1978

(SNP130) Frank Wilberger interviewed by Amanda Moody, transcribed by Victoria M. Edwards

Henry F. Wilberger
Interview with Frank Wilberger
Part of the Shenandoah National Park Oral History Collection, SdArch SNP-130 (SC# 4030)

Interview conducted at New Hope, Virginia
By Amanda Moody on Unknown Date

Transcribed by Victoria M. Edwards, December, 2009

Key
[AM:] Interviewer, Amanda Moody
[FW:] Interviewee, Frank Wilberger
[UF:] Interviewer, Unknown Female; apparently around FW’s age range

[Notes regarding transcription technique]
[unintelligible] Unable to understand more than one word
______ (?) Transcriber’s best guess
— Speaker makes abrupt change in sentence
Refer to the Baylor University Style Guide for consistency in transcription

Total interview length: 00:37:58 min.

[Begin Audio at 00:00:01]

AM: Now I’m with Mr. Frank Wilberger—

FW: Huh?

AM: And we’re in New Hope and I wanted to ask you about the mountain, the way it used to be, what you remember, any of the people?

FW: The people—you got that on now, running?

AM: Mm-hmm.

FW: And there’s a church up there called Wayside, I think.

AM: Uh huh.

FW: You know where that’s at?

AM: It’s not there now.

FW: Yes it is. I think, something along, the cemetery there either?
AM: The only cemetery I’ve seen is where the Vias were, way back.

FW: Oh. Well, there’s a cemetery there and then there’s a cemetery on up there on the old Harris place, I buried two bodies up there.

AM: I’ve seen a cemetery near the Harris place. It’s just a small?

FW: Yeah.

AM: I seen the fence.

FW: Up there behind the stable.

AM: Yeah.

FW: It was a stable.

AM: There was a, there’s a house and then the cemetery’s up on the hill.

FW: Yeah, that’s right.

AM: I can’t see any stones in it, but I can see the fence.

FW: Well, I don’t expect they put ‘em up, but that’s where it’s at.

AM: Mm-hmm.

UF: Who were they, which Harrises?

AM: Huh?

UF: Who were the Harrises, that are buried there?

FW: Who were the Harrises, I’d have to get the record to look at that up.

UF: Right, okay.

AM: Now, where was the cemetery down at Wayside?

FW: Wayside cemetery, the church, when you went up the mountain, here was the Black Rock Road come around there and you’re going on up to the top of the mountain here, then you’d turn in right here and you went north and it’s awful rough in there, rocky and rough, but we made it with the cars, always, we never had any trouble. Mr. Coochland up in there one time, broke his car all to pieces, we (laugh) had to get a horse and sled and bring it out kinda on a sled. Tore it all to pieces, on the rocks. But I was always very particular, [audio warbles in and out for a few moments] get in and we just had that, no, we had that one that metered (?) one time. But we had that (??) on them most of the time, we had it higher off the ground, you know, and (trails off).

UF: See that picture on the wall.

FW: It’s behind you.

AM: Yeah. Oh boy. Now, tell me about burying the people, did you embalm ‘em?

FW: Some of ‘em were, some of ‘em wasn’t. Now, there was one embalmed, we brought him out from up there, he was a Harris, and put him on the railroad at Grottoes and sent him to Hagerstown. Now, wait a minute. Yeah, I think it was Hagerstown. That’s where he wanted to be buried. Put him on the train. The way that happened,
I don’t know whether you want this or not, way that happened, they called us up there to lay the man out and I didn’t go for some reason, father and Martha went. And when they got up there, they had just so many hours to meet that train and they didn’t know how they were gonna do it, if they missed that they wouldn’t get it until the next day, because it wasn’t but four trains on down the road at that time in twenty four hours. So he sent Martha and another man back down here to get, for me to bring a certain type of casket and come up there and get him. And I did, and we got it, we made it by fifteen minutes. Got the body, I went all the way up there and got the body, and got back to Grottoes and put him on the train fifteen minutes before the train go. (laugh)

AM: You did pretty well.

FW: (chuckling) I never will forget that.

UF: My, that was doing all right. A long ways.

FW: But as for that, around the spring there, the springs was sitting, well, here’s the, go on you could pull right up, (?) you come up the road here this way, come around, here’s the springs, right in, all of ‘em docked right in there that a way, you know that.

AM: Yeah.

FW: Alrighty. Then on up above here just a little piece was an old tabernacle, Miller owned it.

