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(SNP059) Paul Harris interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Sharon G. Marston

Paul Everett Harris

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D.S.: This is Dorothy Smith interviewing uh, Mr. Doug, also called Duke, Harris. At present he lives on the Brown's Gap Road. Mr. Harris, where did you live when you were growing up...when you were a little boy?


D.S.: On top of the Blue Ridge Mountain?

D.H.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Alright now. Mr. Harris I want you to go back in time with us, and tell us...number one how many were in your family?


D.S.: Nine children?


D.S.: ...were you the oldest or the youngest...?

D.H.: No, I was along in the middle. I have two brothers older than I am.

D.S.: I get it. Now...uh...your home. What was that built of?

D.H.: Well our home was mostly...part of it was a old time log home. And the other part, my dad put on new, and uh, it was in pretty good shape, but uh one half our home was in a bad shape.

D.S.: He put on new because of the extra children?

D.H.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Alright, now. How many acres did you have?

D.H.: We had a...if I remember right...we had around twenty seven acres.

D.S.: Twenty seven acres...up on top of the mountain?

D.H.: Yes mam

D.S.: Must have been mighty cold there, in the winter.

D.H.: Ah, we had...we had two and three stoves going in the winter. We had to do it to keep from freezing to death.
D.S.: Sure.

D.H.: And when it'd sleet...sleet and snowed on top that mountain til sometimes we could drive nails into my shoes so we could climb the mountain. We'd go up on the mountain for half mile and cut wood and limb it up and get it started and go clean to the hollow right above our house and then we'd saw it up with an old time cross cut saw. It wasn't no chain saw in them days.

D.S.: No.No. Now Uh, did you uh, well while we are talking about trees did you peel bark?

D.H.: Yes mam. We peeled a lot of chestnut bark and stacked it all about in the mountain and carried it out to where we could get to it on our backs. We'd cut grape vines and stack it on to catch hold of. And put it up on our back and carry it off of the mountain to where we could get to it. A lot of it we could get to. But our very best bark was in rocky ledgy places where we couldn't get a sled or a wagon to. And we used a wood sled where we could and stacked the bark on it hauled it to the...when we could get to it...the wagon. And then we loaded it and hauled it to the valley here.

D.S.: You used grape vines?

D.H.: We used grape vines for carrying. We laid them down and stacked the bark on it...all we figure we could carry and then catch each end and wrap it up and put it on our back, and carry it.

D.S.: Roughly how much would that weigh?

D.H.: Oh, we carried as much as a hundred pounds.

D.S.: A hundred...Wow! Okey. It was rocky up there?

D.H.: Yea. Uh what most of it was...we had some pretty fields around the
house, that we pastured. We took in milk cows and milked them for
the butter. We had a cement spring house with cold water in it,
and my mother would churn, and we would carry that butter across that
mountain from Brown's Gap to BlackRock Gap. There was an old hotel
in BlackRock Gap...and we sold it for ten cents a pound. And we
carried it barefooted...we was barefooted...we didn't have no shoes,
and it'd take an hour and a half after we got home to get the
chestnuts burrs out of our feet. The chestnuts burrs fall off the
trees and get dry, and we'd get our feet so full of chestnut burrs
it would take along time to get them out.

D.S.: Didn't that hurt terribly?

D.H.: Ah, no. All that hurt them days...people didn't pay much attention to
hurt.

D.S.: I want to ask you later about the Rockrock Hotel because we do want
some information on that. How many cows did you have?

D.H.: We had four of our own, and then we milked about seven that belonged
to the farmers in the valley. And then we would pasture for the milk,
and all together during the summer season we'd milk about ten cows. And
we'd churn all that butter and give the sour milk to the hogs...we al-
ways kept a lot of hogs...give sour milk to the hogs, and then we had
plenty of butter all the time for our own use, and the other butter
mama would fix it in buckets and tie a cloth over it...nice big yellow
pounds in that water...just hard as if it'd been froze. And we'd take
about four of us...girls and boys...would take a bucket full a piece
every Saturday morning...carry across that mountain five miles on our
shoulders to Blackrock Hotel.

D.S.: Uh, why did the valley farmers pasture them up there? Then they
didn't have the use of the milk did they?

D.H.: No, but they'd put them in there and let you pasture them during the summer, til they was fresh, and then we couldn't use the milk then, but then when they taken them away in the fall they had an extra calf to take away.

D.S.: I get it.

D.H.: They just didn't need them at home during the summer.


D.H.: And then my father looked after the farm fences .. we fixed fences and looked after cattle for about six farms joining us..all around. We'd fix the fence in the spring hoping they'd bring their cattle here, and then my dad would salt~. On Sunday he would salt~ all the farm fellows and count the cows and watch after them they wasn't gone. Sometimes one would get over on the other man, and we'd have to bring him back.

D.S.: Valley farmers then..around your area..then was bluegrass. Is that right?

D.H.: That's right. We had bluegrass there in that hollow...fine pasture. Cows ate that all summer.

D.S.: How many..roughly how many valley cattle came up?

D.H.: Well in four farms, they'd run somewhere between seventy five or a hundred a piece in there. Mr. Tom Wood, Stuart Croft, John Glider, and Gibb ~. All a long was different ones of them.. they'd bring their cows in in the spring and my dad looked after the most of all the farmers and then he'd take the money in the fall, he didn't get but twenty dollars a year off each farmer, but he'd take the money and buy flour for winter to feed all of us children.
D.S.: Right, because wheat was hard to grow up there wasn't it?

D.H.: Well, yea...we couldn't grow no wheat. We could grow good corn on
the hillside...we'd have to work it by hand and sled it off in the
fall, on a sled.

D.S.: Yea. You had..did you grow buckwheat?

D.H.: Sometime, we'd grow a little buckwheat. It wasn't too good up
there.

D.S.: Rye?

D.H.: We have..grew rye at times. But it wasn't nothing for market. Always
fed everything.

D.S.: Uhhuh..so you grew corn ... Uhuh...Okey. Now the rye what would you
do with the rye?

D.H.: Uh, well we'd uh, I think, if I remember right the old
man would take poles and fork out some of it and sack it and take it
and have it ground for the hogs.

D.S.: Uhhuh! Uh you never made any moonshine out of the rye?

D.H.: Uh, uh, well we made moonshine out of rye when we had it, but when
we didn't have it we bought it.

D.S.: I see. Uhhum. Did you have an apple orchard?

D.H.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Peach orchard?

D.H.: No..we had a good apple orchard and people from the valley would
come in there and buy them every year...buy all we'd sell. And then
we'd fill...we had a cement cellar...we'd fill that full in the fall.
Milam apples, and Pippins, Baldwin, good winter
apples. We had apples all the year round, up until the next spring.
Keep them in a dirt cellar.

