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(SNP046) Charles H. Estes interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Victoria M. Edwards

Charles H. Estes

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Smith: I am interviewing Mr. Charles Estes of Sperryville, who had been a sawmill operator, correct?

Estes: That's right. Sawmill, orchards, farmer.

Smith: In the Piney River?

Estes: Yes, just all in the Piney River, yeah, just a sawmill and stave mill up there.

Smith: Oh, you had a stave mill up there.

Estes: Moved the stave mill in first.

Smith: There is one thing I've been wondering. Did you own the property?

Estes: No, my father did.

Smith: Well, I mean, it was in your family?

Estes: Yeah.

Smith: Do you know where they bought it from? Did they maybe buy it from the Thorntons?

Estes: No, they bought it from the Eagles I think. My father and John J. Miller went together and bought the place.

Smith: How many acres was it?

Estes: I think it was 165, somewhere around there. They bought it and peeled the tanbark off of it. And they had a little sawmill and sawed some too, but you see the tanbark went to the tannery down here, for tanning hides and stuff with.

Smith: Was it a portable sawmill, one of these that you could move from one place to another?

Estes: Yes.

Smith: Did you employ other people?

Estes: Oh yes, I had a big sawmill. We had seven or eight work for us.
Smith: Were they mountain people?
Estes: Yeah, most of them was.
Smith: Do you recall their names?
Estes: Go get the book in there, 1927.
Smith: You've got their names in a book?
Estes: Sure, I've got the book and what I paid and everything. I was paying a dollar and a half a day and board when the farmers around here was paying seventy-five cents. See, we had a farm, and a store, and a grist mill. You know all that old grist mill, old mill, my daddy bought that place in 1895 (sic.)

(NOTE: Several seconds unintelligible because both talking at once.)

Smith: Would the people pay you?
Estes: Well, I'll tell you this book starts with what's that, 1927.
Mrs. Estes(?): Yeah, put your glasses on.
Estes: Here are the names.
Smith: OK, Curley Frazier.
Estes: Curley Frazier, he was raised up in Frazier Hollow. Harry Clatterbuck, he lived in an old house at Piney Run at the sawmill, we had a house there, see.

Mrs. Estes: We owned this property, ran from the top of the mountain down Piney Run, all the way down.

Smith: From the very top of the mountain?
Estes: No, no.
Mrs. Estes: Almost.
Estes: You know where Trail Camp is.
Smith: Yeah.
Estes: Well, it's down below Pole Bridge. See old Dr. Kelley
I owned a lot of land in there. He owned a lot of land. And my daddy adjoined him and Bernard Bolen on one side, and ~~~ on the other. And Piney Run come down this ravine here.

Smith: We'll go over it with the map in a little while.
Estes: And see this side of the mountain Bernard Bolen lived on, and this side ~~~ ~~~ , and here it was Dr. Kelly.
Smith: OK. Now Bob High (?)
Estes: Bob Fry (?), he come from up in there around Turner bridge (?) (ridge?) originally. But he's dead too. Most all of them that worked for me up there is dead now.

Smith: Sure. Lester Paine? Was he a mountain
Estes: Yeah, all the Paines lived right above here.
Smith: OK. And so now Harry Clatterbuck, for three and a half days work, got seven dollars.

Estes: Seven dollars, that's right. You go on down and had ~~~ ~~~ Clatterbuck, Jim Clatterbuck, from Browntown. And they'd walk across the mountain to work. Every week walked from Browntown over there.

Smith: Up the mountain and over?
Estes: Up, yeah, see, I was cook, and I had a little four-room house I built, and there was a four-room house up there. And I had a nice little four-room house, and I cooked, and I fed seven or eight, by gosh. I worked from four o'clock in the morning to ten o'clock at night. When I wasn't at work cooking, I was hauling stuff out.

Smith: What time would they show up for work, after walking from Browntown. What time would they leave in the morning? Have you any idea?

Estes: No, they stayed with me, boarded (~) and ~~~
I was, some lived, more than two of them, see two of them stayed with me.

Smith: Now, these mountain people, had they had much education?

Estes: Well, I'd say one of them, especially one, didn't have much education, but he's the wittiest person you ever talked to in your life, course he's dead. I doubt if Ashby, not Ashby Clatterbuck, can't think of his first name. But you couldn't say anything to him he didn't have an answer for it just like that. He didn't have to wait and so he could think about it.

Smith: Oh, I'm not saying that having no education means that a person is stupid.

Estes: No, no, what I said, he was a, most of them up here was educated, yeah.

Smith: Did they go to school?

Estes: Yeah, they went to school. They had school. The Sycamore School, and the Hull School. My sister Virginia taught school up there.

Smith: So there were plenty of schools dotted throughout this area.

Estes: Yeah, they had a school on the Hazel, and they had the Asket Dawn School near Turner Bridge, and they had a school up on the side of the mountain there, the first quarry. I mean coming down the mountain on the left was an old quarry. Right down below that was a bank with a school house. I know the lady taught school there. It was down on the road, and some of these darn rascals was hauling across from wasn't nothing but horse and buggies then. They went by, and they called the and put a bulge on the flue to keep the smoke from coming out,
and the smoke come all out of (?) this room. They told that tale, and said it was really so.

Smith: Did you in Sperryville, or I mean where did you consider your home?

Estes: My home where I was born and raised is up there where the old mill is. You know where the old mill is? Pete lived. Well that would be a house out there to the left, on the road, and that store there, that's where I was born and raised, right there.

Smith: And so whenever you had any free time, you went back there, right? Or did you stay in town?

Estes: Yeah, no, I always helped my daddy to pack apples, the apples and make hay or stuff like that and cut corn. We would take off for that, you see.

Smith: What kind of apples did you raise?

Estes: All kinds.

Smith: Milams?

Estes: No. We had all other apples, we never did pack any Milams. We had Milams, and russets, and all kind of old varieties.

Smith: What did you do with the apples?

Estes: Well we exported them, I mean

Smith: You sold them.

Estes: Yeah, we sold them. We had 30 acres orchard. There's still 25 acres over there now. That orchard was set out in 1910, and I was born and raised in that orchard. I tend to it all my life. Helped to. And 50% of them trees is still in that orchard and bearing today. So help me God you can go back, you look up, and you can't see that orchard from one place unless you get on the other
of the road up on the side of the mountain. It's perfect orchard land. It drains three ways. That's what you want, drainage. It drains to the river, it drains to the east, and it drains to the west. Just like the top of your hand. It never did freeze out in there. See, the advantage is cause of that frost. See, frost is what freezes apples, not anything else.

Smith: With your mill did you charge, did they pay you for grinding the mill, or did you take a part

Estes: We told it, and some of them would pay, and some of them we would take out for it. We told it out.

Smith: All right. Now did they bring it from like Nicholson Hollow?

Estes: Nicholson Hollow, and Hazel, and Atkinstown and all around everywhere.

Smith: How would they bring it in?

Estes: Horseback, and on their back too. They carried a lot on their back. In other words they toted. They put a two-bushel sack of meal on their back and carried it by gosh to the foot of the Hazel. Over John Filmore Jenkins place, it's at the foot of the Hazel, over on the Hazel River.