AM: Oh. A tavern?

FW: Cavern, yeah. (?) Great big building, I don’t know, that thing was seventy five, eighty feet long, I reckon, and about thirty or forty feet wide and on the front, back side went in the mountain, but on the front side, oh it was way up off the ground. See, the ground sloped there so much. And (trails off).

AM: Was it (stops short)?

FW: He took renters.

AM: Would it be like that? Can you make that picture out?

FW: No, that’s not it. Here it is.

AM: Oh.

FW: That’s the old tabernacle right there. Well this might show it back here, way back up there, that was right smart land. There it is again, yeah.

AM: You say Miller owned that?

FW: Huh?

AM: Miller?

FW: Miller? Yeah, (??) there. (??) Miller owned ‘em, there’s the old steps all right, that’s the old tabernacle. Then you went from there, it was sitting right there like that facing down here toward the drive, then you went on around back to the ball, (?) to the pool alley, the pool room. It was straight on back the mountain. Now on the lower side of this walkway, the drive, was these cabins that the people had. Now the Marys (?) had a cabin up there and the Groves had one, Drivers had one and there’s somebody in there above Weyers Cave had one.
AM: Wamplers, Millers.

FW: Huh?

AM: Wampler, Miller?

FW: Wampler, that’s right, Wamplers had one. And they stayed in there most all the time, they’d have a fire and burn ‘em out and the same winter and go back and they’d build again, but the last time they never built back.

AM: When was the last time?

FW: I don’t know. Seemed to me like it must have been about 1915. I don’t want to say that’s it now. There was several fires up there, but that was the big fire, that’s one they didn’t go back in on at all.

AM: Now, was the cabins below where the hotel was, the cabins were down below?

FW: Yeah. The cabin, the cabins the people owned, they were on the lower side of the drive, there wasn’t any of them on the upper side at all, on the side where these were.

AM: Okay. So this building was way up above.

FW: But the ball, the pool room alley was straight on back from where this is and man (?) Miller owned that, he’d grant you the whole pool and everything. The last time I was up there, I went up there with sister, that’s my sister Mary Wilberger, and a Hammond girl, or maybe two or three Hammond girls, there was a block of us went up there and we went up the rocks. Then we come back and we kicked around there, shoot and shot pool for a while, and this Hammond girl, she liked to shoot so well, she shot the whole game, I just ran the whole pool, and she stayed in there and she just rolled the whole day, next two or three days she was so stiff she couldn’t get out of bed. (laugh)

AM: Did they have bowling?

FW: Huh?

AM: Did they have bowling?

FW: Bowling, yeah. And, I don’t know, now Mrs. Mary, she go up there and so would the Wampers and the Drivers during the Spring, and stay the whole Summer. Some of the family, I’d go with the Marys up around on Sunday evening or sometime or maybe Saturday evening and stay til Sunday evening and they’d take your groceries and things to ‘em. Bread and flour, a little butter, didn’t eat much, just sat around there.

AM: Now, was there, was there two hotels or two—

FW: School, schoolhouse?

AM: Two hotels?

FW: Huh?

AM: One hotel or two hotel?

FW: There wasn’t, I don’t think there was but one hotel, there might have been two or three building joined together, but I think they were all owned by one man, old
Mr. Miller. And he was the one who interfered with those springs, he tried to wire it, pump the one spring across, or pipe across the head of spring.

AM: Why?

FW: He wanted that water. See—

AM: Well who had the water?

FW: Huh, Miller.

AM: But who—he was getting the water from whom?

FW: From the mountain, he didn’t know whose it was, but they all claimed, each fellow claimed he had the head interest in the spring, you know. And I reckon old man Miller must have wanted a lithia spring. But anyway, he run a pipeline from the lithia spring over into the other spring and he called it his spring. And that was—

AM: Did have to blow—

FW: —far as I know.

AM: Did he use dynamite or anything to get there?

FW: No, no, he just dug a trench and laid a pipe down there to that, just pumped it across.

AM: Did it work?

FW: Just let it roll across itself by gravity.

AM: And so he got the water?

FW: He got the water all right.

AM: Was there a fence between his—

FW: No, no fence at all.

UF: Where was his spring?

FW: Huh?

UF: Where was Mr. Miller’s spring?

FW: Miller’s spring?

UF: Yeah.

FW: It was the third spring from the bottom.