D.S.: Oh yea. Oh, that's great. Uh, you grew vegetables?
D.H.: Yes mam. We had good gardens and we uh raised cabbage up there, heads that weighed fifty pounds.

D.S.: Yea.

D.H.: Ah, they'd get so big and hard, they'd crack open.


D.H.: That's right.

D.S.: Sure. Did you make sauerkraut?

D.H.: Yea, oh we make sauerkraut in a barrel.

D.S.: Uhhum, and did you bury the cabbage?

D.H.: Yea, yea, a lot of them that we didn't sell. My mama and daddy has hauled cabbage out of the down over this mountain and over this old dirt road to Waynesboro and stay all night at a spring up yonder and sell them in Waynesboro for only ten cents a head.

D.S.: Gee. Alright now, did you have chickens?

D.H.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Did you sell the eggs?

D.H.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Uh, did you sell those at the Blackrock Hotel or... at the store?

D.H.: No. we sold our eggs out here at the store.

D.S.: Down here in Grottoes?

D.H.: Yes mam

D.S.: That was quite a distance away wasn't it?

D.H.: To bring them you mean? Well we were in and out every day. We had a lot of cars that dealt in the moonshine so heavy...

D.S.: Yea

D.H.: We had some good cars ...Til the revenuers started coming in, and then they broke us up so much and cut up so much, and cut up so
much why it was all over then. We actually, woulda had to leave
the mountain anyway. After they got in there and go to cutting
up stuff and breaking it up and sending up to jail and prison and
different things like...we, we really had no other way to make a
living. All the timber had been cut out, bark was all peeled, and
uh, it wasn't hardly a way we coulda lived if we'd a stayed in.

D.S.: Uhhum. uhhum. Yea. Uh, schools. Did you have a school anywhere
near you.

D.H.: We had a little school...hillside school...three miles from where
we lived. Had a lady from White Hall, Virginia teaching school.

D.S.: The school was three miles away?

D.H.: We went three miles...we walked three miles to a little hillside school
that was near Fork Hollow. And we had a lady from White Hall, she's
still living...her name was Lottie. She boarded with us.
I fell in love with her. I was young...but I thought a awful lot of
her.

D.S.: Uh, the school was for how many months a year?

D.H.: Well, it generally was run like other schools. but the weather would
get so bad at times and snow so deep...why the schools would have to
shut down. People couldn't get there.

D.S.: How about the children that had to work on the farm? Did they get
there in the fall and the spring?

D.H.: Yea. Poppa always tried to arrange that all of his family got to
the school house. When the snow wasn't too deep. But none of us
never did learn much, up there. Mostly what we learnt, we learned
after we got in the valley.

D.S.: How far did you go through school?
D.H.: Three miles.
D.S.: No...how far...what grade?
D.H.: Oh, I didn't get up to but bout the fourth grade.
D.S.: Fourth Grade.
D.H.: And I got into the seventh grade after I went to the valley.
D.S.: Oh, then you had learned a lot.
D.S.: You had. Okey. How old were you when you moved out.
D.H.: Oh, I'll have to think on that. I just don't exactly remember, exactly. I musta been somewhere around eighteen years old.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Right. Okey...now, church. Did you have a church?
D.H.: We didn't have no church. We had a preacher that'd come there sometimes.. once in a while.. and preach in that little schoolhouse. We'd always go to that. Now we belong to the church..we go to church every Sunday unless there is something the matter...we belong to this new Church of Christ up here. A hundred thousand dollar church just been built..we belong to that..we go to church all the time.
D.S.: What happened when people died or wanted to get married? If there was no regular minister.
D.H.: Well, they'd have to come to the valley. There was here in the valley.
D.S.: To get married?
D.S.: Well how about if they died?
D.H.: Well we had a cemetary back there. Most of them had a home cemetary. My mother and father is buried right in Brown's Gap.
I mean my granddaddy and grandmother. They buried up in Brown’s Gap. My mother and father had done left the park and was out here ... left the Blue Ridge Mountain... and they was buried here in the valley. But my granddaddy and grandmother was buried back in the hills.

D.S.: What was your mother’s maiden name?

D.H.: Uh, well she was Emma Sipe.

D.S.: Sipe?


D.S.: Were there many Sipe’s up there?

D.H.: I believe she was the only Sipe up there.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

D.H. My dad got acquainted with her here in the valley and married her. She was a Sipe. I had an awful good mother.

D.S.: Ah, great. Now your neighbors. How far away was your nearest neighbor?

D.H.: Well they were on the average of a mile apart.

D.S.: The houses were more scattered in this area, weren’t they.

D.H.: Yes mam. Yea. We only had...let’s see - one, two, three - we only had three homes anywhere near us. Then more homes were eight and ten miles from us. There was...Andrew Garrison, Leif Garrison, and Rodney Jass. They was three homes near our home. About a mile distance, a mile and a half woulda took into the distance of all three of em.

D.S.: Then, was there much visiting?

D.H.: Not too much...only in the corn shucking time, in the fall. We’d say, ever man up there had a few hogs and cows would raise corn and they’d
sled it off the mountain. pull it by hand sled it off in wooden sleds and pile it til they got it all in and then they'd have corn shucking. And a bunch would come and help each family to shuck the corn and then we'd go and help them back. And that's the way they got all the corn shucked, in the fall.

D.S.: Uhhum. Did you have the custom of hiding the jug under the corn?

D.H.: Corn? And whoever found the first red ear got a drink. You know all about that, looks like?

D.S.: (laughing) right! Oh dear. How about applebutter boiling? Did you do that?

D.H.: Applebutter...we had more applebutter boilings than anything else. What we didn't use we sold and we had girls and boys and neighbors to come and help us stir. Nights, daylight, and all time we'd make applebutter. And we'd have big butcherings. We always kept eight or ten hogs to kill, and we'd graze those hogs in the mountain...on top of that mountain...and we didn't have to feed or nothing. They found enough...acorns, grapes, berries, and stuff to fatten their own self. When we'd bring them in off the mountain in the fall...they'd never leave the range too far...they'd always come home...in and out...and when we'd get ready to gather them in in the fall when the weather started getting colder, they was ready to butcher. That's right.

D.S.: yea, uhhum. During the applebutter boiling, did anyone play any music...did you have any fiddles, guitars anything like that?

D.H.: Uh, no not at the applebutter boilings. We had an awful lot of square dances. Then they'd come for miles.

D.S.: You did?
D.H.: We had people...Will Wood and people from the valley around Crozet and White Hall on the East side of the mountain was 'quainted with us and they'd bring the music and come and play. We'd have square dances and then we'd go from of us house to the other and have square dances.

D.S.: They were good. Did you have a particular caller?

D.H.: Yea, I called the figures of most of them places after I got older.

D.S.: Could you do one. Could you do one right now.

