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(SNP025) Ralph Cave interviewed by Nancy Smith, transcribed by Peggy C. Bradley

Ralph Cave

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

NARRATOR: Mr. Ralph Cave
INTERVIEWER: Ms. Nancy Smith
PLACE: Park Headquarters (Luray, Va.)
DATE: September 21, 1977

TRANSCRIBED BY:
Peggy C. Bradley
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N.S.: Today is September 21st, 1977. I'm talking with Mr. Ralph Cave at Park Headquarters.

Now, you said you grew up down there in Dark Hollow?

R.C.: I lived in the Dark Holler, and what work I did, I did there until we moved out of the Park.

N.S.: Uh-huh. So you were born there?

R.C.: I was borned - I wasn't borned there. I was borned in Page County. But my mother was from Page County. My father was from Madison County. And jest in a little while after I was borned, why, they moved back to Dark Holler. That's where my father was from.

N.S.: I see. Uh-huh. Were you the oldest one in your family?

R.C.: Yes ma'am.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And your parents' names were -

R.C.: Girdon Cave.

N.S.: Your father was Girdon Cave?

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: How was that spelled?

R.C.: G-i-r-d-o-n -

N.S.: Uh-huh. And -

R.C.: A. Cave.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And what was your mother's name?

R.C.: Dorothy. Dorothy Ann Thomas before she was married.

N.S.: I see. And - so then she moved up to Dark Hollow when she married Mr. Cave?

R.C.: Uh-huh. That's right.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And, how many brothers and sisters did you have?

R.C.: All together there was thirteen of us.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: Several died. There was four died -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: young - younger. And now there's six of us living. Let's see.

There's seven dead all together. There's six living now.

N.S.: Oh. Are the others living in this area?

R.C.: Well, Jesse, my brother, he lives out here in Luray. And I got two sisters lives in Luray.

N.S.: Oh. Hmm. That's interesting. O.k. So, how many years were you in Dark Hollow, about?

R.C.: Well, thirty years - about thirty years. Thirty two years.

N.S.: Oh my. So you raised a family there, too, then.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: That's my father and mother there.

N.S.: I see. And who are the children in that picture? Those are the smaller ones, I guess.

R.C.: That's Ross. Ross and Jesse. And the little girl - I don't know her unless that's Geneva. That's the youngest girl, I guess.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: That must be her.

N.S.: How about that? So they were the smallest children?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Was Jesse the youngest?

R.C.: No. Garland is the youngest.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: He lives in Shenandoah.

N.S.: Hmm. O.k. Now, tell me about the other people in Dark Hollow. Your neighbors.

R.C.: Well, you want me to tell you about these pictures?

N.S.: O.k. Why don't I go ahead and get a pencil and write down the names on the back.

R.C.: Now, that's a little church that we had in Dark Hollow.

N.C.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: The church and school house in Dark Hollow.

N.S.: Oh, this is where the school was?

R.C.: That's where the school was until Hoover come in there and built a - he built a school house about two miles from where we lived. And then all the younger children went to school at the Hoover School house.

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: But, I went to school at that -

N.S.: Uh-huh. Did you have many teachers come in or was this local?

R.C.: No. We only had-jest had one teacher up there because there was only about twelve families lived around there.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And who was the teacher?

R.C.: Well, they had several teachers. I couldn't - uh - Miss Rosie Lohr was the last teacher that we had there.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: Now, she lives over around Brightwood right now, I think.

N.S.: So, did the teachers just come up to teach or were they from Dark Hollow area?

R.C.: No. They came in there from - to teach.

N.S.: And was it mostly the Cave children that would go to school?

R.C.: Well, the biggest part of 'em was Caves.

N.S.: Uh-huh. The Breeden children go there?

R.C.: Breedens went there and the Caves and the - there was some - one family of

Broyles' and one family of Woodwards -

N.S.: Oh. Were those Woodwards from over near where the Hoover School was built?
Did they walk way over there?

R.C.: No. Not - No - They -

N.S.: Oh. It was Woodwards from down Dark Hollow?

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And about how far did the children come? What was the furthestest they walked?

R.C.: Well, I'd say these last children walked about four miles - some of them - from Dark Hollow to Hoover's School.

N.S.: Hmm -

R.C.: Now, that was after the - see, after the Hoover School opened up, why they closed up Dark Hollow School.

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: And then, they just - the children walked over there.

N.S.: I've heard them mention children from Dark Hollow going over there.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: I guess they had the furthestest to come -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Most of the children lived right around the school.

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: That must have been hard to get to in the winter or something. They probably stayed home.

R.C.: It was. Sometimes you couldn't get there because they had to walk anyway. They had no school bus.

N.S.: Where was the road? Did you go through Big Meadows to get over there?

R.C.: The road that went to Hoover School came right by our house. It was called

the old turnpike - the Gordonsville Turnpike.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And then there was a road that the bark peelers and ones that made - hewed ties and so forth and so on, made this road through there to haul their -

N.S.: The bark.

R.C.: material and bark and stuff out.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Did that go over Stony Mountain there or -

R.C.: That went over Medder Mountain.

N.S.: Uh-huh. What else have we got? In the pictures?

R.C.: Right there. That's my wife's sister and her brother - her husband. And that's their small children. He's dead. He's been dead for quite a long time.

N.S.: What was her name?

R.C.: Stella. And his name was Douglas.

N.S.: Uh-huh. What was her name before she was married?

R.C.: Breeden.

N.S.: Stella Breeden. Was she from Tom Breeden's family?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: She was one of his daughters?

R.C.: Yeah. She was a sister to my wife.

N.S.: Oh. That's Douglas Cave.

R.C.: We didn't have very many people to pick from.

N.S.: I guess not.

R.C.: Unless we went out a long ways.

N.S.: I see. Where did Douglas and his family live?

R.C.: They lived right there in Dark Holler - in the Dark Holler area.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Near the church or -

R.C.: Yeah. About half a mile from the church.

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: Now, that was Walter Cave and his wife. They live over at Criglersville now.

N.S.: Oh, they do?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And were they from Dark Hollow, too?

R.C.: They were from Dark Holler, too.

N.S.: What was his wife's name? Do you remember?

R.C.: Gertie.

N.S.: O.k.

R.C.: Now, that's my wife and boy - that boy, he's a foreman in Charlottesville in the Sperry-Rand plant now.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: And the little -

N.S.: Is that John? The little baby? He told me he left Dark Hollow when he was just a baby. And let me see - let me get your wife's name first.

R.C.: Elsie.

N.S.: Elsie. She was Elsie Breeden Cave.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: And the first boy - oldest boy - what's his name?

R.C.: Davis.

N.S.: Davis. And the girl?

R.C.: Gladys.

N.S.: And John.

R.C.: Johnnie.

N.S.: How about that. And that's taken in Dark Hollow?

R.C.: Yeah. We have a couple more kids, but they was not borned in Dark Hollow. They was borned after we moved out of Dark Hollow. That's Jerry - his real name is Carroll. And the other one's named Maxine.

N.S.: Oh. Let's see. That's five. Three born up there in Dark Hollow?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: What was it like? Were they born right there at home?

R.C.: Born right at home.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: We had the doctor for two of them. Never had any doctor for the other one.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: Dr. Ross over at Criglersville. Had to ride about ten miles to get up there on horseback.

N.S.: Oh my goodness. Did you have to get him some word? It must have taken him a while to get there.

R.C.: Well, we'd always just walk down there and tell him. Have to - or ride. Ride horseback. A lot of 'em ride horses in there, you know.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: We'd ride a horse or sometimes they had what they call a buckboard or a spring wagon or something like that.

N.S.: Was that a pretty rough road? That Gordonsville Turnpike?

R.C.: Well, it wasn't too bad. They kept it up - the State kept it up pretty good.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: Now, that is my father's - my wife's father and two of her sisters. And the little kids there - I don't know. That's some of their kids. I don't know which ones.

N.S.: Do you know which girls these are? Is one of these Mamie or -

R.C.: No. Yes, it is. That is. That's Mamie. She lives over above Syria now.

And this is Nettie. She lives right out here in - right up in Dry Run - what they call Dry Run.

N.S.: Oh. Up here in Morning Star?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Oh. I declare. What's her married name? Nettie -

R.C.: Let's see - she married Lang.

N.S.: Oh, I see. We could probably get hold of her. Is she in pretty good health?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: I know Mamie's not in good health now.

R.C.: Now, that was - that was my wife's father's home. That's where he lived.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Yeah. And I've been to that place. But there's just nothing there now -

R.C.: No. There's nothing there now.

N.S.: except some root cellars, I think.

R.C.: I've been there, too, lately.

N.S.: He had all girls? Is that right?

R.C.: All girls.

N.S.: What did he have? Four girls?

R.C.: Oh, he had nine girls.

N.S.: Oh my goodness.

R.C.: And his wife died when she was about thirty-five years old, and he raised all the girls by himself. He never did marry again.

N.S.: Oh, remarkable. My goodness. He must have had quite a hard time.

