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## (SNP074) Loula Judd, interviewed by Nancy Smith

Loula B. Judd

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Interview with Mrs. Judd - Big Meadows

Part I

November 20, 1975  
Nancy Smith

I: Today is November 20, 1975, and I am conducting an interview in connection with the Oral History Program. I'm at Loula Judd's home today, which is in the Middletown area. Her maiden name was Breeden and Mrs. Judd was born in the Big Meadows area, just right below it. I'd like to ask her some questions.

You say you were born, was it just right below the area that we call Big Meadows?

MJ: Yes, just down the hill.

I: In 1903?

MJ: 1903.

I: Your parent's name?

MJ: Luther and Viola.

I: Luther and Viola Breeden?

MJ: That's right.

I: As far as you know, do you know how long your family had been living around there?

MJ: Well, my mother lived there all her life. She was born there. My father was born up near Elkton.

I: What about their parents? Were they born there?

MJ: Well, my father's parents was from over in Green County. My mother, of course, her parents were from Madison County.

I: So you have a pretty long history?

MJ: Oh yes.

I: There were eleven children?

MJ: Yes, eleven children.

I: How many brothers and sisters were there? I'll go ahead and ask you again. I didn't get it on tape before. I'll ask you the same thing again.

MJ: Well, let's see.

I: You can go ahead and tell me their names again.

MJ: Six boys. Five girls.

I: And you were the.....?

MJ: Oldest, Yes, the oldest.

I: When you were a little girl living in the Big Meadows area, were there quite a few other families there, or.....?

MJ: Oh yes, quite a few. There was never an empty house. They were always filled.

I: Do you remember about how many houses there were?

MJ: Oh yes I could tell you if I'd just take the time. Taking from where the Frank Weakley people lived up there, there was one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven. Eleven right in that area.

I: Quite a community.

MJ: Yes. It was all like that, all up in there. It was settled.

I: Most the mountains?

MJ: Most the mountains. Well not.....Some of the mountains coming this way that wasn't too many people. Course there were a lot of people lived down towards Skyland, all out in there. The Colvins and the Thomas's lived out there. And ...McDaniels lived over there.\* Oh I could go on and on.

I: At the time you were living in the Meadow, what was the land like there?

MJ: Well it was practically all cleared land. It was in pasture and farmland, because everybody, they farmed and raised their own food.

I: Didn't bring in things from outside?

MJ: No, nothing, only maybe go to the store once a month and get some flour and coffee and sugar. That was about it. And of course they used to use a lot of molasses. You get that at the store in a barrel then. You have to take your container along, and you got it. They pumped it out of the barrel into your container.

I: And you used it like for sugar?

MJ: No, no, they just ate it on bread. Syrup you know. Molasses it was called, still is. But of course they got kerosene. They had to have kerosene. Most of them, they all raised their own corn. They took their corn down to Kite's Mill, just down the mountain down there.

I: By Syria?

\*When talking to Mrs. Judd later, she said that the McDaniels lived down Rapidan Road a little ways.

MJ: Yes, just above Syria - Kite's Mill. It was Siram Kite had the mill there. Course he had a big family too. Belvin, he run the mill a long time after his father died. Course there's no mill there any more.

I: Was there, at Big Meadows, was there any kind of mill there?

MJ: No, nothing, only the stave mill was there. Course there was saw mills through the mountains at different places. But the stave mill was the only industry really, up there. That was there a long, long time.

I: Of those eleven houses or eleven families there, did quite a few people work in the stave mill?

MJ: No, they didn't too many work; just enough to run it. But most of the people up there, they worked a lot for the people that pastured cattle up there. You see it kept most of them busy keeping the land cleared.

I: Oh I see.

MJ: And looking after cattle. They did that a lot. And you take a piece of ground, say 50 or 100 acres the land, and you keep the bushes off of that and keep the fence up, why you've got all you can do.

I: About how many cattle were pastured up there?

MJ: Oh my, I wouldn't have any idea - thousands of them. The people around Luray and Stanley, down by Syria, they brought...The fields were full of cattle all the time, all the summers. Course they took them down in the fall to the...where they lived at. And kept them, sold some of them, then when spring came, they got the cattle in front of them and drove them up the mountain to the pasture again.

