Mae Atkins Long interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Sharon G. Marston

Mae Atkins Long

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

NARRATOR: Mrs. Mae Atkins Long
INTERVIEWER: Mrs. Dorothy Smith
PLACE: 1 Mile East of Panorama
DATE: 11/28/78

TRANSCRIBED BY:
Sharon G. Marston

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D.S.: Who... what is your first name?

M.L.: Mae.

D.S.: Mae Atkins.


D.S.: Long. And how... her mother's name was Beahm. And she lived... right... one mile west of Panorama. How many were in your family?

M.L.: Eleven.

D.S.: Eleven.

M.L.: Uhhuh. Seven girls and four boys.

D.S.: You know they had big families, didn't they?

M.L.: And all of them are living except one brother.

D.S.: Oh, that's nice.

M.L.: Course Mother and Dad are gone but...

D.S.: Yea. Uh... what sort of a home did you have? Was it a log house?

M.L.: Oh, no, it was a regular frame house.

D.S.: It was a frame house. How big was it?

M.L.: Well we had six bedrooms, a kitchen, living room, and two large porches. One went all the way across the front of the house and one all the way across the back of the house.

D.S.: That was a very large house. Um... how many acres did your father have?

M.L.: Oh, where we lived was about 17 and then on another track of land we had 400.

D.S.: Where was that track?

M.L.: It was over in what we called Dean Hollow.

D.S.: Uhhuh. And what did your father do with that...?

M.L.: He raised uh corn and we had a potato garden... patch... as they called them then.

And uh... mostly corn... raised away from our home which was about a mile from our house.

D.S.: Now... 400 acres... you couldn't plant that much corn.

M.L.: Oh no. Part of it was wooded. Part of it was cleared off... say as much as
a ten, twelve, maybe a fifteen acre field. I just don't remember what size it was.

D.S.: Of course you were only when you moved out right?

M.L.: The rest...the rest was wooded...

D.S.: Uhhum. Yea. Did your father sell any of that wood?

M.L.: No, we used it for ourselves.

D.S.: So you had woodburning stoves...

M.L.: Stoves and a fireplace

D.S.: And that's how the house was heated?

M.L.: That's right.

D.S.: Uh, I have heard some people tell about the homes were not that well built so that snow would come in. Did that ever happen in your house?

M.L.: No. No, our's was built when my mother and father was married. So it was practically a new house. There was one room that wasn't finished. But we used that for a storage room.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Near your home, did you have your own vegetable garden.


D.S.: What did you grow?

M.L.: Oh, we grew everything. We had beans, of course, and corn, and cabbage, and just the regular vegetable garden. In between each row of vegetables my mother had a row of flowers.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Is that why you are a florist?

M.L.: I don't know. I can see the flowers. I don't know if that's where I got the florist business or not.

D.S.: Do you know what kind of flowers they were?

M.L.: Well yea, they were uh, zeniás and then she had a bed like all to itself of lilies of the valley. And of course in the spring we had a lot of jonquils. And uh, dalías, course they were in the fall...usually in the fall.
D.S.: That was a lot of work.
M.L.: Oh yes, but there was a lot of us to help.
D.S.: Did you have any particular job...did each child have a particular job they had to do?
M.L.: No, I didn't. I think they just all worked together when anything had to be done....it was done. And we had an aunt that lived with us...that helped mother out with the cooking and the washing and ironing....for years.
D.S.: Uhhuh. How was the washing done?
M.L.: Ah, on a board....in a tall tin tub and you'd wash the white clothes out in an iron kettle....to keep them white.
D.S.: Yes, that's right.
M.L.: We made our own soap, except for bath soap. We made our soap to wash with.
D.S.: Uhhuh. You did buy bath soap?
M.L.: Oh yea. Yes, we bought bath soap.
D.S.: You are the first family that I have heard of that did.
M.L.: Yes, we had bath soap. But I think most of it came from New York where my brother...I mean my aunt lived....and uncle and he would send it to my mother which was her brother. A lot of it came from there I am sure.
D.S.: Uhhuh. How were the vegetables saved over the winter? Do you remember?
M.L.: Well we canned a lot. Canned an awful lot. But then the turnips and the cabbage and apples we buried in a root cellar.
D.S.: Oh, you had a root cellar.
M.L.: Uhhuh.
D.S.: Oh,
M.L.: We buried those and ...
D.S.: The reason I asked that is so many used to put uh...dig a trench and then they put the vegetables in there.
M.L.: No, we had a root cellar.
D.S.: You mentioned apples?
M.L.: Uhhuh. We had our own apples.