R.C.: Course, they all worked. He farmed and peeled bark, hewed ties and just everything come along almost that he could do. And they helped.

N.S.: Uh-huh. The girls all worked.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Uh-huh. I had no idea he had that many children.

R.C.: Now, that's me right there with that stick in that kettle. And that's Lester Weakley there. We was a butcherin'.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: And there's where we was renderin' out the lard.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Let's see - Lester Weakley. Was he from the area?

R.C.: Yeah. Well, he was from right over in the Hoover School area. Just a little bit out -

N.S.: Oh. Was he related to the John Weakley family or -

R.C.: He was John Weakley's son.

N.S.: Oh. Great. We were trying to figure out what John - because John Weakley died, I guess -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: And there was just the mother and the son. And we were trying to figure out the son's name.

R.C.: Yeah. Well, they had - they had two sons. One was Kern - Kern Weakley.

N.S.: Oh. I've come across that name, too. Uh-huh.

This is so fascinating. You're fitting together all of the pieces for me that I haven't been able to fit together. Let me see. Now, that building says 'Dark Hollow' on it or 'Dark Holler'.

R.C.: Well, that building, I don't know. That's the only one that I don't know. But, I -

N.S.: Could it be Click Cave or something on his property? But, I don't know if you can see it, but right over here it says 'Dark Holler' and the same way it does on the church.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: See. Was this actually painted on the church? I guess it was. Dark Hollow,

the words.

R.C.: Yeah. Uh-huh.

N.S.: And it looks just like that on that house.

R.C.: That could have possibly been Click's house, but I wouldn't - couldn't identify it exactly.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: But, it probably was. If it was in Dark Holler, it must have been because there's no other house that I couldn't aknowled besides that.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Well, was Click related to you?

R.C.: Well, we were distant cousins.

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: Maybe about third or fourth cousins.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Did he live up near Red Gate there?

R.C.: Uh-huh. Right down from Red Gate.

N.S.: Uh-huh. So he'd be near that cemetery.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: And that's your parents.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: O.k. Give me the names of those small children again.

R.C.: Let me see. I don't know whether I know 'em or not. That's Ross. That's Ross and Jesse and Geneva.

N.S.: Ross -

R.C.: That's Ross. That's Jesse. And that's Geneva.

N.S.: O.k. Well, this is fascinating.

Do you have pictures like these?

R.C.: No, I don't.

N.S.: We have some of the negatives, if you'd like copies of any of them.

R.C.: All right. I wish you would. I wish -

N.S.: O.k. Did you want all of them or -

R.C.: Yeah. I'd like to have one of all of them.

N.S.: O.k. I think we can arrange that. I don't know if I can find negatives of all of them, but whatever I have negatives of.

R.C.: Well. All right.

N.S.: O.k. Gee, thank you for identifying these.

Now, let's see. Did everybody - tell me a little bit about the church services and how that went. Was there one every Sunday or -

R.C.: Oh yeah. Yeah. We had church every Sunday and then we had Prayer Meeting every Thursday night.

N.S.: Oh. So it was quite a religious community, then.

R.C.: Uh-huh. Yeah.

N.S.: And was that - that was all - did your father - you said he helped build that church?

R.C.: Well, he built it. I mean he built it with the help of all the other people, you know. Everybody pitched in and helped to build it.

N.S.: Uh-huh. The shingles on it looked like the shingles on his house -

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: That's why I figured he must have built it.

R.C.: The shingles was drawn shingles with the hand - the hand drawn shingles.

N.S.: All hand made?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Were those chestnut?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: It's a beautiful building. I sure wish they could have kept that building there. And was he always the preacher? Or how about this -

R.C.: No. They had other preachers that came in, why, from down from the conference.

Sometimes there was an old preacher by the name of Craddock came there. And one by the name of Moser. And different ones from the Methodist Conference came in there and preached.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: Well, sometimes one a month and sometimes two - a couple times a month.

N.S.: So people actually came up from Stanley and so forth -

R.C.: That's right. The church was always full.

N.S.: Oh. Isn't that something. Like they'd come up and attend church -

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: like when your father was preaching.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Now, who was Tom Cave? Where did he preach?

R.C.: Tom Cave. He was a preacher, too. But he just - I mean he preached around kindly an evangelist. He preached all around. Well, my daddy did, too. But he didn't travel around as much as my daddy did. My daddy traveled all over the country. He was -

N.S.: All over the country?

R.C.: All over the - around close here, you know.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: He'd go to Philadelphia, Baltimore -

N.S.: Oh my.

R.C.: and Washington. I don't know - just before he died - a year before he died, he was in Washington running a revival there.

N.S.: Isn't that something. Uh, everybody seems to know of his name. He must have been a wonderful person. Now, when did he die?

R.C.: He died July the 10th, 1972.

N.S.: I was wondering why he wasn't buried up there in that little cemetery? Was

that just too far to get to?

R.C.: Well, I'll tell you why. We have a cemetery at our church where we built now.

N.S.: Oh, I see.

R.C.: Now, he built another little church about like this one was down here after he come out of the Park.

N.S.: Oh. Is that over in Shenandoah?

R.C.: Uh-huh. And now since - well, before he died, he sold part of his land - about four acres of land from there and we've built a big church there now.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: We have about a \$30,000.00 - \$35,000.00 church built there now.

N.S.: Oh, isn't that wonderful. So he really just got everything started. And what was he - did he ever - when he lived in Dark Hollow come down like and get a group around him and -

R.C.: Well, he'd go to different little churches around like that was built and different - around - there was always a church - a small church in all these hollers up above Stanley and Elkton, Shenandoah, Luray and all around -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: He just traveled all around to.

N.S.: Were they mostly Methodist or different -

R.C.: Well, different denominations.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: I mean back there then, nobody didn't pay as much attention to a denomination like they do now.

N.S.: Yeah.

R.C.: A lot of people now, why they just - if it's not their denomination, why they don't go.

N.S.: Oh, yeah.

R.C.: But, it was not like that then.

N.S.: Yeah. Well, it seems to make more sense the way they used to do it, I guess. And, when was that church built? Do you know? Dark Hollow.

R.C.: That church was built in about - let's see. I was - I expect that church was built in about 19 - in about 1920.

N.S.: Uh-huh. So it was only up - I guess they took it about 1940 or so.

R.C.: Something like that.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: They moved it or done something with it after we left the Park. I don't know what they -

N.S.: I saw a letter from your father to the Park asking if he could take it down. And they wouldn't let him do that.

R.C.: No.

N.S.: I was wondering why they wouldn't.

R.C.: No. I don't know why either. They had some funny ideas about 'em.

N.S.: I guess so. And, how did your father become a minister?

R.C.: I don't know. He just took it up, I guess.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: Because, I think he'd been preaching - I've heered him tell he'd been preaching ever since he was about nineteen years old.

N.S.: Oh, is that so? How old was he when he was married?

R.C.: Well, I think he was about twenty-three -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: and my mother was about seventeen.

N.S.: Oh. And, let's see now, the school - was there school everyday?

R.C.: Well, they just had - not all the whole year, but the season school just like they have now.

N.S.: I see. So, you'd go to school in the wintertime if you could get there?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Uh-huh. That must have been pretty rough. How many grades did you go to school there for?

R.C.: We went - I went to the first year of high school. But, I went to school after I moved out of the - out of the Park. About the 8th grade was the highest that the most of the people went -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: in there.

N.S.: Well, that's more than some other areas in the mountains -

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: a pretty good school.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: And all ages would be there in the same room.

R.C.: That's right. Uh-huh.

N.S.: And did the County help with that school?

R.C.: Yeah. The County paid for the school.

N.S.: I see. That was the only school in the area until Hoover School.

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: I think I've come across that. O.k.

Tell me about - I read this story - did - were two of the children in your family - did they die in a bad winter or something?

R.C.: They died in a - well, two of them died with the diptheria. They died - one died like this morning and in the morning, the other one died. And they was both buried in the same grave up there at that little cemetery. But then, one little boy died and there was a snow about four foot there. Nobody didn't get out - nobody didn't get out of the mountains for about - I don't know, it was twelve or fourteen days. And, Elsie's father made a casket

for the child out of one of the seats that was in the church.

N.S.: Oh my.

R.C.: We couldn't get out. We couldn't get out to get to a undertaker to get a casket in or anything. And he made this casket out of one of the seats that was in the church.

N.S.: What was the name of that child? Was that just a small child?

R.C.: Russell -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: was his name. Yeah.

N.S.: He was just a baby?

R.C.: No, it weren't a baby. But, he was - well, he was several years old.

N.S.: Was that diptheria?

R.C.: No. I don't know. I don't really know what the trouble was.

N.S.: Could - could - you could get out the door of the house, but just not into town?

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: Was that one of the worst snows?

R.C.: That's one of the worst snows I ever saw.

N.S.: Do you remember about when it was?

R.C.: No, I don't. It was somewhere in - I reckon around in the 20's -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: but I don't remember just when.