I: Do you remember the names of the people who worked in the stave mill, or was there a particular person who ran that most of the time?

MJ: No, I really don't know who run it, to tell you the truth, because... Just the men around there worked at it you know. The Weakleys used to work there I know, but I couldn't tell you really who run the mill.

I: Did they actually make the whole barrel there?

MJ: No, just the staves, the staves that made the barrel. You know a barrel is like this...you know how a barrel is. Well, it was those staves, they were jointed to bend them, so they were in a curve like that. And then they made the barrel. They were used for flour and sugar and apples and potatoes; whatever they shipped in them days it all went in barrels. They didn't use crates and baskets like we use now.

I: That's kind of neat. Did they, the fellow that worked there, were you making the barrels for yourselves?

- MJ: Oh no, they shipped - they sold them. They sold the staves to the barrel companies. They were put up in bundles. They were jointed and cut out; jointed rather, and then tied up in bundles, of so many in a bundle. And shipped out; they were hauled out on a wagon. With mules of course. No trucks. No trucks and automobiles. Yeah, just a mule team. My uncle, my oldest uncle, on my mother's side, he worked for Graves from the time he was old enough until he died. He died, he was about 100 when he died.\*
- I: Was Graves, uh down in the valley there you mean?
- MJ: Oh yes, Bob Graves, they have the Club down there. Well, they don't even know what they own, and I couldn't begin to tell you. I doubt if they have any idea of what they own.
- I: Do you know what kind of wood they used for the staves?
- MJ: Well you kind of got me bummed there. I used to know but I forgot. You know I can't remember as well as I used to, when it comes to things like that.
- I: I think you've got a good memory.
- MJ: But I really couldn't tell you. Of course I do know they used oak for whiskey barrels. They used oak for whiskey barrels; I know that. But I guess, maybe they used a softer wood for the other things. Because they didn't have to be as durable as the whiskey barrels. They had to be heavy - they were very heavy. I've seen lots of them. My uncle, the one I told you just died not too long ago?\*\*\* He was 100 when he died - he was 103 when he died. He used to run Tom Lillard's Still House down the Rapidan there, just a little ways.
- I: Oh really? Which is down what is now the Rapidan Road you mean?
- MJ: Yes, down the Rapidan Road.
- I: And they produced whiskey down there?
- MJ: Oh yes. That was before Prohibition. And of course when Prohibition went into effect, why they had to close up the Distillery. And, they couldn't make it any more. So, they hauled off a lot of it into the mountains and hid it.
- I: I heard that, making moonshine.....
- MJ: That wasn't moonshine. That was pure apple brandy we made. Yes indeed. Yes, I used to go down to my uncle's, and now he made it, but you'd never see him take a drink. If somebody came around, a good friend or something, he'd get out and sit down a bottle, a little bit of sugar and water, and made a toddy and set there and sip it. That's the way

\*Charlie Hurt

\*\*David Breeden

we drank it. And Effie and I, that girl I told you, his daughter, where we painted her dress you know? (Mrs. Judd had shown me a picture of Effie that they had painted.) I used to go over there sometimes and he would go out, he never would let us know where he got it, he never would, and he would go get a little bit in a glass and he'd say now "Babies", he always called us "babies" til we were grown almost, "here's a little toddy for you, but now don't take but one tablespoonful and put in some sugar and cream and drink it". He would get us some cream and we would put that in that cream, and was that ever good. Had the best taste ... with that cream, but he wouldn't never let us have it any other way. You don't put but one tablespoonful in...was really good, was pure apple brandy. Well, that didn't hurt you like this stuff today. Everybody kept brandy in their homes for medical purposes. You know, and if they wanted a drink they took it, but it'd sit there for months and months and they'd never touch it. Wasn't like it is now, everybody guzzling...Can't do anything unless they got a bottle.

I: The area that's all cleared now for Big Meadows, was that what it was like when you lived there?

