the Indians.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: I believe it is still there yet, if you could find it.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: It over ..., the people over in, ah, where was it now? Way over..., way, way, cross the mountain, they use to come over there quite a lot. I forget the name of, that class of people.

D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: And..., and, they used to come over, come over to church, see when we would have church I used the Baptist Church, had a, used to have a little place over there on the other side.......

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: the other side, way over, ah, of the Meadow's school.

D.S.: Ah!

J.D.: Yes, ten miles I guess, across the mountain.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: They had, had that little church over there. I..., I forget the woman's name, she asked me to preach for them over there. I preached for them over there a couple of time.

D.S.: Well, how would you get around, on horseback?

J.D.: Walk.

D.S.: Walk?

J.D.: Yea, all my traveling..., on, on, walking.

D.S.: How did they have their funerals? What were they like?

J.D.: A funeral?

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: Well, it was..., I..., I had to send to the city for funeral .... There were all kind, they would make a box, see, and, they would put ..., something in the box, you know, put the casket in..., then put the body in, see?

D.S.: Did they keep the body in the house until it was buried?

J.D.: Yes.

D.S.: Yea, uhhuh.

J.D.: As far as I know they did.

D.S.: Yes.
J.D.: See?

D.S.: Then would you perform the service in the house?

J.D.: I would perform the service in the house and take it from the house to the graveyard.

D.S.: Yes.

J.D.: They had a graveyard.

D.S.: Yes.

J.D.: ...they would dig a hole big enough to put the body in.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: ... and they would put the body in there, and have a service at the graveyard from there. The body would stay there. A lot of the bodies are in there yet.

D.S.: Well, did they put up tomb stones?

J.D.: Yes, they put up some kind of a marker. Put a stone of some kind. They didn’t know nothing about these tomb stones they have now.

D.S.: No, they just put up stones?

J.D.: They put a stone, a marker.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: ... who was buried there.

D.S.: Yes, uhhuh.

J.D.: And, so they went on that way for years, see.

D.S.: How about their weddings? What were they like?

J.D.: The weddings were on the order of.

D.S.: Were they in the church ever, or usually in the house?

J.D.: Well, both, in the house or in the church.

D.S.: Oh.

J.D.: The school house, would have weddings in the school house.

D.S.: They didn’t make much fuss over a wedding, did they?
J.D.: No, not like they do today.
D.S.: No. Would the bride wear a special dress?
J.D.: Yes, she, she wore a special dress. See, I... I tried to get there a special dress for them so they could get married in it.
D.S.: Ah, that was nice of you, yea.
J.D.: Well, I... I'd write to people, and in the city right quick, and they would send it right quick, right down to me.
D.S.: Oh, Great! Yea.
J.D.: They would send a dress, you see.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: A dress for the people that going to get married.
D.S.: Yea, uhhuh.
J.D.: They were... They were real good that way when they were getting married.
D.S.: How did they make money, these people?
J.D.: Make money?
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: Well, they..., they didn't make any money. (Laughed)
D.S.: How, they didn't sell eggs or corn?
J.D.: I tell you, when they were starting to build Skyline Drive up there, ah... ah... cars would go over it, you see. Could go over it, they would take..., take, like peaches or pears, or whatever was growing on their place. They would take them up on Skyline Drive and they would sell them, see.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: For so much; ten cents..., ten cents, maybe for so many.
D.S.: Yes.
J.D.: That way.
D.S.: But, before Skyline Drive, they didn't have any stores that they could take these things to?
J.D.: They had to walk all the way down, down about three miles or four miles, down to Buzz meadows' store. Buzz had a little store down there, you could set the store in this room.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: That, that's about how big it was. Now, Clinton Lam, he had a store below Buzz Meadows.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: A lot of the people dealt with him.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: That, that way, why they dealt with one another.
D.S.: I was wondering how they got money for kerosene, you know, and things of that kind .......
J.D.: Well, they would ..... 
D.S.: Sugar?
J.D.: ..... work for different ones. They, when one needed work done, they would do it. Get paid so much. I guess kerosene was five cents a gallon, something like that.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: Very cheap, nothing like it is today.
D.S.: No! Well, now they grow corn and then take it to a mill to have it ....
J.D.: Take it to a mill to have it ground.
D.S.: Where was the mill?
J.D.: The mill was, now let me think .... It was over ...., ah, the mill ...., see, where was that at now? I forget. It was over ...., I could take you right to it, but I can't think.