Smith: This takes amazing strength, doesn't it?

Estes: Oh, my, they was strong as, you take that book, old Charlie Sisk, well he carried a what was it a corner cupboard or something from Luray by gosh to Nicholson Hollow without setting it down, they always claimed. You remember old man Pollock, don't you?

Smith: Oh yes. Did you have anything much to do with Pollock?

Estes: I reckon I did.

Smith: Did you go to any of his parties, Pollock's parties?
Estes: I been down at Washington city, down at Wardman Park Hotel, and they had a dining room as long as these two rooms, and a table in there, just so you could get around, about twice as wide as this. You remember Hawke Radford (X) I know, Luray. Well he taken care the horses for old man Pollock at Skyland. And I went down there one time, to Washington, to see old man Pollock. And you know I was thinking of something to eat, all you know are your legs. But he used to come up there you know. And I owned Cab Inn over there and run it for years, and made good money there. I built it, built every bit of it.

Smith: Built every bit of what?

Estes: Cab Inn, that restaurant and motel. And he would stop in Warrenton. And we had this colored woman, Susie Majors (X) to cook, and he stopped at Warrenton and called and wanted to talk to Susie. And they'd tell Susie how he wanted his chickens fixed. He had his little dog and his horn, and she was along (X) then, I mean poor old woman she was about crazy. But she'd be with him. And he'd want two or three chickens cooked, or fried, however he'd want them Susie would fix them. In the back I had the river dammed up, and I had a bunch of trout in there. I had some trout in there 19 inches long, old breed (X) trout. I got them through Harry Byrd when he was governor of Virginia. I met the truck at Luray and got them off the truck in Luray. I got 500 rainbow trout and 700 brook trout, and that was the last fish that was ever put in that run over there. And old rainbow trout, old big trout you know, and he'd get out there and had some ducks on, I had it dammed up, was the reason for the, and we had white ducks, and he'd blow his horn, you know. He'd blow his little horn.

Smith: You were talking about Pollock. And did you ever go to
any of his parties up there at Skyland?

Estes: No, I can't say I, I was up to Skyland for several dances, but I don't say it was to any of his parties. Will you cut that thing off, I'll tell you. See, old man George (x) said "Susie," he loved (x) around her neck, you know, this old big fat nigger cook. Said "I'm going to tip you today. I'm going to give you a good tip." He gave her a nickel.

Smith: Well you know he didn't really have much money. He was just barely making it.

Estes: Well I think the smartest thing he ever did.

Smith: That's going to go on the tape.

Estes: Well him and Will Coffman (x) was get this Park started.

Smith: Yes it was. He did it. You used to haul things up for the CCC, didn't you?

Estes: I hauled CC boys before the government put the trucks in there to haul them. I also bought one of them 1939 Chevrolet trucks, and I still got it.

Smith: Still runs?

Estes: I imagine it would run. The last time I, it's been a couple years, I had a spare (x) on it, but it was a good old truck.

Smith: What would you carry up to them? Lumber?

Estes: No, see, the boys they hauled them out to work and back. Then from this side of the mountain it was about seven or eight men that worked on the Drive, and they wanted the trucks to come up this side of the mountain to haul them up there to work. Then when they got up there, you had to go to the camp and haul those boys out to work and carry them back.

Smith: Well back to your sawmill that you had. Did you feel that
in time you would have used up all the trees?

Estes: What, on Piney Run? No, no, we didn't cut as hard. There's just loads of timber up there right now.

Smith: Did you make much money with the sawmill?

Estes: Yeah, I did all right with it.

Smith: And you had to pay the men to come and work. How many did you have normally working for you in a day. Would you say about three or four.

Estes: Yeah, that's a, was, see we cut one week, stave wood, and load the yard and saw the next week. That's the way we did. And we had a couple cutting and a couple dragging it on the ground, you know, and on the log wagon, and of course to the mill. Taken about six to run the stave mill and run it right, because we were sawing anywhere from eight to 14 thousand staves a day.

Smith: Would you sell those staves then?

Estes: To the barrel niggers (X) that made apple barrels. I sold Atkins 600,000 staves one year and he made 60,000 apple barrels. And he was the biggest barrel maker in the county, but we had three or four more barrel niggers (X). And a lot of orchardists made their own barrels, had them made right there, and I'd sell them staves. That book will show you where I sold George Wood, and Willy Wood, and Johnny Keyser, and Sneads, and different ones staves. See, they had their own cooper, to make your own barrels.

Smith: So you had to cook for these people, so you had to feed them.

Estes: Well we had three or four that would come in, you know, from lived right there close by me. Let's see, Floyd Seal (X) and Nelson, and some of these Fraziers, see, they'd just walk
Smith: Well did you pay them less because you had to feed them?

Estes: Well, they was more of a special. Now this sawyer, old man Judge from over there at Luray above the brick church, he sawed for us for a long time on a sawmill. And I'd go get him, and I'd take him back. I'd go get him on Monday morning and take him back after if he worked for Friday night or Saturday at twelve o'clock because only if he worked five days and a half or five days a week then I'd take him home. But from Browntown they would walk across the mountain.

Smith: Did you have any trouble with these that stayed overnight?

Estes: No.

Smith: They never got drinking or anything of that kind?

Estes: No, no indeed, never had any trouble with them drinking.

This fellow I was telling you about, one morning it was pretty cold, and I didn't have a porch, but I had a platform, come out of the front door, about oh six by eight or something. And old man Clatterbuck got up that morning real soon and walked out and hollered "Whee, whee, you all get up". Said "God damn, all poor son of a bitch that can drink ice water this morning."

Smith: Yeah, I guess it did get pretty cold up there, didn't it?

Estes: Oh, yeah, it was cold in the winter time, yeah.

Smith: And you continued working in the winter?

Estes: Well, if we had a lot of logs down, why we'd drag them in the snow, you see, so they'd pull easy.

Smith: Did you use horses for that?

Estes: Yeah, didn't have anything but horses; well no, we didn't have any tractors, any things then, 1927, 8, and 9. That was before
the depression, and we didn't have anything like that. We didn't have no power saws; it was all crosscut saws and an axe.

Smith: That was a lot of work, wasn't it?

Estes: Sure it was.

Smith: You would then, as you say you worked from four in the morning until.

Estes: Ten o'clock at night, a lot of nights. After I finished the supper dishes, I'd say I, this happened in '29, I'd bring out a load of staves down here, you see, and do a little of them. Before that I hauled them on a wagon, I never did haul but one load a week with my horses. But see they had two men hauling staves most all the time. Two of them, and one of them had a four-horse team and the other one had a two-horse team. They hauled staves to different places.

Smith: Did you ever have any time with the mountain people. Did you ever visit in their homes?

Estes: Yes, sure I have.

Smith: Tell us about it.