AM: You say there was—

FW: See, the other springs were up here, one, two, three, and the other two springs below here. And his was the lower down and he wanted to get the water out of this upper spring so he just dug this pipeline up through under the rocks and gravel, didn't have to go very deep, and took that water down and put it in his spring.
UF: So then the lithia spring was high up on the mountain.

FW: Yeah, that’s right.

UF: Is that where a pipe is coming out? Of the (?) water?

FW: No, I don’t think they had pipelines up there at all until—

AM: Well, there’s a pipe up there now, right where the water—

FW: Well, there might have been pipes set there for to bring it on out so the people could get their buckets under it, and just like that.

AM: Yeah, that’s what I was saying, that’s what I was wondering.

FW: But I mean, pipes from up yonder somewhere down to the spring, I don’t think any pipeline.

UF: No, no, I just meant a pipe just out of the wall.

FW: Now, there’s several pipes stuck in there just to hang, down below the water’d come out and go into the buckets.

UF: Yeah, well is that the lithia spring up high?

FW: Mm-hmm.

UF: Aww yeah. Well now, the spring that’s down low, that’s walled up?

FW: That’s the Sulfur Spring, I think.

UF: Well, no, not the one I’m thinking about. Sulfur Spring is up the top of the mountain. I know where that is, but that’s got a wall around it.

FW: Yeah.

UF: Yeah. But I’m talking about down closer to where you come in. Way down at the bottom of the mountain.

FW: I don’t know, not up close to the other spring?

UF: No, it would be the lowest one down, the one furthest down the mountain.

FW: I don’t know what that was, we just called it just a wet weather spring, I reckon.

AM: Well, why did Miller want—

FW: Huh?

AM: Why did Miller want the water from the other spring when he already had a spring?

FW: See, people went up there for their health. And he wanted to get this lithia water, he wanted to get it for people’s stomach, he thought it was better water for the stomach and some of the others, and that way he drew his crowd up there to give, hotel reservations for the summer you know, they’d come up there for their health and he advertised all over Grottoes and everywhere down all up in the Raleigh area about his lithia spring at Black Rock. And see, he come up there and then they’d get water out of that pipeline down at the other spring, which was his
spring. And he’d taken somebody else’s from right above.

AM: Gosh, he was something.

FW: Or he’d take it from a spring, I don’t know if that was anybody’s spring, but the mountain. But anyway, he called it his spring.

AM: And—

FW: Last time I was up there, uncle Odie (?) had of ‘em, my uncle Wilberger, down store at New Hope, he had some kind of stomach trouble, I don’t know what he did go up there for, anyway, he decided he wanted some of that Black Rock water and we went up there one evening and we got, we killed three great big rattlesnakes. Right in the path. And we didn’t bring no water out, either. (chuckling) He got scared and he come on out. Yeah, Odie, he and I went, James Goodly (?) was ahead of all of us, he was walking up there and uncle O and I were coming up behind and Jim Goodly heard something and he was ahead of us, and uncle Louis (?) was right in between somewhere and he thought he heard, he stopped, I said, “What a minute, there’s a rattlesnake.” And he jumped back and he grabbed for James Goodly and missed him, dropped his can right on the rattlesnake. And I picked up some rocks and killed one before we got away from there, we found two others.

UF: My goodness.

FW: So he said, “I don’t want no water.” So we come on away (chuckling) and he didn’t get no water. (laugh) And that’s the last time I’d been up there. But we used to go up there any time on Saturday, sometimes through the week, take the people down here to Mary’s, groceries and vegetables out of the garden, beans and tomatoes and things like that, horse and buggy, cross over the little old springs down there, and then cars come in, done little more with cars, (?) those higher cars, Model Ts and so forth, they’re up off the ground more than the cars are today. They made it very nice. (chuckle)

AM: Now, you worked as an undertaker and sometimes the people who lived in the mountains would call you all the way up to the mountain—

FW: Oh yeah.

AM: —to bury them.

FW: The way that was done, we would share, just father and I, and they’d call in and say, “Mr. Billy, (?) so-and-so has passed away last night, like for you to bury ‘em.” “Well, when?” They’d say when and we’d go back to work here at the shop and made our caskets. And the next day, then, we’d take out over there, we never saw the body until the day we buried, the next day we take out a mound wherever it was, over to Harrises and so forth, some of ‘em (?) a community, and take the casket and put the deceased in the casket, take ‘em on to church and have a little service and bury ‘em and come on home.