N.S.: Yeah. So winters must have been a lot different back then than they are now.

R.C.: Well, we had snow almost all the winter ever winter up there.

N.S.: But, children would still go out and go to school -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: and everybody would be out walking.

R.C.: Yeah. There wouldn't be too much like that - like that snow was, but there

were snow most of the winter. It would stay in the mountains there.

N.S.: Was there a George Cave living up there?

R.C.: Yeah. That was my uncle. That was my father's brother.

N.S.: Oh, I see. 'Cause Mamie Breeden Meadows, she had an article - an interview in the paper a while back, and she talked his house got covered under with snow one time or something?

R.C.: Uh-huh. I think it blowed - well, there was several houses got covered up with snow. Mr. John Weakley's house got covered up with snow.

N.S.: I've heard that also. Yeah.

R.C.: Yeah. He's told me that he kept layin' in the bed one morning - laid and laid and thought what in the world's going on. Said he heered an old rooster crowin' and thought why I'd better get up. Said he got up and said all the windows and everthing - that it was dark in that house. It wasn't nothing but snow all over the house.

N.S.: Well, somebody would have to dig them out then? I guess they couldn't get out.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Isn't that something. Would that be that same winter?

R.C.: Yeah. That was that same winter.

N.S.: I just can't imagine anything like that now. They had pretty much snow up there last winter -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: but nothing like that.

R.C.: No.

N.S.: Now, did you raise most of your food up there in the mountains?

R.C.: Well, mostly.

N.S.: Uh-huh. How was the farming - the gardening? Was that pretty rough?

R.C.: No. Some of the land was pretty rough. Some of it wasn't too rough.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: We usually had a horse that we plowed the - plowed the ground, and then hoed part of it with - you know, hoes just like they hoe gardens now. Well, I mean there ain't many people hoes gardens now. They use some kind of machinery.

N.S.: You're right. What kind of things did you grow?

R.C.: Well, we growed corn, potatoes and just about everthing that we used.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Did it grow pretty well?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: The soil?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: And did you have to go to the store very often?

R.C.: Not too often. About once a week.

N.S.: Once a week. And which way did you go? Did you go up Stanley or Criglersville?

R.C.: Come to Stanley.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And did you sell some things down there, too?

R.C.: Oh, yeah. I mean - they sold - we always had chickens - maybe fifty chickens. We'd sell eggs.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: And then we'd butcher three or four hogs in the fall. And we had meat and maybe sell four or five of the hams.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And buy flour.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: They always baked warm bread. Most of the people called it hoe cake bread now.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: But they would make it up and bake it in the stove -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And we never had to buy any bread or anything out through the winter because we always got enough in the fall of the year to last us 'til the next spring.

N.S.: Oh, I see. Uh-huh. What about apples? I saw some apple trees down there.

R.C.: Oh, there was plenty of apples in there. We had all kinds of different kinds of apples. Some wild apples. Some of the apples was taken care of - but we had plenty of apples. Boiled apple butter and -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: had to make -

N.S.: Everybody got together for making apple butter?

R.C.: Yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah.

N.S.: Did you have any entertainment for the get-together?

R.C.: Sometimes. Yeah.

N.S.: What kind of music was it?

R.C.: Well, they had guitar, banjer and violins.

N.S.: Oh. Uh-huh.

R.C.: Like that.

N.S.: I see. And do you remember where the songs were from or what any of them were or anything that the people would sing?

R.C.: No, I don't. I don't remember.

N.S.: Uh-huh. What about - did they dance?

R.C.: Sometimes. Yeah. They'd have dances.

N.S.: Like square dances?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Oh. Then that would just be like the people from Dark Hollow would get together?

R.C.: Uh-huh. Well, some of the other people from outside too for that if they had it.

N.S.: Oh really?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Would this be at somebody's home, now, or -

R.C.: Mostly at somebody's home. Yeah.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Well, when else would you have a get together besides making apple butter?

R.C.: Well, fall of the year, they'd have corn shuckins.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: They'd pull off the corn and haul it in and throw it in the shed or somethin' another. And then everybody would get together and shuck corn.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And then they'd have a party after that?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: And what about butchering? Did many people get together then or -

R.C.: Well, quite a few.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And did you just let your hogs go out in the woods until you were ready to butcher them?

R.C.: Well, most of the time the hogs - while the chestnut crop was on, you didn't have to buy no feed fer 'em because they got fat without feedin' 'em.

N.S.: Yeah. I guess they did.

R.C.: But after the chestnuts give out, why mostly we would - we would raise enough corn and stuff to feed the hogs.

N.S.: And did you keep them penned up there when you -

R.C.: Then we'd pen 'em up. Yeah.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: Always pen 'em up about a month or two months before we butchered 'em anyway. All the time -

N.S.: Oh, I see. Uh-huh. And you'd butcher about three a year?

R.C.: Well, sometimes more than three. Some of 'em butchered as much as about eight.

N.S.: Oh, my.

R.C.: The ones that had big families.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And, that would last you all through the winter?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: And did your vegetables last through the winter, too?

R.C.: Well, we canned enough vegetables and dried enough. They used to dry beans, you know.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: Uh - my wife loves 'em, now, but I don't like 'em.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: I don't know whether you ever saw any of 'em or not, but they snap beans - string the beans, now, and just put 'em up and let 'em dry, and keep 'em, and eat 'em whenever they get ready -

N.S.: Uh-huh. I see.

R.C.: through the winter.

N.S.: So they didn't can many beans. They mostly dried them.

R.C.: Mostly dried 'em then. They canned some but not too many. Not like they do now.

N.S.: What about cabbage? Did you grow cabbage?

R.C.: Grew cabbage and what they would do with the cabbage, they would dig a trench in the ground, and pull the cabbage up by the root and put it in the ground, and bury it over with dirt. And they never would rot or anything whenever -

N.S.: Keep all winter.

R.C.: whenever you got ready to get you a cabbage head, you'd just go out and get hold of the root and pull it up.

N.S.: Did you make sauerkraut?

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah. We'd make sauerkraut.

N.S.: So, it seemed like you'd get a lot of what you needed right up there.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: I can see why people liked living up there.

That must have been a problem, though, when the chestnuts weren't around.

R.C.: It was. Yeah.

N.S.: Had you sold chestnuts before that?

R.C.: Oh, yeah. Yeah. A lot of people sold chestnuts - a lot of chestnuts. And it was a big slam on the people when the chestnut timber died out.

N.S.: Yeah. So, how did they get money then? Selling apples and stuff?

R.C.: Well, sometimes. Sometimes in the fall of the year, there were a bunch of the men would go out and pick apples for these orchards, you know, and -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: go around - different things after the chestnut crop give out, so they - and sometimes they'd go to bark peelin's or where they cut timber - and a lot of 'em - there was some of the men - some of the younger fellers in there then went on over in West Virginia and cut timber.

N.S.: While they were still living in Dark Hollow?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: They went over there to work?

R.C.: Yeah. They'd go over there and work and then they'd come back to -

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: about the weekend or something like that.

N.S.: Now, what about the bark? Was this tanned bark?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: And what tree was that from?

R.C.: Well, that come from a - what they call a hemlock now, and we called it a spruce pine then -

N.S.: Oh, really?

R.C.: but, we really just called it what we had always heered it called, you know.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: So - and then oak - black oak, white oak and Spanish oak. All that kind of bark was good.

N.S.: All that was used for tanning?

R.C.: Yeah. Uh-huh.

N.S.: I heard it was just chestnut oak.

R.C.: No. No. There was a whole lot of other kinds of bark.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: Uh-huh. About four or five different kinds of bark was good for tanning.

N.S.: How did they do that? I've seen big bark spurs. It looked like great big keys or something.

R.C.: Well, they'd cut around the tree. And they had some of these - they called it a spud then - I've got one of 'em at home now - and split this down a little piece and just get this under it and pull it right on off. Then they'd cut the tree down and do the same thing all the way up. Then they'd cut the log up.

N.S.: Did they use the logs, too?

R.C.: Yeah. They used the logs mostly. Sometimes if it was back in such a fer place, that they couldn't get 'em out, couldn't get a horse or something in there, they didn't bother 'em. But they'd go in there with a little sled or somethin' another and haul the bark out.

N.S.: Uh-huh. There's a lot of old hemlocks along Hogback and Rose River -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: I guess they couldn't really get in there. It was too hard.

R.C.: That's right. There wasn't no road close there then -

N.S.: That's right.

R.C.: for the people. And there was very few people lived through there.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: I know where all of the places are at clear across the mountain.

N.S.: There is one place - it looks like a homesite right up there on Rose River near the waterfall.

R.C.: Well, they was. That there was - the first man that I ever knowed that lived there - I saw him one time, and he was an old man when I saw him - was Perry Sisk.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: Did you ever hear of him?

N.S.: I think I've seen his name in some of these pictures.