D.S.: Was it toward Elkton?
J.D.: Huh?
D.S.: Was it toward Elkton?
J.D.: Yes, it was down toward Elkton.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: They would take it to that mill, and-a, they ground it, see.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: That's the way they made their bread ....
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: .... and all that kind of stuff, they used corn in and wheat, and stuff, what they lived on, you see.
D.S.: Did they raise pigs?
J.D.: Pigs? Ah, yes. That was their main eating. Pigs, yes, and cows.
D.S.: They had cows?
J.D.: Yes. When one of the cow, they would kill a cow, they would all gather together and take and kill a cow and cut ..., cut it all up in pieces and that the way they did with animals.
D.S.: Now, that's a first. People in the northern section never ate beef.
J.D.: They didn't?
D.S.: No, but these people did?
J.D.: Yea.
D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Yea, they ate beef, yes. Corn, all kind of stuff, chickens.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: And anything..., anything that was eatable.

D.S.: Yes. Was there any fishing done around here? Were there good streams?

J.D.: Yes. Best, a lot of fishing streams.

D.S.: Yea. Yea. How about making moonshine, was there much of that?

J.D.: (Laughing) That was their principal doing.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: I remember up, I..., up on the mountain, there were two men that was going around...... They went one place to another saying they wanted to buy some moonshine and they would find out where the moonshine was at and after a little while they would raid it.

D.S.: A-aa, Ah!

J.D.: They would raid it, and take all the liquor that they had made.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: They use to drink it, all the liquor.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Mostly all of it, yea. Lots of them.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: Herbert Breeden, why, he got caught making his liquor. He served for it, he served five years in jail for it.

D.S.: Oh, my gosh!

J.D.: You know what we use to do with him? We use to dress him all up at the end of the month in women clothes, and they
let him go home for a day or two and let him come back again. That's the way they use to do.

D.S.: I wonder why?
J.D.: I... I don't, they didn't keep them in jail.
D.S.: (Laughed)
J.D.: I didn't know why, they didn't have room for them or something.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: So, they would give them a room, a place to sleep, and everything....
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: They were good to them in jail. But, it ain't like it is today, nothing like that.
D.S.: No. Ah, then, was it rocky for them to make their gardens? Did they have a lot of rocks?
J.D.: Yes, just like it is today.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Plenty of rocks.
D.S.: Yea. Did they move the rocks out of the garden and build walls, stone walls?
J.D.: They would move as much as they could.
D.S.: They did. Uhhuh.
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: Did they strip the trees of the bark? Was there any tanning done around here?
J.D.: Canning? Yes, lots of canning was done.
D.S.: No. Tanning.
J.D.: Tanning?
D.S.: Yes, was there a Tannery?

J.D.: No, there wasn't no Tanneries here.

D.S.: So, they didn't strip the bark from the trees, did they?

J.D.: No.

D.S.: No.

J.D.: Not from that territory. Come to find out what it was good for then they would do that.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: A lot of things they didn't know.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Just common to them, that was, they were concern, they didn't know about....

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: ....about that.

D.S.: Was there any doctor they used or ....

J.D.: Yes.

D.S.: ....did they use midwives?

J.D.: Doctor ...., Doctor ...., oh, Doctor Miller, use to come up in here, and another Doctor there in Shenandoah.

D.S.: Oh!

J.D.: What was that name. He lived right on the corner of the street there and he would get a horse and carriage and he, when someone would be real sick, they would send for him and the Doctor would come up, see.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Clean up by here. They had a road, a narrow road, was just wide enough for him to get through. They made a road alright, all the way clean up the mountain for three miles.
D.S.: Wow!
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: How would they get word to him?
J.D.: Why, a man would ride on horseback.
D.S.: Uhhuh, yea.
J.D.: Some Doctors would come up on horseback.
D.S.: Sure.
J.D.: See?
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: To where ever they lived at.
D.S.: Did you hear of any particular diseases that these people had?
J.D.: No. I... I never, they seem to be a good healthy people.
J.D.: Yea, they were good healthy people.
D.S.: Yea, right. Uhhuh.
J.D.: More healthier than those out side of herein the cities.
D.S.: Yea, that's right. Well, they had a lot of hard work to do, and they were out of doors a lot, and they....
J.D.: Yea, they were, were..., they were real healthy people.
D.S.: How would they celebrate Christmas?
J.D.: Well, (Laughed) they, they would celebrate it. They didn't know much about the Christmas tree, they didn't do that.... trim up a tree or something like that.
D.S.: No.
J.D.: But at the school house, they would have somebody dress up like Santa Clause.
D.S.: Oh! Uhhuh.
J.D.: They would come in there at the school house. I use to get a lot of stuff sent to me, for..., for..., to give to the children, you see.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: And, a whole lot of stuff would come in, box after box. Yea.

D.S.: Oh, how wonderful. Just from people knowing about your work?

J.D.: Yea. We got acquainted with one another, they would fill them up with toys for the children. That's, that's where they got their toys.