D.H.: Yea, We ust-a dance "Swing your partner [handwritten: then let's see,] Go back and swing your partner [handwritten: before you know.]

And that is the way when you go back and march.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Okey. Did they serve refreshments?while squaredancing?

D.H.: Well, we'd drink some whiskey.

D.S.: Uhhum..just enough to keep things going?

D.H.: Nobody'd get drunk or disorderly. We hardly ever had any trouble with anybody getting drunk and was trouble.

D.S.: No, just to have fun.

D.H.: We had big time..real big time.

D.S.: Yea, right. The Blackrock Hotel? Was that open all year around.

D.H.: Well, I think it was open, If I remember, I think it was open all the year, but the roads would get so bad sometimes it would only be just their own people there. Mr. Bob Miller, ust-a live in Grottoes, and run that hotel.

D.S.: Bob what.

D.H.: Miller.
D.S.: Miller. Uhhuh. Okey. Now uh, people would go up there and spend a week or two...

D.H.: That's right...he had bowling alleys. Good ones. We usta go there and bowl and bowl when we had any money to bowl with. After we got in the whiskey business we always had money and we bowled there.

D.S.: Yea, uhhuh. You...the people would come...how would they get there.

D.H.: They'd come up by Blackrock Road...come from the valley...oh? Usta have a time up there...we'd have as many as fifty people some Saturday nights upthere.

D.S.: Gee.

D.H.: He had three alleys.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Have you any idea how many guests he could take care of? You know to stay over night?

D.H.: Oh, maybe eight or ten. I'd say eight or ten.

D.S.: Uuhuh. And the meals were they good?

D.H.: Yea. The meals were good. He fed good. He, he...in the summertime he got all his butter from us. And mama would 'low us...he kept this peppermint candy in a glass bowl...the pink, and white...the little round...she would 'low us a pound a piece for carrying the butter. And the candy was ten cents a pound. It took one pound of butter for each one of us to get a pound of that candy. We was just young. But we enjoyed it. Even if we did get our feet fullof chestnuts.

D.S.: Hey. Yea. Right. Did you ever sell any of your hams?

D.H.: Mam?

D.S.: Did you ever sell any hams there.

D.H.: My daddy was different than most all of the other mountain men. We ate our hams. He said if he had to raise his hogs, he wouldn't give
all the good parts to somebody else. We mostly always ate our own hams...all of them.

D.S.: Uhhum, yea. Okey, did you, uh, dry beans?

D.H.: Yes, mam. We rolled bark, big wide barks...packed a strip and on the side of em they turn up like a tub and she'd keep em out on the roof upstairs roof, out of the window on the roof and take em in you know when the rains start and then put them back out til they get good and dry. We dried a lot of beans during the summertime...fall of the year.

D.S.: Did you put any salt or anything like that in those beans? to keep the worms out.

D.H.: Not a thing. We never was bothered with nothing getting in them. Not at all.

D.S.: Did you dry apples?


D.S.: I heard it made good pies and dumplings.

D.H.: I never did like them, uh, some of my family liked them...my mother and my dad liked them. But I never could eat no dried apples.

D.S.: Okey, you were stubborn.

D.H.: That's right.

D.S.: You say, you did raise some buckwheat and you would take that to be ground?

D.H.: That's right.

D.S.: Right. How far away was the miller.

D.H.: Lynwood down here. Twelve miles from where we lived.

D.S.: Wow! You'd use the horse and wagon?
D.H.: Yes mam.

D.S.: How many horses did you have?

D.H.: We generally kept three horses.

D.S.: Three...wow...that's...

D.H.: Uhuh, you see we hauled timber and bark out of there and it took three horses from them hollows to pull a wagon to the top. And sometimes we'd have to double up with the neighbors. They'd bring two of their horses and put them in the lead and use four til we got to the top of the mountain. And then my dad got to hauling a half a load of bark or locust posts or extract wood a half a load up and come back and get a half...another half a load and when he got on top the mountain he would take his first half he took up and top the whole load out...to make a cord...and he could haul it from up there down here with two horses alright.


D.H.: But he'd have to make a double load from down in the hollow...pull a half a load up and unload it and come back and get another half a load and when they come back to the top they'd put the first half a load back on top of that. And then he'd have a cord of extract wood and he'd bring it here to Grottoes and unload it and ship it from here.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Why would he carry it up and then down and again?

D.H.: He wouldn't take it down...we'd just take it...the first half to the top so when we went up with the next half we could load that on...horses couldn't pull a full load up.

D.S.: But why take it up if you had to bring it down?

D.H.: Oh, we come down here. We lived down in the hollow. And we'd have
to take it up to the top of the mountain a half at a time and then
topple those there and then we'd come down this way.


D.H.: We had to use a lock on the wagon...kept checking the lock all the
way...down the steepest part of Brown's Gap Mountain.

D.S.: Did your Daddy play any instruments?

D.H.: Oh he played a fiddle a little bit. He wasn't good with it...he
never did fool with it a lot.

D.S.: How about a *jewe's* harp? Anybody play a *jewe's* harp?

D.H.: Poppa could play a *jewe's* too. But we boys never did play much.

D.S.: You didn't.

D.H.: Oh, later on in the years we had an organ...an old time organ my
sisters would play...and we would all play and sing sometimes on
Sunday. She could play some of the prettiest hymns you would want
to listen at.

D.S.: Yea..Really.

D.H.: Uh..Daisy, my sister..she's dead now..she died about two months
ago. She could..she was a good organ player. That was all we had.
None of us ever learned to play guitar or banjos. I had an uncle
had a son lived across the mountain about eight miles from us and
he was a real banjo picker.

D.S.: Um. Would you have him come over whenever you had your square dances?

D.H.: Oh yea. He'd come over and bring his banjo often. Specially when we
was having a dance. And he was a powerful good banjo picker. And he
could sing good too.

D.S.: Sure. Did you have much work to do in the winter?
D.H.: No, we couldn't do nothing much in the winter. The only thing we had to look after in the winter was the firewood. And it took plenty of that. We'd get all we could in the fall. And then when we went to getting scarce along in…about Christmas time…we'd have to get more. And sometimes the snow would be four and five foot deep and drifts ten foot deep. I've seen that snow blow off the hillside over our springhouse and we took little stove shovels and cut a hole through it so we could get to the springhouse and my dad marked a bush on top of it…a pole like so we could measure down in the spring and he measured down in the spring from where that snow was on top…was seventeen feet. Straight down. It drifted seventeen feet deep. And on top the hills wasn't none. All blow off in the hollows and stay. We'd try to come out here to get flour or something sometime, ride horses and get em down in them drifts and have a time getting them out. And we had Doctor…Doctor Whistler usta come in there to see us…when some of the last children was born and he never followed the road a lotta time…he'd come right straight down over the mountain, over top the fences and everthing…on top of it…had a ice shoes on his horse and rode a buggy. That's right.