Estes: Well, I used to go up to old man Bailey's up there right beyond the Number Trail Camp. I'd go up there for, I liked to hear the old man talk. And Bobby Bailey, course they made a little whiskey, and he had a couple sons. He lived in the house that old Doctor Kelly moved out of. There were two houses there. And one Sunday we was up there and they wanted us to have, another fellow and myself, they wanted us to have dinner with them. I didn't think I could eat what the old woman cooked, so, she had some onions come out of the garden, and I said "All I want's a onion." I said "I'll eat a onion." And so old Dr. Kelly, you know, he left a lot of goats up
there. I mean he left, he was in the goat business, I mean the mountain was full of goats. And this fellow Sam, Sam Bailey's son, they all left home one Sunday, and Sam said when they come back there was a goat in the house. And he said he done eat the Bible up, and gone upstairs. And he said going up the steps, you know, there was a bridle fellow (?) hanging on the stairway going up the steps. And he said, by God, he said when I found out that goat eat the Bible up I got that bridle and I knocked the hell out of that goat. Said "I killed him with the word of God in him."

Smith: Was he able to read?

Estes: Well, to tell you the truth I don't know. He was one on the dumb side, because they caught him making liquor. And they had him in the camp, had him in a camp up here at Beech (♀) Spring when they was building the road, 211. And Captain (♂) , there was a Captain of the camp. And he was a trusty, now. He didn't have much time to fool (♀) you know. And he went into what they called the Corner Store, Schwartz's Store at that time, and it was just a big long room and two back rooms you know. And he said he went in that, the biggest store he ever seen in his life, he went in there and almost got lost. He told the truth; that's the way he saw it, you see.

Smith: I was just wondering, with the Bible, if he was able to read it.

Estes: I imagine old man Bobby (♂) could read the Bible, and she could too. Her name was Belle; Belle Baley and Bobby Baley. (♀)

Smith: Did you know anything about how they did their courting?

Estes: No, can't say I do.

Mrs. Estes (♀): They were very, very modest about it, I think.
They would go and hang around with the men folks, you know, and hang around and keep coming around. It was a very modest affair.

Smith: And their weddings were very simple, weren't they?

Mrs. Estes: Very simple, yeah. But meaningful (X) And then they would have a preacher just like a lot of other people do.

Smith: You know, there is one story that I have been told, and now you have disproven it. And that was that all they ever made in the northern section was wine.

Mrs. Estes: Oh, no.

Estes: No, they made whiskey.

Mrs. Estes: They made very little wine if any.

Estes: I didn't know what they made much wine, but they made whiskey. They made pure grain whiskey, a lot of them. They didn't put any sugar in it.

Mrs. Estes: And brandy.

Smith: Apple brandy?

Mrs. Estes: Apple brandy.

Estes: Yeah, apple brandy. They made brandy, and they made grain liquor they sprouted to boil it, and use the spout (X) on it and then dry it, and have it ground, and it was just as sweet as sugar. They made the malt, and that way they made it.

Smith: Were there any special areas that would make this, like any particular hollows, like Hickerson Hollow, or

Estes: Well around here, everybody thought Hazel, Hazel Mountain. on the Hazel, got the best liquor from the Hazel. And Nichols (sic) Hollow, they made the liquor in Nichols (sic) Hollow too.

Smith: Oh yes, I know.

Mrs. Estes: You knew this hollow too.
Smith: Which hollow is this?

Mrs. Estes: Swindler Hollow (X), and then they called it Sycamore Hollow, and Hollow. You see they sprouted (X) off from it. And Frazier Hollow.

Smith: And they made it there:

Mrs. Estes: Well they all made it.

Estes: All made it. All these mountain people made whiskey.

Smith: Where would they sell it?

Mrs. Estes: Well lots of times they didn't. It was used as medicinal or for their own pleasure, you know. Some sold it. They didn't all sell it.

Estes: But see there was fellows to distill houses (X) before it was legal, you know, I mean, they run the still houses. There was a lot of still houses. There was one up this hollow and one over where the old home place over there is, old Woodward made whiskey. And the store house, the old store house by the store, you know where Ellie Clark had a, on up there at Jimmy Swindler's (X), he had got a still house.

Mrs. Estes: There is one thing I wanted to make clear about. They did not sell it to the people going to the church up there on Sunday. One of the ladies here, new people here in the county, wrote this thing that he made liquor and then on Sunday he'd go up and sell it to the brethren. And boy, they got furious. They got really furious.

Smith: No, of course they didn't do that.

Mrs. Estes: Of course if somebody wanted something we went down there and got it. But he didn't make it because I guess he was a very fine old man, and a very prosperous one. He
Smith: Did they go to church regularly?

Estes: Sure they did.

Mrs. Estes: Some did, yes indeed.

Smith: How about when they did their apple butter boiling? Did they have any fun with that?

Mrs. Estes: Well, sure did.

Estes: Well sure they did.

Smith: Did they do it at daytime or night?

Estes: Night.

Mrs. Estes: They put it on early in the morning, around four o'clock in the morning, and then didn't come off before nine or ten o'clock that night.

Estes: And sometimes it'd be later than that.

Smith: And did they have any eating while they were, and drinking and dancing.

Mrs. Estes: Oh yes. It was a fun thing.

Smith: I've been getting the wrong story.

Estes: That was a great thing for them, apple butter boiling.

Mrs. Estes: You know, even way down here, to be invited, somebody would help with one of the apple butter boiling. Great fun. You felt real proud that they had asked you. And of course you would go.

Smith: Did they do dancing?

Mrs. Estes: Well, they danced in there on the way. You know, it wasn't anything formal.

Smith: No, but it was sort of a party, wasn't it?

Mrs. Estes: Well, drinking, something like that.

Smith: And they'd play music, fiddles and banjos

Mrs. Estes: And the sing and dancing and it was fun.
Smith: Sure it was.

Mrs. Estes: But there was no, there's one thing I want to say about the mountain people. You know, we ran the Cab Inn for a number of years, and they were the most decent things around I've ever seen. I was never afraid of them. I was never afraid to ride back here in the mountains. I rode all the time, and I was never afraid. They were, how did I want to say it? They were strong on honor, personal honor and dignity. And you never felt that you were going to be insulted. You never felt that.

Smith: They were very hospitable people, too. They never locked anything.

Mrs. Estes: No.

Smith: They never stole, they never cheated.

Mrs. Estes: Well you know, they say a lot of them came in here, they were Hessians; of course there were a lot of English too. There were an awful lot of English. Most of them on this side of the mountain were English. Of English descent. And they were, I guess they would go back just as far as about anybody else's, because they were very good people. And I have heard it said that the reason this name Atkins got started, see we have so many, you know, in England, Tommy Atkins, the soldier, well you see that's what they say the name came from. Now I don't know; no one has ever proven it. But it's possible.

Smith: Ah, yeah, it is possible, Tommy Atkins, right.

Estes: Well you take the accent of the Nichols, by gosh they still there. And the Corbins too, they talk just like they did, by gosh, maybe two or three hundred years ago.

Smith: Have you any recollection of any of the statements that
they would make that sound that way.

Estes: Pete Nichols and Paul Nichols.

Mrs. Estes: Well you know, how did they talk? What were some of their expressions?

Estes: Oh, they just talk long.

Mrs. Estes: But you know those Nicholsons and Corbins are some of the finest families in England (?)

Estes: That's right, that's right.