D.S.: Uh huh.

J.D.: From us, right up there on the mountains, and at the school house.


J.D.: Yea, we..., we had quite a number, a any vast amount of toys, doll babies and all that kind of stuff we would give to the children.

D.S.: Uh huh. Did you ever get anything for the grown-ups?

J.D.: Yes, ah, yes. Get clothes........

D.S.: Uh huh.

J.D.: that was sent into us. The grown-ups they would get clothes, box after box of clothes. That's how I got this here place here. This man, this man lived over here, he came up to where I lived at and he says, "Mr. John," he says, says, "if you will give me some clothes," he said, "for my family down there, I'll give you plenty of corn and stuff and I'll give you a piece of land........

D.S.: Ah!
J.D.: "...right across from where I live at."
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: So..., so, he..., he did. He willed it over to me and I went down to; what was the Justice of Peace down in Shenandoah?
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: And he made out the will. I don't, don't know what I ever done with that. I put it somewhere in the house here; and he..., he took us out there and made it all out to us.
It..., it..., it runs from the creek here where the bridge is today, all down on this side of the road, all the way up there where the creek crosses over again.
D.S.: Oh!
J.D.: That's all my land.
D.S.: Great!
J.D.: He give me all that land.
D.S.: That was nice.
J.D.: Yes, and-a...., and-a..., the men ..... I had five dollars to start to build.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: All...., all the men around here wanted to build a church, they wanted me to be the preacher in the church. So, we all worked together, and we got lumber. Lumber was awful cheap ..... 
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: .... then. So, use to sold ..... Will Samuels use to go across the mountain, and he had a horse and took a couple of horses, and they pulled lumber all the way across, cutted, had it cut over there and everything....... 
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: .... and pull that all the way over here......
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: .... and built the church out of it.
D.S.: Oh, how nice. So you could stay here after the Park took over. That was great. Ah, on Christmas day, did they shoot fireworks?
J.D.: No.
D.S.: No, they didn't?
J.D.: Didn't shoot fireworks.
D.S.: No. Did they do a lot of drinking?
J.D.: A lot of drinking, that I did know.
D.S.: (Laughed)
J.D.: Yea, they knewed all about that .......... 
D.S.: (Laughed) Yea.
J.D.: (Laughing) They use to make it.
D.S.: What made you want to come here?
J.D.: In Philadelphia, I was gone from place to place, see. I wanted to go to the mountains to preach to the people. I, I had the thought of other people down here, see, before ever they sent for me.
D.S.: Ah!
J.D.: Finally, ah, they..., they sent word up for me, they wanted me to go, and Willie Wiggins and, and-a couple of men got together and raised enough money ...., it didn't cost much to go, go on the train, you see ........
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: ... a train rode into Shenandoah Junction, and then from Shenandoah Junction on into Elkton, four o'clock in the morning. I..., I was in El..., Elkton, in Shenandoah ..... in Shenandoah rather, and there ..... a ...., a .... I was to meet Joe Meadows and Buzz Meadows on horseback.
They, they was to come in, and..., there was .... quite a crowd. We stayed there until six o'clock. Just at six o'clock in..., in... comes Joe Breeden and different ones. These two men, Buzz Meadows and Joe Breeden, Joe, no, Joe Meadows. And-a...., and they said ...., said; Oh, he was a big tall feller. He said, "Are you Mr. John?" I said, "Yes, yes I am." "Well," he said, "We come down to take you up to where, where you are going to live at."

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: I was up to his place for awhile, until they got the place built, so they worked. We got my trunks, I had a trunk.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: I don't know, a couple of suit cases, ah ..... , they had a wagon of some kind ..... 

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: .... and took us up. We had to cross the creek nine times...

D.S.: Ahhh!

J.D.: .... before we got up to Buzz Meadow's store.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: He had a little store about half as big as this room, you see.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: That's where we stopped at. By the time we got the stuff all fixed and put in these trunks, we started up the mountain. And, we, oh, we had quite a trip up the mountain.

D.S.: Yes.

J.D.: We cross the creek and looked up there. I..., they tell me to ride the horse. I rode the horse, a big black horse.

D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: I'll never forget that. And, we went on up the mountain, as we went on up the mountain, ah, we got up aways I held tight to that horse. I looked down over the side of the mountain. Ah, it looked steep.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: So ....

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: Then we .......

D.S.: Well, what was your reaction when you saw the mountain people? Were you, did you say, at last I am where I want to be?

J.D.: Yea.

D.S.: Or did you think, Oh! my Gosh, how can I do anything here?

J.D.: Well........

D.S.: Which did you feel?