MJ: Well no, it's nothing like it was then. It was beautiful then, and right down in the middle of that field there was a big spring. Where the water came from that made the spring for one of the houses down there. Now the spring from old man Frank Weakley's house was right beside the house, and I expect the water was that deep in that spring. Just clear as crystal, bubbling up you know. Oh it was lovely - best water. And it run out and it run right down the road, right down the road to the other house. Just as clear in the middle of the road as it could run.

I: So there was a road probably along the side of the Meadow?

MJ: Yes, yes there was a road. And now the road, well...just about where you turn in down there below...you know, where the chain is across the road. Well that is just almost to where the road was, well about a block from it. It went out farther down and it went on down to Thomas's, which was Dade and John Thomas's lived down there. That was the cemetery down there. They lived there.

I: You don't mean the Tanner Ridge side?

MJ: Yes, these lived on the Tanner Ridge side. That's coming back this way.

I: Where that little cemetery still is?

MJ: Yes. And you know that's a tremendous big cemetery, but you'd never know it. There's hundreds and hundreds of people buried down there. Hundreds of them.

I: More than what we can see...?

MJ: Oh my goodness, they're buried on top of each other.

I: I've been down there.....

MJ: Yes.

I: I noticed some of the headstones are...looks like the people made them themselves.

MJ: Yeah, they made stones. It's just in the last, well I'd say the last ten years...ten or twelve years that they've been putting factory stones in there. Course you can tell that by the looks of them.

I: Yeah, you can tell.

MJ: They have ...One time Ernest Thomas, that was one of the Thomas boys, he went out to the graveyard there one day and a ground hog had dug a den down into this grave. And there was the man or woman, whichever it was...the teeth, up out of the ground, was lying outside the ground and part of the cloth, the material the people had on. The groundhog had done it.

I: Let's see, did they use wooden boxes to bury them?

MJ: Back then they was. Back then they were buried in wooden coffins. Of course now it's different. But then it was nothing else but wooden caskets.

I: Did you all consider yourselves sort of a little town or was it just a community?

MJ: No, no just a community. Well the whole Blue Ridge Mountain was populated and of course, we just took it that way. It was no... Just a lot of people living here and there, hither and yon.

I: What did you call it there? You didn't call it Big Meadows?

MJ: No, huh uh. Well now if we were going, if we were talking about cattle in a certain part, we'd say they were out in the Big Meadows. Now the field that went toward Skyland, back out this way from the Visitors Center, then turned to go that way, that was the Glore Field, what they called the Glore Field.\*

I: That'd be across from Dark Hollow Falls?

MU: Yes, uh huh. That was going towards Skyland. And that was the Glore Field. That went out by Franklin Cliffs. And there was a house right there, at Franklins Cliffs, but not right close but back just where the old road was. But they used to have a garden almost come right out there to those cliffs and momma's aunt and uncle lived there.\*\*

\*The Glores were people who lived down in the valley and pastured their cattle on the mountain.

\*\*Ben Broyles and Mary Anne Broyles



And momma used to stay out there with them some, when she was a little girl.

I: Had a lot of relatives there.....Did you say there was an area between Dark Hollow Falls and Skyland that was called Big Meadows?

MJ: Yes...well no. You're getting mixed up there. You went that way and then you'd go through the old Glore Field going to Skyland, but down where you'd go down this road and go out through these fields. That was the Big Meadows.

I: Would that be on the east side away from the Glore Field?

MJ: Yes...now wait, would it be east? I don't know. I'm turned around when it comes to east and west up there, right now.

I: Going down Dark Hollow Falls way?

MJ: No, that would be back this way; it would be west I guess. You know the way it goes down, where you go out to Milams Gap? Well it would be to the right of that, out in there was the Big Meadows.

I: So let's see, there was an area called Glore Field. Where Milam Gap was, was there a name for that?

MJ: Well that come up there to Big Meadows. That just came up to the Big Meadows area, all in there. That was owned by...well it wasn't owned by anybody. They pastured it, the men from down there, but it didn't belong to anybody. In fact it belonged to the Government, the land did. Course there was a lot of people up there that had paid taxes on the land and of course when they took it over, they had paid up the taxes so it belonged to them so the Government paid them for the land. Which was where a lot of people made the mistake by not paying taxes on the land up there, if they had of, they'd of collected.

