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(SNP101) Nelson and Claudia Nicholson interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Peggy C. Bradley

Nelson M. Nicholson

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D.S.: Now, this is an interview with Nelson Nicholson of Brightwood.

N.N.: Right.

D.S.: Uh, tell me how did you get into Brightwood?

N.N.: Well, I moved here after they moved the Park here.


D.S.: Did they give you much money for moving?

N.N.: The place in thar belonged to my Father at that time.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: I think it was bout ninety acre tract he owned in thar.

D.S.: Yea.

N.N.: They were disable and couldn't work, they went with one of my brothers down at Winchester, and I come on down here to live. And, my older brother bought this place and I stayed here with him, me and my wife, and he give it over to us.

D.S.: I see. Oh, that worked out very good.

N.N.: He didn't have no family.


N.N.: We took care of him and his wife and we fell heir to it.

D.S.: Yea. Tell me, what is your wife's maiden name?

N.N.: She was a Nicholson, she didn't change.

D.S.: She was a Nicholson.

N.N.: She didn't change a bit.

D.S.: That makes it easy, doesn't it? (Laughing)

N.N.: (Laughing) I raised her up from the cradle. (Laughed)

D.S.: Oh! Then you always knewed her?

N.N.: Ma'am?
D.S.: You know her always?
N.N.: Yea. Born and raised thar close together.
D.S.: Uhhuh. How close were the families? As far as mileage goes.
N.N.: Oh, approximately half a mile.
D.S.: Half a mile apart.
N.N.: Uhhuh.
D.S.: Uhhuh. How many were in your family?
N.N.: They raised ten.
D.S.: Ten? They had big families, didn't they?
N.N.: Fourteen in all, I heard. I'm the youngest, I don't know what come ahead of me.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. They had so many children, why do you suppose that was, to help with the garden and such forth?
N.N.: (Laughed) God only knows, I don't.
D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Well, tell me about the garden you had?
N.N.: The garden?
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Oh, we just had a small garden thar, I don't know, 'bout a quarter of a acre.
D.S.: What did you raise?
N.N.: Vegatebles.
D.S.: I know! But, what kind?
N.N.: (Laughing) Just 'bout all kind you growed in a garden.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Turnips, cabbages, potatoes?
N.N.: Yes indeed. Beans, and peas, and onions.
D.S.: Didn't the rabbit eat the peas.
N.N.:) No ma'am.
D.S.: How did you keep that from happening?
N.N.: Well, it was usually a bunch of hound dogs around alike that to chase them off.
D.S.: Oh! Sure, that's right. Uhhuh. (Laughing)
Uuh, ... That's what we should have. They keep eating our peas and beans.
N.N.: Oh, those Blue Ridge Mountains back thar years ago wuz full of hound dogs, everybody had two or three.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: My Father in his younger day was a powerful coon hunter, anyhow.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: It ain't got cold enough to stop them little ole knats from comin' around.
D.S.: No, ... nothing stops them. Uh, ... speaking of coons, what was the wildlife like? Did you have much?
N.N.: That wuz 'bout all wuz, all to hunt for in thar, wuz coons, possums, skunks, and squirrels.
D.S.: What would you do with the skunks?
N.N.: Oh, their furs sold for a good price years ago.
D.S.: Where would you sell it?
N.N.: Oh, just most any of the ordinary merchants would buy them then, but you got to sell them to a regular fur house now.
D.S.: Yes. ... I mean at that time? Would you take them down to Nethers?
N.N.: Down to Nethers.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. ... Did you ever go over to W. Lee Judd's?
N.N.: No mu'um, I never go over to his store, but I know a lot of them up thar did.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: No, I never went over the mountain to W. Lee Judd's. They said he wuz a good man to deal with.

D.S.: Yes, he was. He was a fine man. But, Nethers had a good store too, didn't they?

N.N.: Nethers and J.M. Jenkins Brothers.

D.S.: Uhhuh. That was a little further South wasn't it?

N.N.: No, I wuz a little closer to Jenkin's store than I wuz to Nether's store.

D.S.: Closer? How far up the hollow were you?

N.N.: I wuz just about two miles up Neuckle River to Jenkin's store.

D.S.: Oh! Uhhuh. Yea. Now, did you have a large apple orchard?

N.N.: Yes, it was two thar. One young one, the new stuff and one with old stuff. But, I don't know the names of them wuz. But, Oh my God, it wuz all kinds of apples thar.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Now, you family would dry those?

N.N.: Yes indeed.

D.S.: Uhhuh. ... And then also ....

N.N.: Sell them.

D.S.: Also use them for moonshine, right?

N.N.: Quite a few of them went fer that.

D.S.: Did you raise corn for moonshine, too, ... or barley?

N.N.: Oh, some, yes. Corn and rye.
D.S.: Yea. Could you tell me how you made the still?
N.N.: Ma'am?
D.S.: How did you make those stills?
N.N.: Well now, I don't know. (Laughed) Most of them would use those big applebutter kettles.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: Thirty or forty gallon kettles. And they would take a fifty gallon barrel and cut it half into and put the top down on that. Make one outfit that hold about ninety to one hundred gallons.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Then they would add another little extra cap on that that leads off to the worm that goes to the barrel of water.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: See, that steam comes up in this cap and out in that arm and goes out in that worm and just as soon as that steam hits that water it evaporates. If you didn't run steam through water, you wouldn't never get nothing.
D.S.: I see.
N.N.: Just as soon as that steam hits that water in the cooling barrel it evaporates into whiskey.
D.S.: I get it.
N.N.: Ah, if it didn't hit water it wouldn't never evaporate. My Father, he run a bonded still a long time, but that's before I come alone.
N.N.: He never did make no moonshine whiskey because when they cut him out from out making bonded whiskey, he wouldn't go to moonshine still. I wouldn't say that he didn't drink it, but he just wouldn't go around it.

D.S.: Yea. Did you sell any of it up, like around Skyline?

N.N.: No, I didn't but (Laughed) George Corbin did.

D.S.: Yea. I know.

N.N.: He wasn't the only one, it wuz plenty of them.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: That man back in thar called, Elliott Jenkins, while he just made oodles of it, he kept it agoin' all the time.

D.S.: Yea. Well, some of them even took them into Washington and sold it.


D.S.: Yea. Right.

N.N.: Well, it wuz like everything else, it wuz cheap then. You didn't get much money fer it, five dollar a gallon, make it and haul it that fer.

D.S.: Yea, that wasn't much to get.

N.N.: Take chances on gettin' caught.

D.S.: Yea. Right. Yea. Did you use any of the apples to make applebutter?

N.N.: Yes, indeed.

D.S.: What was the applebutter boiling like? Did you have a party ... while you did it?

N.N.: Well, it wuz just neighbors come in and help one other out.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you play music while you worked it?
N.N.: Oh, yea lots of time. Yes indeed. Ole banjers, guitars, fiddles, something or other.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you play any of these?
N.N.: No mu'um, I didn't.
D.S.: What, ... Uh, ... what tunes did you play?
N.N.: Now, really I don't know anymore. The ole time tunes, I don't know what the names of them wuz anymore. I can't keep stuff in my head very well anymore.
D.S.: Well, if you heard them you would recognize them, right? Did you do any dancing while this was going on?
N.N.: Well, sometime they would dance some.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Uh, ... did you have the custom of, a fellow on one side of the applebutter and a gal on the other and, you know, you keep turning it around, if the paddle touched the side, then the feller or the girl got a kiss.
N.N.: That what they carried on with, yes.
D.S.: Uhhuh. (Laughed) That's sound as though it really was a lot of fun.
N.N.: Oh, yes it wuz.
D.S.: How long at night would you work on that?
N.N.: Well, they cooked it until it got done. It depended on what time you started in the morning.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Start early you usually be done by dark, or maybe eight or nine o'clock, something like that.
D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: Other words, if you aim to lick the last apples, you put in, you aim to let them cook three or four hours.

D.S.: Yea.

N.N.: If you didn't cook it out right, it wouldn't keep.


N.N.: I got some here I made over two years ago and it is just as firm as the day I made it.

D.S.: How ....

N.N.: I got them apples give to me. This year they are too dear to buy apples to make applebutter with.

D.S.: Yea, that's right.

N.N.: Six, eight, ten dollars a bushel.

D.S.: After the applebutter was made, then what would they do with it, put it jars or what?

N.N.: Put it in jars, cans.

D.S.: Uhhuh. And, cover it with ....

N.N.: Screw your lids down on thar.

D.S.: Oh, I see.

N.N.: I just used up a last half gallon can here we had, I know I made it over twenty years ago. It wuz just as firm as it wuz the day we put it in the can.

D.S.: Oh, how wonderful!