Mrs. Estes: And they still, they have beautiful hands (†). And some of these Atkins have beautiful hands, just beautifully shaped hands. And their facial structure is very good.

Smith: Very British.

Mrs. Estes: Very. Now you see on the other side of the mountain I think it's a little different. I mean you don't have the plain people here in the county. And that's what he said. He had a book on it, and then when they have a sale I try to find to buy it, but some one had moved it or it was gone. But he had written quite a bit on these mountain people. But I remember he was saying that, that that's possibly where they got the name, or they did get the name.

Smith: Well I think the Northern Section had quite a number more English than most of the other areas.

Mrs. Estes: Yeah, I think so. I don't know why, but they did. But you know all through here, most of these people are English or Scotch.

Smith: Do you know how they when they bought supplies from the store, did they pay cash for it, or were they given credit? Like if
they took things down like eggs.

Estes: Yeah, that's right. Yeah, my daddy would take anything they had to sell, and a sawmill man if he had some lumber he'd lumber. He'd take chickens and eggs and butter and dried cherries, dried blackberries, anything.

Smith: Would he give them cash, or credit?

Estes: My daddy was the first store around at this neighborhood that paid cash. The rest of them had due bills. Bogus money, you know what I mean. Some of them wanted due (X) bills, but he never did have any of that bogus money. He'd write them a credit slip, if that's what they wanted. Yeah, we had a lot of that.

Smith: So your father had a store.

Estes: He was a storekeeper.

Smith: Where was it?

Estes: Up there where he started out, the store up there where Pete lives; right there is the store, the store is right there across the ridge (bridge?), right beside the mill.

Mrs. Estes: And then he down

Estes: And one down at Sperryville (X).

Smith: They'd bring brought dried cherries you said too?

Estes: Yeah, dried cherries.

Smith: This is from the Northern Section?

Mrs. Estes: Yes.

Estes: Shiffletts (X) by gosh by the four-horse wagon load.

Smith: What would he do with the chestnuts, send them to the city?

Estes: Dried apples, he shipped them to Baltimore, and Philadelphia, and Richmond.
Mrs. Estes: They were hauled to Culpeper by wagon. They had regular brokers, I reckon, that trade them.

Estes: You take a covered wagon, 28 coops of chickens is all you could get on a wagon at one time, 28 coops. If it hadn't been for chickens on there one time I believe I'd have froze to death. Just the heat from those chickens. That's the truth. We had an idea, he had a covered wagon brought up in front like that, and had the hole about that big, feed trough swung across the back, a hole about that big, and you count them, that feed trough and four kids and a man, say it was warm, but the heat comes from those chickens. That's right.

Smith: Do you know anything about their use of herbs?

Mrs. Estes: Oh yes.

Smith: What was it they used?

Mrs. Estes: Well there's a list of them that long, but I couldn't tell them. Now his great grandmother, well she, you know how, there weren't very many doctors then; people would call on her. They used cherry bark; now you help me, please.

Estes: Wild cherry bark.

Mrs. Estes: Wild cherry bark.

Smith: What for?

Estes: Cough medicine.

Mrs. Estes: Yeah, it was cough medicine.

Smith: They'd make a tea out of it?

Mrs. Estes: Make a tea out of it, m-hm.

Estes: And they made catnip tea. Horehound tea.

Smith: What for?

Mrs. Estes: Don't let's go so fast. Horehound tea was for colds. Catnip was for your stomach, I think it was I remember. They'd make
a poultice and put it on your stomach. And then there was sassafras tea.

Smith: That was just for pleasure, wasn't it?

Mrs. Estes: Oh no. That was the thing you blew out in the spring. And then there was calamus. Calamus grew all around in here.

Smith: And what did they use that for?

Mrs. Estes: That was used

Estes: That's for stomach.

Mrs. Estes: For your stomach or liver you know.

Smith: A tea again?

Mrs. Estes: Well, yes, I think so. Yeah, I'm sure it was

Estes: Well now they had sassafras tea, spicewood tea.

Mrs. Estes: Yeah, spicewood tea I think was more for pleasure though, wasn't it.

Estes: They give you spicewood tea if you had the measles, makes you break out.

Mrs. Estes: Yeah, that's right.

Smith: To break your fever, huh?

Mrs. Estes: Yeah.

Estes: What is that old colored lady from Baltimore that comes up here sometimes, goes out hunting on trail with no more than cans of salt. Captain Miller.

Mrs. Estes: You know him, I'm sure you do.

Estes: Do you know Captain Miller? you talk to him. And I can tell you another man to tell you to talk to. Old man E. A. Cave. He lives over by Stanley, up in there somewhere.

Smith: Oh I did! Just the other day.

Estes: Oh, good. He could tell you, he's one of the nicest old
men I've ever seen.

Smith: He is wonderful and his wife is adorable.

Estes: That's right, yeah. He didn't tell you this, though.

Now Smith was a nurse here in the county. Where is she from?

Mrs. Estes: She's from Alabama, or one of those southern states.

Estes: Anyway, she was a nurse here in the county for a long time. She had Madison too, didn't she? Anyway, she had this patient in Madison. I don't know if it was a woman or a man. I believe it was a woman, and she'd been in the bed so long, they'd take the hospital, but she'd been in bed so long she had a bed sore, and they couldn't cure it up in Charlottesville, and nothing couldn't cure it up. Old Man Cave said "I, I can tell you what to do for it." I think he got the stuff. He said "If you get some Bamby Gillen and boil it, in water and boil it down and put that on there," and it cured that damn thing up. Bamby Gillen. He said it wasn't but one or two places.

Smith: He talked about Bamby Gillen. And I don't know what Bamby Gillen is.

Estes: It's a tree.

Mrs. Estes: It's Balm of Gilead. That's what it is. You look it up.

Estes: Well that's what the old time people called it that. I know where it is. But it's in the Park. But it's over there below Red Gate, in there where he was born and raised. Did he tell you the story about being snowed in one winter? Snow over the top of the windows and everything. Well, that's some kind of story. This is true. They couldn't get out, they couldn't move nothing. They
had to tunnel out to the barn in the snow. And when the snow did leave, they had a little church over there somewhere, and one of his kids died. And after they got so they could bury it, why they kept moving around, they taken one of the benches and made a coffin and buried this little child. You ought to get him to tell you that story. That's true. And he said the horses in the stable and they needed to be fed and they couldn't get out. Had to tunnel their way out. He'll tell you what year it was, what winter it was, and everything. He's a nice man.

Smith: Oh, I had such a nice time with them. They are great. So, that's the Balm of Gilead.

Mrs. Estes: Balm of Gilead, that's what that is. I looked it up because we give a program on it, and we have a friend here in the county, Foster Williamson; do you know Mrs. Williamson? Well she's having a sort of to-do for about two days here, this coming week, Friday and Saturday, and everybody's invited. And she shows you how to use tea, and she uses it all the time. And she's right much older than I am, and she looks like she's about 50. She eats all these herbs all the time, because they're so good as food, you know. And they have them at . She's already found out what some will quiet your nerves, and some for this and so that, well now those mountain people knew that.