J.D.: Well, I...., I, what I saw was so far apart, see, where the people were. The people down here, the people down here, and three or four miles way up the mountain, see. The people, that's where I first landed.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: See, after I got acquainted with the people .......

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: .... at the school house, up there .......

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: .... Meadows school.

D.S.: Did they ever get another school teacher?

J.D.: Ah...., no. They...., they...., the Park took all the people out.

D.S.: Yes. I mean after this one been thrown out, they never replaced her?
J.D.: Not up there. They started a school way down on the road, down here.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: See, that's where, I don't know wheather you noticed the church that sets on the hill, well, right across the road from that was a family lived, they had a school.

D.S.: But that was pretty far for these children to go?

J.D.: Yes.

D.S.: They didn't then, did they?

J.D.: Oh, some of them went and some didn't. Some did.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Some walked that long walk.


J.D.: Those that walked, they had to walk back home too, until later on they got a bus.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: And that bus use to bring them up to here, see. Then they walked from here on up, see.

D.S.: How did the people feel when they were told the Park was coming in and they would have to move?

J.D.: Well, the Park they didn't like it. What, what, they did this. The Park promised to give them five dollars a month, they were going to Stanley, over ......

D.S.: Ida.


D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: And, ah..., there they built little houses for them over there.

D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: See, finally that busted up and didn't last very long.

D.S.: Uhhuh. But were they resentful? Did they not want to move or did they not care?

J.D.: They didn't, didn't want to move. They...

D.S.: No.

J.D.: No, they wanted to stay here.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Stay, but the Park told them that they had to move.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Bought that, the Park had bought all that land.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: All that from here, here all the way around, like, goes all away around that, goes around here .......

D.S.: Sure.

J.D.: .... like in the valley.

D.S.: Yes.

J.D.: See, that bought all that land from the park ..., from the people.

D.S.: Yea. Well, now after they were first told, they were given a couple of years to make you, there, you know, to grasp the idea they were going. Ah, did they still continue living the same way while they were waiting to move?

J.D.: Yes, some of them was ...

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Some of them, as they gradually furnished a house for them, see.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: The Park, would gradually ....

D.S.: Move them out.
J.D.: ...move over there. Built like a one story house.
J.D.: You have seen them I guess?
D.S.: Oh, yes. Ah, did many of them join the CCC?
J.D.: I don't know.
D.S.: You know that helped build the trails and the road and all the rest of it?
J.D.: Yes, some of them did.
D.S.: Yes. Uhhuh.
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: Yes, because that was good pay.
J.D.: They ...., they worked on that road, ah, on the trail, ah, where were it, it stopped at? On the other side of Luray?
D.S.: Yea, well, it went to Panorama.
J.D.: Uhhuh.
D.S.: From Panorama down here to Simmons Gap was the first stretch. Yea. Ah, when the people, you say they use to do jobs for other people, were they stone masons, any of them?
J.D.: No. The only stone masons I know, (Laughed) they would throw stones at you.
D.S.: (Laughed)
J.D.: (Laughing) The only stone masons I know of, I never know them to pick up stones and build houses out of rock, you know. That's the way they use to build their houses out of rock. Get, find, get the rock out in the field, that was the only rocks there were.
D.S.: I see. But, what other kind of jobs then would they do for other people?
J.D.: They didn't. Well, they would, well, they made plenty of moonshine for them and they would sell that. They ...., oh, I don't know of any other work they did do, tell you the truth, outside of that.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: Moonshine, whatever they could sell of that, see.

D.S.: Were you here of the time of the chestnut blight, of the chestnut blight, you know, when the chestnuts suddenly died?

J.D.: Yes, I do remember some of that. I, about the last part of that. When they were tearing all those trees all down.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Yes, I came in around just about that time.

D.S.: Oh, because the chestnuts was a very good cash crop for the mountain people.

J.D.: Yes.

D.S.: Right.

J.D.: Use to get the people that would go over Skyline Drive, see, they just had dirt roads over Skyline Drive.

D.S.: Yes.

J.D.: And they would sell them chestnuts, you see.


J.D.: Yes, I remember that.

D.S.: Well, do you feel that now that the people have been moved out that they are better off than they were?

J.D.: Yes, yes they are. A lot of them are better off now. Better off, they have houses built outside the line .......