N.N.: You see, if it's cooked done that sugar and all in thar together it well keep.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: If you keep it air tight, it ain't nuthin' to spoil it.
D.S.: Yea. Did you make pumpkin butter?
N.N.: Some of them did. But, you have to cook that stuff so long to get the water out of it.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: You've got to cook it about forty-eight hours.
D.S.: Shooo! Oh, my gosh!
N.N.: See, so much water is in the pumkin.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: I think the book says they are two-third water.
N.N.: It's good stuff if you can stay with it long enough to make it.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: It takes too long.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: I never did fool with any of it.
D.S.: No. I imagine it was good once you got it made.
N.N.: Yes, it wuz good stuff.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: If you didn't cook it and get all that water out of it, it would spoil.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: Soon turned sour.
D.S.: Uhhuh. O.K.. So now, ... one ... Oh, I forgot... Back with the applebutter. Here it would take all these hours, would the women bring, ... uh, ... each bring their own dish and you have like a buffet? ... You know, like each family bring something to eat?
N.N.: Well, no not particularly.
D.S.: Well then, how did you eat all during that time?
N.N.: Well, whoever was makin' it, why they eat with this party, next party made we go helped them, we eat with them.
D.S.: Oh, I see.
N.N.: Something to eat was no question.
D.S.: Somehow I pictured all the family get together and ...
N.N.: Well, they mite have done it in some places.
D.S.: Uh huh.
N.N.: They all had, maybe different rules of doing it different places. Had different ways of doing it.
D.S.: You know what I think is one of the nicest thing is, the way everybody did help one another.
N.N.: Oh yes, they'd help one nother out up in thar.
D.S.: Yea. Uh huh. "HI! Mrs. Nicholson, are you going to be able to set down and join us?"
C.N.: I've got to go get my clothes on the line, I want them to dry.
D.S.: Oh!
C.N.: And, I'm not near through yet.
D.S.: Oh, boy. I'm trying to get some questions out of him that I bet a woman could answer.
N.N.: (Laughed)
C.N.: I no good hand on it.
D.S.: (Laughing) My next question is going to be about soap. Did you make your own soap?
N.N.: My Mother did, she made lye soap.
D.N.: I got a whole box of lye soap right now, but I didn't
make it.

D.S.: Well, how was that made?
C.N.: Well, you take meat skins ...
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: ... and lard ...
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: ... and a put your, ... get your lye and put in it and cook it and when it gets done, it turns white. You let it get cold and you cut it out in cakes. That's the way we use to wash clothes, with lye soap.
D.S.: Right. Well, didn't that hurt your hands, all that?
C.N.: No, it wuzn't all that strong.
N.N.: Didn't have it strong enough for that.
C.N.: No, it would make your hands just as soft and smooth. Well, people ... a lot of people would buy it right now, wash-up basins or anything if they can find it.

N.N.: (Laughed)
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: Well, I've got a box full and I'm NOT letting nobody have it.
D.S.: I don't blame you.
C.N.: Just pretty and white. I got nother woman to make mine.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: I give her a tin of lard and I told her, I ain't no use for it no other way, go ahead and make it up in lye soap. Which I gived away right smart of it, but I'd said I wuz goin' to keep the rest.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Well, did it take a long while to make it?
N.N.: No, it didn't!
C.N.: No indeed!
N.N.: Huh-un, it don't take long to make that.
C.N.: That lye soon eats it up.
N.N.: That lye soon eats up that fat.
D.S.: Oooh! Uhhuh.
N.N.: No, it don't take but a hour or two to make a pot full of that.
C.N.: No, indeede! I have made it.
D.S.: Before you go. ... I know you are dying to get the clothes out. (Laughed) Alright, I'll ask you when you come back, you go ahead.
C.N.: No, I've got a whole lot yet. If you want to ask me anything, you better do it now.
D.S.: Alright. I was wondering about herbs and medi ... for medicinal purposes. Do you recall any that were used? You know they are finding out that those herbs had a lot of valuable.
C.N.: Well, thar wuz horse thisle ... 
D.S.: What did you use that for?
C.N.: Backaches.
D.S.: For backaches?
C.N.: You would take it, you wash it, you boil it, and make a tea.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: You take a little nip once and awhile and the back-ache was gone.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Well, that ... that weed was called pipsissewa.
C.N.: Oh, ... horse thistle, pipsissewa.
N.N.: Pipsissewa the name of it.
C.N.: So, it ... hoeshound ...
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: You take that and make a tea out of it, for colds.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: And, thar was catnip ...
D.S.: Catnip?
C.N.: You could take that and make a tea and feed it to little babies, you know, when they would be sick.
D.S.: Ooooh! With the croop?
C.N.: No, with the stomach ache. ... the colic or something nother like that.
D.S.: Oh, yea.
D.N.: Well, a grown person could take it. I've have took it myself.
C.N.: But, I don't never see no more of that around since we left the mountain, we don't see all these ... herbs... what we use to know. What the older people, you know, would take the different things. We don't have that down in here.
N.N.: It don't grow down in here.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: Now, we have our little hoeshound ... hoehound?
D.S.: Horehound?
C.N.: That that grows up tall and have them long slim leaves on it. Which I never did make no tea out none of that, now I have taken calamus.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

D.N.: That thar is good for the cramps, ... or cramps and colic, or something nother like that.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: I put a piece in my ... You get the root of that.


C.N.: You could let it dry out and just cut off a little piece of it, that root, and chew it and swallow that juice from it. Your stomach could be hurtin' you ever so bad and that would break it up.

D.S.: Oh, boy!

C.N.: So, I never uses that no more.

D.S.: No.

N.N.: The best medicine ....

C.N.: 'Cause I don't have the stomach ache no more.

D.S.: (Laughing)

N.N.: The best medicine I ever used up in thar wuz white lightenin' and apple brandy.

D.S.: (Laughing)

C.N.: Oh, yea you ain't goin' to forget nothing like that!

N.N.: (Laughing) I tell you right now, ... if you made it right and used it right it wuz a good medicine.

C.N.: Didn't nobody come with you this mornin'?

(Both Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson was talking at the same tme)

D.S.: Sure. (This was to Mr. Nicholson's remark)

C.N.: Nobody didn't come with you this mornin'?

D.S.: No, she had to go up to ... go back to her home for Thanksgiving.
C.N.: Uhhuh.
D.S.: So, we miss Robin, don't we? Yea. Uh, ... how about poultices? How would they make the poultices?
C.N.: Well, ... they use to take ... well, fer back what I can ... Now, I'm not ... I can't tell you real, ... back thar the old ... the older people. This wuz while I wuz bought up. You can take onions, ... lay them in the stove or you can use a dish that you can, you don't need to get them all on ... put them in the stove and kind of roast them, I call it.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Well, you take them out while they are hot and mash them out, ... put a cloth next to you and cloth over top of them, and lay them on you chest; for colds, croop, or sometnother like that.
D.S.: And, it would work?
C.N.: Yes.
D.S.: Well, that's easy, everybody had onions.
C.N.: That's right. Well, then another thing. If they had pneumonia, ... people use to raise mustard, I mean sage. They use to take sage and make a poultice out of it and put on them for pneumonia.
D.S.: And, it would work?
C.N.: It worked! Now, ... now that is just from my Grandmother.
D.S.: Yes. Right.
N.N.: But, what they done on back further from that, I don't know.
C.N.: And then for coughs they would go out and get them some simmon tree bark. They used to make their own cough syrup. Go out and get them some simmon tree tark, apple tree bark, and take honey. ... Find some ... some people would find bee trees, you know?

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: And they, bought alone. Take hone and boil it all togeter and make their own cough syrup.

N.N.: Put some white lightenin' in that.

C.N.: Now, If I say now every time they get a cold or a little something, away to the doctor they go.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Right. You didn't have ... Did you have a doctor?

N.N.: Oh, yea. We havd ole Doctor Charles Ross.

C.N.: Well, I never did doctor none. ... I'm telling you ...

N.N.: He was a good one, back in them days.

C.N.: I never did doctor N O more than blasted compiled to.

N.N.: They lived up here at Creigersville.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: The most I had doctored wuz when my children wuz little.

D.S.: Uhhuh. How about when they were born, did the doctor come?

C.N.: Oh, yea ... If I had ... But, I went to the hospital with two of them and with one of them I stayed at home.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: 'Cause I didn't have nobody to do fer me and if I had someone to wait on me I would have stayed at
home then.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: I don't believe in it!

D.S.: No.

N.N.: Doctor Ross wouldn't leave the mountain a'many night when it wuz so cold the wild cat was fighting.

C.N.: Old Doctor Ross wuz really be ....

N.N.: His shoes would be frozen to the saddle strurps when he would get to the houses up in thar. You had to take out a kettle of hot water pour on it to thaw the ice before you get his foot out of the strup.

D.S.: Oh, my gosh!

N.N.: Now they got the best kind of roads and automibles to ride in and a doctor ain't a'comin' to your place at night, around here.

D.S.: No.

N.N.: It ain't none of these over here at Madison will do it.

D.S.: No. But, that Doctor Ross was a marveleous doctor.

C.N.: And he...

N.N.: No. He done that fer two dollars a trip.

C.N.: I knew it.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: Now, ... they would charge you twenty-five dollars to forty dollars to ride out here from Madison, out here and back.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: Good road and good automible.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Right.

C.N.: No indeed. I never do no doctoring much.
D.S.: Well, I think that doctoring yourself, since you had a knowledge of herbs and how to ... Uh, ... take ...

C.N.: And, when I was raisin' my children, everytime they complained I didn't run them to the doctor.

D.S.: No.

N.N.: If you did, you would be in the doctor's office everyday.

D.S.: Did you have any ear aches? Did you have anything for the ear aches?

N.N.: Rabbit oil.

D.S.: Rabbit oil?

N.N.: Yes.

C.N.: Rabbit oil, ... or the oil, ... or oil auten the ... or the mar auten the ... Uh, ...

N.N.: Hog's jaw bone.

C.N.: ... jaw bone of a hog. Now, ...

N.N.: Now, I tell you, that stuff would work.

C.N.: That would cure it.

D.S.: What would you do with that?

C.N.: You would ... You heat it and make it soft, you know, so you could. ... That thar oil in thar is just regular oil, just like castor oil. So, you heat it you could drop it in your ear.

D.S.: And, that would cure it?

C.N.: It would cure it! Or, if somebody was a'round a'smokin', let them blow 'baccer smoke in thar. Cure it.

N.N.: Reckon that I killed many a'rabbits in the fall of the year for Mother to dry fat off of, you know, just put
it in a little bottle. Because I was troubled with a lot of ear ache when I wuz young. . . .

C.N.: Oh, I use to have it so bad.