Smith: They did. That's why it's now they're discovering these herbs did the things that the people said.

Mrs. Estes: Well, you see the

Smith: Do you know what they did for like, did they use ginseng for instance?

Mrs. Estes: Yes. Just about like the Chinese use it, they used
it for all these things. And yarrow was used for hemorrhoids, I'll put it that way.

Smith: Oh, would they make a poultice?

Mrs. Estes: I guess they would. I just don't know, but I think they would. And then they used white of egg, they'd skin them, the lining of the egg to put on a boil. I'm trying to think of all these things. And they used flax seed to put in the eye, you know, if there was something in your eye.

Estes: Put a flax seed in there it would run it out.

Mrs. Estes: Yeah, it would chase it out. Maybe you'll think of some of the things that they used. And of course you know they cooked with poke salad. All these wild things.

Smith: Oh, those are good. I do too.

Mrs. Estes: I do too. I get a . I know you're going to kill me, this narrow-leaf dock, I just love it. You know it tastes more like spinach . And he says, I know you're going to kill me, what did you say that is? Mercury?

Estes: Too much nitrate in it.

Smith: I have heard that they used kerosene and sugar for a cough.

Mrs. Estes: For a cough, or for most anything.

Smith: They did do it?

Estes: Yeah, they used kerosene and sugar.

Mrs. Estes: Yes they did, oh yes. And a drop of turpentine. Now I know that'll do, cause I almost had pneumonia one night and this cook said "Well I can fix you up. Doc Snead's not in as much shape as you're in."(??) So he put two or three drops of turpentine on sugar, and that broke up this chest cold, just overnight. You're not
You're not supposed to take turpentine, you know, because of your kidneys. But it broke the pneumonia up. Yes, they used kerosene all the time, and of course this didn't happen here, but these parents went away one time and left the kids alone and a rattlesnake bit one of the children. Well they didn't know anything but kerosene. So instead of just putting a little kerosene on the thing, they gave the child a half a teacup of kerosene to drink, and the snakebite didn't... he got all right, it didn't hurt him. Isn't that something?

But yeah, just little simple things like that.

Smith: They didn't make a poultice then for the snake bite.

Mrs. Estes: No. Well I think they probably did, yes. But these children, they just gave them the kerosene to drink.

Smith: Now Mrs. Cave was saying that her

Mrs. Estes: What was that poultice they used to put on the chest? I want to say asafetida but it wasn't. Asafetida was to keep the fleas away, and numerous things you know. But there was some kind of poultice. Yes, they put a poultice of asafetida on you in the winter time, and you smelled so horrible. Was it?

Estes: Mustard. It was a mustard poultice.

Smith: Didn't they use onions and corn meal?

Mrs. Estes: Oh yes, onions and cornmeal; anything that would draw. And then they would boil up this concoction of onions and, and a little sugar. And it was a gooky, nasty looking mess. And you drink that and it would cure your cold all right. It would upset your stomach but it would certainly cure your cold.

Smith: What

Mrs. Estes: , onions, and sugar. It was a horrible mess. I tried it one time because... about dead in with a cold, but
Estes: My father got this old woman to make him wild cherry bark medicine, almost every year before he died, but he used it in the winter time. She had kept the bottles, you know, and it looked like cherry glycerin, to tell you the truth. And it tastes something like cherry glycerin if you ever tasted cherry glycerin. Cherry glycerin was a cough medicine, you know. Cause he liked that wild cherry and it did him a lot of good. He taken a lot of Wampold's at one time, my daddy did. But he lived till he was 92 years old.

Smith: Well they really did know how to use those herbs correctly.

Mrs. Estes: Oh yes, sure.

Smith: And you wonder how they learned it. Did the Indians help them?

Mrs. Estes: No, they brought it here with them. Of course the Indians used herbs too, you know. They learned a lot from them. But they brought a lot of those ideas here from England. Because even back as far as I can remember, when you were sort of puny, you know, they used to say, they would make you chicken broth, and that's an old, old remedy. And now they say "Well hot chicken soup, you know, if you don't feel good eat chicken soup."

Smith: That's right. The Caves were telling me that one of their children got a snake bite. And they took a chicken... 

Estes: Split it open.

Smith: Split it open and put it over it

Mrs. Estes: That's right, it'll draw the poison out. You tear it open. You don't split it; you tear it open with your hands, because
I saw this colored woman do it. She just pulled the chicken right open (阡) and put it right on the snake bite.

Smith: Yeah, they said while it was still alive.

Mrs. Estes: Oh yes, it was alive. She just snapped （阡） up a chicken, and it was one of her kids, and she snapped up a chicken and tore it open like that and put it on there, and it turned green like. It was horrible looking. Course we were kids and we were very impressed.

Smith: I can believe it, yeah. Did you have any problem with snakes while you were doing all the work you were doing?

Estes: We killed all the rattlesnakes on Piney River. We never had anybody to get bit by any. Cause they was all mountain men and knew what they was doing, you see. Course I'd rather run up on a rattlesnake than a copperhead anyway. The rattlesnake will rattle, and the old copperhead he'll lay right there and bite you. But we'd kill sometimes three or four, five, a week. I've seen rattlesnakes that big. I saw a rattlesnake, his head was bigger than my fist, one time. Well he was killed up there at Beech Spring, right there at the dump behind (阡) the Beech Spring Church. This fellow shot him. Well he saw him and went home and got his shotgun and shot him.

Mrs. Estes: Well you know, getting back to churches, there was a little church and a school too on top the Hazel Mountain.

Estes: Yes, that was

Mrs. Estes: There was a church and a school too, right up on the mountain, wasn't there?

Estes: Sure it was.

Mrs. Estes: And those people, it was, course, you know, it was a very plain little church. Had benches in it. But it was there,
and they attended church.

Smith: Was it any particular denomination?

Mrs. Estes: I don't remember that; I don't remember.

Smith: Yeah, most of them didn't seem to be. Do you know anything about their funerals? How did they do their funerals?

Mrs. Estes: You should turn that off now; I'll tell you

Smith: Oh you can

Mrs. Estes: They were very emotional things. Their voices would, I mean they would scream and cry and moan and go on at great length.

Smith: Did they keep the body in the house?

Mrs. Estes: Oh yeah. Oh, it never went anywhere. Never went to a funeral home.

Estes: Never was embalmed.

Smith: Never embalmed. Did they make their own caskets?

Mrs. Estes: Yes, coffins they called them.

Smith: In the shape of the body?

Estes: Yeah. A fellow at Sperryville he's dead made caskets and coffins, and he made wagons.

Mrs. Estes: Wheelwright.

Estes: Grain cradles and any kind of woodwork.

Mrs. Estes: But these people up in the mountains, a lot of them made their own.

Smith: Did they then all stay right at the grave until it was completely filled?

Mrs. Estes: Completely filled, and they'd stay there and cry a while, and after a while they'd go one home. It was truly, I've been to several funerals, you know, when they'd have (X) some one in the house that they could be with, it was
just terribly emotional. Even the kids and the old people, they'd all just howl.