R.C.: Uh-huh. And he's the one that lived there. Course Roy Woodward lived there after that. The last one that ever lived there, that was Roy Woodward. One of the ones where married that - my wife's sister.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: But she's - yeah, she's still living. They're living over around Madison, right - I don't know exactly where they live, but we was over there a couple times here last year. But, they move around so much. They move to different places. He's not satisfied, see -

N.S.: Oh, I see.

R.C.: at one place. And he keeps moving around.

N.S.: Uh-huh. But, you're pretty happy at Stanley?

R.C.: Yeah. I'm all right where I'm at.

N.S.: Now, was Mr. Woodward involved with a mine there? There was a -

R.C.: Well, now, there was a mine there a long, long time ago. And then they opened up that mine again -

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: uh - later.

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: And, I don't think they ever made much success out of it. They claimed that they wasn't enough ore in it for to get it out from where it's at, you see.

N.S.: Yeah. Yeah. That'd be hard to transport it.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Now, originally, or at least when the Park bought that area, it was from a mining company in Chicago.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: So, I guess they came in and mined it first and then left?

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: And wasn't some local people - didn't they open that?

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah. They was some other people then opened it up again.

N.S.: Harry Hall?

R.C.: Harry Hall.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And did they live right in Dark Hollow?

R.C.: They lived right down in next to where the mine was. Well, that was called Dark Hollow. The whole thing there was Dark Hollow.

N.S.: I see. Now, did they work for the people in Chicago, or they just come in on their own and kind of opened up the mine again?

R.C.: I don't know about the last time what they did - whether they worked for the people in Chicago. But I believe that they did.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And about when was it that they reopened that mine?

R.C.: I don't know. That was early. I can jest remember it.

N.S.: And it shut up again before the Park -

R.C.: Yeah -

N.S.: Uh-huh. So they didn't do too well with it.

R.C.: No.

N.S.: And did those people leave in the winter time? Harry Hall and I guess it was -

R.C.: No. No. They stayed there.

N.S.: There's a big piece of cement down there right now where that mine was between - just before where Hog Back goes into Rose River. And there's an area where there's all kinds of little pieces of rock coming down the side, I guess from the shaft. And, then there's a big cement slab just down on the base there. It looked like they had a rock crusher on that or -

R.C.: Is that where the old mine - you mean down there where the old mine was?

N.S.: Yeah.

R.C.: It was a big air compressor set there that run all the drills. See, up agin' that bank, they filled 'em up mostly - well, they all filled up now - there's one up there against the hill about quarter of a mile that you can see back in, well, maybe fifty feet.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: But, that's what that there cement was. It was where this here compressor was built and that run all the drills that they drilled the holes for that mine.

N.S.: I see. So they moved the machinery out, but the mouth is still there.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Well, that clears up something for me right there, 'cause I used to take people by that and they'd go "what is this"? And I didn't know what it was. I was gonna go up there and look for the mine shaft, but, you know, I was afraid I might fall in not knowing where they were.

Let's see. Over by Mr. Gird Cave's area, looked like there might have been two houses over there.

R.C.: It was. My grandfather lived right there and our house was just a little bit right above his house.

N.S.: Oh. What was your grandfather's name?

R.C.: John I. John I. Cave.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Was he born up there or did he move in?

R.C.: No. He was borned there, too.

N.S.: So the Caves go back a ways, then.

R.C.: The Caves go back until - 'til - my great grandfather was Jimmy Cave and his father was named Newman Cave. And that's as far as I know about 'em.

N.S.: So that would be back in the 1800's.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Oh, I know they went back because up there in the cemetery is a Civil War grave.

R.C.: Uh-huh. Well, that's my grandfather.

N.S.: Oh. Uh-huh. Isn't that something? Do you know where the Caves originally came from?

R.C.: No, I don't.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And - now, let's see. Now, where did you build your house?

R.C.: Well, my house was right below the church.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Across the road?

R.C.: Just on the opposite side across the road.

N.S.: Uh-huh. I looked around down there because I thought there had been a house down there -

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: but I couldn't quite see. I saw kind of a flat place, but I didn't see much.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Have you been back there at all?

R.C.: I can go back there now and the place looks just as different as day and night as what it did then, you know -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: 'cause it was a lot of cleared land in there then that's grown up now completely in woods. There wasn't no woods in there then. It was a lot of cleared land there.

N.S.: Yeah. Were there any cattle up in that area?

R.C.: Oh yeah.

N.S.: Would that be the people's cattle or cattle from the valley?

R.C.: Well, everybody - most everybody had a cow of their own.

N.S.: Uh-huh. For -

R.C.: But, then, up around now where Big Medders and all are, why the people from - that owned that land up there - they grazed through the summer time.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: They had cattle up there and then they'd have somebody to take care of 'em, salt 'em and keep the fence up and everthing like that, you know. If they'd get out, why they had somebody to look after 'em and see that they was all there.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Now, who actually owned that land there in Dark Hollow?

R.C.: Well, that there was all that mining company's land. Everbody lived on that mining company's land.

N.S.: And you didn't have to pay them any rent or anything?

R.C.: No.

N.S.: Uh-huh. I guess they didn't take too much interest in that area.

R.C.: No.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And, now, I heard a story from a Mrs. Cowden who was involved in the resettlement. She said she came up there one time, and I guess she came up in a car. Could cars get up on that road?

R.C.: Oh, yeah. Yeah. You could get over in a car then.

N.S.: And she said - I think she said Mr. Cave was there and it might have been you and a small child that were both sick. And he had called three different doctors and - hoping one would come up there. I don't know whether it was in bad weather or what. But, he called a Madison doctor and an Elkton doctor, and maybe a Stanley doctor or something like that.

R.C.: No. I think that was Mr. Ashby Cave's people.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: That's who I think - that was a house right on up above where you - where I told you that Perry Sisk lived in.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: That was on up that river about a quarter or a mile above there. That's where that happened at. They had a girl and she had - I think she had diptheria. And they finally did get a doctor. Dr. Ross from down at Criglersville.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Oh my. Now, what road would they have used up there?

R.C.: Well, they was a road that went from the Red Gate where goes down Dark Hollow - goes down to the - on down there, you know, turns off to your right - to your left. Turns off to your left and goes on down there to the -

N.S.: That's the hiking trail we use now, I guess.

R.C.: Uh-huh. Well, it used to be a road. That's what they used for a road.

N.S.: I see. So that kind of linked a loop in Dark Hollow - a circle.

R.C.: Yeah. Uh-huh.

N.S.: If you're going from Mr. Gird Cave's place to the house that you built, would you go around Gordonsville or come across on the other road?

R.C.: No. Jest come right on up by Dark Hollow - you know where the Dark Holler bridge is?

N.S.: Yes.

R.C.: Well, just come right on up that road and come right on up and stay on the road.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Now, when I was over at where Mr. Gird Cave lived and where you grew up, I saw lots and lots of pieces of shoes - more than I've ever seen at any other home site. It must have been about parts of eighteen pairs of shoes or something. Do you have any idea why that would be?

R.C.: No, I don't.

N.S.: Small shoes - large shoes. I'm just wondering -

R.C.: I don't know, unlesen - sometimes - sometimes when my father was there, why

there would be people send clothes in from different places in there to him to give out to the people. And if them shoes was there, I imagine that that's what it was.

N.S.: Oh, I see. Did even small children wear shoes when they were walking around there?

R.C.: Yeah. Uh-huh.

N.S.: So - now tell me about the houses. Some big houses or -

R.C.: Well, there was some big houses in there, but the usual run of houses - we had about four - we had four rooms in our house, and a kitchen.

N.S.: This is the house you built or the house your father -

R.C.: No. The house my father lived in. And our house had just three rooms.

N.S.: Uh-huh. You had a smaller family while you were up there.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: What kind of things could children do up there?

Did they have any toys to play with?

R.C.: Oh yeah, they got some toys.

N.S.: What sort of things?

R.C.: Oh, something like little wagons or - I wouldn't hardly know what they really did do. They had somethin' or another. They entertained - always was entertained. They'd get together - several of 'em - several families live around close together, you know, and they'd all get together and maybe play ball -

N.S.: What kind of ball?

R.C.: Gum ball. Did you ever see anybody play gum ball?

N.S.: Oh, I never did.

R.C.: Well, we used to do that. Played gum ball. And if you hit it real hard, it'd go fer about half a mile.

N.S.: Oh, what was it - what kind of ball was that? What was it made of?

R.C.: I really don't know what they call it. I believe they called it town ball, then.

And that's before I ever heered of any baseball.

N.S.: Did you hit it with a stick?

R.C.: They hit with a bat. Yeah.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And where we would play - we'd play up there just about where the Black Rock is now - down in that flat there, see -

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: We had a place in there. Then we had another place right there at Red Gate where you go up there. See all that was cleared through there then. And before the road went through there, why it was smooth through there. You could -

N.S.: Go out and play ball. Was that just the children or would the men go out, too?

R.C.: Well, big people and all would play sometimes. Not really the old people, but the younger people.