N.N.: ... And a drop of that in your ear and lay still a little while, she would pass on off.

C.N.: I use to have the ear ache and tooth ache so bad. I've layed in front of the fireplace, when we lived up that on the mountain . . . a'many, a'many a'night and cried with the ear ache and tooth ache.

N.N.: Ear ache is . . .

D.S.: Tooth ache, did you ever go to a dentist?

C.N.: Oh, yes I went. ... When I went I ended it.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yes. Where was the dentist?

C.N.: Over at Madison, Doctor Early, was the one I went to. Had ever dern one of them pulled.

D.S.: Well good heavens, that was a long distance away, wasn't it?

C.N.: But, I had them all pulled.

N.N.: She didn't ever shed her baby teeth.

C.N.: I never did shed my baby teeth.

N.N.: He didn't pull nothing but baby teeth.

C.N.: (Laughing)

D.S.: Well, how did you get from the . . .

C.N.: Oh, I had . . . Well, I had . . . I reckon it has been about twenty years since I had them pulled.

D.S.: Oh, yea. . . . I mean while you lived in the Park area?

N.N.: Ride a horseback.

C.N.: Well, I never did go to no dentist up thar, no indeed. I set on a fender one time for Doctor Ross to pull
a tooth for me. Never numbed it nor nothin'.

N.N.: No numbin' goin' on then.

D.S.: No.

C.N.: And you could hear those teeth just a'scrunchin' as he would go pull them...

N.N.: (Laughing)

C.N.: ... it wuz nothin' but a hull. He pulled two fer me.

N.N.: (Laughing) He didn't do you like Eb Weakley. He had a pair of forceps up that. He pulled a lot of teeth for people, you know?

D.S.: Oh, he did?

N.N.: Yes indeed!

D.S.: Oh.

N.N.: He pull some for my wife at one time. Ole man Jim Poke Nicholson...

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: Ole Eb Weakley just done it for devilish meaness, he pulled one beside the one he wanted to pull.

D.S.: Aaaah!

N.N.: He went on and put his forceps away and Uncle Jim looked; "Come back here, 'you pulled the wrong one!"

D.S.: (Laughing)

N.N.: I 'pect that been me, I would have killed him right thar.

D.S.: I think so too! (Both laughing)

N.N.: Aaah, throw them down a half pint of that strong apple brandy, they didn't pay no 'tention to it.

D.S.: Yea, that's right. That would help cure a lot of things.
N.N.: Yea, that would knock it all out. It was good drinkin'.


N.N.: They don't have a strong constitution like that no more.

C.N.: It everything, just least little pain, to the doctor they do.

N.N.: Weaker and wiser.

D.S.: That's right.

N.N.: They say they are gettin' weaker and wiser, but I say they are gettin' weaker and dumber.

D.S.: I think so too.

N.N.: The way ninety percent of them does.

D.S.: Well look, think of this. Most of you were busy out of door, most of the time. ...

N.N.: Oh, you always had something to do.

D.S.: ... and when you'd take long walks like you had to do going up and down that mountain ...

N.N.: Oh, yea. ... Yea. Uh huh.

D.S.: ... Uh, that keeps you healthy.

N.N.: I ... I know it did.

C.N.: I ... Well, I would take my walk yet today, ... but, I ain't got nobody to go with me and I'm NOT goin' by myself.

D.S.: Uh huh. Take your dog with you.

C.N.: I ain't got no dog big enough to protect me. (Laughing)

D.S.: Oh, to protect you! You don't need me protection. I walk all over with my dog.

C.N.: People has got so honary, I just can't get out and walk.
N.N.: Go ahead.
D.S.: You know, that's another thing. All you people up there in the hollow were so honest. You never locked anything up, did you?
C.N.: No.
N.N.: No, indeed!
D.S.: What would have happened if a person had stolen something?
N.N.: Well, I just don't really don't know.
D.S.: Because nobody did?
N.N.: (Laughed) He just might had a fight on his hands.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: Well, if he had known who done it. It would have been bad, I reckon. Just like it is now, you never know who done it.
D.S.: Right. I was just wondering, because I never heard of any thievery.
C.N.: People up in thar, I'm a'tellin' you now. As I wuz tellin' Nelson, I said, "It can't keep a'goin' on this way."
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: The way people are a'carrin' on.
C.N.: It's something goin' to come up on them.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: As I said, that it is. We all lived up thar in the mountains, NEVER locked a door, ... NEVER lock your meat house, ... NEVER lock your chicken house. ... You could go where ever you wanted ... you come back what you had when you left wuz thar when you come back.
D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: But, now you do it!

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: Better not take them chances now.

D.S.: No, that's true. That's true. Uh, ... I ... I think it was because all of you knew it was survival.

N.N.: I reckon so.

D.S.: And, that if you had taken something from someone you were taken away their survival ...

C.N.: Yes.

D.S.: ... and so, you would have been ostracized.

C.N.: Then ... in them days ..

N.N.: Then it wuzn't nothin' to take. Everyone had practically the same thing.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yes.

N.N.: It wuzn't no use to go over here and take something you already had.

D.S.: That's right.

N.N.: They all had practically the same things.

D.S.: Yea. .. What was your granddaddy's name?

C.N.: Newton.

D.S.: Newton?

C.N.: On Father's side.

D.S.: On your father's side. Uh ...

C.N.: And, on my Mother's side was, James Dodson.

D.S.: Oh, that's right, there were Dodsons in there, weren't there?

C.N.: My Mother wuz a Dodson.

D.S.: Now, did they live in the same hollow?
C.N.: Right in talkin' reach.
D.S.: Aaah! (Laughed) Uhhuh.
C.N.: Right.
D.S.: Because there were some Dodsons over in Corbin Hollow, were they kin?
C.N.: Noooo! They were Rob Dodson and them. No, I don't think they wuz no kin to us, fer as I know.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: I don't think they wuz any kin, they were on up practically on top of the Blue Ridge. ... Robert and Oddie and ...
C.N.: Not over in thar, we didn't. See, it was so far. See, we lived in Nicholson Holler.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: And, ... these ... Well now, I don't know why it wuz called different names like that. I reckon because it wuz more Corbins in one holler and more Nicholsons in the other. But, we would go over thar in Corbin holler sometimes.
D.S.: Yes. ... There, ... you ...
C.N.: Now, where Betty Lee Corbin lived at, I been thar a'many, a'many times.
D.S.: Sure.
C.N.: We always visited.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.:
D.S.: Yes. The visiting time was always a good time, wasn't it?
C.N.: Yea, them day when someone wuz sick, they would go and visit and go set and talk to them and like now, will they do it? They wouldn't do it to save their life.

D.S.: Yea.

C.N.: They wouldn't hardly come if you wuz dead.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. That's true. And, ... and you all pitched in and help one another if ...

C.N.: Yea.

D.S.: ...if someone was sick you'd bring something for them...

C.N.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: ...to help them out. Yea. Uh, ... when you all got together and would play music ... uh, ... uh, Hi would you just set around and sing and uh, ... some talk or what?

C.N.: Well, I never did go around where they played music at. I never did, I never did.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: I don't go no where.

   Now, I like to go to church!

D.S.: Yea.

C.N.: That's all I like to do.

D.S.: Did you go to church there?

C.N.: Oh, YEA!

D.S.: Did you go to church there?

N.N.: Oh, yea!

D.S.: Where was the church?

N.N.: Regular Baptist Church.

D.S.: Oh!
C.N.: Well, we didn't live no piece from thar.
D.S.: Yea, that wasn't far away.
N.N.: I didn't live over three or four hundred yards from thar.
C.N.: Went to school thar.
D.S.: Oh, great! Now, was the school for nine months like it is now a days?
C.N.: I don't think so.
N.N.: Oh, no. ... huh-un! They teach for awhile in the fall and the winter. Sometime they teach two months summer school through August and September.
D.S.: But, you all were needed on the farm. How could you be releaved to go to school?
C.N.: Oh, it wuzn't a lot who didn't go at that time.
N.N.: It wuz some went and some didn't go. Went when it suited them.
N.N.: While in the winter some of us went on bad days and if it wuzn't bad days we had to work.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: So, I got tired of it, I tell him if I couldn't go none except on bad days I wuzn't going at tall.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. How far....
N.N.: But, it wuz a few girls in thar, I would go down to visit sometimes.
D.S.: Why sure! (All laughed)
C.N.: I never did....
D.S.: You got a foxy one, didn't you?
C.N.: I never did like to go to school.
D.S.: You didn't?

C.N.: Ole Miss, ... Me and old Miss Meanmayers had a fight, use to be our teacher. All of the girls my age would go to school, you know, with a little paint on their lips, up thar. And, because I put it on mine she thought she wuz a'goin' to wash it off, but I showed her better stuff than that.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: And, I had her goin' over them benches (Laughed)

D.S.: (Laughed) I ... I understand you both knew each other from the time you were ......

C.N.: Oh, yea.

D.S.: ... young? How did you court?

N.N.: (Laughing) Well, ... they

C.N.: Well, in them days it wuzn't much courtin'. (Laughed)

N.N.: You didn't go out in automobiles and court like you do now.

C.N.: No, indeed. That, ... when you wuz with a boy you were at home.

D.S.: That's right.

N.N.: I use to set in the living room together before her father and mother.


N.N.: That's the way you courted then.

C.N.: They didn't run around at night, now like they do, out all night.

D.S.: I know it. But, that was ... uh, ... Were you sort-of excited when he started calling?
C.N.: NO!

D.S.: (Laughing)

N.N.: (Laughing)

C.N.: No indeed, I certainly wuzn't.

D.S.: (Laughing) What was the wedding like?

C.N.: We got married in my house.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: We had family ...

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: ...all that wanted to come and could come.