And when there was a battle amongst them, the gentlemen folks got to fighting cattle and the women and children they would go through that same emotional thing. They would scream and cry, and they'd do that, because they'd poor John and Freddy. But now I'll tell you right now, in some of the fights the women fought right along with the men. But I've known of, down at that trail at White Rock, were you there? Yes, you were there. This one woman, yes indeed, every now and then her mother would walk up and first thing she called her, yeah and they weren't both taking part in it. Because they were very lawless, very lawless up there, husbands and wives.

Smith: Yes, I think the family unit was a very close

Mrs. Estes: Yes, a very close thing.

Smith: A very wonderful thing, yes. They weren't quite that close together, were they?

Mrs. Estes: Not too close, no. But now when they butchered, that's one of the last sights I remember on the old dirt road going down the mountain to Luray. Charlie and I had to go to Luray for something, to pick up some cattle or something, and this old woman was going down the road with a butcher knife in her hand, and we stopped and picked her up. And she was going down to her neighbor's to help the butcher. It was early in the morning, frosty cold morning, and we felt sort of sorry for her, and she was going down the mountain to help them. And they all did; they went and helped their neighbors.

Smith: Sure, yeah. The butchering was quite a time.

Mrs. Estes: Yeah. Oh, that was another fine time. They all got
Smith: Did they have many dances?
Mrs. Estes: Not that we'd call dances, no, I don't think so.
Smith: How about Christmas? What was that like?
Mrs. Estes: Probably just one toy for the child. They observed Christmas, and of course there was a lot of drinking at Christmas. But not as we celebrate Christmas. But they observed Christmas,

Smith: Firecrackers?
Mrs. Estes: Well, I don't know about that. I never saw any. Did you ever see them?
Estes: Oh yeah, they'd buy firecrackers, and see my daddy never did set any firecrackers, but you could buy them. I mean I can remember. But he sold a lot of glass and dishes, and what you call colored glass now, he showed up with 15, 20, quarter of a

great big bowls you know. They call it colored glass now and make (?) 50 or 100 dollars. Making more dollars than they did pennies then, you know. But they did buy a lot of that stuff at Christmas time.

Smith: So then they really did give gifts.
Estes: Oh yeah, yeah, they always, a lot of them would give the kids something at Christmas and New Year's too. Yes sir, they had

Smith: Now then there's where the North is entirely different from the rest of the area.
Mrs. Estes: They didn't give things? Oh yes, they observed Christmas.
Estes: Yeah. Cause I remember cause I mean I've heard them say that I can remember 65 years ago myself.
Mrs. Estes: They were all here. We remember well, and that
little cabin you have built up there at the Byrd shelter, you know, that's just exactly right. Whoever did that knew exactly what he was doing. Even the old rags lying on the ballister on the front porch, now whoever made that thing had been there, because it was just typical.

Estes: They had to be up there. Because Byrd was at Big Meadows, they putten up his portrait, didn't they? I saw it in the paper. It's a thing I think.

Smith: Did you say you knew Harry Byrd?

Estes: Sure I did. He's one of the, two of the best statesmen the United States by God ever had.

Mrs. Estes: Now we can't have any politics on this.

Smith: You're absolutely right. We're so lucky to have a Harry Byrd.

Estes: Little Harry Byrd or Harry Byrd, he was a wonderful person. Harry Byrd was. Course at different times little Harry would come along, and he but he come along and know that little Harry was independent instead of Democrat he'd really

Mrs. Estes: You cut that thing off.

Smith: Your grandchildren may be interested in this. I think that if it hadn't been for Harry Byrd we would not have had the Park.

Mrs. Estes: That's right.

Smith: How do you think the people were able to adjust after the Park came in? Did they have a hard job?

Estes: Some of them did.

Smith: Where did most of them move to?

Mrs. Estes: Well they didn't stay on these resettlement things. They'd all But now we have this little friend that
was raised back in there and he, long before they (?) were born back there, and he was born back there, and he is, right now, he has a son in college, and he educates all of his children, and he has a job at, what do you call that bank down the mountain?

Estes: Federal Bank. Federal Reserve Bank

Mrs. Estes: and he's a (?) big boy down there now, and his wife is just as nice as she can be, just lovely. And they have a camper and they go camping with him. They go to the beaches. They do everything else. But now you see that wouldn't have happened if they'd stayed up here. So in the long run, they may not think so, and I might say the wrong thing, but I guess it was better for them.

Smith: Well I haven't interview anyone yet who didn't say that they would go back if they could.

Mrs. Estes: I think the older people, you know missed it, it was terrible. And of course the thing of letting them stay there until, but there were some that, you know, they sort of fell to pieces. They couldn't manage out here like that. But then the next generation did. They, they kept right on. And some of the best students now. Right here I have this here, the essay for the kids to write. You know the DAR does this thing once a year you know. And the best essay that I got from our Rappahannock (?) school was a child of a family.

NOTE: Her voice is almost too faint to hear; she is far from the mike, and the record gain is low. They were all the ones that I got in because they were better. And I was just, I was so pleased to think that they had, you know, just gotten right in there and gone ahead.

Smith: I know that they didn't stay pretty much because they didn't like living so close to each other. That was I think one of
Mrs. Estes: I think they felt naked. There were no trees around and everything was all out and just too wide open you know. They just don't like that. And this hill you know, they missed the mountains. I think they missed them terribly.

Estes: One old fellow back up in the hollow here was a Dwyer, Boot Dwyer. Every time you'd see him, he expressed to me and a lot of other people too that he knew, he said "Have you heard anything about the Park?" So, you know, he wanted to find out everything, wanted to find out what was happening you know. Every time he'd see me Dwyer would ask me that. He talked just like I said. His mouth was one-sided. I don't know how come his mouth was all away. Anyway he, his daughter lives up at the old great grandfather's place now, back up in the mountain there.

Smith: Did they allow their cattle, now they had cattle up there, and

Estes: Yeah they did.

Smith: And hogs.

Mrs. Estes: And sheep. And chickens.

Smith: And goats you mentioned.

Mrs. Estes: Well Dr. Kelly brought the goats in here. Now when they lived, the old mountain people, they didn't have goats Charley.

Estes: No, they didn't have goats

Mrs. Estes: Well Dr. Kelly brought the goats in here.

Smith: Well now did they let them all just run wild.

Estes: Yeah.

Mrs. Estes: They were marked a certain way, just like they said in "Foxfire". That "Foxfire No. 1" book is very good.
Smith: It is good, yes. So they would have them marked.

Mrs. Estes: They would have them marked, and he knew that that was his cow, and you knew it was his cow, and you wouldn't take it.

Smith: Did they eat beef?

Mrs. Estes: Oh yes.

Estes: Yeah, they killed their own beef.

Mrs. Estes: Everybody did, your own kill (?) you know, all the farmers. You killed beef every fall after it turned cold. Well the mountain people did the same thing. And they could cure the best pork, hams. Their hams were just delicious. And they ate them. They cooked, they didn't bake them but they would fry them, and they were good. Very good.

Smith: They ate very well. Their vegetables, they dug trenches to keep them in the winter, do you know?