D.S.: Yea.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: See? Living ....
D.S.: Hey, do you have any names of those people?
J.D.: Yes, lots of them. Some of them have died off, or ...., lots of them have died off and I forget what their names are.
D.S.: Oh, dear. That's shame, because they would have been good to interviewed too, you know.
J.D.: Hensley, Johnny Hensley, John Hensley.
D.S.: H-e-n-s-l-e-y?
J.D.: Yes, Hensley, from Hensley Hollow.
D.S.: And where does he live now?
J.D.: He's dead.
D.S.: Oh!
J.D.: Yes, he's dead.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: The Hensley, they call that , over there at Hensley Hollow.
J.D.: That name still goes. This is Jolliet Hollow.....
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: ....here. A man by the name of Jolliet, Johnny Jolliet.
D.S.: Is he alive?
J.D.: No, he died.
D.S.: (Laughed) Oh, dear! I can't interview them, can I?
J.D.: All those old fellows now are dead and gone.
J.D.: Yes. They moved out here. They were buried, buried, lot down here, a big place is, a lot of them laid out there and was buried. I see so many. That, it goes around just some-thing like that goes around the mountain.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: It kind winds around, in different hollows.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Named after these men ......
D.S.: Sure.
J.D.: ...that died.
D.S.: Well, you still have contact with a lot of the people don't you?
J.D.: I use to, yes. I use to at that time, hundreds of them. I use to, I would work, work all around here. I lived here, you see. Like I would work with the people upon the mountain, up there, and down here and people over that way.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: People this way, over in here.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Well, did you help them when they were being moved? Did you help to console them and work with them to help them adapt?
J.D.: Yes I did, I helped them, give them clothes.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Oh, give them piles and piles of clothes. They use to come here, be hundreds of them use to come, for clothes. We gave them clothes. It was, they...., they were wonderful people. I liked them. I liked these mountain people.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Bag full after bag full, cart, and they would have a cart or something. Give them a load in their cart and take it up the mountain, and give it to whoever I told them to give them to. They would give them to those people. Ah, a pile, piles of clothes that were sent in here was tremendous.
D.S.: Yea. How about shoes? Where they given shoes?
J.D.: What, what you mean, in the bags? Yes, what the people sent in.
D.S.: Yea, otherwise they had no shoes. Right?
J.D.: No. Summertime they run around in their bare feet.
D.S.: Uhhuh. And with all the rattlesnakes. There were a lot of rattlesnakes, weren't there? Yes.
J.D.: They use to shoot them.
D.S.: Where did they get their money for their shots?
J.D.: They, they would get money, not..., powder, you see, and put it in the guns......
D.S.: Ah!
J.D.: ....and then they would shoot.
D.S.: Did you ever sit around with them in the evenings when they were playing music?
J.D.: Yes. Yes, I use to listen to them a lot.
D.S.: What kind did they play? Did they play fiddles?
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: Banjos?
J.D.: Banjos and ah, ..... 
D.S.: Harps?
J.D.: Yes, harps.
D.S.: Do you recall any of the tunes they played?
J.D.: I don't have any. No, I don't have any, see. I don't know if I've got anything, I can't place any, that has been so many years ago.
D.S.: I know it, yes.
J.D.: Thirty years ago when they use to ...... a..., ain't that funny? I wonder, if I had know something like this was
a coming, I... I would write a lot of things.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: But, I never expected anything.

D.S.: Ah, in the central section a lot of them use to sing, just sit around and sing hymns. Did any of your poeple do that?

J.D.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: Then they would play Turkey In The Straw, did yours play that?

J.D.: Yes, they use to play all that. Turkey In The Straw.

D.S.: Slippers?

J.D.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: And, how about Under The Double Eagle?

J.D.: They use to sing all.... all those songs.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Yea, but they don't sing them anymore?

D.S.: No, I know it. Yea.

J.D.: They got away from all that, them,... those people. They forgot all that, they've got in ways like the northern people, see.

D.S.: That's not good, no.

J.D.: They got acting like they do.


J.D.: That, that's how a lot of northern people, lot of them come down and moved in down here, in places down here and worked with them.

D.S.: Yea, uhhuh.

J.D.: And that way they got acquainted together.
D.S.: Yes. Did you ever hear any expressions that sort-of surprised you when they said them? Did they have any little colloquial expressions?

J.D.: What...., what do you mean?

D.S.: Oh, well, like they would say ..... I've heard ....

J.D.: Y'all?

D.S.: No. I've heard one of them use to say like, "Well, as the little boy said, as the rabbit run over him, I'll stick with my pig".

J.D.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: And then, "The little boy said, as the rabbit..., chicken ran over him, ah, I don't like that". (Laughing) You know?

J.D.: Uhhuh, yea.

D.S.: Ah, sort-of strange expressions, and I was wondering if you had heard any of such?

J.D.: Oh, there were all kinds of expressions like that, yes, yes.

D.S.: Can you think of any?

J.D.: No. I....., they, they wanted to get me out, see, up there. They didn't want me up on the mountain, see, after a while. There was one, one fellow up there, Gerald Lam, he used to sit way up on top of the mountain, see. Up there, and he used to shoot at me, to try to scare me, see, he'd shoot. He fires a shot down there, I went out the door to go get something, I don't know what it was, and the shot went through my hat.