D.S.: Yea. And, the preacher came up there to the house?

C.N.: That's right, ... right from the church.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: Well, he come first before he had service that day, 'cause it wuz on Sunday.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: And, he come up thar first ...

D.S.: Yea.

C.N.: ... and married us.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: And he go back to the service.

N.N.: Thirteenth of March, 1942, ... no, 1932.

D.S.: 1932?

N.N.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: Then did you build a house of your own or ...?

N.N.: No, I still lived with my Father and my Mother.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: And, I were too.
N.N.: Because I stayed and lived with them until after I
wuz twenty-five years old. ... Then, I came down here,
they broke up and went to Winchester.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you do any, ... did you join the CCC or
do anything with them?

N.N.: No mu'um, I never went in the CCC camps.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: I sold the boys quite a lot of whiskey though.

D.S.: Uhhuh. (All laughed) Did you see anything of Hoover's
Camp when it was being started ... did you ever see...?

N.N.: No mu'um, I never did go over thar.

C.N.: I have never seen it yet.

D.S.: You haven't?

N.N.: Oh, I been up in thar since war time, on that river
fishing.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: I never had been up in thar. I wuz up on the drive
last Friday ... Saturday.

N.N.: Saturday a week ago.

C.N.: Saturday a week ago.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: Me and Mervin.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did it make you feel good?

C.N.: But, it wuz so cold up thar!

D.S.: (Laughing)

C.N.: And, you know on around on that ole high porch on
Panorama? There wuz where ... I didn't know it wuz
closed.

D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: And, Mervin said, It wuz closed, we'll go around on this side and take a picture. He like to take pictures so well. And this boy who wuz with him from Tennessee hadn't never had been to Virginia. And so, he got me to come around on that lower side of the building ...

D.S.: And, the wind was blowing.

C.N.: ... and the wind wuz a'blowin' and I ... I wuz dressed, you know, good and all, but ... still! I can't get up high and looking back, I get in a awful shape.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: And, he said, Get up thar at those railing, you know.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: He said, "Mommy, you ain't a'goin' to fall!"

D.S.: (Laughing)

C.N.: And, I wouldn't do it. Aah, I wuz weak from it.

D.S.: Yea.

C.N.: And, I said, "This is all the further I'm goin' to go."

D.S.: Uhhuh. But, just think, you use to be a living in with that wind.

C.N.: Yea, but down under them mountains it didn't hit in thar very good. (Laughed)

D.S.: Oh, the wind wasn't as bad down there?

N.N.: No, it didn't blow so bad down in them hollers.

D.S.: Uhhuh. What was the house like that you lived in?

N.N.: Log-bodied house.

D.S.: Oh, those are great! They really were warm houses.

N.N.: Shanked, and dobbied, and weatherboarded outside.

C.N.: Mine wuz ...
D.S.: Oh, weatherboarded.
N.N.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Some of them wuz sealed up inside.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Mine wuz sealed up inside, the one I wuz raised ... well, wuz sealed up we lived in.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Big wide pine planks.
D.S.: How did they get those planks?
C.N.: I don't know.
N.N.: Cut logs and hauled them to the mill and have it sawed up.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Was it very expensive to have that done or would ...?
C.N.: Not im them days it weren't, everything wuz cheap them days.
D.S.: Would the man who opereated the saw mill take part of the lumber or ....?
N.N.: No, you just paid him so much for sawing it.
D.S.: Oh, I see.
N.N.: I think it wuz seventy-five cents or a dollar a hundred.
D.S.: Well then, how did your family get the money to pay for things of that kind, like for kerosene ....?
C.N.: Well, they would have a cow to sell, or a calf, or a hog, or ...
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: ... eggs, or chickens ... and stuff, then you could sell stuff then.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: ... but, you can't do it now.
D.S.: Yea. No ... right. That would be ... that would really give you income.
N.N.: Yes, indeedie.
C.N.: He daddy ... and he daddy would do stone mason. He would go clear up thar on the ...
D.S.: Oh, he was a stone mason?
N.N.: Yea, he ... My Father wuz a stone mason.
C.N.: He would go clear up by around George Pollock and work.
N.N.: He built about all them stone chimneys up thar at Skyline.
D.S.: Ooooh!
N.N.: For George Pollock.
D.S.: That was a real work of art, that stone.
N.N.: Well, you know what he got a day for it?
D.S.: Huh-un.
N.N.: Two and a half and three dollars a day.
C.N.: And, now look what they get.
N.N.: Now you can't hire a stonemason now for less than six or eight dollars a hour.
D.S.: I was going to say an hour, yea.
N.N.: If I could lay stone, I could ... I could make half of my time clear a hundred dollars a day.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Well, now your father would walk up there ... 
N.N.: Why, sure walk it.
D.S.: ... or he would ride his horse? He would walk it.

How far was that to Skyline?
N.N.: I would say it wuz somewhere around, approximately six miles.
D.S.: Six miles?
C.N.: But, people in them days ... up thar, get out ...
D.S.: Yea. Right.
C.N.: They didn't lay in the house.
N.N.: Well, he'd usually stay up thar a week at a time.
D.S.: Oh, I see, walk up there and stay there ...
N.N.: He got his room and board.
D.S.: ... for a week and come back on a weekend.
N.N.: Yes. Uhhuh.
D.S.: Oh. Yea. ... Well, that was a lonesome time for your mother when he was away?
N.N.: Well,
C.N.: Well, the children, you see, wuz thar.
N.N.: I wuz thar, and nother brother and my youngest sister wuz thar at that time.
D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Did you ever work for Pollock?
N.N.: No ma'am!
D.S.: You know, he was a pretty fine man, wasn't he?
N.N.: He wuz a father to a lot of them people back thar in them mountains.
C.N.: If it hadn't been fer him, I don't know what in the world them poor people would have done.
N.N.: Especially that Corbin Holler bunch.
D.S.: Oooh, right.
N.N.: Well, if they had anything, they were too lazy to work, that's why they didn't have anything.
C.N.: They'd go up thar and they cut some wood ...
N.N.: Fool around and make a few baskets.
C.N.: ... cut wood fer him and .
N.N.: I'd starve to death at that game.
D.S.: Right.
N.N.: Cause I never liked a setting down job.
C.N.: Well, they wouldn't starve to death now cause they're gettin' a good price fer them.
N.N.: Oh, yea they are bringing big money now.
D.S.: Yea, but they didn't then.
N.N.: No indeed, bring nothing.
C.N.: I couldn't set that long to fix one to start with.
N.N.: Twenty-five, or thirty cents a piece.
C.N.: Let me get on my feet, I could go good. (Laughed)
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: Make them great big two basket and sell them for seventy-five cent and maybe a dollar.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: No indeed ...
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Those Jenkins brothers down thar beat them out of half of it.
D.S.: Aaaah! Yea.
N.N.: That wuz the only market place they had and they had no way to go no where else.
D.S.: That's right.
C.N.: Well, them days people didn't have to buy nothin' a'hardly.
N.N.: No, they didn't live out of tin cans.
C.N.: I don't know why it is that we left the mountains everything you put out now costs a WHOLE lot more, you got it a WHOLE lot harder, and everything to make it.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: Now, that brother of mine can put out ....

D.S.: You mean you didn't work as hard up there as you have since you came down?

C.N.: I don't think so.

N.N.: NO, indeed!

C.N.: That's a fact.

N.N.: You didn't have to work half the time to make something to eat up thar.

D.S.: Oh, no.

N.N.: You didn't have to buy no fertilizer.

C.N.: Dig up the ground and make hills and plant the corn. Dig it up and work your corn and then time to gather it, you'd go through and top and blade it, ... you snap your corn off on the stalk.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: Wuzn't near as bad as it is now.

N.N.: Shell it out, carry it three or four miles to the mill to have it ground and shoulder it up and carry it back. (Laughed)

D.S.: Did you have a horse to do that?

N.N.: Oh, yea ... we had horses. Father, he always kept a couple horses.

C.N.: But, it would be so steep, you know, in places that a horse couldn't do nothin'.
D.S.: Oh, yea. So, you had to do it on your...
N.N.: Yea, you had to do it by hand.
C.N.: And, people always dried apples.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: Sell them. Well, they wouldn't get nothin' hardly for them.
N.N.: Three, or four, and five cents a pound.
C.N.: Crack out walnuts and sell them, you wouldn't get nothin' hardly for them.
N.N.: Quarter a bag.
C.N.: Ooddles of black walnuts up thar.
N.N.: Yea, ... until the blite came through thar and killed the chestnuts timber in thar. Well, sell a lot of chestnuts for awhile.
C.N.: It wuz always a way to make a'livin' up thar.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Why, a man with a family, ... I mean four or five kids, why they could pick up four or five hundred pounds of chestnuts in a day. They got anywhere ... they'd start off from, ... first beginning in the Fall, about seven cents a pound........
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: ...more went on the market, the cheaper they got. See, they'd get down to about three or four cents a pound toward the last.
C.N.: Same with drying apples.
N.N.: Why, he would take his kids out thar and pick up enough chestnuts in one day and buy enough shoes and clothes for them all Winter and Spring.

C.N.: That's how all of them would get their clothes is by drying apples and crackin' walnuts and .......

N.N.: Gathering chestnuts.

D.S.: Yea. ...

N.N.: Well, you take ...

D.S.: Uh, ... did you make your own clothes?

N.N.: No. ... You could buy most of them already made.

D.S.: Really? You didn't make any ...?

N.N.: And, a lot of them wuz homemade, yea.

D.S.: Yea.

C.N.: Well, all of mine, every since I wuz big, my aunt made them fer me.


N.N.: Well, you could buy the best kind of goods for eight and ten cents a yard.

D.S.: Of course.