D.S.: You had your own orchard?

M.L.: Yes. And they were mylum apples which there isn't any around that I know of...

D.S.: We have two on our property.

M.L.: Really.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

M.L.: Well you are very fortunate. Cause all that were around up our way...they died. Course they were old trees.

D.S.: I know...I know...those mylums are the best apples ever grown.

M.L.: They've got the best flavor.

D.S.: Yea. Did you dry your apples?

M.L.: Yes, uhhuh.

D.S.: Did you dry the beans?

M.L.: Not much...we weren't much on snap beans....we'd rather have them canned.

D.S.: Oh, uhhuh. Alright now...how would you get your supplies...like the kerosene and sugar and coffee?

M.L.: Oh, my uncle run a store within a half mile of us right on the highway. Post Office there also. Called Beans Post Office.

D.S.: Oh, uhhuh. Your uncle?

M.L.: That's right. That was my mother's brother. My uncle.

D.S.: Okey. Now the post office...he had the post office?

M.L.: Uhhuh...

D.S.: And with the mail, you would all go there to pick up your mail?


D.S.: Every day?

M.L.: Every day.

D.S.: And then you...did you take like eggs to him and get credit for those or how would you...
M.L.: You know I really don't remember that because my daddy worked a sawmill a lot across the mountain for a Fletcher and uh, I just don't remember them exchanging eggs or anything like that. They probably did....

D.S.: Uhhuh, then you had cash..

M.L.: Yes, he had cash, because he worked most of the time.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Your clothing. Where would you buy that or did your mother make most....

M.L.: Well she made a lot but then she came to Luray and bought a lot because there were a lot of clothing stores there when I was younger...I don't know, I guess she made things for the older girls.

D.S.: Uhhuh, uhhuh..now shoes...

M.L.: I never...I remember my sister saying that somebody made some shoes for them but I never wore homemade shoes so I can't tell you much about that.

D.S.: There were some people that would wear shoes only in the winter...maybe saved for the winter because they needed them then more than in the summer.

M.L.: Well, probably the older girls and boys did, but they never would allow me to go barefoot...because they was scared I would be bitten by a snake.

D.S.: And you were to young...

M.L.L I was too young to really know...

D.S.: Uhhuh, right. Uh, did you go to the school?

M.L.: Thornton's Gap...

D.S.: Thornton's Gap School. Exactly where was that located?

M.L.: That was about a mile above our house...oh, about as far as from here to McKim and Huffman Drug Store....from uh...Panorama....right on top. And uh it was so far for us to walk around the road, that the families got together and they made us a path...from one road to the other...which it was on a horse shoe bend...around like that. And then they just cut a pathway up through so we wouldn't have to walk on the highway that far.
D.S.: Very Good.

M.L.: So it cut off a lot of walking.

D.S.: When...what...that school was it a one room school? And did it go through the
sixth grade? or Eighth grade?

M.L.: Yes, uhhuhh...Sixth grade.

D.S.: Sixth grade. Uh, were there many children? in the school?

M.L.: Yes I would say it was about twenty or twenty two....something like that. It
varied.

D.S.: Did they come from the east side of the mountain...

M.L.: Uhhuhh..uhhhuhh..uhhhuh...they came from about a mile on the other side...of the top
and they came...huh...

D.S.: How about the snow...did you all walk through the snow?

M.L.: Well if the teachers could get there, we got there.

D.S.: Oh, the teacher didn't live...

M.L.: She boarded with my aunt. And uh, a lot of times she would stay at our house
too. It just depended on who would take her.

D.S.: Did she pay board?

M.L.: Oh yea. Oh yes, they paid board.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Do you recall what subjects were taught?