AM: Did you have many services at the Wayside church?

FW: Yes, we had some three or four services up there.

AM: Do you remember—you said Harris, did you bury any Vias?

FW: Yeah, we buried some Vias, but I don’t know whether we buried any Vias up there or not, we may have. I don’t just remember.

AM: Marshalls?
FW: Marshalls, yeah, there’s a, I think there’s a Marshall up in there.

AM: Do you remember a graveyard way up the top of Mormon’s River there? Would be north, north of Black Rock Gap, up where the, beyond where that river starts, there’s a Via graveyard?

FW: I don’t believe I know where that’s at.

AM: Now how did the people get word to you? Did they send somebody down to tell you?

FW: They’d send ‘em down with the horseback or they’d come as far as they could to Grottoes and then maybe call up. Lots of ‘em from around over in there, they’d come walking in here, or maybe they’d come in on a horse and buggy or horseback and have a great long old stick. And they’d measured the body with the stick and they had it, oh, they had it that much too long, father knew the people too well, he said, “That man or that woman ain’t that tall.” And then on this here stick, they’d have a notch cut in it for as wide as the chest was. And they’d have about a third wider than they’d oughta be, he knew better than that. So we’d just go on and make a coffin, now, I’m gonna take you upstairs before you get away and show you some of the stuff we made. I got ‘em right here.

AM: Uh-huh. Let’s see. So you brought ‘em up there, and you had a service for ‘em.

FW: Uh-huh.

AM: Now, some, some they didn’t embalm, right, didn’t they just take—

FW: Yeah, lots of ‘em didn’t embalm, you don’t have to do embalming today, it’s not compulsory.

AM: Didn’t they smell? (chuckle)

FW: Huh?

AM: Didn’t they smell?

FW: (laugh) Oh, yeah, sometimes, yeah, you had that now, don’t forget about that. (laugh) But (trails off).

AM: But what would they do in the winter? I bet in the winter they couldn’t get to you.

FW: Huh?

AM: In the winter, weren’t they shut in up there in the snow?

FW: Had to wait until we got around to it, that’s all there was of it.

AM: What they’d do with the body while they were waiting?

FW: Just let it lay still. (chuckle)

AM: In the house?

FW: Had to?

AM: Must’ve smelled pretty bad. (chuckle) They’d just lay ‘em out in the house and wait til they could get to you, huh?
FW: That’s right.

AM: What about, were you involved at all in the headstones?

FW: Huh?

AM: Did you ever make the stones for the cemeteries?

FW: No, I never made anything, I made some slate rock. But I never made no marble stones. But I’ve taken some slate rocks, lots and lots of places.

AM: Did you put names, the name on it?

FW: And just tried to just chisel it out, you know, somebody something. [volume increases suddenly at 00:18:14] And most of that, now, I done it for the Wilbergers down at the old Frieden church. Down below Weyers Cave, you know where Friedens is.

AM: Yes.

FW: Now the way that comes in, that’s some of our old generation and I’ve tried to trace it back to ‘em, and the old ones come from Germany. And they’re buried, most of the old ones, down there and they started out with the (??) with their stone, maybe they’d say, “Elizabeth Anne” and didn’t have room enough and they’d come down here and put “Wilberger.” And half of its written in German, well I couldn’t do nothing with that, then they’d put the dates down below it. I could pick up the dates, kinda, but I couldn’t get these, so I got a German, interpreter from Mary Baldwin to go one Sunday evening with me, and she tried to figure out some stuff for me, and she did, she helped me out like everything, but there’s was still lots of ‘em we couldn’t mark. So after that, why I went down there with a chisel and some good slate rock and I tried to chisel out some and set ‘em in there, I don’t know if they’re anything like right or not, but I know they’re up in that corner. But that’s all the stones I ever marked. I’ve gotten other stones, put stones from various places over the country and taken into the marble people and had them to mark ‘em different for me for people that couldn’t buy stones, you know.

AM: Well, who did the marble?

FW: I did, I get Hartman in Harrisonburg. (?)

AM: Because I’ve seen one marble stone up there.

FW: Well, I don’t know anything about that, I didn’t put that one in there. White marble or gray?

AM: White.

FW: White, huh. That’s about what they used at that time.

AM: And when you did the slate, did you have one at, a headstone and a footstone, too?

FW: Well, some, at that time, most all of ‘em used that, see, they don’t use footstones now anymore.