I: The people that didn't pay taxes, did they receive anything then?

MJ: No, huh uh.

I: The people, did most of you have your own garden?

MJ: Oh yes. Everybody. Not only garden, but they had fields, fields. Everybody raised their own, everything that they needed for the winter.

I: What would be your main crops or most of the things you raised?

MJ: Well just all kinds of vegetables. Corn, we always raised a lot of corn because we all had hogs and we had a cow. Most everybody had cows and you had to feed them, so we had to raise to feed them.

I: What did you raise besides corn? Like which vegetables?

MJ: Well we raised beans by the bushels and bushels. Potatoes, cabbage, turnips, and the biggest turnips and cabbage I've ever seen growed on that mountain. Oh my, and good, they were delicious...so sweet and brittle. And potatoes was so different up there. They didn't taste at all like potatoes does you get today.

I: I wonder what the difference was.

MJ: Well it was just the mountain land. They grew in rich ground, and I noticed in some of those books up there (at Byrd Visitor Center) where they spoke of the ground being depleted and it wouldn't...worn out. I never seen a piece of ground worn out up there. They could plant ground over and over and over, for years and years and years, and it always produced just the same every year. But then they decided they'd clear up a place, another field somewhere, they'd clear up another one. When they cut down the trees and bushes, stuff off a piece of land, they pulled it out and made a fence with it. They just drug all that stuff up and fenced it in with that.

I: Did most of you have fences around your own...?

MJ: Well yes, you had to have fence on account of the cattle, you see. Course they had to have fences to keep the cattle out.

I: Was there a lot of chestnut trees?

MJ: Yes, that was one of the main crops up there was chestnuts, at that time. And they'd start gathering chestnuts as soon as ever they would start opening, the burrs, the burrs would start opening on the trees. And they'd start gathering it. Beat the hogs there. Everybody's hog made a beeline for those chestnut trees. They knew where every one was. But my, up there you could, you could go and, ...they were just thick, the chestnut trees were. There was no way to even tell, wouldn't be any way to explain how they were. They were just thick up there, huge chestnuts. Well you can still see some of the old ones up in there yet. The big logs. After the blight got into the chestnuts, that killed them out. It was a shame. And they were good. The chestnuts were so sweet and good up there. They sold for so much a bushel. And you'd gather those chestnuts and take them across, down to Syria or across to Kiblinger's, or wherever over there, the nearest stores. And sell them. And that way they made a lot of money for to get clothes and stuff. And of course when huckleberries started to get ripe.....Now there's no huckleberries to amount to anything at all. You hardly ever find a huckleberry. But then the mountains were full of huckleberries. The fields and everywhere was full of huckleberries. And you could go out and pick, my land, you could pick a bushel of huckleberries in no time. And that brought a lot of money in too.

I: Those aren't the same as blueberries are they?

MJ: No, no. These are much better than blueberries. Much better.

They've got a lot better flavor than blueberries. Blueberries just sweet, they don't have much flavor to them.

I: Did you pick other berries too?

MJ: Oh yes. They never sold any. Just sold the huckleberries. Of course people always put up all they wanted. Put up all kinds of berries. There was all kinds of berries and fruits up in there you could ever think of. But there's nothing up in there anymore. Strawberries sometime, if you'd strike a field where they hadn't turned the cattle in, early in the spring, when the strawberries were ripe, the strawberries were just great big strawberries, like tame ones almost. They were so delicious. Lot better than the tame ones.

I: When you all were kids, was there any particular games you all used to play?

MJ: Oh well we played...well, just kid's games. Hide and Seek, and Drop the Handkerchief, and uh, wait a minute, Tag and all that stuff. A lot of games. I've even forgot them. But just things like that.

I: Did the families right where you lived, did you very often get together with say families in Dark Hollow or other families, or did you kind of...?