N.S.: How about that. That's very interesting. I never heard about anything like that. Did you get together with the Big Meadows people much? I guess it was - a Frank Weakley. But he would have been an old man.

R.C.: Well, I knew him. I can remember him.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And then he had a son named June?

R.C.: June.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Well, now, were they related to the John Weakleys down by Hoover's School?

R.C.: Yeah. They were all some relation. I don't think they was real close relation, but they was related to each other.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: Now, it's the same way with the Caves. The Caves was all related, too. Now, old Mr. Frank Weakley and my grandfather was first cousins.

N.S.: Oh. So everybody's pretty much related in there. One big family.

What were some of the other families up there between where Frank Weakley and

John Weakley lived?

R.C.: Well, now, between there there was nobody lived in there.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: Wise Hurt lived there one time down in - right out from Mr. John Weakley. Then George Buracker -

N.S.: Right.

R.C.: lived right down at the bottom of the hill there.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And Emmett Weakley, that was old Mr. Frank Weakley's son, he lived right close - right there, too. That was right above - that was right close to where Hoover's School was built.

N.S.: Emmett Weakley?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Did you ever go over to Tanner's Ridge area?

R.C.: Oh yeah. I've been over Tanner's Ridge area thousands of times.

N.S.: I guess - was it Thomas living over there?

R.C.: Yeah. There was a whole lot of Thomases - mostly Thomases lived there.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Didn't one of the Caves marry a Thomas?

R.C.: My father married a Thomas.

N.S.: Oh. Oh. Dorothy Thomas.

R.C.: That was Dorothy Thomas.

N.S.: Was she from Tanner's Ridge?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Well, how about that. Now, tell me about when the Park came in.

Let's see, there's a lot of letters that your father wrote to Mr. Lassiter and to Mr. Hoskins. It seemed like he was having some trouble there. I wonder why he didn't get a homestead or exactly what happened?

R.C.: Well, you mean when he moved out?

N.S.: Yeah.

R.C.: Well, he did.

N.S.: Oh. He did get a homestead?

R.C.: He got a homestead, but just after he moved out of the - out of the Park, and they bought this homestead for him. Why I had a brother - Jesse - he was in the Army. And he had saved up some money and he bought it off the homestead people. I mean -

N.S.: Oh. He bought it later on -

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: they bought the area.

R.C.: Yeah. Uh-huh.

N.S.: Was this in Shenandoah, then?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Uh-huh. So, how did people feel about that - having to move out of the Park?

R.C.: Well, it was a lot of people it really hurt. They didn't like it at all. But, I mean, the people made it all right there then, but I don't think they could make it in there now.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: I mean like times are now, I don't think - I couldn't go back there and live again.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: Not under the circumstances, you know, like they are now.

N.S.: Right. Right. I can understand that.

O.K. Now, what was - let's see - he was still living there when there was a Park, kind of, wasn't he? When did he move out? '38?

R.C.: I believe he did back in about '38.

N.S.: Uh-huh. I guess they were building the road through there and everything. Were you up there when they started on the Skyline Drive?

R.C.: Yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah. I worked on it. Worked on the Skyline Drive -

N.S.: Oh, you did?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: My father did, too.

N.S.: Oh. I didn't know that.

R.C.: He worked some on it. Most all the people that was up there worked on it.

N.S.: I see. And were there people already coming up to visit while you were still living up there?

R.C.: Well, after the Park - after they started on the Park, you know, a lot of people came in there, took pictures and different things.

N.S.: Oh, went around and took pictures of people's houses and -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: things like that?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Now, was there something where some of the children would sell flowers or something to people?

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah.

N.S.: What was that? Paper flowers or real flowers?

R.C.: Paper flowers where they made. Their mothers would make 'em for 'em and they'd take 'em up there on the - where they had the parking places on Sundays or - sometimes after church or somethin' like that. They'd go up there and sell these flowers .

N.S.: Uh-huh. But the Superintendent didn't like that, did he?

R.C.: No. He didn't like that much. They didn't say nothin' about it for awhile - for a year or so.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: But, I went with Mr. Hoskins when he went up there one time. And there was a girl from down in what they call Nichols Holler up there on a parking place. He told her that she'd have to get off of there. That he wasn't allowin' no

and side!

flowers sold up there no more. And she walked off the road, and she said, "Aw," she said, "you ain't nothin' but a big bluff no how." Said, "Pop said you weren't".

N.S.: Oh, my goodness.

R.C.: He just laughed about it, you know. He just busted out alaughin' about it.

N.S.: He was a pretty good natured person, wasn't he?

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah. I knew him well. I've been out with him on some parties and different things. Him and - there was an old feller up there when they worked - put this water line in at Big Meaders, by the name of - they called him Colonel Smith. I don't really know what his first name was.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: But he would kindly get excited, you know. He was an Army man, but he had retired. And -

N.S.: And he was working there? He wasn't living there?

R.C.: He was just a boss.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: He was a boss there, you know. And he'd get excited over everthing. Anything - little thing happened, why he'd get all excited about it. One time we went down into White Oak Canyon, and I played music. I played the guitar.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: I been playin' guitar fer - well, ever since I was jest about grown. My aunt, Irene Thomas, taught me how to chord a guitar and I started playin'. And I played around different places a whole lot. I been to Washington and played several times, and Baltimore and - we got a radio broadcast out here at 3:30 - singin' and some talkin' at 3:30 on Sunday evening now. We've had it for about eight years - me and my son.

N.S.: Oh. Uh-huh. And what kind of - now, was this mountain music you played up in the mountains to?

R.C.: Well, we played mountain music and played most everthing then.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: But we only have a religious program now.

N.S.: I see. Uh-huh. Were you telling me something about Mr. Smith, then?

R.C.: Yeah. I don't know what ever happened to him. He left up there before I quit working up there. And I don't know - I never did hear of him no more.

But what I wanted to tell you about, he - we was havin' a party up there one night at the - out at the parking place out there at the picnic ground back out from - after you leave the Drive up here - after you leave Panorama and go out there - what's the next one called?

N.S.: Pinnacles or -

R.C.: The Pinnacles. That's right.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And we was all supposed to meet there that night - me and another feller that was aworkin' up there. And we was supposed to play a trick on 'em, you know. I was supposed to go in there with a gun and make out I was arrestin' him for non-support. And Mr. Hoskins and them was there and some of 'em recognized me. And I had to laugh. And they had a big time about me alaughin'. Said we wouldn't aknowed it, if the Sheriff hadn't alaughed.

N.S.: That must have been something.

Now, did you have a car back then?

R.C.: No.

N.S.: Up in the mountains?

R.C.: About the last of the - after they built the Skyline Drive, I had a car.

N.S.: Uh-huh. So you were up there until the last of the people moved out?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: And then you moved right down there at Stanley?

R.C.: Well no. I moved to Shenandoah.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: And I been in the junk business at Shenandoah about thirty years.

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: And, after my last son - I had three sons in the Army. And after my last son come out of the Army, why, I let him take the business over up there. I had a pretty good business - junk business up there. And we also run a little country store there, too. It was a lot of people around there, you know. But after we got in the junk, as big as we did, why, we just had to let the store business go.

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: And that's what he's - that's what he's into now. After he was in the Army, and he come from Vietnam, and when he come back, he just started helpin' me.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And then I mostly give the business over to him. And then I just go out now and buy stuff like I bought out here and around different places -

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: and have it hauled.

N.S.: So, did they get you a house down there, too, or you got your own?

R.C.: No. I got my own house.

N.S.: You got your own place.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Uh-huh. That's interesting. So you didn't feel too badly toward 'em when you moved out? Too badly toward the -

R.C.: No. I didn't feel too bad.

N.S.: I guess it was harder on some of the older people.

R.C.: It was. That's where it was. The older people was - they left some of the older people right around the edge of the Park.

N.S.: Yes, they did.

R.C.: They left 'em live there until the older people died out, you know.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: My grandmother lived in the Park. And she lived right along the edge of the Park

up on Tanner's Ridge.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: And she lived 'til she died.

N.S.: Was that a Thomas?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Uh-huh. I think I've seen a house - was it a William Thomas?

R.C.: Yeah. Uh-huh.

N.S.: And that was your grandfather?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: What was your grandmother's name?

R.C.: They called her Ginny. But I don't think that was her - really her right name. But that's all I ever heered her called.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Yeah. I've seen that house, and I was wondering who those people were. That house must have been near where that funny grave stone is that talked about a murder. Do you know that on Tanner's Ridge?

R.C.: Yeah, it is. Just right down below there. A Gray -

N.S.: Do you know the story on it?

R.C.: Aus Gray. I know of it. I just barely remember it and that's all. I've heered 'em talk a lot about it, but I never did - I didn't know anything about it. I didn't know - well, I have saw some of the boys that they said killed him. I remember seeing one or two of them. But the man where - the Gray man, I never did remember him. I weren't nothing but a kid, 'cause they carried this Gray man down to my grandfather's that night and laid him on the porch 'til they could get somebody up there to get him. But he was dead already then.