C.N.: Now, the goods you get ain't worth pickin' up

N.N.: Now, it's a dollar and a half and on up and it ain't no account.

D.S.: I know. Three dollars for most of it. (Laughed)

N.N.: Yes. I said a dollar and a half and on up and it ain't no good.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: And, the material ain't no account.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Right. Were these made by hand?

C.N.: Some were and some wuzn't. My aunt always made my
clothes on a sewing machine.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you make quilts?

C.N.: Oh, yea! Nelson's mother could sit down and sew the littlest pieces together you ever seen.

D.S.: Aah! What were the ... Then how ... What would she put in between?

C.N.: Pad cotton.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Then would she tie them full of knots?

C.N.: They called it cotton batting.

D.S.: Yea.

C.N.: Yea. ... You tack them.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: I still tack mine.

D.S.: Yea. Oh! You still make quilts?

C.N.: I certainly do. I didn't get to make ... I did make my two granddaughters one apiece last summer.

D.S.: Oh, good.

C.N.: I didn't get to make a near one fer myself, so I give Mervin one when he wuz here.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: The last time and I give him one when he wuz here before. So, I said, ... Now, I've give Charles three. So, I learned his wife going makin' them.

N.N.: I don't know what in the world you would want with any more quilts.

C.N.: So, I said I just had to....

D.S.: Keep warm in the winter.

C.N.: ...It passes your time off, ... it's company in it.

N.N.: (Laughing)

D.S.: Why sure.
C.N.: I enjoy it.

N.N.: That's all my Mother ever done in the winter time, wuz quilt, outside of cookin' and cleanin' up.

C.N.: She would take the littlest ... I can't hold them little pieces in my hand to sew them.


C.N.: But, I ... have arthritis in my hand now, I can't sew as good with a needle as I use to.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: I use to ... uh, ... back here a few year ago I could ... you couldn't tell my sewing with a needle from my sewing machine sew.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: If anything it wuz littler.

D.S.: Yea. ... Did any of you ever do any quilt ... uh, any crocheting or anything of that kind?

C.N.: Well, I started tatting, but I never kept it up.


C.N.: I give Mervin my piece I made. I made it a long time ago. As I was, my hands was too stiff now to undertake it.

D.S.: Yea.

C.N.: I had done it a'workin'. ... Yea, ... you got a crooked finger, how come that, been broke?

N.N.: (Laughing)

D.S.: Arthritis.

C.N.: Uh Oh!

D.S.: (Laughed)

N.N.: That is mean stuff.
C.N.: That what it done fer me. Now, all through this butchering I haven't felt one thing.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: I never ... I don't know why, ... I am just as shaky as can be.
N.N.: You need some of that ole timey white lightin'. (Laughing)
D.S.: YEP! How about it, did you do butchering up there in the mountain?
C.N.: Oh, yea!
D.S.: The same way you do here?
C.N.: Yes, indeed.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Do it every bit yourself then.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: But, now we don't do oursourself. Hire somebody else to do it fer us.
D.S.: When would you do it?
C.N.: But, he would work the meat up.
D.S.: You did it about the same time of year you did?
N.N.: Yes ma'am. ... butchered in thar around Thanksgivin'.
D.S.: Yea. ... And, did you then make sausage then too?
N.N.: Oh, yea.
C.N.: Oh, yea, make the lard and ;uddin'.
D.S.: Lard pudding?
C.N.: Lard and puddin'.
D.S.: Oh, I was wondering!
C.N.: Scrapple.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Also souse. ...
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: It wuz_n0thin' wasted.
D.S.: No. No. ... What kind of pudding would you make?
N.N.: Like you have now.
C.N.: Out of the head and liver.
D.S.: Oh?
C.N.: You would take the heads ...
N.N.: You cooked the heads and liver together, and when they get done, you'd take it up and you get the bones out and grind that up and take you a bag of corn meal and throw it back in the pot in that soup. Throw some, you put some flavoring in thar and let that cook and it wuz what you call puddin' scrapple.
D.S.: Boy, bet that was good.
N.N.: That wuz good eatin'..
D.S.: Did you fry that then?
N.N.: Yea, you can fry it a little bit.
C.N.: Let it get cold, you can slice it up and fry just as nice.
D.S.: Mmmmmum.
C.N.: Yes, it is good. I wuz, mine yesterda. I wuz to see how it wuz.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: I didn't feel like flavoring it up, being out with them.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: Which, I did help cut up some lard, meat, and can some. I wuz too nerveous to be with a sharp knife.
D.S.: Yea, don't do that. How about Christmas, how did you celebrate Christmas?
N.N.: Just plenty to eat and drink.
D.S.: That sounds like a good Christmas to me. (Laughed)
C.N.: And stay ...
N.N.: Boil off a big ham.
C.N.: And, stay at home.
D.S.: Oh, you stayed at home. You didn't go visiting?
N.N.: Not too much.
C.N.: No, not ... we don't yet today.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Did you ever shoot off firecrackers?
N.N.: Oh, yea!
C.N.: Oh, yea that would be the fun of them. They'd get firecrackers and shoot it.
C.N.: (Laughed) If they don't have them, they'd get out and shoot a gun.
D.S.: Oh, yea. Uhhuh.
C.N.: Up in the air.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Were there many trees, when you recall, back the way ... uh, ... it looked around your home, were there many trees there?
N.N.: Oh, yea ... it wuz plenty of them. It wuz nothin' but in the woods, except a field we'd cleared up around there, you know, to cultivate.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: All the rest of it wuz in the woods just like it is now.
D.S.: Did you ... uh, ... occasionally make what they call new ground?
N.N.: Oh, yea. Did that bout every year.
D.S.: Every year?
N.N.: Yea.
C.N.: While farmin' one and clean up another one.
D.S.: That was a hard job to make a new one, wasn't it?
       How did you go about it?
N.N.: Ax and grubing hoe.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Cut down, saw your up, and wind up and plow your
       ground up.
D.S.: How would you get the tree stumps out?
N.N.: Well, they just stayed in thar.
D.S.: Oh, they stayed in there and they gradually disintegrated?
N.N.: They'd gradually rot out.
N.N.: Pull the stump every summer and go through thar with
       a hoe and knock the stump bushes off.
D.S.: Yea. ... I have heard that leaving the rocks in the
       ground helped the corn to grow, is that true?
N.N.: (Laughing) I don't know weather ...
C.N.: It keeps the tail out of it, I reckon.
D.S.: (Laughing)
N.N.: It wuz plenty of rocks in thar. (Laughed)
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: That's the only thing I could see would be a help, is
       that the roots goes underneath of it and ....
D.S.: And retained the moisture.
C.N.: From the wind ... from a windstorm or something like
       that.
N.N.: Well, I bet you if today if you had it out of thar, the timber on my Father's tract, he owned up thar about ninety acres, I wouldn't be surprise what it would be a quarter of a million dollar worth of timber on that track.


N.N.: The Government allowed him fourteen hundred dollars and something for it.

D.S.: Yea.

N.N.: Today, you can't buy one acre for that.

D.S.: No. No, you can't. Did your family do any, ... uh, ... uh, ... oh, what did they call it? Debarking of the tree?

C.N.: Barkin', ... yes indeed.

N.N.: Yes indeed!

D.S.: Yea, to sell it, then and you'd carry it over to Luray?

N.N.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: Uhhuh. That was ... that was a long carry.

N.N.: Well, that they run up thar wuz over here on ole Boston on 522.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: They would haul it on horses and wagons down thar and sell it.

C.N.: I helped carry out bark for it get took to the wagon.


C.N.: I wuz big enough to help do that.

D.S.: Yea. That was a good cash crop too.

N.N.: Oh yea ... yea. Early Spring, as soon as that sap would go so the bark would peel.