AM: What was the service like? Was that in the church or—

FW: (laugh)
AM: —cemetery?

FW: Well, they’d have most all of ‘em at the church, sometime they had ‘em at the house, see that’s the way the usual church, but the funny services at that time, I don’t know whether I ought to tell you how about it or not, but I will. Had these older preachers around, they’d preach for an hour, hour and a half, any time for funeral services. And hoop and they holler and they get the people nervous and all excited and stirred up, they couldn’t have a service until they had everybody in the church crying. And how was that, you remember those days, I reckon?

UF: I remember that, I do. You’re right about it.

AM: Yeah. And then everybody would go on a procession over to the—

FW: Huh?

AM: They’d all, all go over to the burial? All the people would go over and?

FW: Oh yeah, everybody’s around everywhere, they’d go to a funeral.

AM: Even up in the mountains?

FW: Oh yeah, they’d come walk, come, climb that mountain, we even walking, (?) horseback, just anyway, on sleds.

AM: Hmm. Remember any other families?

FW: No, I don’t know that I could, other than the (?) Vias and Marshalls and [audio dims] Harrises, that’s about all that’s around over in there about that time, I reckon. Except—

UF: What about the Bowens?

FW: Huh?

UF: Bowens.

FW: Who?

AM: Bowens.

UF: Bowens.

AM: Yeah.

FW: Moores?

UF: No, Bowens.

FW: Moore?


FW: Bowen?

AM: Yeah.

UF: Bowen, yeah.

FW: Well, there might have been some Bowens, but I don’t think they were up on the
AM: They weren’t?

FW: They might have been there about Horsehead, somewhere around there, but I don’t think they were up in the mountains.

UF: Right, I wasn’t sure.

AM: What were the people like? Were they—

FW: Huh?

AM: What were the people like?

FW: What were they like?

AM: Mm-hmm.

FW: (laugh) Well, like we are now, I reckon.

AM: They did okay up in that mountain there?

FW: Huh?

AM: Did they do okay on that mountain land, the gardens and so on were good?

FW: Did I what?

AM: They had good gardens?

FW: I didn’t get you now.

AM: Did they have good gardens up in the mountain?

FW: Oh, yeah, they wouldn’t be very big gardens, they’d just have a little spot there, back of the house. And half a dozen old chickens or so around. And they’d have a good gardens, now I tell you one, an old colored lady down here on the Old Federal (?) Mountain, down here at Jarman’s Gap, she was back in there, Old Aunt Anna, you’ve heard of her, haven’t you?

AM: Oh yeah.

FW: We’d go over there every now and then, Hallie (?) and I, and even Lewis Beards (?) lived, how Lewis and I went in there, and we go down in there, Aunt Anna say, “Henry, get the old red hen, you can go down and get the old red hen.” We couldn’t get away now, she’d dress that old hen and have her and chicken fried biscuits and so forth before we come out of that night, you had to stay and eat with her.

UF: That’s right. She liked to feed you.

FW: That old woman knew how to cook, now, they all knew how to cook. They didn’t live out of tin cans like people do now. (laughter)

AM: How often did you go to the mountain for a funeral?

FW: Oh, (chuckle) I couldn’t tell you, I just went when it happened, we’d have, I reckon, three or four funerals a year up there.

AM: Did they, they didn’t always call you, I imagine some had buried themselves,
didn’t they?

FW: Well, most of the time, they’d call somebody. People thought you had to have a funeral director, but you didn’t. But now today, you do, you have to—anybody can build a casket or make a casket or put a body in anything they want. But you gotta have a funeral director at a graveside. A lighting (?) man. If you don’t, why they, the law’ll get you. That’s coming, at that time, they didn’t, anybody could bury anybody if they wanted to. And I reckon it was some of ‘em, just made a box themselves and go ahead and take ‘em up and open up a grave somewhere and bury ‘em.

AM: Did the people in the mountain make a moonshine?

FW: No, that time there wasn’t any moonshine made, it was just good old whiskey. (laughter) That’s all that was, and they didn’t have moonshine.

AM: But they made their own, huh?

FW: They made their own and they made good whiskey.

AM: Corn or rye?

FW: Anything. Wild grape wine and—

AM: Apple brandy?

FW: Yeah, apple brandy and just blueberries that grows around plants wine, all that just make good wine.

AM: And sell it to the folks down here?

FW: Give it to ‘em! No, you go up in there, you got to take a drink of one before you come out.

AM: Oh.