M.L.: Yes. Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, History, and some Geography. When you got
up as far as fifth and sixth grades.

D.S.: Was this for seven months out of the year or....

M.L.: I believe it was seven or eight months. I just don't remember, now.

D.S.: Yea. You were very fortunate. You were really...

M.L.: We were...I know we were. Because a lot of children had to walk a lot further
than we did, didn't get to school. We were very fortunate....to be as close
to the school as we were....because we lived right on 211.

D.S.: That's right. Yea. Now is that how you would come into Luray on 211.

M.L.: Uhhuh.
D.S.: Did you have a horse and wagon?

M.L.: We had horse and buggy.

D.S.: Buggy. Ahha...You were one of the elite.

M.L.: We had horse and buggy...well no, not really, but we were just fortunate enough, as I say my daddy worked part of the time and then farmed part of the time...it didn't take as much to live then as it does now.

D.S.: Uhhuh. That's so true.

M.L.: I often wonder how they ever raised 11 children.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Couldn't do it now a days. How about a doctor. When anyone was ill, did you have a doctor.

M.L.: Yes, uhhuh. We had Doctor Loring Hammers and Dr. Ed Brumback. Those would come on the mountain.

D.S.: Those were from Luray weren't they?

M.L.: Uhhuh..both of them.

D.S.: Uhhuh...and they would come up if you'd go...

M.L.: Yes they would.

D.S.: Did you have a phone in your house or did...

M.L.: Oh, yes we had a phone.

D.S.: You did?

M.L.: Uhhuh. We had a phone as far back as I can remember. Now I don't know before that, but...I imagine that we hadone just as soon as they could get one. Now I do remember when they put electricity in our house, because I know I could remember going around snapping on the lights you know...And the told my dad said oh, let her alone she'll get over that in a few hours..said it's just something new now.

D.S.: Since your mother was so good with flowers..did she know a lot about herbs?

M.L.: No. nothing, but this ginseng...do you know what that is?

D.S.: Yes.

M.L.: Well she knew about that. And, oh, I'm sure a few others but my mother died
when I was eight years old. I don't remember to much about...

M.L.: She had a cerebral hemorrhage. Uhhuh, she was cleaning chickens for dinner that day about 7:30 in the morning and she only lived just a couple hours. And Dr. Loring Hammer came up.

D.S.: Oh my goodness.

M.L.: Uhhuh. She was only 50...51 or 52.

D.S.: Oh my and your father left with all these children.

M.L.: Well some of the girls were older and they would help.


M.L.: They had too.

D.S.: Were you the youngest?

M.L.: I'm the youngest of the eleven.

D.S.: Oh, I'll bet you were spoiled. Did you get...uh, what kind of toys did you have when you were a child?

M.L.: Well of course I had doll babies and just the toys that ordinary kids have today...I guess.

D.S.: You did.

M.L.: Yes. But as far as the older girls...now I don't know what kind of toys they had. Probably dishes and tea...and I guess things like that. I just don't know.

D.S.: Oh, my you don't realize how lucky you were.

M.L.: I know.

D.S.: Very fortunate. Uh, did the boys play marbles. And pitch horseshoes and

M.L.: They pitched horseshoes...oh yes, and played marbles. But mostly ball.

D.S.: When you mentioned your mother died...uh, the funerals did they embalm people...

M.L.: Yes. They came to the house and embalmed her.

D.S.: Uhhuh. And when she was buried did everybody stay right around the grave until...

M.L.: Yea...until it was closed.

D.S.: That shows such nice respect. I wish they did it now.
M.L.: And of course all the neighbors...they even uh, would dig the graves you know. You never had a funeral director to dig a grave. Everybody was there just as soon as they heard...that someone had passed away. They were there to do that. Because sometimes...

D.S.: There was so much more help among people then wasn't there.

M.L.: Uhhuh. Oh, I think so. Because—people don't have time for anything now. They just live in such a rush.


M.L.: Church...we'd go to Morning Star Lutheran Church....

D.S.: Right across the street from where I live.

M.L.: Oh, is that right. There's where we went to church. Now that's where I went and before that they would have different...you know....revivals and things around.

D.S.: That was a distance to that church.