D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Yea, ... cut them big Chestnut Oak trees and peel the bark and in the winter time cut the tree up for wood.
N.N.: You had good seasoned wood thar.
D.S.: Yea. ... You know, you wasted nothing.
N.N.: Not, too much.
C.N.: Well, let me tell you, I don't yet either.
D.S.: Aaaah!
C.N.: I don't!
N.N.: It don't pay you to waste it.
D.S.: No.
C.N.: I've got to get these clothes on the line, y'all have to excuse me.
D.S.: O.K., thank-you.
N.N.: All that stuff you waste don't do you any good.
D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Uh, ... what grade did you go through in school?
N.N.: Went up into the fourth grade.
D.S.: Went up into the fourth grade? Uh ...
N.N.: Thar wasn't anybody that when I wuz in the fourth grade above.
D.S.: Oh!
N.N.: Didn't write them out like they do now.
C.N.: And, I quite when I wuz in the third. (Laughing)
N.N.: School then and school now is as much more like it is as much different as it wuz day and night.
C.N.: That wuz me. I ...
D.S.: What did they teach? Reading, and writing, and ...
N.N.: Reading, writing, and arithmetic, and geography.
C.N.: Spelling.
N.N.: English and history.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Spelling.
D.S.: Spelling. Whhuh. Yea. Uh, ... was your place any place close to George Corbin?
N.N.: Yes, ...
C.N.: Not too fer.
N.N.: ... he wuz on up the holler about two miles above me.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: I've known George Corbin all my life, he is a good ole feller.
D.S.: He's a fine ...
C.N.: Had you seen him since you been over here the other time?
D.S.: No, I haven 't. ... No, ... only I kept checking with the hospital and they say he is stable.
C.N.: Yea, poor ole feller.
D.S.: Yea, ... he's a fine man.
N.N.: Yea, he's a good feller.
C.N.: Never wuz no harm in him.
D.S.: Nope!
N.N.: No indeedie.
D.S.: Nope, ... he's really nice.
C.N.: As I've said, ... if thar's any harm on the people in the mountain, they done it to themself they certainly didn't do it to other people.
D.S.: That's right.
N.N.: They didn't do nobody no harm, ... now, if outsiders come in thar and went raising the devil, now he got accomadated.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Let a color person come up in thar. (Laughing)
N.N.: Oh, my god!
D.S.: You know I oftened wondered, ... uh, ... there were none, were there?
C.N.: No.
N.N.: No, thar wuzn't none. You couldn't get one to come in thar either.
C.N.: But, some people would get married, you know, and go on out ... somewhere else, out from the saying, the holler.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: And, they didn't have no car. They hired somebody to bring them up in thar that had a car. So, one time a Jenkins man come up in thar, hired this colored man to bring him. Boy, I'm a'tellin' you, he went out of thar!
N.N.: (Laughing)
D.S.: What all did he do? Just ...
C.N.: They run him out!
D.S.: (Laughing)
C.N.: No colored ...
D.S.: I wonder why?
C.N.: No colored people wuz allowed up in thar.
N.N.: Nope, they didn't allow them in thar.
C.N.: But still, ... when horses needed shoed, what wuz that ole blacksmith's name?
N.N.: Ole Tom Clay, down thar.
C.N.: Now, he wuz colored.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: They would go down to Keller and get their horses shoed.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Keller.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: But, no colored people wuzn't to come up in the thar where we lived at.
D.S.: That well, you all were pretty smart.
C.N.: They cmae in thar.
D.S.: You didn't like strangers any way, did you, really? I mean, if a stranger came in through there...
C.N.: Oh, no, I never did pay any attention to strangers. Unless, I thought they'd do us some harm or something or other.
D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. I don't know how you could tell if they was going to do no harm or not?
C.N.: Well, you can pretty well tell.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: I can yet today.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: I'm not have no real stranger people come in my yard, unlessing I know what they want.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Right.
C.N.: And, what ever they want talk it over and go on.
C.N.: That's what I do.
D.S.: How about when Pollock came? Did your family say anything about the early days when Pollock first came?
N.N.: Well now, that wuz before my time.

D.S.: I know ... I was wondering, ... like if you was sitting around of the evening and had nothing much to do ... What did your ... what did yall talk about? (Laughed) You didn't talk?

C.N.: I tell you, ... I never did see Pollock, only in his pictures.

N.N.: Well, that wuz too far back for me, I don't remember.

C.N.: I have been up thar, you know, I have carried butter up thar to sell for my aunt ... I never did see him.


C.N.: Never did see Pollock.

D.S.: Well, I was just wondering how the people reacted to him coming in and ....?

N.N.: Very good, I think, according to the way I read his book on it.

D.S.: Oh, yea. According to what he said. (All laughed) Now, I'd like to somebody ...

C.N.: But, I imagine all them Corbin Holler foks greeted George .... He never did come down in Nicholson Holler.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: If he did, I never did know it.

N.N.: Not much.

D.S.: Well, he came down and visited Aaron Nicholson. Now, is Aaron kin to either of you?

N.N.: Yea, he kin to me but I just don't know how much. He's my uncle.

D.S.: Oh, he's your uncle?

N.N.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: He'd be your great uncle, wouldn't he?
N.N.: Yea, that's right.
D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. He, ... uh, ... did you know him?
N.N.: No ma'am, I didn't know him.
D.S.: I was wondering how big a man he was, I always heard he, they say he was a ....
N.N.: Oh, they say he was a stout man.
D.S.: Yea. He sounded like a wonderful man.
N.N.: Oh, ... it wuz no harm in him if you didn't bother him he wouldn't give you no trouble.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: That is one thing with them people up thar ...
N.N.: You better not start up nothin' with him.
C.N.: You better not start up nothin' with none of them.
N.N.: (Laughing) If you did, he wuz goin' to accomadate you.
C.N.: They were all quiet unless somebody else come in the neighborhood and start something, you couldn't figure on nothin' else.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: Just like it is now.
D.S.: Well, George Corbin told me one time about somebody came and was rocking his cabin.
C.N.: Huh!
D.S.: And, a .... finally he shot him. And, was that often done, rocking a cabin?
N.N.: Not as I know of.
C.N.: That must have been over thar in Corbin Holler.
D.S.: Well, this is his cabin.
C.N.: Oh!
N.N.: I never did hear tell of nobody throwing any rocks at
his'. Could have happened before I come alone, I don't know.


C.N.: I don't know.

D.S.: That wasn't a common practice to ... to rock cabins?

N.N.: Oh, no indeed.

C.N.: No.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Uh, ... how large a home was it? It must have been a pretty big house to take care of all them children?

N.N.: Well, anywhere from a four to six room house.

D.S.: Wow! That's a big house. And, the dinning room table to seat you all, did you eat, ... did you eat in shifts?

N.N.: About the size bout like this.

D.S.: And, you all cout fit in it?

N.N.: If you all couldn't all get to it, you just waited until the other one got through eatin'.

C.N.: That's what we use to do, some wait and some go ahead to eat.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: What it would hold.

D.S.: Yea.

C.N.: But, all of us would eat together ... many a time.

D.S.: Yea, ... when it get so many you had to do it in shifts? (Laughing)

C.N.: I know a lot of people comes here, ... have to still ... I still got this big table ... some have to wait until some of the others get through.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Right.
N.N.: Well, this big table don't seat but about eight.
C.N.: Three on each side and one on each end.
D.S.: Yea ... until ...
C.N.: Sometime they crowd more in, as I tell them I can't eat elbow to elbow. (Laughing)
D.S.: Yea, you got to have some room.
N.N.: I like plenty elbow room. (Laughing)
C.N.: That's the way with me. I tell them lots of time, I can't crowd.
D.S.: Did you ever make what they call ash cakes?
C.N.: Yea, ... I have.
N.N.: Oh, yea. They were good eatin'.
C.N.: If I used a fireplace I'd do it yet.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: I'd rather have them than this store bought cake you go out here and get.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Nothin' to that stuff, only artifical stuff.
C.N.: You take, ... you had to put it in your fireplace if you wanted to bake it good.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: Take it up ... just had ... Take ashes back out of your way.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Put your hoe cake down in thar, ... put you some ashes on thar, ... fire ashes on that.
D.S.: Mmmmmum.
C.N.: Talking about good with milk.
N.N.: Of course, the crust of it wuzn't any good, you see that wuz scorched, but the inside of it wuz ready.
D.S.: Yea, I like the scorched part too. (All laughed)
C.N.: Now I telling you, I never did throw away none of it.
N.N.: Had a bowl of that stuff in a bowl of rich milk, I
tell you, you had some good eatin'.
C.N.: You can't rake hot ashes on top of it, it don't
scorch much.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: It wuz so good.
D.S.: Yea. How about sorghum, did you make sorghum?
N.N.: Well, I would say it wuz mad when I wuz a kid, yes.
D.S.: Was that a lot of work?
N.N.: Whole lot of work to it.
C.N.: You got to stand by it and skin it all the time.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: I never did fool with it.
D.S.: I know that they made better sorghum up there than you
can buy nowadays, that's for sure.
N.N.: Oh yea, if it wuz made right it wuz good stuff.
N.N.: After it got 'bout six months old it started gettin'
sugar in thar.
D.S.: Was that good?
N.N.: Yea, it'd all go to sugar.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: It'd go to sugar, they'd take and dump it in a barrel
and cook it and run whiskey out of it.
D.S.: Uhhuh. How did you feel after you had know you
was going to leave the Park, ... leave your home, ... and have to move out? Were you upset?
N.N.: No, I wuzn't a bit in the world.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: But, you take ...
N.N.: I wanted to see the world and what wuz in it, and I seen it too.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: But, you take he Mother and Father, they wuzn't satisfied no more.
N.N.: Oh, no the older people ...
C.N.: My Grandmother and Grandfather would go back in a minute.
N.N.: It wuz a bad thing for them, ... but, the young people it wuz a good thing.
D.S.: It was a good thing for the young people.
N.N.: Absolutely!
C.N.: But, it wuz tought on the old ones. I believe a lot of them would have been livin' right today that is gone, if they stayed thar.
D.S.: Yea. Right.
C.N.: And, then they ...
N.N.: They ought to left old people in thar, but then on the other hand, they couldn't done nothin' if it hadn't been some young ones thar to help them out.
D.S.: That's right. They couldn't have made it on their own.
N.N.: They couldn't work.
C.N.: It wuz some in thar that didn't own a home.
D.S.: That's right.
C.N.: But yet, but yet built up a home.

I know my poor Grandmother lived down here around the
mountain ... She said, if she had it to do she would give any mount of money in the world if she go back right whar she came from.

D.S.: Yea. I can understand that. By the way, was there any story handed down about where your family came from?

N.N.: If it is, I don't know. Too fer Jack fer me.

D.S.: They never told you, ... I mean, like your father and mother didn't say what their mother and father said?

N.N.: Yea, I understand that the Nicholsons originated and came here from England.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: Mervin found that out.

N.N.: The Corbins, they are German decent, the Corbin is.


N.N.: I'm half and half, Corbin and Nicholson.

D.S.: Oh, you are?

N.N.: My Mother wuz Corbin.

D.S.: Oh, she was?

N.N.: Yes, ma'am.

D.S.: So, they came from England, and I'm wondering how they found these mountains. This is how ... .

N.N.: Well, I seen them running a reel on the television here a couple of months ago, come over Harrisonburg station. It wuz a awful lot to it, see ... how the settlers first come in here.

D.S.: Yea. Well, I'm wondering if they sort-of felt as though it looked like part where they come from in England?
That could easily be, you know, that they was homesick, and the mountains, and they come from a mountainness section in England.