N.S.: Things like that didn't happen very often, did they?

R.C.: Not very often. This happened - I think they kindly had a grudge against one another someway or another over some girls.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: I think that's what - that's what I heard.

N.S.: Uh-huh. So people up there, generally, in the mountains, were pretty friendly and got -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: along pretty well?

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah. They never had no - very little trouble.

N.S.: What about moonshining? Was there much going on up there? We hear a lot about it further up at Skyland.

R.C.: Well, I tell you, at Dark Holler and around there, we never did have no moon-shine in there.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: I mean - it was one old man lived back on top of the mountain over there by the name of Broyles - Jim Broyles. He used to make a little. But, he didn't make none to amount to anything. Now, in Shenandoah, where I've been - up in what they call Steam Holler, they made their livin' on - just about like that for the last - only until things got pretty good, you know. And then they quit. I don't think there's nobody in there at all now who makes any.

N.S.: Uh-huh. But the reason they didn't make it in Dark Hollow, I guess, was because it was like a religious -

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: area with Mr. Gird Cave -

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: I kind of figured they didn't do much 'cause I - reading about the other areas, I know, it was a big thing on the mountain.

R.C.: Uh-huh. Yeah.

N.S.: Tell me about this Click Cave. What ever happened to him? Where did he move to?

R.C.: Well, now, he moved - he moved down to some of these Longs over here. Isaac Long. I believe he lived - moved on his place. And then -

N.S.: He owned land up in Big Meadows. Isaac Long.

Was he a cattleman or something?

R.C.: I mean - he's not up there now, is he?

N.S.: No. No. But he did at one time.

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah. Uh-huh. And then he lived - I think the welfare - he got on the welfare. He got disabled to work. And he got on the welfare. The welfare bought him a place and then he lived there 'til he died.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And his wife died here just a little while - I think last year.

N.S.: I was wondering because they had the grave up there and didn't show her death date on it. Click, I guess, died some time ago?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: In the '60's or something.

R.C.: He did.

N.S.: But I was wondering if they were gonna bury her up there because -

R.C.: Well, they did bury her up there.

N.S.: Oh, they did?

R.C.: They did bury her up there, but probably they haven't -

N.S.: Put a date on it.

R.C.: put a date on it. I don't know, maybe she's not been dead a year yet. Maybe six months ago. Something like that. I know she's dead, but it hadn't been very long.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And where was she living?

R.C.: She was living out - right around Ida.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: You know where Ida is?

N.S.: Yes.

R.C.: I think that's what - that's what I heard.

R.C.: Well, right down that Ida stretch, there going towards the highway - over to the - where you go to Stanley -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: she lived right down there where there's some Taylors live along there now. And she lived right up - there was a little lane went up there about a hundred yards. She lived right up that lane.

N.S.: Well, she must have been very old.

R.C.: Oh, she was. She was about 88 or 90. Right around 90, I reckon.

N.S.: Did they have a son-in-law that the Park Rangers were having trouble with or something?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Burton.

R.C.: He's still out here at Luray now. He moved away for a long time. He wasn't originally from here. He come in here with the CC people.

N.S.: Oh, I see.

R.C.: He wasn't from Dark Holler. I don't know really where he come from. He come from over on the other side of Charlottesville somewheres. And he married a girl up there. He married Click's girl.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And then they lived together for I don't know how long - how many years, and they separated.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: So, he goes back over to Charlottesville and married again. They got divorced, I think. And now he's divorced the woman over at Charlottesville, and come over here and married another woman. And he lives right out here this side of Luray. I just saw him the other day.

N.S.: I came across some letter where he was giving the Park Rangers a hard time.

R.C.: Yeah. He did.

N.S.: He must have been a character.

So - let's see. Was there anybody else living in there? Now, the way I see it would be coming in from Fisher's Gap - that would be Click Cave, and Tom Breeden, and then you and Tom Cave, I guess, was over by the church somewhere?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: And then going around down to where George Cave and Gird Cave lived - those were the places I think I found -

R.C.: Well, there was another house up there. Tommy Cave and old man Newman Cave lived in that place right there at that high point before you get to the cemetery, you know, there.

N.S.: Right up at the beginning?

R.C.: Uh-huh. He lived there and then -

N.S.: Almost where the Drive is now.

R.C.: Huh?

N.S.: Almost where the Drive is now?

R.C.: Well, just a little below the Drive.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: He lived there. But he's dead and all the boys are dead, too.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: That was John, Tommy, Marvin. And their daddy was named Newman.

N.S.: That was a different group of Caves.

R.C.: No. No.

N.S.: No?

R.C.: It was a whole -

N.S.: All related. That's real interesting. And everybody was gone by 1938 then. Probably so -

R.C.: I expect they was. I expect they was gone by 1938 because about 1940, I believe, during the war, I went to Baltimore and went to work in the shipyard. And I had

done moved out of there then. I went to the shipyard and worked there about four years.

N.S.: Oh. Uh-huh. Now, what - was living up there pretty healthy, or did people get sick right often -

R.C.: No.

N.S.: get sick during the winter?

R.C.: They - nobody got sick not half as much up there don't seem like as it is down here. Course it wasn't as many people. But not many people - there wasn't many people went to the doctor like they do now, you know. You get a bad cold or you get kindly the flu or something another, and nobody thought nothin' much about it. They would get their own - a lot of 'em made their own medicine.

N.S.: That's what I was going to ask you.

R.C.: Some of the older people, they would go out in the woods and dig some kinda roots and different things, and boil 'em and make medicine -

N.S.: Did it work?

R.C.: and use their ownselfs. Yeah.

N.S.: It worked. What kinds of things did they use? Do you have any idea?

R.C.: Deed, I don't know. I don't know what they used.

N.S.: I imagine some people still do it.

R.C.: Yeah. I guess they do.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Now, tell me again some of these people that we can - that are still alive from that area and live around here.

R.C.: Well, my mother's living.

N.S.: Is she? Is she over in Shenandoah?

R.C.: She's over in Shenandoah. And Walter Cave and his wife, they're living.

N.S.: And where are they?

R.C.: They're over at Criglersville.

N.S.: Criglersville. I was just gonna look up some of these people in the telephone book -

R.C.: Uh-huh. And -

N.S.: I'm trying to think of more people we can interview.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: People that might be interested. Is your - your mother must be a -

R.C.: Well, it wouldn't be any use to talk to her because she - her mind's bad. She might talk to you a few minutes and tell you one thing. And the next few minutes, she'll tell you something else.

N.S.: Yeah. It would be hard to remember.

R.C.: She couldn't give you no information.

N.S.: I didn't know she was still alive. And you said you have two sisters.

R.C.: Yeah. My sisters are out here in Luray. I don't know exactly where they live. They've moved around two or three times. And Jesse, he's been sick. Now, Jesse's been - course Jesse worked for the Park. Worked up there for the - that -

N.S.: At Big Meadows.

R.C.: Big Meadows Lodge.

N.S.: Yeah.

R.C.: He's been up there for about twenty years, I reckon.

N.S.: Yeah. I called him, but he's been in the hospital, I guess.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Uh-huh. What was your sister's name in Luray?

R.C.: Geneva.

N.S.: And did she marry -

R.C.: She married a Turner, but he's dead.

N.S.: Would she be under that in the telephone book?

R.C.: Deed, I couldn't tell you whether she would or whether she wouldn't.

N.S.: O.k.

R.C.: Probably she would, though.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Somebody told me about an E.A. Cave. Do you have any idea who that would be?

R.C.: E.A. - that's Elzie. He lives up in what they call Kite Holler. You know where Kite Holler is?

N.S.: That's below Red Gate, isn't it?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Was he from Dark Hollow?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Where did he live?

R.C.: He lived over - right over from Red Gate - right back kindly to the right of Red Gate. Right up in there where all those big - I guess those pine trees are still there. There was a big bunch of pine trees there. He lived right on the other side of those pine trees.

N.S.: What was the story about Red Gate? I read one article your father wrote in the newspaper where he said they couldn't get down the road anymore when they put the gate in or something?

R.C.: Well, they put the gate across there, see, and they put a lock across it.

N.S.: And this was -

R.C.: And -

N.S.: the same place that it is now?

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: So, how did you get to Stanley then?

R.C.: Well, they didn't put the gate across there while we lived in there.

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: They put it across there - the reason he wrote that was on account of that cemetery down there, see.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: If you go up there to the cemetery now, well, you've got to go to the Rangers - go somewhere and get a key -

N.S.: Right.

R.C.: before you can go up there. That's the reason it's in the shape it's in.

N.S.: Yeah.

R.C.: Right now.

N.S.: Yeah.

R.C.: Tanner's Ridge is the same way. But they had people on Tanner's Ridge that worked in the Park, and they had keys to the gate up there.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And they could get up there about any time they wanted to, see.

N.S.: Yeah.