D.S.: Did snow ever come in your house?

D.H.: Well we had a pretty good house…we didn't get much snow in the house…maybe a little bit blow in around the box at the top…maybe enough to track a cat…next morning. Sweep it out before it thawed.

D.S.: Yea.

D.H.: But we had a pretty tight house.

D.S.: Then what did you do in the winter? Just sort of relax?
D.H.: We uh, we raised moonshine. After we got into that we'd run off some mash.

D.S.: Uhhum. Okey. You couldn't fix fences because they were all covered with snow.

D.H.: NO. We had to wait til spring. And they didn't bring the stock in there to pasture til May and we'd have the fences all fixed up. See trees would fall across em in the winter or something...break them down in places and we would have to go and recut them and put stack in and get them back up before the farmers would bring their cattle...up in there.

D.S.: Yea.

D.H.: They give my dad twenty dollars a year to look after the cattle and take care of them...salt them and count them. They'd come in once or twice in the summer. See how everything was going.


D.H.: Some of the cows...they'd put quite a few up there to be they'd put quite a few up there to be fed and the calf would go along on his own in the summer you know. Sometimes maybe they'd bring in fifty head and then in the fall they'd take out sixty...sixty five...young calves.

D.S.: Yea. Sure. When you...during the winter...you were sitting around keeping warm...did ever anyone say where you family came from? to get into the mountains.

D.H.: Where my family came from? You mean my brothers and sisters?

D.S.: No, your ancestors?

D.H.: Oh, well we hardly ever had any visitors in the winter.

D.S.: No, your ancestors...like your grandfather, or great-grandfather.

D.H.: Oh. No well we didn't have none of them up there. My granddaddy
and grandma was dead and buried back there. But we never lived to see em.

D.S.: You never heard anything about a great-grandparent? Living up there.

D.H.: No.

D.S.: I'm just wondering how they came to that area.

D.H.: Now, I know just what you mean. I don't remember...I have heard my dad talk about his father a lot. Kinda in the spring time and all that...usta bring people in there and work for nothing.

D.S.: Yea. Uh, was...if a stranger came into your area, what was the reaction?

D.H.: Well, different things. We had a lot of strangers visit us and some of them would be hunting homes, and some of them would be for other business. Different kind of things. They'd want to ask us...well first place...some strangers come there to see my sisters. And they'd visit most ever Sunday. And they married people from the valley that usta come in there and see em and get acquainted with them. So a lot of them was gone when the park made us leave. But the park treated my dad...I think they treated my dad fair enough. Cause they gave him a decent price for his home. It like to killed him to leave, but after all we family didn't mind, because we wanted to get out anyhow. And the next question, if we hadn't got out, we'd all been just as dumb as could be cause we couldn't learn nothing up there. And after we got in this family meeting decent people, business people, working with them and working fer them, why we got to learning what we do know. We didn't learn it back there in the hills. You didn't learn nothing back there...you wasn't much more than an animal.
D.S.: Yea. Sure. Speaking of animals. Did you do any hunting?

D.H.: Oh, me and my dad hunted all the time.

D.S.: What did you hunt?

D.H.: We hunted coons...in the wintertime.

D.S.: Did you have coon dogs.

D.H.: Oh, the finest kind. That's what made him so mad. His coon dogs didn't know where he could hunt, but we hunted from Elkton, Swift Run Gap, clean here to Gap here this side of Waynesboro. And in the summertime we'd bee hunt. We'd find big trees, chop them down and take the honey out and carry it home. Carry two or three buckets with us and my dad could set out a bait and let them get to sucking and watch 'em fly and he could go just as straight to them as you could shoot and after I was with him for a long time I could do the same thing. Just watching them fly against the hillside. And then we'd cut the tree down and notch it out and split notches then and get the honey out, and put it in buckets and carry it home. Sometimes we'd get more than we could carry and then a lot of times we didn't get none hardly.

D.S.: You hunted coon, how about squirrel, rabbits

D.H.: Oh yea, yea we hunted a lot..oh yea we hunted a lot of squirrel.
We didn't do much rabbit hunting. But we hunted squirrel..I killed more squirrel than anybody up there.

D.S.: What would you do with them...did you sell the hides?

D.H.: Huh, huh. You couldn't do nothing with squirrel hides then but we eat them..all the squirrel. Mama would take as many as ten and make a big cooking in a big iron pot and make a potpie. And we all liked it.

D.S.: Sure.
D.H.: We eat all the squirrels we killed.

D.S.: Yea. You never sold any of the rabbits.

D.H.: Yea. We couldn't catch them in the mountain...in a box like they do out here in the valley. They would not go in a box, but we set steel traps and catch them. And when we did get some rabbits we would bring them down here and sell them down at Mr. Doc Store. Fifteen cents a piece.

D.S.: Uhhum. Did you ever tan any hides?

D.H.: No. We always sold our hides. It would be a hide buyer come through the mountains late in the year and the last couple years we did get up to where we got ten, twelve, fourteen dollars for a top big coon hide. And then they comes to going down and they went down to nothing to where we just quit hunting them.

D.S.: Uhhum. Groundhogs?

D.H.: Groundhogs, we caught them by the dozens. These same coon dogs would keep one treed at all times. We commenced having keep them tied to keep them under cover. And when they treed one up a tree that they could see, they wouldn't never leave. You'd have to go after it.

D.S.: Yea.

D.H.: And the same thing with a coon. We had some of the finest coon dogs ever walked through the woods. I mean when we got on Cedar Mountain or the big mountains and turned them loose they was nothing till they hit a coon. And when they hit one you had to go. And up a tree. We'd shoot a lot of em out we didn't have flashlights then. if we'd had flashlights we wouldn't have had to cut no trees. But we
had to cut so many trees because we couldn't see. And some of them would have hogs in a tree and go inside the tree. And we would have to cut it down. We've cut some in there...bigger than Big Sugar Bee and hold the dogs till it hit the ground and turn them loose and they'd go into it. And fight them...I've seen them coons stand up and fight them dogs and holler just like a child. And just fight them till just... took two good dogs to whup a big ole coon...because they could do some tall fighting. My daddy always wore those big high top boots and he'd get in there and try to stomp them to keep them from cutting the dogs up so bad. Oh boy. We'd, We'd shake one out on top of one of them mountains and I declare when we got him killed it'd be in a hollow a mile from there. They just keep going. Dogs and the coon. And we'd keep rolling behind. Slipping up, falling, sliding and get down there and they'd have him down in the hollow killed him. For one mile off the top of that mountain we've had a many a coon fight and roll them dogs a mile. They'd never let him go.

D.S.: Yea, right, they were good coon dogs.

D.H.: Oh, the best.