N.N.: Probably so.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: You get them people from over thar in the ole countries that come over here lived in the mountains.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: All country is full of them tharo.
D.S.: That's right. When you came out of the mountains, uh, ... what did you start doing?
N.N.: Stone mason work.
D.S.: Stone mason?
N.N.: Yes, ma'am.
D.S.: Well, that's good. Your dad really taught you, right?
N.N.: That's right.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: Near all the boys were stone masons.
D.S.: Uhhuh. And, did you get any decent salary for it?
N.N.: Well, we made a livin' at it.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Didn't pay nothin' like they pay now.
D.S.: No.
C.N.: If they had, we'd been wealthy people.
C.N.: Thank God, I'm blessed fer what I've got.
D.S.: Yea. You're very wealthy.
C.N.: A lot of people don't think that. They're wanting all the time, but here's one don't crave nothin'. What I get I pay for it honestly and what I sell, I sell it honestly.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Thar you see, I sell milk and butter.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: And eggs, course my chickens ain't a'layin' none now. I sell milk, butter, and eggs and it helps me out since he quit workin'.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: And, I sold over a half of a hog this time. Well, that helped me out wonderful.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: That will take care of my insurance.
D.S.: Right.
C.N.: All of my stuff.
D.S.: Hey, speaking of butter, you use to make butter, right?
N.N.: Oh, yea!
D.S.: And cheese, what kind of cheese?
N.N.: Well, you just made cottage cheese.
C.N.: Cottage cheese.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Where would you keep it?
C.N.: In the refrig ... Oh well, at them time, ... wuz enough to eat up what you made at one time.
D.S.: Oh! ... You didn't have a spring house?
C.N.: Oh yea, had spring houses, but we didn't put ... Thing you made it today it wuz gone today.
(D.S. & N.N. Laughing)
C.N.: Now, we always kept milk and butter in the spring house.
D.S.: Sure.
C.N.: Good cold water ... If I had one now it would be worth a fortune.
N.N.: They didn't need no refrigerator up thar in them mountains.
D.S.: No, you didn't. No.
C.N.: The milk, it would clabber right in that good cold water.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: And, all you had to do wuz bring it on to the house and scald it, put it up to drip, and ... put in a bowl.
N.N.: I admit they didn't have no running water in the house, in other words you didn't have much use for it no way.
D.S.: No.
N.N.: With that good cold spring right thar close by.
D.S.: Sure.
N.N.: Well water, ... my Father had a big well thar at his place.
C.N.: They had a ... Where they kept our milk wuz out, ... aaah, a right good way out from the house.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: Now, I had to keep mine right at the house.
D.S.: Oh, boy.
C.N.: Good spring water.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: And, good water, Lord me!
D.S.: Was the spring, was the stream far away?
N.N.: Well, no indeed.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: No.
D.S.: So, you'd get your water by going to the stream?
C.N.: To the spring, to the spring.
N.N.: Stream?
D.S.: To the spring and the stream?
C.N.: Walled rock, ... walls in it made out of, wuzn't no cement, no block.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: Walled it up with rock, and ... you could just stick your bucket in it and go on.
D.S.: Sure.
C.N.: You never dipped it up with a cup.
D.S.: Uhhuh. How about for laundry, would you take it from the spring or the stream?
C.N.: Spring.
D.S.: The spring, Burrrrr!
C.N.: But, still we had ... we had a nice stream of water running down between our house, well, it wuz closer to the house, a good way closer to the house than it wuz to the barn.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: But, the spring wuz just closer.
D.S.: Yea. How about fishing, was it any good?
C.N.: Oh, lord yea!
N.N.: Oh, yea.
N.N.: See, I lived right between thar, The Run and the Hughes River. This run they called Hannah's Run, ran up this away, like this.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Then, the river ran up this away. Lived right in here between them.
D.S.: Oh!
C.N.: Yea, we did too. Lived right in between the two, run and river.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Great!

N.N.: It wuzn't over a couple of hundred yards to walk to neither one of them.

C.N.: And, the church wuz no piece from us, ... right in between the two rivers.

D.S.: Well, then you'd catch trout?

N.N.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: Eels.

D.S.: Did it take a long while to catch them? Or, were ...

N.N.: It all depended on what time you went fishin' for them. The best time wuz early of the morning or late every evening.

D.S.: Uhhuh. What would you use for bait?

N.N.: Worms.

D.S.: Worms? Uhhuh. Then how would you cook them?

N.N.: Well, ...

D.S.: Fry them?

N.N.: Yea, fry them in butter and then sometimes too.

D.S.: Fry them in bread crumbs, or ???

C.N.: No, indeed! Fry in just butter.

D.S.: Corn meal? Just in butter?

C.N.: Just roll them in, ... just take, well, just take ... roll them in meal if you want to. Flour either, if you want to.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: Take the, clean them and fix ... clean them up nice, wash them nice, and put butter in your pan.
N.N.: You didn't get hungry eatin' them, for all you had to do wuz jerk out his back bone and that wuz all the bones it wuz to him.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: I get hungry eatin' these things full of bones.

D.S.: Yea.

N.N.: I can't eat fast enough.

D.S.: (Laughing)

N.N.: If I don't eat fast, I ain't goin' to eat at tall.

C.N.: People had it good up thar in lots of ways.

D.S.: Yea. How would you fix the squirrels and rabbits that you caught?

N.N.: Just skin him, clean him out, and put him on and cook it.

D.S.: Aaaah, alright! How would you cook them?

N.N.: Either eat him, ... either stewed, boiled, or fried.

C.N.: Parboiled them for a little while ... until ...

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: Well, a rabbit you don't have to parboil, ... well, a neither one if you don't want to.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

C.N.: You just take it and roll it around in a little flour, fry, if you want, real slowly. But, I always generally parboiled them until they'd get real good and tender, take them up then and roll them in flour and put in the skillet with butter.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Good, huh?

C.N.: GOOD! I wished I had a dozen right now. (Laughing)

D.S.: (Laughing)
C.N.: We had a half dozen this year, ... this fall, so far.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: My son went and killed us a mess.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you hang them at all?
C.N.: You don't have to hang them!
D.S.: You don't have to hang them?
C.N.: No indeed. When we clean them up, skin them and clean them out, you know? Take them and put them in salt water, well, that gets all the blood out of it.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: So, you take them up and wash them a time or two. They wuz as good and clean as could be.
D.S.: Yea.
C.N.: And, then you put them on and let them parboil them for awhile.
D.S.: Did you sell the skins?
C.N.: No, indeed.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
C.N.: I never did hear tell of nobody buying no squirrel skins.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Yes, it is so fragile.
N.N.: (Laughed)
D.S.: Yea, but you did sell skunk?
N.N.: Oh, yea. Polecat hides, possum hides, coon hides.
C.N.: Fox hides.
D.S.: Yea. Uh, ... roughly how much would you get for a coon hide?
N.N.: Years ago they wuz bringin' anywhere from between eight to ten to twelve dollars.
D.S.: Oh? Uhhuh.

N.N.: Black polecat hide bring the same thing. If he had a whole lot of white on him, he didn't bring as much money.

D.S.: Oh, really? Did you ever set traps?

N.N.: Oh, yes.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: Catch them in steel traps.

D.S.: Oh, you used steel traps?

N.N.: Yea.

C.N.: I'm goin' to leave yall!

D.S.: O.K. Uh, ... you had to buy them then?

N.N.: Oh, yea you had to buy the steel traps.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you ever catch anything you wished you hadn't?

N.N.: Not that I know of.

D.S.: (Laughed) Uh, ... did you ever see any fox while you were there?

N.N.: Well, the foxes wuzn't too awful plentiful up in thar. It's a whole lot more around here than it wuz up in thar.

D.S.: Yea. And, did you ever see any deer?

N.N.: It wuzn't no deers up in thar then.

D.S.: And, no bears?

N.N.: No bears in my days.

D.S.: No.

N.N.: They had been thar, they tell me, before. They all had been killed out.

D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: Yea, it's plenty deers around here. Well, one evening last week two came through right on the lower side of the house, through the yard, and on out through the garden, and down through the corn field.

D.S.: Yea. Rattlesnakes? (Laughed)

N.N.: Oh, it wuz plenty of them.

D.S.: Yea. Did you ever sell their skins?

N.N.: No, ma'am, but they make a awful pretty belt.

D.S.: They do.

N.N.: Neckties.

D.S.: And, Pollock use to buy them.

N.N.: Oh, yea. Yea.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: He could handle them alive.

D.S.: Yea. You never went to any of his parties?

N.N.: No, I didn't.

D.S.: Why?

N.N.: I don't know, I just didn't go for it.

D.S.: Uhhuh. You look like the kind of man that would have said, 'That would have been fun'.

N.N.: My Father and my older brothers went to it, I wuzn't too big then, when he wuz having them parties up thar.

D.S.: Oh, I see. Yea.

N.N.: Yea, he'd buy all the rattlesnakes anybody would take him.


N.N.: Yea, of course, that's true ... if you keep them streight he can't bite you.

D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: He's got to coot up, to coil up before he can strike you, ... bite you.

D.S.: Uhhuh. So, you just killed them and never did anything with the skins?

N.N.: Oh, he'd take a lot of them back to Washington with him. I don't know what he did with them down thar, might put them in the zoo, I don't know.


N.N.: Some of his work hands around thar got to stealing his whiskey, years ago ... and he just bought up four or five of these rattlesnakes and put them out thar in the building where his whiskey wuz at. He didn't miss no more whiskey after that and he didn't lock the door either.

D.S.: (LAUGHING!)

N.N.: Oh, he kept whiskey up thar all the time.

D.S.: Yea.

N.N.: For them city people, you know, come up thar and stayed a few days or maybe a week, a weekend, stuff like that.