R.C.: But, none of us had a key to the gate down there. And, I've been to 'em and tried to get a key a couple times. Several of the rangers has let me down there when I wanted to go down there. And take the key back to 'em. But, they never would let me have a key permanently. So when anybody got ready to go, they would have to come out here and get a key, if they'd let 'em have one.

N.S.: Yeah. That's right. That must be difficult. Is there many people buried in that Cave cemetery there?

R.C.: There's right many people in there. But, you can't hardly tell where they're buried now. I don't know whether you've been there lately or not, but -

N.S.: I could see, you know, a couple of the stones. There was one for a Civil -

R.C.: Well, a lot of people was buried in there a long time ago that just had a rock or something for a stone.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And, I wouldn't know where they was buried at now. I don't even know where my own people's buried at.

N.S.: Uh-huh. There's one that looked like Buellas. It was handwritten - B-u-e-l-l-a-s,

something like that. I couldn't quite make it out, but it was handwritten there on a rock. And then, of course, was Click Cave. And there was another - I guess it looked like Elsie. I can't remember what - there was another couple. It looked like a modern stone, you know, had been put in there not so long ago, maybe in the '50's. I don't think I've got it written down here.

Did they pay you for the land there and your homes and everything?

R.C.: Well -

N.S.: Did the Park give you much of a deal on that?

R.C.: They give us a little something. Not too much. They give - I think I got about two hundred dollars out of 'em for what I had there when I left.

N.S.: Uh-huh. That didn't last too long, I don't guess. Anything else in particular that you can think of about life up there that stands out in your mind or -

R.C.: Well, I don't know much other than when I lived there and was younger and didn't have anything else to do, I hunted and fished and trapped -

N.S.: Did you?

R.C.: a lot.

N.S.: What kinds of things did you trap?

R.C.: Well, most anything - foxes 'coons and skunks.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: We don't fool with - we buy fur now, but -

N.S.: You trapped skunks?

R.C.: We used to trap skunks, but we don't now.

N.S.: How in the heck did you trap a skunk?

R.C.: Well, you just find a den. They always had a den in the ground. And we'd take a trap and just dig a hole out there and put it in front of that.

N.S.: And then you'd get far out of the way.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: And, could you sell the furs from the animals -

R.C.: Oh yeah.

N.S.: you trapped. You sell 'em down at Stanley?

R.C.: Well, sometimes we would. And sometimes we'd - I would ship it - ship it to New York.

N.S.: Oh. That's interesting. How about the fishing? Was it good there?

R.C.: Oh, it was a lot of fish in there then. There wasn't no restriction much on fish then like they are now. And, they was a whole lot more fish then they are now.

N.S.: Mostly brook trout or -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: We've put brook trout in there a lot of times before the Park ever bothered about anything. Me and June Weakley and different ones has ordered a barrel of trout - of little trout, you know, about small trout -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: from people that would - some people would come in there and visit, you know -

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: and then they would send 'em from these hatcheries in there. We'd meet 'em at Stanley with a wagon or somethin' and haul 'em up there and distribute 'em out all along the creek. Take as close as we could get with 'em, you know -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: buckets and all. And get a bunch of people down there to help carry 'em and put 'em in the creeks.

N.S.: So you stocked you own streams.

R.C.: Yeah. Uh-huh.

N.S.: Isn't that interesting. I hadn't heard -

R.C.: I don't think they stock any trout in the Park anymore, now.

N.S.: No. No. Not anymore. They used to, you know, in the beginning -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: early days of the Park -

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: but they haven't done it in a long time.

R.C.: I used to go up there ever - about a couple times a summer, but when they got it down to where you can't - can't catch but, I believe it's five. And then they got to be -

N.S.: They have to be eight inches.

R.C.: they got to be eight inches long. So it's not worth going up there for.

N.S.: There's none up there that big anymore.

R.C.: No. I doubt that.

N.S.: I still see the little ones, but I never see a big one. People -

R.C.: I tell you what goes with the trout. When the water gets like it's been now - low as it is - these 'coons - raccoons catch 'em. That's what they live off of.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And they can't hardly get away from 'em. When the water gets low like it is now, why they just about clean 'em up. They just about get all of 'em.

N.S.: Yeah. And there aren't that many raccoons up there anymore either. I don't see as many. Maybe that's because they can't get as much fish.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: But it's been terrible up there this year. People go over to the waterfall and say where's the falls.

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah.

N.S.: Did you pay much attention to the waterfalls when you were living up there?
Did people go up there for picnics?

R.C.: Oh yeah. People went up there, but there was no trail up there then, you know.

N.S.: Yeah.

R.C.: You just had to go up through the woods. I took a bunch of girls up there one time, and they was about to fight me before they got outta there. They got in this weed they call nettle weed. Have you ever got in it?

N.S.: Yes, I've been it. I sure have.

R.C.: They give me a fit before they got outta there over this weed - about gettin' them in this nettle weed.

N.S.: Uh-huh. You just had to really -

R.C.: And there was no other way to go, but to go through there.

N.S.: Yeah. I've been through it. It's all over the Tom Breeden place.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: And I remember the first time I put my hand down in it. That stuff will really burn you.

So, young people, mostly, would go up to the waterfalls?

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: That was a kind of a place to go?

R.C.: Yeah. There was a lot of people would come in there. They would come down from Madison. They'd come from different places.

N.S.: Oh, even then they came in.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: I didn't know that.

R.C.: Well, you know old man - I reckon you know all about old man George Pollock having that place up Skyland.

N.S.: Right.

R.C.: I used to go out there. I used to go out there and I played music for him out there a lot of times.

N.S.: Did you?

R.C.: He'd have dances out there, and he would have a bull horn or some kind of a horn. And he would holler and yodel. He wore leggins. He wore the old leather leggins,

you know, most all the time.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And he would go out on a big picnic and take a lot of people with him - many as wanted to go with him.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: He'd come over there to Dark Holler and have a -

N.S.: Oh, did he?

R.C.: Yeah. He'd come -

N.S.: He'd bring his guests over there?

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah.

N.S.: You all play music for them and -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: entertain them?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Did you -

R.C.: I would go out there. And they always - before they made the Skyland Drive, they had a road that you could get out to Skyland.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: And -

N.S.: Was it like where the Drive is now?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And about how often would you go out there?

R.C.: Oh, sometimes I'd go out there couple times a week.

N.S.: How'd you get there? Did you take a horse?

R.C.: No. Somebody'd come out there and get us. There was road enough the cars -

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: The guests or somebody that come up there, you know. He would want somebody out there to play for 'em.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: He'd send somebody out there after me.

N.S.: And did you have a group or did you play by yourself?

R.C.: We played with a group sometimes, and sometimes I played by myself. They would - if I couldn't get a hold of the group, why, I'd just go by myself.

N.S.: And this was guitars.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: And what music did you play up at Skyland? What kind of music?

R.C.: Well, that's about all I played when I went up there. Of course, if the whole bunch went up there, we played - we had banjo and the guitar and violin -

N.S.: Was this like square dancing music?

R.C.: Well, I don't know what kind of dancing you'd call it. They danced three or four different kinds of dances up there.

N.S.: Was this - this was all the music you learned from your aunt or from different people coming in.

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah. Well, I've learnt a whole lot of music. I've -

N.S.: I guess so.

R.C.: taken some lessons and all since that.

N.S.: Since then.

R.C.: And learnt a lot more about it then what I knew then.

N.S.: But you got started right there in the mountain.

R.C.: Yeah. Yeah.

N.S.: Where did your aunt learn to play?

R.C.: I don't know. See, they come from the Lamb people. And the Lambs was musicians - a lot of 'em -

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: and I guess that's where -

N.S.: I hadn't heard that.

R.C.: she picked it up from.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Did you use regular sheet music when you were up there or just stuff that you picked up?

R.C.: Just stuff that we picked up.

N.S.: Uh-huh. I bet that was some of the best kind of music.

R.C.: I used to go to Richmond to the old - I don't know whether you ever heered of the Old Virginia Bardance, or not. But, they used to have a theater down there. It was the Old Virginia Barndance. And I don't know how - I used to go down there just on Saturday nights, and Charlottesville - they had one over at Charlottesville. I'd go over at Charlottesville. I've been to Washington I don't know how many times. And I used to go - go out on these cruises when they had - oh, they'd have a big crowd. And I got in with some people down there that knew me, you know. And got this Happy Johnny over here - that - he's still announces, I think, for Frederick - Frederick, Maryland. And I got acquainted with him. And we'd go out on these boats of a night - moonlight cruises, they called 'em, you know, and so forth and so on.

N.S.: And when was this?

R.C.: That was in the 40's.

N.S.: 40's.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: How about that? So you are quite a musician it sounds like.

Tell me about Mr. Pollock. Did you get to know him personally?

R.C.: Oh yeah. Yeah. I knew him. He was a good man. Nice man. He was just - just a funny man, you know. He was out for a good time - big time all the ways.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: He kept horses up there to ride, and he had all these little cabins. I reckon all the little cabins, I don't know whether they -

N.S.: Some of them's still there.

R.C.: Are they still there?