M.L.: Uhhuh. See we had a Model T Car at that time...

D.S.: Is that someone...

M.L.: Yes....

D.S.: Go ahead.

M.L.: You had mentioned something about candy. You used to make candy.

D.S.: Now was this common for the people...families to make candy....up there?

M.L.: Oh, I imagine, because there wasn't any place to buy it.

D.S.: Uh, what kind of candy did you make?

M.L.: Make this hard candy...just like this. In different flavors.

D.S.: Uhhuh. How would you make it?

M.L.: Well it's made with syrup ...course our's got darker than this because now you can buy the light syrup...then you had to buy the dark syrup...

D.S.: Uhhuh...like karo syrup?

M.L.: Uhhuh. And of course the flavoring and the sugar...water...
D.S.: Did you make that...

M.L.: Oh yea. we make that....that was made of peanut butter of course...the only thing mother would use uh, regular grain sugar because we didn't have powdered sugar.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did your family ever make sorghum?

M.L.: No. But we made applebutter.

D.S.: You did? Okey, tell about the applebutter...would all the neighbors get together?

M.L.: Yea...Yes. And we would have a party. Mother would always fix something for dessert and something to eat you know. Well it would take them all night to peel apples...up until the wee hours of the morning and she'd serve them coffee and cake or a sandwich...anything they wanted.

D.S.: Did anybody play the fiddle and the banjo while you all were working?

M.L.: Oh yea....no no not while we were working. But when we used to have parties and they would come to our house and we had a lady that played the violin and then one of my older brothers played the guitar and one of my sisters played the organ. And they made real good music.

M.S.: Did they ever play that song the Fox Chase or Fox Hunt?

M.L.: No...

D.S.: You don't recall. Uh, what tunes would they play?

M.L.: Oh, Like Turkey in the Straw uh...

D.S.: Money Mush.

M.L.: No.

D.S.: Leather Britches..


D.S.: Do you recall how that went.

M.L.: No, I really don't. I really don't...I couldn't...I've forgotten.

D.S.: How.....hum that tune for me....

Up, the dancing...what kind of dancing was it...more like reel dancing...
M.L.: Generally reels...used to do the charleston too.

D.S.: Oh sure, of course...

M.L.: Uhh...the Mims'. Ralph Mims and Josie Mims...in fact we sold them the land that they built their cabin on back of our house and they had a piano in their basement and I can't remember who used to play, but we would go up there and dance and visit a lot.

D.S.: Uhhuh...when you were doing the applebutter boiling...did they have a fellow on one side and a girl on the other?

M.L.: Oh a lot of times...it was somebody there that was a courting each other, they would do that and bump the kettle and kiss. That wasn't uh, very many...weren't much of that went on.

D.S.: No. Uh, have you any idea how they did their courting...

M.L.: Well...they would come to the house, and we had a parlor that the girls always courted at home...they weren't allowed to go out very much.

D.S.: No. Were they supervised? Chaperoned?

M.L.: At intervals...not all the time. But you never knew who was going to walk in and out...uhhhuh...uhhhuh..

D.S.: Uh, would...in some of the places it was only on Sunday's and Wednesday's that the fellows would come courting...

M.L.: I don't remember about the day...

D.S.: It was pretty...it was a lot of work wasn't it?

M.L.: Oh sure.

D.S.: You all were pretty busy most of the time weren't you?

M.L.: Uhhuh...but every evening...oh, yes, in the evening we'd sit around the fireplace...either have popcorn or my daddy used to buy peanuts by the bushel...raw peanuts and of course we had...in the oven we would roast those at night...And in seasons we buy...these husters would always go across the mountain and would always stop and we'd buy banana's by the bunches and hang them in the
washhouse...just like we killed our beef and would hang it in the washhouse and cut it down as we wanted it.

D.S.: Uhhuh. There weren't the flies or anything.

M.L.: Oh, no...we never saw the ground until...from about the middle of October and sometimes earlier until April. When we lived on the mountain. It just snowed a lot more then...than it does now.

D.S.: Where would you get the beef from?

M.L.: Raised it.

D.S.: You raised your own.