FW: Yes sirree. They just sit it out on the table and nobody ever got drunk, either. They just used to it and natural with ‘em and take a drink or two, have a joke or so and come on home, that’s all t’was of it. They didn’t just sit around and drink, then want another drink, then another drink until they couldn’t drink no more, (laugh) that’s all there was.

AM: How much did you, how much did they pay you to come up and do the, to bring up the coffin and bury the people?

FW: Well, the wasn’t no set sum.

AM: Mm-hmm.

FW: Father made these old coffins that we had at around twenty five, thirty five dollars apiece.

AM: What if they—did you ever get up there and they couldn’t pay you?

FW: Oh, yeah, we got people who couldn’t pay us.

AM: Mm-hmm. Just let it go, you—

FW: Huh?
AM: Did you get after 'em or you just let it go?

FW: Just have to let it go, couldn’t get it. [unintelligible]. [FW apparently gets out a ledger book] Now you come over beside of me.

AM: Well we got the books now.


AM: Wow.

FW: There’s your price. Here’s a Hildebrand for fifteen dollars. And here he paid driver, Charlie Parr, fifty cents to ride the herds and keep those horses heads straight all day long. And he hired a horse, one horse from Sink Switcher (?) for fifty cents, driving. Here he paid a man fifteen cents, to ride all day with him for a twenty five dollar funeral. Here’s a five seventy-five funeral. Now we got back a little bit further to ’93. There’s eight dollar funeral. He hired a horse and a man for thirty cents.

AM: Golly.

FW: There’s a twenty dollar funeral, you’re nineteen. (?) Now you can see kinda how they run.

AM: Yeah.

UF: A lot different from today.

AM: There’s a Fretwell, there from the mountain?

FW: I don’t know, something happened there, that wasn’t—there’s a Shoemake.

UF: Yeah, which one?

FW: T. S. Shoemake, eighty five dollars, metal casket, for Emma Shoemake. You know it?

UF: Well, that’s what I was trying to think, who is it, who is he?


UF: Yeah, but who’s T. S. Shoemake?

FW: Huh?

UF: I don’t know who the T. S. is.

FW: No, I don’t know myself, there’s—

UF: This is my grandmother.

FW: Well.

UF: Now let’s see. When was it? 1880—

UF and AM: 1894.

FW: And here’s a Western.

UF: Must have been—
FW: Ten dollars.

UF: —[unintelligible] back I’m not familiar with. Must have been a—

FW: Here he paid a man thirteen cents.

AM: Mm.

FW: On a twenty five dollar funeral. Five, fifteen, six, eight. Didn’t know where you want to look, but stop now.

UF: Yeah, well, we’ll go over about, let’s see how far are you going? Here’s 1895, though. I was just wondering if you’d done my grandfather’s funeral, I bet you did.

FW: Huh?

UF: That was back 1905, I think.

FW: Where?

UF: My grandfather’s funeral, 1905. I think it was.

FW: 1905.

UF: Yeah, you’re in 1890s.

FW: Well, it was have to be in that other book, I’d expect.

UF: Well that’s alright, don’t worry about it.

FW: Now here’s one wasn’t paid. Now whenever you see one that ain’t got the red lines under it, it wasn’t paid out. They paid four dollars and a half on fifteen dollars and that’s all. County. There’s another one paid out. And another one paid out. Then a funny thing happened here some time ago, on this Carr business, Old Mr. Charlie, Carr up here, Jim Carr’s father was justice of the peace and a lot of these county people would get an order from him, you know, and he’d tell dad to go ahead and work and the county would stand for it. So he would ask to hear some time ago, way back, about these old records, he wanted to see ‘em, so forth and so on, so I says, “Alright, Jim.” So sometime last year he come in here one evening, and he said, “You ain’t busy this evening?” and I said, “No, I’m down in the garage, just checking around.” He said, “How about showing me some of these old records?” I said, “Alright.” So I got this, Jim he come up here, James T. Carr for, (?) and maybe see if for a casket for a colored. (?) And go on somewhere else and another said James T. Carr and they was born somewhere else and another one James T. Carr, Jim says, after oh, after it was running up to seventy-five, thirty of ‘em, Jim says, “Why’d dad have so many of these children to bury?” And he said, “And some of ‘em niggers.” He said, “I don’t understand it.” (chuckling) And Jim hasn’t asked me anything more about any of these records since. (laughter) It (??) him, he was always asking about the records. Anything else you wanna see here?