MJ: Well we never was...the Caves usually just sort of stayed to themselves down in there, down in Dark Hollow. Of course now Tom Cave he was a preacher. And sometimes he would come over to John Weakley's and preach up there on Sunday night or some night in the week maybe. Of course his, Fannie Weakley, John Weakley's wife, was his sister. And he would come over there and preach and people would go over. And then down at Hawkin's Schoolhouse, right down below the Hoover Camp, my cousin used to preach down there. And his name was Seal, Grover Seal. And we used to go down there to the preaching, Sunday. On horseback or walk, whichever we wanted to. I always liked to walk.

I: You were telling me that you remember when you were 3 years old, that you walked...?

MJ: I sure did. Right down there below, you know where I told you I was born, my grandmother's, we started from my grandmother's, from there to Skyland.

I: That's a pretty long ways to walk.

MJ: Of course now the road didn't curve like the Skyline Drive does. It went through the old Glore Field out there. Straight through the field. But that was a long, long ways. I'll never forget the first time I ever went out there with my mother. We went on the Cresent Rock. It was called the Sour Rock then. Yes the Sour Rock.

You know why they called it that? Well there was a girl that committed suicide there. She jumped off of that. The name was Sours. It was always called that, after that. The boy she was going with, I think, jilted her or something, any way married another girl. And she just went off there and jumped off. And it was always called the Sour Rock. It was never called the Crescent Rock until.....

I: Does her family live up there? (Did her family live up there?)

MJ: I guess so. There was a lot of Sours lived up there.

I: Would you guess, say between Big Meadows, and there were Caves that lived in Dark Hollow, what were some of the other communities between there and Skyland?

MJ: Well there was houses out through there. There was Cubba-, now wait a minute, Parks. That's one name I didn't get on here (Mrs. Judd had written out a list of names for me), I thought of it last night after I laid it down. Parks lived out there. There was two families of Parks and then there was Corbins, lived out through there. You see a lot about Corbins in those books you know. But a lot of that is exaggerated. Oh yes. And...then there was Jenkins, and Corbins, Parks.....Different families. \_\_\_\_\_ lived out through there. Houses all the way out through there.

I: Was there a time when everybody would get together?

MJ: Well sometimes...If somebody built a house or barn or whatever, everybody come in and helped to do it. Everybody helped each other. That's the way they did. And then, of course then sometimes they would have a quilting party. The men would be out say clearing land and they would be making fence. To fence in that field for a crop that year. They would be doing that while the ladies of the house were all quilting. Of course then they'd have the dinner ready. Then that night sometimes just depending who it was, some of them would move out of one room and have a dance. Was a lot of musicians up in there. Oh yes. The very best. That's right. I mean they could play. Guitars, violins and everything.

I: What all instruments? Guitars, violins and...?

MJ: Violins and banjos. My mother was an expert banjo player. Yes she was. She could make a banjo talk.

I: Do you remember some of the names of the songs and stuff that they played then?

MJ: Well...it's been a long time since I went over that. I wouldn't know. I could tell you some...I don't know much about what they played. But I know they were good musicians. My mother's people were musicians.

I: Did your mother make her own banjo or did somebody make it for her?

MJ: Oh they bought it. Yes she had a good banjo - a nice one.

I: Did she like mostly playing for other people or did she play at home a lot?

MJ: Well she played at home a lot. Yes she'd sit down and sing and play with the kids. And then she'd play for dances. When they had a dance in somebody's home why she'd play for that.

I: Yeah if you could think of any names, I'd be curious, if you could think of some of the songs and stuff.

MJ: Well if I could think of them now but...There was a lot of the old songs I've really forgot.

I: What sort of dancing was it?

MJ: Just square dancing. There was no round dancing then. Just old square dancing - real fun. I love to dance. Always did. That was my sport. I'd dance all night.

I: How often would people usually go to town?

MJ: Well just whenever we were getting short - low on different things. We'd go to the store and get some flour and sugar and coffee and kerosene. That was about all we bought. Then if you'd need to get a piece of material for a dress or something or whatever you'd have to have, that was it. We raised everything else. We canned and dried. We dried a lot of our food. We dried our corn, we dried our beans, that is the shell beans and the green beans. We ~~dried~~ dried them, we didn't can the green beans at all. And they were, oh so much better than the canned ones. I have some out here now. I dried mine this year.