M.L.: Uhhuh. Made our own butter...you know everything like that.

D.S.: Uhhuh...how about...uhhuh...how many cows did you have?

M.L.: Well at different times we'd keep around 4 milking cows...

D.S.: You needed that for that many people?

M.L.: Oh yes. uhhuh.

D.S.: And so you'd make your own butter, cheese, cream,...did you make clabber.

M.L.: No, I didn't but I've heard the other girls say they liked it. But I never ate it.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you raise pigs?

M.L.: Yes.

D.S.: Were they kept in an endosure or...


D.S.: They weren't allowed to just roam...

M.L.: They didn't roam...they were fed daily.

D.S.: How near was your nearest house? Your nearest neighbor?

M.L.: Um...where my uncle had the post office....well it wasn't a half a mile...right on the highway. That was our nearest neighbor. Our next nearest...was I guess a Mr. Cliser. Was the next closest.

D.S.: Yea. Poor Clisers?
M.L.: Mylanthum Cliser. You know that lady is still living...and she is 90 some
years old. It's a shame. He's blind.

D.S.: I know it.

M.L.: She has a twin sister though that is still just....

D.S.: Yea. Very, very good sharp memories. While you all were sitting around
of an evening, uh, did anybody ever say how your family came to be in the
mountains? Or where they came from?

M.L.: No, because my mother lived on the east side...uh, the west side of the mountain
and my daddy lived on the east side. He lived about a mile down on the other
side. And she lived about a mile on this side. And my grandfather had a
toll gate where the Bean's Post Office used to be. That was my grandfather.

D.S.: Do you know how much they used to charge to go through that toll gate?

M.L.: Uh...I've heard them say...I think maybe...I don't think it was over a nickel
or something...like that...maybe not that much.

D.S.: How was the road kept repaired?

M.L.: Well now when I first remember the highway it was hard surfaced. When I
remember it.

D.S.: Oh, it was. Uh,huh.

M.L.: But before that it was just a muddy road with deep ruts in it. You could
hardly get over it with a car.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Uh, fascinating. You know the thing that I .. well I'm going to put
words in your mouth. How about it...did your family have a key on their
door.

M.L.: No.

D.S.: Okey. It was no stealing was there?

M.L.: No.

D.S.: Nobody ever thought of stealing. Uh, they were very honorable people weren't
they? Do you have any recollection of how the weddings were.
M.L.: No, I really don't. The only wedding I remember was one of my sisters and I was awfully small. But I know there were a lot of people around, eating. That's all I can remember.

D.S.: You know I've heard that a lot of the people used to elope.

M.L.: Yea. Sure a lot of them did.

D.S.: And for no reason...not because of rejection but it was the thing to do. They'd elope to West Virginia.

M.L.: Maryland.

D.S.: And Maryland. Yea. Uhhuh. There is a cure that a lot of the people used for colds. I'm wondering if your mother gave it to you. Turpentine and sugar.

M.L.: No. We had castor oil with applebutter. That's the way we took it.

D.S.: ooh...for a cold?

M.L.: We could play on the ice, we could stay in the snow as long as we wanted to. But the minute we hit that door at night we had to have our dose of castor oil.

Now, that's the medicine my mother used.

D.S.: Yea. How about mustard plastards?

M.L.: Oh yes. She used those!

D.S.: She didn't make any plastards of cornmeal and onions?

M.L.: No.

D.S.: What I was trying to see if you did without realizing it...know of some herbs. How about sassafrass tea?

M.L.: Yes, we used that.

D.S.: And what was that used for...pleasure or...

M.L.: No, that was used for backaches...kneys.

D.S.: Oh, backaches and kidneys.


D.S.: Some people used it to bring out the hives and measles and some of them got it every March to thin their blood. But you got it for backaches and kidneys.
D.S.: Did your mother ever make any peppermint tea?

M.L.: No.

D.S.: What did she use the ginseng for?

M.L.: I think more or less, they just gathered that for sell. I don't believe she used it for anything that I know of...I think just a fantastic price at that time.

D.S.: Yea. It sure was.

M.L.: and I believe when they gathered that...she and dad would go together. gather it.

D.S.: Did you hunt marmals?