D.S.: Oh, my goodness!

J.D.: Yes. I was in the way. Yes, he'd remember it.

D.S.: Huh! Is he still alive?
J.D.: I think he is.

D.S.: Where is he living?

J.D.: He lives over around Stanley somewhere, over that way.

D.S.: Gerald Lang?

J.D.: No. Lam

D.S.: Around Stanley.

J.D.: L-a-m-b.


J.D.: Yes.

D.S.: Uhhuh. O.K. (Laughed)

J.D.: Yes, he'll remember. He could give you a lot of stuff to tape for you.

D.S.: Uhhuh. O.K. Bu, they didn't drive you out, did they?

J.D.: No, I'm still here.


J.D.: Yea. It has been hundreds of them have been saved since I come in here, maybe thousands. All, over, all this part of the country, I use to preach. I preached in every little hamlet there is around about here.

D.S.: Oh.

J.D.: And, the Lord, the good Lord saved a lot of them. I guess there was hundreds and hundreds of them that was saved here at the mission. I... I tell you if it was...... I feel like some time sitting down and cry, thinking of the hundreds of.... I don't preach, they got another preacher now, they got another man. I forget what his name is now, can't...... Oh, I forget now what it is.

D.S.: It makes no difference, I tell you this, you are still Mr. John to everybody.
J.D.: I can't remember, I can tell you in a minute what his name is, out there.

D.S.: You're still the preacher for this place, so make no difference what name he has.

J.D.: Oh, yes. Steve Trout.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: S-t-e-v-e Trout.

D.S.: Well, how did you get around to all these hamlets, by horseback?

J.D.: Walk, walk... walk.

D.S.: Oh!

J.D.: Use to do a lot of walking. I would start......

D.S.: Didn't you have a horse?

J.D.: No, never had a horse. I start out maybe, six or seven o'clock in the morning and I would walk until I come to the first place, see. Where they, these people had a church, where there was preaching. I would preach for them there, after I got through preaching for them there then I would go to another church, to another place that they would have. I use to preach four or five times on Sunday.

D.S.: And walking in between?

J.D.: Walking all the time.

D.S.: Oh, my heavens.

J.D.: Get home about two or three o'clock the next morning.

D.S.: You sure did. Did you visit the people when they were ill?

J.D.: Yes, visit as many as I could.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Yea, the Lord helped them.

J.D.: It was a blessing.
D.S.: In other words, you had a very good life here among these people.
J.D.: Yes, yes I did have a good life among them.
D.S.: Uhhuh. And you did a lot of good.
J.D.: Uhhuh.
D.S.: Did you ever know Deconess Hutton?
J.D.: Who?
D.S.: Deconess Hutton.
J.D.: Hutton, the name seems familiar.
D.S.: She was with the Episcopal Mission in Stanley.
J.D.: Uhhuh. Who was that lady use to preach there up on the mountain there?
D.S.: Deconess Hutton.
J.D.: Yea. I preached for her a couple of times.
D.S.: She is a wonderful woman.
J.D.: Yes. I don't know what come of her.
D.S.: She is still there.
J.D.: Is she?
D.S.: She's still there.
J.D.: Sure would love to see her.
D.S.: Yes, she is still there.
J.D.: Yes, I preached to, I don't know how many times I preached for her?
D.S.: That was a long walk for you, too, wasn't it?
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: You had said they had large families, way back quite a while ago. How large a family would be a large one?

J.D.: Well the largest one I know of was fourteen.

D.S.: Fourteen! (Whistled)

J.D.: Yes.

D.S.: That's a lot of children isn't it? Ah, do you know of any particular herbs or medicine that they used?

J.D.: Well, I don't know of any right off hand, but I know they use to use certain herbs and different things that they would, you know, gather out of the fields.

D.S.: So many doctors are learning now that these were really good and that they did the job, and I was just wondering if you knew what they were.

J.D.: Yes, I was, I just this doctor up in Philadelphia and on ........., He had a drug store, 15th and Arch, 15th and Market, yes, that's what it was. There he use to make up a medicine, and it had seventeen different ingredients in it.

D.S.: Wow!

J.D.: And all the doctors were trying to get a hold of that remedy, see.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: And, he wouldn't give it to them.

D.S.: Yes.

J.D.: He wouldn't tell them what was in it, or anything. So he, that man, that poor man he died. It was for

D.S.: Uhhuh. But they had some things for coughs, they had others things for poultices, and ...

J.D.: Yes, they use to have all kinds of different herbs for coughs, and ......

D.S.: Yes.