N.S.: The Massanutten - the one he lived in - that his wife built is still up there.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Did you ever see him with his rattle snakes?

R.C.: Oh yeah. Yeah. He used to pick up rattle snakes and get in the pen with 'em. Have pens around there and had four, five or six rattle snakes in there. He'd pick 'em up. He had some peculiar way that he would get around when a rattle snake wasn't lookin' or anything and grab it by the neck or somewhere that it couldn't bite him.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Yeah. He must have been quite something.

R.C.: He was.

N.S.: What about - you were up there when President Hoover was staying at that camp. Did you ever run into him or talk to people that had?

R.C.: I've been up there to the camp when he was there.

N.S.: Oh really?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: On what occasion did you go to the camp?

R.C.: Well, I knew a lot of the Marines that was over in there -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: At the time, I worked over there.

N.S.: Did you?

R.C.: I worked there - well, practically all the time that he was in there.

N.S.: Oh. What was your work?

R.C.: Well, they just - they cut down trees and they built trails and -

N.S.: You mean the Marines brought mountain people in to work? I thought they did all the work.

R.C.: Well, they did the work, but some of the local work was done by - I don't know really, now, who did hire the people.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: But, all the lumber - all the lumber that was hauled in there was hauled on the old Army trucks, you know. I helped to haul all the lumber that they built over there.

N.S.: Oh, is that so?

R.C.: Helped these guys - these Marines had twelve big old Army trucks and a wrecker. And some of these guys, you know, - it was a narrow road from down at Criglersville where it turns off to go up Hoover's Camp down there. And they'd be in the night sometimes and they had these old lanterns that they - I believe that they called it the carbide light -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: And that's all the lights they had on the trucks.

N.S.: Oh.

R.C.: And I'm gonna tell you, you couldn't see much either.

N.S.: I bet not. So did you see Mr. Hoover or Mrs. Hoover?

R.C.: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I saw 'em, I reckon, several times.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Did you get to talk with them?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Were they pretty nice people?

R.C.: Yeah. Real nice.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And did you know the teachers over in the school?

R.C.: Yeah. I knew Miss Vest. She was the first teacher that taught there. She's the only one that I knew.

N.S.: Did she have a lot of things going on? Which Cave children went over there? She mentioned - I guess Jesse was too small then, wasn't he, to go way over? Or did he go over?

R.C.: I don't know whether Jesse did or not. Maybe Jesse was too small. But, Myrtle and my other brother up at Elkton, Reuben, they went -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: I know. I guess they was the only two that went.

N.S.: She said two.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: And that's why I asked. So it would be Myrtle and Reuben, your brother and sister.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: Uh-huh. And they came the furtherest. She must have had quite a school over there.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: She enjoyed that. And did sometimes the adults go over and -

R.C.: Oh yeah. Yeah. They would.

N.S.: and they had cooking and sewing and -

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: and things like that for the women.

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: That must have been very interesting. Oh, let me ask you - a way back you were talking about trapping. Did you ever see any deer up there back then?

R.C.: No. There wasn't no deer then.

N.S.: Uh-huh. What about bears? Any bears at all?

R.C.: No bears. I never did see a bear. Now, I've heard my grandfather talk about they was wolf and bear in there one time, way back yonder a hundred years ago or more -

N.S.: Right.

R.C.: but in my time, I never did see any deer or bear in there.

N.S.: And - but there were bobcats, right?

R.C.: Oh yeah. There were plenty of bobcats. There's plenty of bobcats up there yet.

N.S.: Sure is.

R.C.: They've stopped the sale on bobcats.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: My son called Mr. Robinson the other day and he sent him a list - oh, about that thick - or somebody did. He referred him to somebody else and then they sent him this - all this information about the bobcats. Why they thought they ought to be stopped. That they was gettin' scarce or something. They may be scarce someplaces, but they're not scarce up in this mountain because you can go up through there in the snow, and you can't track one for the other clear down to where we live, they come down. They come down there.

N.S.: What about cougars?

R.C.: No. I never saw a cougar.

N.S.: But, there were plenty of snakes. Lots of rattle snakes around.

R.C.: Plenty of snakes.

N.S.: Did people worry about snakes back then?

R.C.: No, I don't think so. I never did.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: I come mighty near gettin' bit with one one time. Almost bit right in the face with a rattle snake. You know, we used to hunt bee trees and get the honey out of 'em - the wild bees. The way we did it, we'd get a bee off a flower that was suckin' and we'd get a little honey and have a little honey and get him to come into that honey. And then there would more bees come. When he left, in a little bit, there'd be another one or two or three. The longer you left it there, the more would come.

N.S.: Right.

R.C.: And then we'd move it closer and keep watchin' them. And keep watchin' them. And I was going up over a cliff -

N.S.: I see.

R.C.: right back this side of where old Mr. John Weakley lived then, with a staff in my hand, with a bee under a can, holdin' it like that. And I was climbin' up this cliff. And I heered something make a little noise and I looked. And it was

a rattle snake with his tongue stuck out jest about that fer from my face. I just dropped everthing and rolled down that cliff.

N.S.: Pretty close. And he hadn't rattled at all.

R.C.: Never did rattle. Never did rattle. He just - and he never did try to bite me or anything. He just stayed there.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: But, I went back up there and killed him. It looked like I ought not to bothered him after he didn't bother me.

N.S.: That's interesting. Anything else particularly you remember? Any good stories about things that happened in there or people that lived in there?

R.C.: Well, nothing much that I know of. Only we - we used to have to walk a long ways after it got so that it wasn't no chestnuts. And the timber was about all gone. You couldn't peel no bark. I never did peel no bark to amount to anything. I know some of the older people peeled bark, you know. But I never did peel no bark, but very little. And me and Roy Woodward, that boy that I was tellin' you about that married my wife's sister. We used to walk from Dark Holler down into Meader's Holler above Criglersville - above Syrie -

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: We'd walk down there and work for old man Will Meaders and walk back that evenin'. We'd work ten hours. And we didn't mind it. We just walked about twenty miles a day and worked ten hours.

N.S.: That's unbelievable. You must have run or something.

R.C.: Did run part of the way. Most of the time I run just about - well all the way down - when it was downhill and a lot of times uphill. I was used to it then. I didn't care. I look at some of these boys now joggin' along the road, and I just wonder then how I stood it that way to run like I did. I been down there to preaching a ready in what they call Richard Holler. And there was nobody with me and it was five miles from there to Dark Holler -

N.S.: Yeah.

R.C.: and I would run all the way up that mountain at night.

N.S.: Oh my goodness.

R.C.: I was almost exhausted when I got home. But, I was sceered. I was sceered to go up there by myself so I'd just light out runnin'. Run so fast, you wouldn't run too fast but just keep runnin' all the time.

N.S.: How about that? All the way up the Gordonsville Turnpike there.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Did many people travel across that road while you were living there?

R.C.: Well, right many people. There's right many people crossed there with wagons and spring wagons and what they call surreys and so forth and so on, you know.

N.S.: Were they going over to trade their -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: produce?

R.C.: Yeah. They'd go over to Syria and over to Madison.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Did you ever put people up who -

R.C.: Oh yeah.

N.S.: were traveling?

R.C.: Yeah. My grandfather and grandmother used to put up a lot of people that come through there. We have, too. My father - I never did. Well, yes, I did, too. Because, - I mean some younger people would come in there and they'd stay fer - stay all night or stay a day or so. Some - some old people would come through there, and they'd be to Stanley or somethin' another. And they'd be tired when they got up there, and they stayed all night.

N.S.: Yeah. So, I guess that made Dark Hollow different from any of the other hollows -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: 'cause you'd always be up on all the news -

R.C.: Uh-huh.

N.S.: and know what was happening with so many people coming through.

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: And maybe the people were - having traveled around and not so many people - traveled around, maybe it was easier for them to settle outside the Park.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: Some people, I guess, had a hard time -

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: having to move out. People that lived in some of those hollows, you know, where nobody ever came -

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: or left.

R.C.: That's right.

N.S.: All kinds. I guess there were all kinds of people up in the mountains.

R.C.: Oh yeah.

N.S.: We used to - when some of the - you know, people would say oh, the mountain people are all such and such, but it seems to me all kinds of people and all levels of education -

R.C.: Yeah. There was a lot of people wrote a lot of stuff that wasn't right.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Have you ever heard of the "Hollow Folk"?

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: It didn't seem to me that was too accurate.

R.C.: It wasn't.

N.S.: Uh-huh.

R.C.: There wasn't half that was in that true.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Yeah. I think there were a lot of good people living up in the mountains.

R.C.: Yeah.

N.S.: You enjoyed pretty much living up there?

R.C.: Oh yeah. While I was there, I enjoyed it.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Anything else?

R.C.: No. I guess that's all that I can tell you.

N.S.: Uh-huh. Well, Mr. Cave, I can tell you, you know, I've listened to a lot of

these interviews and I've done several of them. This has been the most interesting one for me. It really has. You just remember so much. This is so interesting.

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