AM: I don’t think so.

FW: It’s all run just about the same [audio volume normalizes] as the area, (?) we’ve got twenty dollars, fourteen dollars, here’s a fifty dollar one.

AM: Mm-hmm. Did you ever bury anybody up Browns Gap and north?
FW: Huh?

AM: Did you ever bury anybody north, north of Black Rock Gap, up around Browns Gap?

FW: Yeah, many at Browns Gap. Yeah.

AM: Who lived in there?

FW: Oh, I don’t know about getting some of these records, hung ‘em up. (?) Just sorta like we come up a while ago, the Vias and the Harrises and the Marshalls. There’s a lot of Marshalls up in there at one time. Not Morrices but Marshalls.

AM: Right.

FW: That’s still (trails off).

[tape break at 00:33:58]

AM: Do you know anybody who lived up on Patterson’s land? Up by Loft Mountain or Big Flat Mountain or—?

FW: No, I don’t believe I do.

AM: That’s up in Rockingham. Do you remember any other families?

FW: No, I just can’t recall just who’s, who owned what up here. There wasn’t too many people up in there, just a family scattered here and there.

AM: Mm-hmm. Anything else about Black Rock Springs, anything else we haven’t talked about?

FW: Not that I know of, except the rocks up there, if you’ve been to the rocks, you’ve seen them. (?)

AM: Did you walk up to the rocks or ride up?

FW: Oh, you got to walk, to the springs?

AM: To the rocks.

FW: To the rocks, I mean, you gotta walk, unless they’ve done something to it. [audio dims] And sometimes it’s hard walking. (chuckle) No, we never did ride up to the springs up to the rocks.

AM: You have to climb on the big rocks?

FW: Yeah, just climb along, get old bushes and rocks. Watch out for snakes and bears.

AM: Were there bears up there then?

FW: There were bears up there at that time. Every now and then you’d see a bear. He’d come around down there around the camp, right on the cabins, on the lower side of the houses most of the time. They’d throw their biscuits and refuse out of the house they didn’t want, you know, they kept too long, they just threw it through, out there on there on the little back door there, maybe a little porch, dump it down on the mountain. They’d see a bear come up in there any time, to eat those biscuits, tomatoes and chicken bones and so on.

AM: Did they ever have any music at the hotel?
FW: Oh yes. Yeah, he had a record player of some kind, I don’t know how they ordered a (?) –

AM: Miller?

FW: Well, they consist (?) of what they were of (?) but we called ‘em gramophones.

AM: This is Miller, had this?

FW: Miller, Miller yeah, he had ‘em in that hotel. He had two or three of ‘em back in there. He had all these great big old spools, you know, and the old, great big old horn out, he’d sit there and the old horn would kind of weave up and down on that spool, rolling over you know. You’ve seen ‘em work, haven’t you?

AM: Did people dance?

FW: Huh?

AM: Did they dance?

FW: Dance? Oh, I reckon they did dance. People at that time, they knew how to dance, they didn’t have this old...

[tape breaks at 00:36:26 and repeats self to clarify audio]

FW: Huh?

AM: Did they dance?

FW: Dance? Oh, I reckon they did dance. People at that time, they knew how to dance, they didn’t have this old belly hugging and (?) you call it. (laugh)

AM: Well what kind of dancing was it?

FW: Huh?

AM: What kind of dancing?

FW: What kind of dancing? I don’t know what they called it, but it was nice steps.

UF: Square dance.

AM: Square dancing?

FW: Huh?

UF: Square dancing?

AM and UF: Square?

UF: Square dancing?

FW: Uh-huh.

AM: They have any fiddle players or anything?

FW: Huh?
AM: They have any fiddle players?
FW: Funeral plans?
AM: Fiddle.
FW: Oh yeah. They'd have old mountain fiddlers up in there.
UF: Who were they? Who played the fiddles?
FW: Most all of 'em played. Most anybody come walk out of the mountain, he'd be carrying an old fiddle or a banjo. They'd haul most there in the evenings and play half the night.
AM: What about at your services, at your funerals, did you have any music at the service?
FW: Not much, sometimes they'd have somebody to kind of play one of these old foot organs, but lots of times, if they had any music at all, they'd just, three or four women would get together and just strike a tune, and go on and sing. Maybe one verse, something like that.
FW: (laugh)

[End of Interview 00:37:58]
Frank Wilberger, Unknown Date
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