M.L.: No.

D.S.: You didn't? uh, these hucksters that would come by would every now and then you sell them eggs or anything...or hams,

M.L.: No, I'm sure we didn't sell any hams or eggs...we probably gave them away. I don't think we sold anything...I mean we'd buy off of it, but we didn't sell.

D.S.: Yea, uhhuh. You gave some of your milk to the hogs?

M.L.: Oh, yes. Sure. We had uh, a springbox...it's called a springbox because the spring ran continuously through it. And whenever we had a heavy rain we'd have to go to the springbox and put rocks on top of the lids to keep it from floating see and upsetting. It was in a branch see, and this water run in here right here out the other end. If it rained real hard before the water would get up, you would have to go out there and weight them down....so they wouldn't float...see...so much water got in there they would float.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh...and what was kept...

M.L.: They were crocks of milk...and for lids we used uh just a regular dinner
plate like. And then we would weight that down...keep them from floating...when the water got up. And then we kept our butter in that all summer...of course in the winter time you could keep it in the house.

D.S.: Sure. Right. Uh, the butter was churned?

M.L.: Oh yes, uhhuh.

D.S.: It's lucky you had a large family because your mother never could have...

M.L.: I know...

D.S.: Did you raise any sheep?

M.L.: No.

D.S.: Just cattle and hogs and...

M.L.: and chickens. Course we had horses...riding horses and work horses.

D.S.: You did.

M.L.: Uhhuh..

D.S.: Did you do a lot of riding?

M.L.: Well not too much. Except just to go after the cattle and and other horses when we wanted to bring them in.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Were any of the cattle kept on the 400 acres?


D.S.: Uhhuh, yes.

M.L.: Had to go open gates and drive them through the branch and back to the house.

D.S.: Sure. Did you...did your family or any of the families near you make any moonshine?

M.L.: Yea. My family didn't but their was a lot of families that did make it.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Do you recall which ones?

D.S.: The Statute of Limitations of over...

M.L.: Well a lot of Jewell's made it. The guy I was telling you about a while ago. He made it...
D.S.: Uhhuh, probably still does.
M.L.: For sure...
D.S.: Yes. After all it makes sense. Because carrying a jug of whiskey is certainly a lot lighter than barrels of apples.
M.L.: Because...mother always had wine and she kept it in a keg and it was made out of blackberries. Because there were just plenty of blackberries. Plenty of wild strawberries. And that's what we made our jam out of...and preserves and things like that.
D.S.: Uhhuh. And no sorghum?
M.L.: No. I don't know why we didn't...oh, we probably had some of it, but we never made that...somebody else probably made that and dad would just buy it or trade something for it.
D.S.: Sure. There was a lot of that wasn't there? If you had an extra supply of this and then you would trade...
D.S.: Do you know what was done with the excess corn? Was that sold?
M.L.: I imagine. Because I can remember them talking about raising wheat and bringing it to the mill.
D.S.: Where was the mill?
M.L.: Here in Luray...This same mill, has been there for years and years. Of course it's closed now. Well see it's only seven miles...to where I lived on the mountain...to Luray...
D.S.: It's a long way...Yea...Right.
M.L.: And uh, we would bring wheat there and have flour, and they would just keep it there and we would get it as we needed it.
D.S.: Oh, really?
M.L.: Uhhuh. You'd bring so much wheat in and they'd make flour out of it for you and you'd pick it up as you needed it. I don't know how much storage they
paid or anything like that you know... I don't remember.

D.S.: No, of course not. No. How could an 8 year old girl...

M.L.: Well a lot of it I remember by hearing my sisters talk you know about different things.

D.S.: Yea. Did he uh, pay the miller or did the miller take out a certain percent?

M.L.: I think the miller took out a certain percentage of the wheat.

D.S.: Uhhuh. That was pretty general. Coming on toward winter... you knew all this snow was going to be coming would you stock pile a lot of things like flour sugar and so forth?

M.L.: Oh sure. Uhhuh. We'd buy sugar by a hundred pounds. And of course the last two months... around September or October when it got to getting cool up there well they started getting the wood in for winter... we had plenty of wood for in the fireplace and the stove.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Kept you busy...