J.D.: •••••• and, all use to go to him. He use to give them all kinds of remedies.

D.S.: Humm, yea. Well, you know fourteen children in a family is an awful lot to try to feed, isn't it? How big were their gardens? About an acre?

J.D.: Their gardens? Oh, my goodness, four or five acres. Yes, they use to gather up stuff out of their gardens and put it together some way and make up remedies, give to their children for diseases.

D.S.: Yea, right. When they grew their cabbages and turnips and potatoes, would they put them in the ground? Dig a hole and put them in the ground and cover them with straw?

J.D.: No, no. I never heard tell of doing that, no.

D.S.: No? How would they keep them over the winter?

J.D.: Well, they had like a little house like built across the road••••••••

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: ••• and they would put their stuff in there.

D.S.: I see, yea. Uhhuh. Ah, there's a difference, yea. Wonder why the things still didn't freeze? Why the cabbages wouldn't freeze?

J.D.: Who?

D.S.: Why the cabbages and things didn't freeze while in that building?

J.D.: Well, sometimes it did.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: They had to cover them up good.

D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Yes, they..., they had ....

D.S.: Cover them with straw, yes. O.K. Ah, can you think of anything else about these people?

J.D.: Well, they were ..... Oh, it was so many different things they used ...., and the, they would bury some of the stuff.

D.S.: They did?

J.D.: Bury some of it in the ground, for the next year, save it. They had a way of fixing it up.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: Just, they would can it, a lot of stuff.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: They would can it up and ..... 

D.S.: Did they do applebutter boilings?

J.D.: Yes, Yes, they used a great, great big boilers, I don't know where they get that boiler from, but they would boil their applebutter and everything in it, even boil their liquor in it.

D.S.: That's right, well, now when they were making the applebutter, was it sort a festive time? Would they make a party out of it?

J.D.: Yes.

D.S.: They did?

J.D.: Everybody would come around.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: Yea, they made a big time over it.

D.S.: Yea.

J.D.: Singing and everything going on, drinking and everything.

D.S.: Yea. They, did they have a fellow on one side and a girl on the other?
J.D.: No.
D.S.: No?
J.D.: I never seen anything like that.
D.S.: To stir it?
J.D.: Well, those who stir it would.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: Yes. Then a lot of men would do that kind of work.
D.S.: Oh, I see, yea.
J.D.: But, the women, they handled all the canning.
D.S.: After they had made it? They put the applebutter in big crocks, right? And, then how would they cover them?
J.D.: Oh, they would cover them with whatever they could get, see.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: To cover them up good.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: This kind of weather, see.
D.S.: Yea.
J.D.: Yes, they would have a awful lot of jars to cover up.
D.S.: Sure. Did they dry apples?
J.D.: Dried apples? Yes, they use to dry them. Yes, other things, other fruits.
D.S.: What?
J.D.: They use to dry them pears, and all that kind of stuff.
D.S.: They dried pears?
J.D.: Yes, they dried all that kind of stuff.
D.S.: Cherries?
J.D.: Cherries, and everthing else. They run out of cooking, see, why they would have to dry it.
D.S.: Sure.
J.D.: Or else they would cook it up good, see, and can it.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: ...... that way, put it in cans.
D.S.: Yea, uhhuh.
J.D.: Yea, they had all kinds of seeams doing it ......
D.S.: Sure.
J.D.: .....they know how to do it.
D.S.: They did know how to do it, yea.
J.D.: Yea.
D.S.: Did they ever make, what you call ash cakes?
J.D.: Ash cakes? Yes, something, something like that. I don't know how they did it.
D.S.: Were they good?
J.D.: They were good whatever they were.
J.D.: Yea. All that kind of stuff.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. So they all had chickens, they all had pigs, and they all had a cow ......
J.D.: Uhhuh, cows and ....
D.S.: Horses?
J.D.: Horses and ....
D.S.: Uhhuh, and then, well, did any of them had more than one cow?
J.D.: Had more than one cow? Yes!, some of them had as many as a dozen cows.
D.S.: Really?
J.D.: Y e s, indeed.
D.S.: And they had a lot of prperty didn't they?
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: And they would make butter out of the milk, butter and cheese?
J.D.: Their own butter.
D.S.: Ah, cottage cheese?
J.D.: Cottage cheese.
D.S.: Where would they keep that, in the spring house?
J.D.: Yes, they had spring houses up there.
D.S.: Oh, uhhuh. Then all the houses were along a stream, weren't they?
J.D.: Near a stream, yes.
D.S.: Did they make their own soap?
J.D.: Soap? Yes, they made soap. They made all of those kinds of things, see.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Soap and every different things you can think of, see.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Sorghum?
J.D.: Would take the place of a lot of stuff.
D.S.: Yea, right.
J.D.: Of what they used today.
D.S.: Uhhuh. They lived pretty good, didn't they?
J.D.: Yes, yes. They lived real good, they got their ideas from the Indians. A lot of their ideals.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Yes, they canned an awful lot of stuff.
D.S.: Ah, you said there was an Indian settlement, ah, did they mix with those Indians at all?
J.D.: A lot of those Indians were dead, a lot of them was gone. They wasn't around, wasn't around here forty years ago.