D.S.: Yea, right.

D.H.: We had one yellow dog the coons would try to run to the hollow and get in the creek to fool him and we had a yellow dog that they could not fool in the creek. He would go in too. And swim up and down the creek and run them back out so he could get the track. And whereever he come out he'd pick up the track again.

D.S.: Gee, what a smart dog.

D.H.: Yea, and them up in Bumbo Hollow one time, I will have to tell you,
we had a coon, she'd been chased so much by dogs I guess, it'd got
smart. He run right on the bank and sailed over on top of some
bushes in the creek and he set down on the bank from the bank and treed from over on the bank. He didn't
tree.... from up the tree. And when we got there... my dad said he's
right over there in those bushes, he from here. And
we went down in there and I come up and started shaking him and
down he come. Yea we caught lots of coon.

D.S.: You know going all the way down to German's Gap were there many
houses down there?

D.H.: No houses. No. After you left German's Gap on the East Side of the
Gap there were some old time antique buildings round the mountain
toward Waynesboro. Over on another mountain. But wasn't no houses
on German's Gap, on the mountain from German's Gap. Only house
that was between German's Gap and where we live was an old log house. We passed by his field with the Skyline Drive when
I worked up their seven years.

D.S.: Yea, and I want to get into that, in a minute, but first of all
when you were a little boy did you have any special job that was
yours?

D.H.: No, not til I left the mountain.

D.S.: Okey, you just all pitched in and

D.H.: Did what ever I can and helped to do what mama and dad asked us
to do. Getting in the wood and...

D.S.: Did you ever tell your mother and father "I won't do it"?

D.H.: No, Poppa didn't let us tell him that. If we did some of us tell him
that, then we would get the switch. And one thing I will always give
father, he learnt all his children to be honest and to treat people like we would like to be treated. That's what helped me when I left the mountain, and got to dealing with decent people...church people, and business people...I treated them like I would like them to treat me and I got along fine. I went in the cement business and I stayed in it forty years all the way from Front Royal clean to Greenville.

D.S.: We want to talk about that in a second. First of all we are still back in the mountains. Christmas. Did you celebrate Christmas?

D.H.: Oh, we generally always had a dance on Christmas.

D.S.: You Did? Did you ever hang up stockings or anything of that kind?

D.H.: Well, Mama...when mama and dad come as Santa Claus and they hung a black stocking for some candy in the bottom and a couple oranges on top. Wasn't no use in giving us apples because we had the cellar full. But they'd put maybe...big ole old time black stocking up maybe six inches of candy with a couple oranges in the top, and hang it on the chairs in the room. And we couldn't wait till next morning to get up and come down.

D.S.: Sure, did you shoot off firecrackers?

D.H.: Yea, we got them big ones...what they called thunderbolts, and we and shoot them could light them and throw them up back there on the hillside and they'd roar like a dynamite. Just from hollow to hollow.

D.S.: Yea. Uh, did you do anything called the Chris Kringler?

D.H.: I just don't understand.

D.S.: Did you dress up on Christmas and go from house to house?

D.H.: Oh yea. Yea, after we got older you know. Why we went in and out here all the time. Started going with the girls in the valley...that's
the way I found that woman you know. We would dress up... we dressed nice. After we... we had money, and kept money when we was in the moonshine business. Till the revenue men got to coming in there and cutting us up and breaking us up.

D.S.: You mention that you wore no shoes but you did in the winter, didn't you?

D.H.: Well in the last part of the... after we got further along in and got in this moonshine business... well we could all buy our own shoes. When we got old enough.

D.S.: But when you were a little boy, you didn't wear shoes in the winter?


D.S.: Didn't you get frost bitten toes?

D.H.: Nah, we stayed in the house til we got older... after we got older, they'd get us some shoes. My daddy worked awful hard trying to raise all of us and mama too.

D.S.: Yea, sure. Did you ever play any practical jokes on anyone?

D.H.: Well, I don't really know... remember... I may've. I ust be a terrible fellow for joking. I just don't remember... I guess I did.

D.S.: Did you play marbles with other boys?

D.H.: Yes mam. We'd set them up and shoot them... setting back there... my daddy could beat us all. He had big long thumb nails and he could set far as from here to that kitchen floor and pick that center one out. He could beat ever one of us in the family shooting marbles.

D.S.: Great, great. Did you ever play any baseball? or anything of that kind. Pitch horseshoes?

D.H.: We pitched horseshoes a lot. We didn't pitch... oh, the last few years we was up there, we would pitch ball in the evening. After we
got up some size; but, we played horseshoes from little boys on up.

D.S.: That's fun.

D.H.: That was our motto. We had one family people's boys, the Garrisons, lived eight miles from us. In the summertime we'd go visit them one Sunday, he had two boys about grown, and we'd all play horseshoes all day and eat dinner with them, and the next Sunday they'd come and visit us, and we'd have dinner and play horseshoes.

D.S.: Hey, great...and on Christmas you had a dance.

D.H.: Most ever Christmas we'd have a square dance.

D.S.: Was this at your house or...?

D.H.: Well, at different ones. The neighbors along there that knewed about it would come to our house, and then when they had a dance we'd go to their's.

D.S.: Christmas, then was a fun day?

D.H.: Oh, Lord yes. We had a lotta fun.

D.S.: Yea. Marvelous. Okey, let's see. Now to get your supplies. How did you get your supplies? Did you take the wagon...horse and wagon?

D.H.: We hauled them with a horse and wagon til we got in the automobile business.

D.S.: Okey. But before that you came down Brown Gap Road? Into Grottoes?


D.S.: Did you bring things down so you could get cash or credit? So you are saying you took your wagon...did you take anything down in the wagon? To the store to get credit?

D.H.: Yes mam. We hauled cabbage and potatoes out of the mountain. We raised a lot of potatoes.

D.S.: And eggs?

D.H.: And eggs.
D.S.: Huckleberries?

D.H.: We picked huckleberries too and sold them.

D.S.: Yea. Okey, now would the store give you credit or cash?

D.H.: Well, they would do either way, but we always needed enough to deal out what we needed for what we took. Sometimes we had to pay them different...we never asked for no cash.

D.S.: Alright.

D.H.: My dad had awful good credit with these business people, but he hated to ever go into debt any more than he had to.

D.S.: No. Did you...You were sort of young, so maybe you didn't notice. But do you know how fellows would court a girl?

D.H.: Court them? Well, maybe I don't know just enough about that. I know I started out at it when I was too young.

D.S.: Would they do it at like Applebutter Boilings?

D.H.: Oh, yea. Evertime they would bump the kettle they would have to kiss them. And he was cause of bumping kettle they would kiss em.

D.S.: Okey, would he go to visit her? At her home?

D.H.: Yea, they would visit each other.

D.S.: Uhhuh, would he go on a special day like Sunday?