M.L.: Uhhuh, we've had as many as ten or fifteen to spend the night at our house. Of course we had it set up by the fire, when they were trying to keep the roads open on the mountain. Oh, the machines would freeze up and people would leave Luray and Mr. and Mrs. Capatan from Richmond went across the mountain when we were having a terrific snow storm and they got stuck about a mile from Panorama... just above our house. And my dad and brother had to go and lead them to the house, they were just lost... it was snowing so hard they said you couldn't see. And we did have enough room for them to sleep and they stayed there for two days and two nights before they could get away. And you remember Mrs. Chapman lived over here... it was her niece and her husband. We always had the Highway Department men there whenever the snow fell they'd come in and warm up and mom would give them coffee and something to eat. And the machines would freeze up and they didn't have the anti-freeze that they have now, and oh it was terrific.
D.S.: When your family was moved out...now this is going to be a sore point...


D.S.: But, uh, they of course had lived there all their lives, where were they moved to?

M.L.: Uhhuh. Well we bought our own place.

D.S.: You were given enough money to buy your own place?

M.L.: Well, not really enough to buy it, but anyway they took us up in Ida Hollow to look at some places that they had built up there for the people they were moving out of the Park and my dad said "No way...I'll buy my own house." And we bought on East Main Street...it's still...just right the other side of where you turn to go into Blue Bell. That's where we moved. It's a white house out there that's got black around the porch. My dad, so no, will I move into a place like that. And of course the houses were just like barracks that they had built to move the people in. Til they could find something. But we bought our property out here on East Main Street.

D.S.: How did they adjust?

M.L.: Fine. We all adjusted fine. Some of the older ones did not. My dad of course had five of us kids with him at the time and he adjusted fine and he said he really didn't want to live up there if everybody else moved out. So he didn't make any big deal about it. Well they said you had to move so that was just one of those things you had to do...not like the Clisers.

D.S.: No.

M.L.: They had an awful time with...

D.S.: I know...

M.L.: It was terrible.

D.S.: And uh, I never go past there because the horror of that...and yet if he had been alive to stay there and everybody else...

M.L.: That's right. That's right. You had to treat everybody alike. You couldn't
take one person's property and let somebody else stay there. Although as I say, they let Mr. Willis stay up there as a fire warden for a long time... well until he died.

D.S.: And Annie Shenk was allowed...

M.L.: Yes. Uhhuh, But they uh..wasn't hardly two or three months til they burned all the buildings and removed someone would move back in.

D.S.: Well they did. They did. They were sure that would happen. Uhhuh.. But don't you feel it has been a good thing for you? That you have been moved out?

M.L.: Well I'm sure...according to the way that the times are now to what they were then...it was a God's blessing that we moved out, because we were able to get a better education...course now, my brothers and sisters..I had brothers living in Sperryville...well a bus would not run and pick us up after we passed the seventh grade at the country school. They would not send a bus up to pick us up so we either had to go and stay with relatives in the town and go to school or the seventh grade was as far as we could go. But I have a brother and a sister both that graduated over at Sperryville High School...because I had sisters and relatives living over there that they could stay with...and finished high school...but of course I was just in the third or fourth grade and I came to Luray but the older ones...some of them the seventh grade is as far as they went.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Well it seems to me like...it opened your horizons.

M.L.: Yes..oh, yes.

D.S.: You were mentioning the Boars Head Inn and I doubt if you would have living on the mountain.

M.L.: Well, the way the traffic is now..I mean...not the traffic...but the way you have of getting back and forth to places...cars and buses...and the buses used to run across the mountain of course. It was awfully hard to get enough
to ride a bus to go very far.

D.S.: Uh huh. Is there anything I haven't asked you that you can think of...did you ever take time to look around you at the things...beautiful place...

M.L.: No...no...no...we did not realize it then. I look around now and think how beautiful it is...maybe the older girls did but to me it was just a place.

D.S.: Somehow, I always have a picture of uh...the mother of the family making a whole lot of apple pies...

M.L.: Oh yes...we did...

D.S.: Walking outside and looking at her home. Looking around the mountains and saying aren't I lucky...