Mrs. Estes: Well they had, a lot of them, and down in front of the fireplace there was a little pit like. And they put sweet potatoes in there. Now I've seen that in houses down here, in a certain room beside the kitchen. They'd have a pit in front of the fireplace with sweet potatoes in it. But they buried the potatoes in the winter, and

Estes: Cabbage.

Mrs. Estes: And buried cabbage, and of course turnips, that was it, and then they dried apples and they dried beans, and that's where we get the leather britches (?) you know. They'd snap the beans, dry them and snap them. Snap them and dry them, and strung them on strings you see. And they would call them leather britches.

Smith: Oh that's why the song "Leather Britches"!

Mrs. Estes: Yeah, that's what they did. I did a log cabin for
one of the tours we had, and I did all these things. I went up here in the mountain and found all these things, you know: the old gourd that they put the eggs in, and

Smith: What did they do with that?

Mrs. Estes: Well that's where they kept the eggs. They'd go out to the henhouse and get the eggs and put it in and put it in the old gourd. It was a big old round fat gourd usually, you know, with the top cut off, and keep them in there. So that was the egg container.

Smith: Have you any idea how that tune "Leather Britches" goes?

Mrs. Estes: No, I don't. I haven't the slightest idea.

Smith: Have you any idea?

Estes: No, I can't say that I

Mrs. Estes: Well now you could find it somewhere, I'm sure.

Smith: How about money mush? I heard that they

money mush.

Mrs. Estes: I don't know it was called "money mush" but it had mush. Now people down here ate it too. Mush.

Smith: No I mean a song.

Mrs. Estes: Oh. No, no, I don't know that. But they ate a lot of mush. And that was good. You see you could make a pot of mush and feed a whole lot of kids with that.

Smith: That would be made out of corn meal?

Mrs. Estes: Uh-huh. Just corn meal and flour. And if you had the cream to spare you put cream over it. If you didn't, you didn't. And then another thing that they ate, and another thing that the people down here ate, was, when milk sour and clabber you know, they'd eat a lot of that. It was very good.

Estes: Cheddar cheese, they made cheese. They made cheese.
Mrs. Estes: I don't think they ever suffered.

Estes: Yeah, they didn't, they lived good, I'm telling you, most of these mountain people that I know, they lived good.

Mrs. Estes: And they always asked you, if you came to their house at meal time, they would always ask you to come and have something to eat.

Estes: Another fellow and myself used to ride, ride on Sunday horseback, and ride on the Hazel over in Nichols Hollow (sic). We'd leave soon in the morning and get back late you know, and we'd go to one house to the other.

Smith: How would you get there?

Estes: Horseback. Yeah, Joe Johnson and myself. We used to go over Nichols Hollow to old Amos. Amos and Andy. Amos Nichols and Andy Nichols. They was brothers. They cut logs for me up on Piney Run for about a week. But they didn't know anything about it. They'd ruin the timber. They would cut it you know, and it would fall and split up and everything. I told them, I said 'You all.' Especially oak. Just ruined it you know. I said 'If you all can't do better than that' I said 'I just can't keep you.' So I had to let them go. But Rass (2) Nichols was their father, I think. We were back there one Sunday, and went in, and their house, they had a shed room on it like. Comes out into the roof like this you know, then come down, and had a cook stove, a little old stove in there, and they had a big pot of beans on the stove, and of course they was ready to eat. And the ham and the shoulders hanging along the side of the wall you know. And they had
plenty of eggs. And Joe, why he was a good cook too. Joe said he
would just like brother you know, he liked
them mountain people. And he eat the beans. I said "Joe" I says
"if you're going to cook anything" I says "fry me a couple of eggs,
and a piece of that meat; that's all I want." And I said "I don't
believe I care for any beans." And he did. But Joe Johnson, he's
the one that has left here and went down in North Carolina and taken
over the damn Park land. Did you know that? He could really get
along with people. He went down there and he got along with them,
and lied to them and everything else. I know he did, cause see he
couldn't talk without lying.

Mrs. Estes: Well it's too bad you couldn't have gotten him
before he died. He really knew more about these mountain people than
anybody I know.

Estes: All down south of the National Park, he.

Mrs. Estes: You know, down in North Carolina.

Estes: And see, he died. He went down there by gosh and got
them people to agree with all this and that and the other.

Mrs. Estes: And sign up to sell their property.

Smith: Do you know Skipper Nice? (?)

Estes: Yeah, I reckon I do.

Mrs. Estes: That's where we go about five times a year.

Estes: Skipper does (?). Yeah, I'll tell you, Captain he was the head shot of the number one camp.

Smith (?): Isn't he a great fellow?

Estes: I reckon he is. The whole thing through he's in bad shape now

He was up last year, wasn't he?

Mrs. Estes: Yeah, but he's coming again this summer before too
What was his name?

Estes: Kieth (?).

Mrs. Estes: What's his name?

Estes: I can't, but she's a poor old thing. Both of them are.

Mrs. Estes: Well she's pretty old.

Estes: Yeah. Poor old thing, he was eating a fish or beef sandwich, what was he eating? He got choked, and I felt so sorry for him. That's a Virginia's. See Sniffy Miller, he was a...

Mrs. Estes: He was with the CC too a while. Did you ever know Sniffy?

Smith: No.

Mrs. Estes: Well he was there too as a foreman. That's when he was a foreman.

Estes: Well he was a foreman. I think he was a foreman.

Mrs. Estes: But you know, he was head of the rest of them.

Estes: Yeah, he was a nice fellow.

Mrs. Estes: And they liked him too, and that's right. But he's a very, what is his wife's name? Oh, for goodness sakes.

Estes: I can see her face right now.

Smith: I can too.

Estes: Yeah, poor old thing

Mrs. Estes: I won't say Margaret, but Margaret, yes Margaret.

Estes: Margaret, that's it, Margaret Miller.

Smith: Well. Oh, I have learned so much about these people.
Estes: We used to go up there to dances, you see.

Mrs. Estes: Look, can I fix you a little drink? I think you'd like a little drink just as well as we do, and a chicken sandwich and a cup of tea. If you do that then you could run along when you're finished.

Smith: Yeah, only we're not through yet, are we?

Mrs. Estes: But I can do this and you all can sort of eat while you

(NOTE: Recorder apparently was turned off for a while.)

Estes: on this land, on Piney Run, so Cliff Bailey and Jim Bailey, of Luray, they was in the pulpwood and stave business too, you know, and he tried to sell the timber to them. They offered him 75 cents for a thousand foot on the stump, and I'd, in 1927, I went up there in '26 and cut a lot of locust for him. In '27 I said "Dave," I said "you loan me $3,000 and I'll give you a dollar a thousand foot on the stump." See. And I taken my brother in law and his partner, and we went over to Frederick, Md. on the other side of Frederick and bought a bunch of machinery. We bought a stave mill, with two saws and the boiler and engine and everything, and I got the picture of it. Pete got it. All of those pictures I got around Piney Run and River, I got all the pretty fishing holes, pictures of them. And the falls and everything. I got three or four of the prettiest tall pictures of fishing. I've caught thousands of trout up there myself. I mean we didn't keep anything under 10 or 12 inches long, but there they won't grow any trout.