D.H.: Yes mam.

D.S.: Okey. Now I am going to get into a very unhappy subject. Funerals. Uh, you had your own graveyard?

D.H.: Yes mam.

D.S.: You...would you make the coffins...would the coffins be made to fit the body. Like if it was a child would they use a very tiny...?

D.H.: Well, the undertaker would come in there and look at the corpse and then they would bring a casket...to...right fit for them.
D.S.: Okey. In the olden days they didn't have embalming, so did they keep the body in the house?

D.H.: Uh, well, lots of times they did. Keep them back around home till they was buried. On the mountains. And twas a lot of children back around there, we didn't have no doctor... had an old time 'granny-woman'. They'd go down from one house to another... one old woman just stayed mad... always give her a little something... and she made her living going around... when a baby was born... a cutting navel strings. No doctors.

D.S.: Did your mother know any herbs?

D.H.: Herbs in the ground?

D.S.: To use for medicine.

D.H.: Well she used peppermint and gin-sin.

D.S.: What did she use the gin-sin for?

D.H.: She ground the gin-sin, and I forget anymore what she used it fer, and then she used apple brandy with peppermint in it.

D.S.: What for?

D.H.: For cramps or sickness. When you get sick take a little drink of that sometimes would...

D.S.: That's what you should have had this morning.

D.H.: Yea, that's right. I wish I did have a little drink of apple brandy. Even if I do belong to the church.

D.S.: If you got a cold what would she give you?

D.H.: She kept a little white jug with apple brandy in it... good double... good brandy for sickness. A little white stone jug, and she'd give us a little of that apple brandy or else epsom salt, or turpentine.

D.S.: Turpentine with sugar?

D.S.: Okey, Uh. Did you ever make sassafrass tea?

D.H.: Oh, yea, when we didn't have no coffee...we'd dig them sassa..roots and peel them and wash them and make a tea. We used that instead of coffee. Lots and lots of times.

D.S.: Right. Okey. Uh...I'm just trying to think of any of the other herbs that were used, to see if you knew about them.

Well, okey...now you gave me this poem that your father wrote.

D.H.: He wrote that when he was in Atlanta, Georgia. Penetentiary.

D.S.: Atlanta, Georgia. Was that because of making the moonshine. He was caught carrying a still under his arm. And he told the rev- enue men...my dad didn't know...that was when they first come in the mountains...he didn't know the difference I'm sure...but he told them he knew he had to pay for that and could he pay them. His fine...and they told him, yea, and if you give us two hundred dollars a piece you can go...and, uh, he didn't have but a hundred and he give them the hundred and he come over to my house, and got a hundred dollars from me and took back and give them the other hundred and they let him go. And later on in the day they caught my brother manufacturing whiskey...Marvin Harris...and when he went in late that evening to bail him out, they turned him in for bribing, and he got two years in Atlanta, Georgia.

D.S.: How terrible!

D.H?: They were gonna keep it I reckon, but after Dad went out that evening, maybe they got scared he would tell on them. John and they had carried the two hundred dollars all day, but when he went out that evening to bail my brother out, they turned
him in for bribing, and they gave him two years in Atlanta, Georgia; and that's where he was when he wrote this letter.

D.S.: That's injustice, isn't it?

D.H.: Oh, it like to killed the old man. He didn't know the difference, he didn't have the education. He said, I know gentlemen, I got to pay a fine for this, can I pay you all or do I have to go to town and pay it. That was John Durden, and Dofflemeyer. They was the ones that cleaned up the mountain. They said yes you can pay us if you give us a hundred dollars a piece. He says well I don't have but a hundred but if ya'll let me go home, I can bring you back the other hundred less than an hour. I'll be back. And he come home and borrowed a hundred off of me and went back and paid it and they just let him go, he went on and thought he was free. And late that evening they caught his brother, his son, and when he went out to bail him out they turned him in for bribing. And he got got two years in Atlanta, Georgia...that's where he was when he wrote that letter.

D.S.: Oh, boy. Alright now, the park came along and your father got well paid, for it you say.

D.H.: Yes mam, yes.

D.S.: And you all moved down into Grottoes or where?


D.S.: Well, where did you move.

D.H.: Well, we moved to Stony Point. Down to Stony Point...above Charlottesville. Ten miles east of Charlottesville. I'd just like to...if you can stop the tape for a minute----------------------

...come along very slow...they chased me over in old Tuckehoo. I moved down in Bobsville, ten miles above Charlottesville,
I planted potatoes in the spring, dug them in the fall, and they was so damn little, I ate em skin and all. From there on I went, moved in and out to come back, and then the contractors come for the Skyline Drive and they give me and my boys a job. Poppa was a watchman there, from Browns Gap to Swift Run. And he said, he'd never seen no machinery or nothing... he stood up on a hill when the jack hammers & drills was in such a roar the like to him he'd never heard before. When they hit Old Rag Mountain, hit it so high, the boom of the shovel looked like it was gonna reach the sky. I just wonder it went on around... Old Rag Mountain is the highest mountain up there.

D.S.: Uhhum.

D.H.: And then moved from there on down in Elkton, and they gave him a job down there watching the machinery they left it there for months. And my dad stayed they and guarded it at nights til they left then. Then I worked for Luke Chandler from uh, Brown's Gap

D.S.: This was the C.C.C.'s?

D.H.: That was the contractors.

D.S.: Yea.


D.S.: Doing what?

D.H.: Uh, Putting in the Skyline Drive... was driving trucks... my daddy was watchman and we was all truckdrivers. And I stayed with them and got on then with the government... Mr. Elmer Clem from Shenandoah.
And uh, Mr. C. V. Caffman, Waynesboro was uh, superintendent and he treated us very nice. We maintained and stayed on the drive for years. I stayed with them clean through. I finally got to haul T.C. Poole out of Richmond with a Diamond T Truck. And then when we was maintaining...we moved up there...me and my wife and she cooked for ten of us. We'd fry our lunch up there. And uh, some of us stayed up there at night...some didn't...some went home. Austin Judd, and Ed Sharp they was with us then and I stayed on clean on through til Buena Vista. I worked with them from Front Royal to Buena Vista. Was up there seven years. We worked most of the time we was there for thirty cents an hour...all the way through, and towards the last when we got up to driving trucks...we got fifty. That's the most we ever got.

D.S.: Alright, so you got your food and lodging...

D.H.: Well, we didn't get any of that, we had to furnish all of that. We bought the food we took...Board...they gave us so much a week for the board up there. We bought all the food, we'd come down off the mountain and get groceries every night or two...stuff to cook and fix up there.

D.S.: How did you learn cement work?