M.L.: Well maybe she did. Maybe she did...You asked me...not me.

D.S.: Was there ever much drinking at the parties?

M.L.: No, but everybody had it all the time. In fact...speaking of medicine, my dad used to make what he called a stew...at that time when I was little. And we all had like little...cups; stuff like now...I don't know what they were called then. And he would put it on the stove and put spices in it...like ginger...and of course water and things like that. But what I was fascinated with was when it got hot he would strike a match to it and that would burn all the alcohol out and we thought we were drinking but really we weren't getting anything but medicine. So that...it would just come up in a blue flame. But he would never give it to us until it had burned the alcohol and...of course I'm sure we got a little, but not uh...

D.S.: And when it was real cold weather we had a lot of that at night before we'd go to bed.

D.S.: ...you do ice skating...

M.L.: Not up there. It wasn't any place large enough to ice skate. It wasn't wide enough. But we sleigh rode. Oh yes, uhhuh. When my uncle I was speaking about from New York was down he brought us one of these flexible flyers and oh
we just thought we were great you know.

D.S.: Oh you were.

M.L.: We had plenty of hills...even down the highway. And the car...we had an old Model T. Car and they...we would come as far down as right above that last gift shop on the left hand side. And the car...somebody would be driving the car and come down and pull us back up. Of course there wasn't many cars on the road then. Oh yes. Well the one thing we never had that I could remember...the older girls said they used to have one is a sleigh.

You know pulled by horses...........

Now, I have one at my home...it's gorgeous...I had it all redone.

D.S.: Do you have a horse?


D.S.: Where?

M.L.: Just about 3 miles west. At a place called Hamburg.

D.S.: Oh yes...

M.L.: I live in a good-sized house on the right hand side...by a church...

You know where Virginia Holtzman lived. Well we own that farm back of her.

D.S.: Oh great.

M.L.: Uhhuh. And as I say it's been since when Cleftron was working on the ABC Board...he just got tired...he said I've got too much to do .... He could have retired in three more years...but he just.....life is too short...

D.S.: That's exactly right. But he always...when he's at parties or something...they get to talking about how they make their lives or something...he'll say I' got my wife...money married rock...

And I say now ya'll think he's kidding, but he's really telling the truth.

D.S.: Have you ever heard any stories about how Mary's Rock got its name?
M.L.: Uh, I've heard lots and lots and lots. I heard that there were two lovers up there and he shoved her off and gosh, I've heard so many different tales.

D.S.: Yea.

M.L.: About that.

D.S.: Have you ever heard the story on the Thornton that there was a Mary Thornton and she loved nature and her father took her as far as you can see this is the land I own. She always loved that rock. I've always wondered how with all those heavy skirts that they used to wear when the Thorntons were there, how she ever made it up that rock.

M.L.: Yea. Uhhuh...there you go.

D.S.: But that's the story that I got from the Thorntons.

M.L.: I don't know how any man made it up there to honestly, really and truly ever got named because up until the Park Service took it over there was no way you could get there. And they made a trail to walk up there. And if you've ever been there you know how hard it is to walk on the trail and what do you think it would be walking through rocks and brush and...

D.S.: Uhhuh. Right. Speaking of rocks and brush. Were there many huckleberries?

M.L.: No we never had any huckleberries...up our way. They were on this other mountain. But of course we didn't burn ourselves up....

D.S.: That's right. That's right, you didn't. You cherished what you had. Yea. Your father just used the woods for his own firewood.

M.L.: That's right.

D.S.: That's is marvelous because that is really what preserved all those woods...

M.L.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: Well you do...you said you knew nothing and what you have told....

M.L.: Well I told you partly what I knew and partly what my sisters had told me.... which I am sure is true.
D.S.: Well I certainly thank you...

M.L.: Well...

D.S.: I thank you so very very much... Now.....

M.L.: We had "fit" hens so we could have frying chickens in the spring. Course in the winter we had roasting chickens. We raised hens also.

D.S.: How did you cure your hams?

M.L.: Salt, pepper, sugar. Then hung 'em in the smoke house where they got plenty of air.

D.S.: Thank you again.