N.N.: Boy, he would buy five or ten gallons of whiskey anytime.


N.N.: Now, George use to sell him a lot of it.

D.S.: I know he did.

N.N.: Elliott Jenkins. (Laughed)

D.S.: How I wish we could have that now, because that was really pure.
N.N.: Oh, yea. Yes indeed.
D.S.: Good ... that was good stuff.
N.N.: They didn't go crazy off that stuff like they do off this state liquor.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Right.

N.N.: I reckon that stuff killed more people than ever one of the war ever did.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Just for that alone, I am sorry *all was moved out. (Both laughing) Did you ever know of anybody having being caught by Revenuers?

N.N.: Oh, yea they'd catch some of them up in thar sometimes.
D.S.: They did?
N.N.: Yea.
D.S.: What did they do with them?
N.N.: Well, the first offense they'd give you thirty days.
D.S.: Huh!
N.N.: After that they'd put more time on it.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Make ninty days, make it six months, make it twelve months.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Where would they take them to jail?
N.N.: Here at Madison, ... sometimes at Charlotesville.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Sometimes some of them had to go to Harrisonburg.
N.N.: Ma'am?
D.S.: That wasn't fun to go to jail, was it?
N.N.: I don't reckon it wuz.
D.S.: No, huh-un ... particularly after being out in that nice
beautiful mountain. Did you all ever take time and just stop and say, 'What a beautiful place I'm in'?

N.N.: Didn't pay no attention to it.

D.S.: You didn't?

N.N.: Didn't pay a bit of attention to it.

D.S.: (Laughing) And, here you were in the most glorious spot in the world and never paid ...

N.N.: And, didn't know it!

D.S.: That's right.

N.N.: Didn't know it.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. With the finest people, and you didn't recognize that either, you just assumed that everybody was like that.

N.N.: Oh, yea.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Is there anything you can think of that I haven't asked a question about?

N.N.: No, I don't believe it is. Not with my age.

D.S.: What is your most vivid recollection?

N.N.: I can't (Laughed) remember anymore what it wuz.

D.S.: Well, no ... When you think about your home there, ... what immediately flashes into your mind?

N.N.: Oh, I wuz glad to get away from it.

D.S.: (Laughed) O.K.. I thought you would say, like ...

N.N.: They couldn't give it to me if I had to go back thar to live. They could give me the whole Park back and I wouldn't go in thar and live.

D.S.: Yea.

N.N.: No, they couldn't give it to me.

D.S.: Didn't they, ... Didn't the cabbages grow real good?
N.N.: Oh, my god, ... cabbages grow up thar as big as washing tubs.
D.S.: Yea. Would you bury them?
N.N.: Yea, we growed plenty of them.
D.S.: No, did you bury them?
N.N.: Yes, indeed.
D.S.: For the winter?
N.N.: Get them things out and cook them and they'd be sweet as sugar.
D.S.: Yea. Uh, ... from what I've heard, you can't grow cabbage as good as that.
N.N.: Oh, no. I can't never been able to grow none here like that.
D.S.: I wonder why?
N.N.: I can grow a few early ones, ... I can't get that late cabbage no more.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: You get it and set it out it wouldn't do nothin', I don't know what the trouble.
D.S.: Yea. Wonder what the different was?
N.N.: I don't know.
D.S.: That soil must have been tremendous.
N.N.: They had a cabbage thar they called it the Early Flat Dutch and they had one they called the Late Flat Dutch.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Now, them late ones you didn't go setting them out until ... set the plants out sometimes around June.
   In June.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: They were ready to bury by the last of September or the first of October.


N.N.: Make a barrel of sauerkraut out of them.

D.S.: Oh, yea! Sauerkraut, that reminds me. Uh, ... did you buy the seeds for these or did you, like exchange them with other neighbors?

N.N.: Well, fer as I can remember seems as we bought the seeds.

D.S.: Bought the seeds?

N.N.: Yea.

D.S.: And, did you make your own vinegar?

N.N.: Yea. Yea. I often made it, yea, sure. All you had to do wuz just make cider and leave it set, not put no sugar in it. It would get sour.

D.S.: Yea, that's right. So, you didn't have to buy that either.

N.N.: You didn't have to buy it if you didn't want to.

D.S.: Yea. And, turnips were buried too, did you put straw on top of them or under them?

N.N.: Straw or leaves, either one.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. ... Wonder why people don't do that now?

N.N.: I don't know. They ain't got time to fool with it. It ain't nobody got no time to do nothin' no more. You can't have, I can't have nobody to come here to do nothin' to save my skin.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: Money don't mean nothin'.

D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: Everbody is busy.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: Seems to be.
D.S.: Uhhuh. But, up there everybody always had time to help each other, didn't they?
N.N.: Yes, indeed.
D.S.: Yea. You know I think you have given us the most perfect complete story that anybody could have.
N.N.: If anybody wanted to build a barn, why six or eight of them would go thar and they'd cut that lumber and they'd have that barn built in a days time, in other than putting the board roof on it.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Get six or eight men together, why they soon could put a building up out of them logs.
D.S.: Sure. Yep. How about houses, did they help build each others houses?
N.N.: A lot of them did, yea.
D.S.: Huh! Well, you don't know how appreciative I am of all you have told us.
N.N.: Well, that Uncle Dave Nicholson, George Corbin married his daughter for his second wife.
D.S.: Oh, really?
N.N.: They always told me Uncle Dave went to the woods with his ax and cut the logs and carried them in and built him a cabin and moved in on Saturday night, and raised ten children thar. Well, he did raise ten children.
D.S.: (LAUGHING) You know, those people were so strong, weren't they?
N.N.: Indeed they were, yes indeed.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: Log weighed four hundred or five hundred pounds, he picked that thing up and carry it on his shoulder like nothin'.
D.S.: Ssssssh!
N.N.: Yes, indeed. You couldn't find none of them to do it now, ... why, a half of dozen of these young men wouldn't pick it up and carry it.
D.S.: Yea, I know. Oh, another thing I wanted to ask you, the furniture, was that mostly hand made?
N.N.: As far as I know it wuz.
N.N.: They didn't have none of that fine classified stuff like you get in factories now.
D.S.: Yea. Where did the stove come from, ... do you know?
N.N.: Deed, I don't.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Because, they must have been pretty expensive, weren't they?
N.N.: No, cookstove back in them days wuzn't high.
D.S.: Uhhuh. But, carrying it up the hollow ...?
N.N.: Well, see now a long time, I reckon before I come alone, why they cook by fireplaces.
D.S.: Oh, yea. ... Uhhuh.
N.N.: Until the cookstoves come out.
N.N.: That's they way they done through the Philippine Islands, I nver neen no cook stoves over thar, no place.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: Talking about them mountains a bad place, I never seen no civilization after I left Hawaii.

D.S.: Were you in the service?

N.N.: Yea, all the way down through the South Pacific.

D.S.: What branch of the service were you in?

N.N.: I wuz with the Seventy-seven Infantry.

D.S.: Oh, boy!

N.N.: That's my discharge up thar on that paper.

D.S.: Oh, yea. Uhhuh.

N.N.: Yes sir, they think they have civilization down thar, it is altogether different from now. They didn't have no civilization down thar, except up in the holler.

D.S.: Yea.

N.N.: Didn't have as much back thar in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

D.S.: Yea.

N.N.: From the ole grass shacks they lived in.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: A one room shack sitting out thar with a couple of rocks piled up thar they cooked on.

D.S.: Yea. ... Did you ever hear about any fo the people going into World War I?

N.N.: I had a good many cousins in it.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did they go into the Civil War?

N.N.: Oh, that number one war, that wasn't the Civil War.

D.S.: Oh, no!

N.N.: That ole Civil War wuz way ahead of that one.

N.N.: I had a ole uncle in that ole Civil War.
D.S.: You did?
N.N.: Several ole uncles in it.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: One of them went down here at Richmond to Camp Lee and stayed three or four days, then he slipped off and come back here to the Blue Ridge Mountain and they never did find him. (Laughing) But, he drawed a pension for it. When it come time to get one, he drawed a pension for it.
D.S.: Good for him.
N.N.: Of course, the pension wuzn't much then, ... I think they got ... the old veterans, they got thirty dollars every ninty days.
D.S.: Uhhuh.
N.N.: That wuz the pension they got.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: Thirty dollars then wuz a lot of money.
D.S.: Yea.
N.N.: That then would last him ninty days.
D.S.: Sure. Right.
N.N.: It wouldn't last you ten days now. (Laughing)
D.S.: (Laughing) No, it wouldn't. No. Oh, dear ... I was wondering how they got the news about these wars?
N.N.: I don't know either, no radios, no nothin'.
D.S.: No, probably when you went, they would go down to Nethers.
N.N.: Yea, ... they might get a newspaper once a month.
D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Sure, whenever they went down they heard them talking about it.

N.N.: They had a printing office at Luray and one at Madison.

D.S.: They had a what office?

N.N.: Printing, ... printing office.

D.S.: Oh, yea.

N.N.: They printed newspapers thar.

D.S.: That's right. Did you ever get the Luray paper?

N.N.: I use to get it when I lived up thar in the mountains.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: I think they called it, 'The Blue Ridge Guide' then.

D.S.: Oh, they did?

N.N.: Uhhuh.

D.S.: Have you ever gone back to your old place?

N.N.: One time.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

N.N.: I went through thar fishing ... me and my brother, we lived here with, pretty soon after the war. That wuz in fourty-eight or fourty-nine, I hadn't been in thar since.

D.S.: Well, since you was happy to get away, I guess that makes sense. (Laughed)

N.N.: It suited me awful good, I know that.

D.S.: Yea.

N.N.: (Laughing)

D.S.: You know I'm going to show you a map.