D.H.: Well, I just really don't know. I come down off the mountain...I just getting old enough to work and I didn't have nothing to do and I started out in the cement and we finished by hand then...me and my brother...and we got into it bigger and bigger and then I bought two finish machines and I...only thing I done wrong...I stayed in it a little too long, I reckon. I got this arthritis so bad I
can't hardly walk. Uh, we poured cement from Front Royal clean to Greenville. That's right. All over this valley...basements, porches, carports,

D.S.: But there is a knack to doing it. How did you learn it?

D.H.: Well, I just naturally put it up there. By watching, I watched some older men. There was an old man into it when I started...he said, Mr. Harris, I wanna tell you something...said...you can make a lot of money in this cement...he was hobbling ; but he said when you get old, you will be just in my shape...standing in this wet cement, and if ever a man told me the truth, he told me the truth. Now I can't hardly walk at all ; I was in the cement business forty years, and I got a record of some of the best finishing in the cement of anybody in the valley. We worked...I stayed with the government up there...I stayed with the contractors with the government seven years...on the Skyline Drive. I know where there is springs in that mountain that we found...be coon hunting...that I knowed the rangers don't know nothing about. Run just cold as ice. Coming out near the tops of the mountains. We yesta find when we was bee hunting...coon hunting.

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

D.H.: Bear? Hardly ever then...wasn't many there.

D.S.: But you did see some?

D.H.: Oh yea...it was a few, and a few deer...We saw the biggest buck deer we ever seen in our life before the park come in here. Up in Patterson's Field back in Ivy Branch. That's a deer crossing, the rangers told us. They see more at Ivy's Branch than anywhere else. But you not 'lowed to hunt there.

D.S.: Oh, no!

D.H.: You can get in above there off the park which they do ever year, and
hunt, up to the park line.

D.S.: Yea, right. That is very unusual, because there were no bear north of Swift Run Gap that I've been able to find out.

D.H.: North of the Swift Run Gap?

D.S.: Uhhuh.

D.H.: Well, we seen a couple bear in around Brown's Gap, and we seen one deer...two deer...we seen a deer up here going up Brown's Gap one time. And we seen one at Patterson's Field...went back there, bee hunting. That was before the park ever come in there. But after all's said and done, I want to thank the Park for coming in and taking us...running us out of the mountain. When they come in there, it was like a bunch of hunters going in a gang of birds shooting at them. They went everywhere...I usta know a lot of girls I was going with back then, they disappeared and went to Pennsylvania and all other states...I don't know where many of the old people got to, but everybody left...but they treated everybody decent. They give 'em a fair price for their homes. And uh, my dad, all he done...it just hurt him bad to leave...he'd been all his life...he figured he couldn't make a living no where else, and he didn't make much after he left. But we boys got into money in the cement and stuff and we helped him and mama out. I put this house up right across the road for my mother and she lived there to have and she had sugar diabetes shot for four years before she died and I tended to all that. I give her the shots myself, til her shoulders looked just like a pin cushion.

D.S.: Boy! Were there any bad diseases up there?

D.H.: No mam.

D.S.: Diptheria?
D.H.: No.

You hardly ever heard of anybody having any kind of disease in the mountain.

D.S.: I heard about...that during that drought, it was in 1930, it was a bad drought, and that a lot of the springs dried up and caused typhoid fever.

D.H.: I never heard of it...not up there...so, I do know a lot of springs dried up. Now the springs were where we lived never dried. I found it ten years ago. It had grewed up so bad I didn't know where we was...me and my brother...but we found it by looking at the map, and in the hollow, we knowed it had to be the hollow we lived in, and we kept looking and coming on til we found the spring...me, my brother, and the other man had been there...on the Sunday before, and they couldn't, and I told them I could find it. And I did find it, and this guy that was with us, I forget his name...he found a deer horn where a deer had run against a tree and broke it off, and he turned that upside down...was a great big six foot square rock over our spring...he turned them deer horns upside down and dug all the leaves out it, and we had a few cans of stuff to eat, and we set there and eat it there.

D.S.: Oh great. Yea, uhhuh. Do you know how your family made out with their vegetables during that drought?

D.H.: Well, we uh, I just don't know back...uh when...just too much about that, but uh there was one thing about mama and poppa...they stayed ahead a year on most everything...in the canning...and the meat, and the potatoes and all would keep...long as they would keep in the spring...he buried a lot of his potatoes in the ground...and he kept a lot in the cellar. We had a cement cellar, so they tried
to stay way ahead. When he'd get his pay for looking after stock in the fall he'd take all his money and buy coffee, and sugar, and flour...stuff we had to have in the winter when we'd get snowed in and couldn't get out. And sometimes it was as much as two weeks sometimes three that we couldn't get out on the horses, and when it would get down where we could get out, me and my brother would ride horses out here and get stuff and carry it back on horses..in sacks..back to our home.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Sure. Did you ever hear of the, the uh hairs of a horse work-through a sack of meal?

D.H.: Yea, it'll do that. We had that done.

D.S.: What did you do to protect it?

D.H.: It would have to be cleaned very closely. Pour out small amounts at a time and take your fingers and go through it...to clean it...we've had that done. And I want to tell you something else later..that a lot of people don't believe in it. I remember one time at night we were riding back into our home and a jack-o’-my-lantern come down over the mountain and he landed on one of the horses head...my daddy took a switch and kept rubbing it up and down..the horse got to snorting and jumping...just went wild..and he took a switch and just kept rubbing it up and down and around and it left and a round ball with sparks like these Christmas sparklers children have, and we watched it go clean to the hollow and clean up the other side of Cedar Mountain. We set there on our horse and watched it til it went out of sight. And then another time one came out of the hollow down by our house..and we all setting on the back porch..in the summertime..and we watched it til it went up across Cedar Mountain.
They both went the same way...a little round ball of fire with sparks coming from it. And we don't know what it is. I don't know whether anybody else knows or not...but you've heard of jack-o-h-my-lantern haven't you?

D.S.: Sure, right.

D.H.: But when it got on that horses head, he just went wild...it was the one my daddy was riding...and he always kept a riding switch, and took it and rubbed it up off the horses ears and all and it'd keep crawling back around his neck and he just had a fit. And finally it all just closed together like a ball of fire and took off. And you could see the little sparks from it like Christmas sparks.

D.S.: It didn't cause any fire?

D.H.: No fire. No. And went through the woods about four foot off the ground and went clean to the hollow and we watched it go clear up Cedar Mountain til it went over top. That's a high mountain. We lived right in the hollow on this side, under Cedar Mountain.

D.S.: Great. Now. Fires. I just mentioned fires. Did you have many fires?