Smith: Your father's store, did the people buy shoes?

Estes: Yeah, shoes, I reckon they did. I had a brother sold, toward the last, they run races in Sperryville selling shoes, and
see who could sell the most. I forget how many pair my brother sold one Saturday. That was in the fall of the year. They'd buy more, he knew, see, he knew in the fall of the year when they were going to buy clothes and shoes. And Robert bet another fellow that worked in the store that he was going to sell more shoes than he did. He sold, oh, 10 or 15 pair of shoes.

Smith: Did you ever hear of anything like grass stockings?

Estes: Grass stockings? No, not grass.

Smith: Some people I talked with the other day, they lived under Pocosin Mission; that's quite a ways down, near Elkton. And they didn't wear shoes in the summer, but the fellow said his mother would make him some grass stockings in the winter. Would go way up his leg, and he said kept his feet real warm in the snow.

Mrs. Estes: Grass stockings, no. I told you they were different people down that way. People have to because I wouldn't denigrate about them.

Smith: How did they do their gardening?

Mrs. Estes: They picked the rocks up out of it, and made stone walls of course. But they didn't put the rocks around their vegetables.

Estes: They didn't put the rocks around any vegetables, but they put a mulch around there. I mean litter from the stables, or something like that.

Smith: Oh, they did use mulch?

Estes: Yeah, they used mulch litter, I say litter from the stable. You take an old leaf pile and you go get the dirt from around that, where there had been a big pile of leaves for a long time, why you get the best kind of dirt.

Smith: They didn't then like put a kernel of corn in between two
stones.

Mrs. Estes: No.

Estes: I've heard them say right up this hollow here, that the whole side of the field up there would be look like all stone. And said they had to carry dirt to cover the corn up, and said they grew corn ears as long as your arm.

Smith: That's it. Then they did it too.

Estes: Yeah, right up here, right up here in the old Baker Place.

Smith: It retained moisture of the rain and the heat of the sun.

Estes: The old Baker place there. Said he had to carry dirt to cover the corn up.

Smith: Did they have many large gardens, like a couple of acres maybe of corn, or anything like that?

Mrs. Estes: They called them patches.

Estes: Well the beans, a lot of the beans they'd raise in their corn field, they're called corn field beans. They climbed the stalks. We had a man at , a fellow Clark, that would raise all these beans and shell then, five or six or ten bushels at a time and put them on a slide, and hook a horse to it and pull them to Luray to sell them. A slide, that's right. And he'd shell all those beans. Right above

Mrs. Estes: What I said, instead of calling it a corn field, or a wheat field or oat field, they'd just say corn patch or oat patch. They wouldn't say field.

Estes: They raised buckwheat and they frailed (sic) it out, you know, and had it ground, buckwheat flour, I've ground it many a time.

Smith: They flailed it?

Estes: They flailed it out with a yeah with a frail they called it.
Smith: They did?

Estes: Sure, frail. You take orchard grass, and any seeds they wanted out, they'd cut it with a cradle or make [illegible] , and they called it to frail it, they frailed it out to get the seed. Well they frailed the buckwheat to get the grain so they could make flour out of it. Buckwheat cakes. I've ground a batch of buckwheat.

Smith: Now this goes back to around 1715 to flail.

Estes: Yeah. You know how buckwheat come to this country? Three cornered. It's a three-cornered seed. Did you know that? And buckwheat honey, the bees make honey out of the bloom on buckwheat. It's a little bit dark but it's really sweet.

Smith: Did they make sorghum?

Estes: Yeah, we made two or three barrels of sorghum, used to, every year. My daddy sold it in the store.

Smith: Was it a hard job to make it?

Estes: No, it wasn't too hard a job. It just, you know, work is work. Well they had a man come off the Hazel to make it. Fellow Hawkins made my daddy's sorghum, and he made two or three barrels every year. We'd plant the sorghum, of course, and strip it and cut it, and cut the seed , and have it right ready when you'd bring your miller in. You'd hook the horse to the grinder and mash it and grind it up and get the juice out. There's a sorghum mill over there at Pete's. It's a [illegible] over there now to make sorghum in. This old man Hawkins used to make it, so they made sorghum all day that day and that night. We had it on the table, you know, had sorghum and of course the hot biscuits and butter and what else food we had. But that was to finish it up, of course, you know, and my brother says "Boy, I'm telling you this is good molasses."
And Mr. Hawkins said "Yeah, they are good. They're called molasses. They, you know, they are good." If I did make it, he says, they are good.

Smith: You know they don't make it the same way now, do they?

Estes: No, I doubt it. No, you take Mennonites they make it so it's all, I don't like it.

Smith: It's dark, and

Estes: Well the best sorghum I ever got was from Missouri, and the man that owned it and made it, he died and his son has never kept it up. It was kind of dark but it was real good, his sorghum. We used to sell a lot of it over on the road at the apple stand.

Smith: Oh, I thank you so much. You know what I'm going to do? I'm just going to tuck this all away. We have a correction to make on the size of the land that was owned by Charles Estes' father.

Mrs. Estes: James A. Estes.

Smith: How many acres was it?

Estes: I think it was 265.

Smith: Who did the surveying?

Mrs. Estes: Did Fred Amiss do it or did old Mr. Smith do it?

Estes: No, Fred Amiss from Luray run the line so we could cut the timber by it, especially between the Dwyers' and the Estes' property. We knew where the line was with Dr. Kelly because he had up a wire fence. He had up a wire fence to turn those goats. He had a wire fence. We knew where the line was on Bernard Bolen's side. Fred Amiss run, the way I remember, just one line, between the Dwyers, that's on the left-hand side. It was a pretty long line, I know that.
Smith: He was a good surveyer, wasn't he?

Estes: Yeah. He did a lot of surveying for my daddy.

Smith: And he did a lot for the Park, too.

Estes: Yeah. You know what? I told that boy up there at Byrd's, what do you call it, at Big Meadows, this spring. He was one of the best; he laid that Skyline Drive off. Who in the world could have laid that Drive off any better than Fred Amiss? I'm telling you, he got those grades and everything, it's just perfect. Now you take somebody that's dumping through the mountain, by gosh, and do a job like that, he's got to be recommended. I'm telling you, he's something.

Smith: Oh, I'm glad we got that corrected. Thank you.

Estes: That Bradford boy was old Hunk's boy. What was his name? You know, he could take a cigarette and lay it in his hand like that, and he smoked so many cigarettes, he slapped his hand and that cigarette would jump right in his mouth. He'd bet you on anything. He liked to play poker or any kind of game you could bet on, you know. And he got run over on a trestle down there at Overall. He was drunk, I think. Cause Bill Campbell told me. Cause I liked the boy. There was two of them boys. What was the other name? I can't give neither one of them names.

Mrs. Estes: I don't know. Can you think of the names of any of the people who lived up in the hollow? The Baileys, the Bakers, and Bolen, Bowen, Bemal. I was trying to think of many these people lived up there.

Smith: Well you don't know what you have already done.

Mrs. Estes: Well good, I'm glad he stayed to help you. You see I haven't lived here always. I was born over in Faquier (END OF INTERVIEW