D.S.: Oh.

D.S.: But they didn't intermarry with them?

J.D.: No.

D.S.: No?

J.D.: Yes, yes they did. You can look at some of them, you can see the Indian in them.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yes.

J.D.: Yes.

D.S.: Have you any idea where these people came from originally?

J.D.: That..., I don't know. I'll tell you where they went to.

D.S.: Oh, I know where they went to. I wonder where they came from?

J.D.: Down toward Richmond.

D.S.: Yes.

J.D.: That's where they are at now.

D.S.: Yes. I am wondering how they originally got here.

J.D.: Uhhuh. They moved out, see, here, when the park come along, they had to get out.

D.S.: Yes, I know that. But, I was wondering how they first came here to live?

J.D.: First came here?

D.S.: Yes.

J.D.: I don't know. All around here were Indians.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: Who was that, name of Indians. I forget how, who it was. I forget now who it was, can't think of it.
D.S.: You know, you have given us a really remarkable interview. Ah, I don't know how to thank-you for all that you have told us.

J.D.: It was years ago, I may think of some more and send it into you.

D.S.: O.K. That would be wonderful because we are trying to vary and confirm and you have told us a lot of things we had not already known. Oh, I wanted to ask you, wildlife. Did you ever see any deer up here?

J.D.: Yes.

D.S.: Before the Park came?

J.D.: Yes, I seen two over here not so long ago.

D.S.: No. I mean before the Park?

J.D.: Before the Park? Yes, yes, there was a lot of wildlife, yes.

D.S.: Were there bears?

J.D.: Bears? Yes.

D.S.: Before the Park?

J.D.: Uhhuh. Yes, before the Park took over.

D.S.: There were bears?

J.D.: Bears, deers, and wildcats. I lived up on the mountain, what was it that jumped over my head? I forget what it was, what it was now. It was some kind of a wildcat or something.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

J.D.: I forget what it was now.

D.S.: Cougar?

J.D.: Yes, it jumped right over top of my head.

D.S.: Uhhuh.
J.D.: Yes, it was lots of them.
D.S.: So, it were deer and bears here before the park?
J.D.: Uhhuh, way before the Park took over.
D.S.: And, the mountain people hadn't killed them out?
J.D.: No. No, they hadn't killed them all. There was plenty of them here. They lived on a lot of that stuff.
D.S.: Sure.

J.D.: Bears and deers, and different things, eatable things.
D.S.: Yea. And, squirrels and rabbits.

J.D.: Yes, and all. What was, now that they use to go out and hunt for?
D.S.: Coon?

J.D.: Coons... no, not coons. I forget what they are now?
D.S.: Opossum?

J.D.: Opossums, yes, yes, we use to go out and hunt for them. They would dig under ground, see. We had a line. (Laughed)

D.S.: Yea. Did the families have many dogs to keep the wild animals away from their gardens?

J.D.: Yes, some of them did. All the dogs. Uhhuh.
D.S.: Yes, to keep the animals away from their gardens, yea.

J.D.: Yea, it was plenty of them.
D.S.: Yea. Oh, this is tremendous, and I really thank-you.

M.S.D.: You ain't got no grey hair?
D.S.: No. Well, my Daddy never had grey hair either, so I must have taken after Daddy. So, which I am very happy about. (Laughed)
ms. d.: Is your Daddy living?
D.S.: Neither my Daddy or Mother.
J.D.: My Mother was ninety-three years old when she died.
D.S.: Oh, my!
J.D.: My Father was eighty-nine.
D.S.: Then you come from a very long lived family, don't you?
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: Oh, I know what is the matter here, I wired him for sound, didn't I? (Laughed) A real Watergate. (Laughed)
J.D.: I might think of some more.
D.S.: Yes, if you can that would be just grand.
Now lets see what kind of picture we got. Well, I would say it is just as good as the other, a fact I can't see the different.
J.D.: Uhhuh.
D.S.: Yep, and I thought I was going to center you better, and I didn't. I think it is amazing that your memory, that to me that you have such a fabulous memory, you memory. Wow!
MS.D.: Did you hear? Did you hear what she said?
J.D.: What?
MS.D.: She said she thought you had a fabulous memory.
J.D.: Yes.
D.S.: You do.