D.H.: Oh yea. We had mountain fires that you couldn't hardly do nothing with. And uh, the most of the fire up in our section was set by a woman and her children, and uh, she'd do it for meanness. We had our barns burnt with all our feed, ever bite of feed we had in them. And Leith Garrison had his burnt with ever bit of feed in the fall of the year he had. But from uh all calculations that this Leith Garrison wife...he had two women...up there he lived with and one of them had a couple children and she'd make them go and set these fires. Me and my dad come down by the place and he tried to...
tried to come through the bushes so they wouldn't see us, but they still seen us and just as soon as we got down the hollow back of the mountain she made the children come right down the mountain behind us and set it to make it appear we'd done it.

D.S.: I wonder why she did that?
D.H.: Oh, she just like that. She done that. She's dead now. Biddie Frazier...that was her name. We had some powerful fires in there at times. But where we lived...we was in a grassy field away from the hillside so fire never bothered us around our house. We had pasture fields in there...grass for miles and fire couldn't get to our place.

D.S.: But it did get to your barn?
D.H.: Oh, burnt the barn...several barns were burnt in there...and she accused...she told somebody later, that she had it done. But nobody never did have her arrested or nothing. Couldn't exactly prove it...she'd come in court, she'd deny it. And they just let it go at that. But it put us in bad shape. My dad had to sell...I think...one of his cows and two horses, cause we had nothing to feed them that winter. But he got them back the next summer.

D.S.: Did you, would you say, uh, well let's put it this way...What kind of a lock did you have on your door?
D.H.: Just plain locks like they got now.
D.S.: Oh, you did have a lock on your door. You locked your house?
D.S.: There was stealing?
D.H.: Stealing wasn't bad up there. Hardly ever lost anything. I never
hardly ever hear anybody talk about anybody stealing anything from them. Would sometimes...it was families in there...would do mean things. Somebody shot through our window one time with buckshot...we was all sitting in the living room. And we knew who he was. Junior...a man name of Junior Lavar...he died in Pennsylvania. But he and my dad had had a few words about something and he come by there drunk and shot through the window...buckshot...we got them out of the floor...swept them up off the floor. Didn't hurt nobody.

D.S.: Wow!

D.H.: And uh, little things like that they'd do. We had play wagons set against the bottom of the hill where we'd...we'd saw a gum tree down...bore a hole in it, put wheels on it...that's the only kind of wagon we had and they'd get them sometimes and take and bust them all up. Things like that. But fer as stealing...I don't remember any stealing was talked about in the mountain at all.

D.S.: Then you really didn't need a lock on your house?

D.H.: We really didn't need it...not un...only thing was 'cepting when one of those drunks one night would come and come in. But we always kept...my dad always kept a double barrelled shotgun setting in the corner He'd never keep it loaded, but he had the shells right there in case somebody come in and bother us.

D.S.: Well, that made sense.

D.H.: Yea, Right

D.S.: Well, the people were pretty hot tempered weren't they?

D.H.: Yea, they had a lot of fights. And you know the old people usta meet here in Brown's Gap in that field and bring their sons to fight each other to see which one wins. Yea, which one was the
best man. They 'fit' and 'fit' til they just almost died. My dad said he's seen old man Garrison have his son there and Tom Frazier and said he stood right back from them...he was young then...and said Garrison was whupping Tom Frazier...fixing to make him and his daddy walked by and said 'don't hollar Tom' said die with him; and, Tom Frazier whupped him. He finally got the best of old man Garrison. But he punched one of his eyes with his thumb nail clean out on his face. They 'fit' up there til...and so one could brag about his son was the best man. They met by the bunches and 'fit' up in that field here in Webb's Field, that's right in Brown's Gap...that field there...that's where they'd fight at...and at the start of the park that's where we had our big dinner. The Government men come in there and everybody fixed...mama fixed a whole ham that day and we had a big dinner there in the very starting of meeting the man there...that hired us...that is the first of it. And from then on, they begin to come in and out and survey and talk til they commence to taking the farm over. Now they did leave a few old houses stand in the park...Log houses, I reckon for souveniers, but it has growed up so bad now you can't see them from the drive. You can't see em.

D.S.: You have been simply wonderful, Mr. Harris. You don't know what you have done.

D.H.: Oh, I'm I'm real glad to do anything I can.

D.S.: You have. You've done it. It's beautiful. You have given the most marvelous story. Can you think of anything else?

D.H.: Well, well the only thing...the next thing I got to say is, if we'd stayed in there we never would have knowed anything and after we
got out here and went to school and got to working and meeting with
decent people, church people, and business people why we learned
something ourselves. And uh, I don't have no trouble with nobody
and I never did after I left the mountain...I just got along with
everybody I worked for in my life and I reckon I worked for hun-
red of people and a lot of them church people, business people
and when you go working, meeting, talking with them kind of people
you learn something yourself.

D.S.: Right.

D.H.: And uh, I made a lot of money in the cement business, but I had a
lot of people needed money...I give all my money away. That's why
I don't have nothing now

D.S.: You are a wonderful person.

D.H.: I had uh, so many people were so hard up and really needed money
and I give the most money I ever made away. I didn't save none of
it. I'm sorry I did it, but I just .. when you see somebody real
bad in need...if you got something..you gonna give it to him.

D.S.: Well, I sure do thank you.
I have spent my days in the Blue Ridge Hills......, where I could--n't hear noth--in' but the whip--poor----wills. There the light--nin' gave such a beau-ti-ful sight

I could 'hard-ly tell when it grew night.......... But now I'm down in this low land.....

......, where the wa-ter is warm and the land's all poor..............

RECISSION

Where the old rattlesnakes crawled all Summer long, 'til the frogs were all gone. I had a home near the Blue Ridge Top where the wildcats hopped from rock to rock.

I lived up there as happy as could be, never had the least idea anyone would ever bother me. But one cold dark evening, about four o'clock, on my front door I heard a knock.

In came the government people with papers in their hands, saying, "Old man, we have taken your land. You must vacate by April first". I felt right then my heart would burst.

My wife and dear children stand by my side. Now we are trusting in our Saviour to send us a guide.

But come, dear children, don't grieve and cry, God will prepare a home for you and I.

I have a good spring and a spring house combined. I hate to go and leave it behind. I have a good orchard and lots of good fruit. I often watch my big hogs root. But the government is now traveling very slow; they chased me over in Old Tuckahole. They left me standing on ole poor gall, that is the reason my head is so bald.

I climbed up a tree and I looked all around. I couldn't see nothin' but persimmons hangin' down. I planted some potatoes, I dug them in the Fall; they were so little I ate them skin and all.

I woke up next morning at the rising of the sun. I cast my eyes 'round me while the tears began to fall.

I wish I was back on Old Browns Gap, where I used to raise potatoes as big as my cap.

I tho't of my dear old mother I was forced to leave behind. I tho't of my dear old father, who to me was so kind. I tho't of my old mountain home which I loved so well. My feelings at that moment, no human tongue could tell.

Oh, I would like to be back in my tumble down shack, where the wild roses bloomed 'round my door.