I: I guess I've never had them.

31.22  
MJ: You didn't? Well maybe you'll get some sometime. If you come down sometime I'll cook a mess. Yeah I love them. We dried apples. Peaches. We dried apples by the tons and sold them.

I: Were there a lot of apples on the mountain?

MJ: Oh my yes. The best apples that ever grew. Used to be an orchard right below my grandmothers. It belonged to William Hurt.★ This old man right here. The old home place where Uncle Wes lived and when he died, he gave him that place. And instead of him paying the taxes and keeping the taxes up on it, he didn't do it. So when the Government took over they just...

I: Let's see and their place was above Camp Hoover and it was below ..?

MJ: Over on this side, yeah. Instead of going down this side to the Hoover Camp, you just went straight on. You know where the road

★ I believe William Hurt was Mrs. Judd's great-grandfather. Uncle Wes was his grandson. Wes Hurt was Mrs. Judd's mother's brother (one of them).

goes around there, down through, instead of going on down there to Hoover Camp you went straight down. Course old Ben's Field, grandma lived there.

I: Ben's Field. Ben's Field is where the road goes through that area today.

MJ: Yeah, uh huh. Yeah it goes right above it. Just a little bit, where the rise starts there. It was level on there. Where Ben's Field was. You came up out of the old Broyle's place too, where the Marine Camp used to be and where Hoover had the, you know, he was down there. That was two ways you got up there. You could come up Uncle Wes's to the Ben's Field or you could come up through the Broyle's field. There was a gate there.

I: The Broyle's field was by the Marine Camp?

MJ: Yeah, that's where it was at. Was in the Broyle's field. And that's where the Jenkin's used to live. Church Jenkins and his wife. Now they're extremely old people, like these here. I can remember them all right. But they were old enough to die when I can remember. Because they didn't live long. I can remember when they died. Ed Jenkins was their son. They only had one child. And he had two sons. I was trying my best to think of one the other night. One's name was Mahlon and the other one, I think, was Eddie, named after his Dad. But I know the one was Mahlon and Eddie. Yeah I think that's what their names are.

I: Did you all ever go down to Camp Hoover?

MJ: Oh yes. Yeah we lived right...well almost in the field. The fence went up by our place.

I: Le's see, and your great grandmother, Betsy Hurt, she lived...?

MJ: She lived over...after you go down from Ben's Field down where Grandma lives. She went down the road by Grandma's down, well just a jump or so.

I: And what was it you were saying about one of your relatives trying to find that house?

MJ: My cousin that lives at Syria. He lives at Syria now. He was my mother's nephew. Her sister's son.\*

I: I was going to put on tape about...he didn't find it, but he did find a rose bush?

MJ: Yes he found...found a rambling rose that Grandma had planted there and that's how he found the place where the house was. But he said there's nothing there, just anything you could ever know there was ever a house there. There was two houses there. The old house, and then they bought the new house.

\*Bealie Hurt



I: Did you all raise much flowers, the ones that were up at what is Big Meadows now? Did they have flowers in their yards too?

MJ: Oh my yes. Everybody. I wish you could have seen the flowers the people had. Grandma had flowers I never saw any like. There used to be a vine that grew right by the side of her house, of the old house and she called it the "Martha Washington Rose". It was lavender and it was, oh about that big around, I would say. And it was double, just as double as it could be. And it was just a dainty little vine, a dainty little vine and it just crept all over those rocks. It was so pretty. Oh it was beautiful. I never saw any like it, before or after. So that's in the past.

I: You say your mother worked some at Skyland? Did she know Mr. Pollock?

MJ: Oh yes indeed she did. Any my...Emmet Weakley now, that was Frank Weakley's son, that was one of Frank Weakley's sons. Now Emmet Weakley married my mother's sister, oldest sister, Ardenia, and they lived at Skyland and he worked for Pollock for years up there. He was caretaker out there. He would take care of things when they were away from there in the winter time. He worked there.

I: What do you think most of the people thought of Pollock?

MJ: Well I think a lot of them thought a lot of him because he helped, he did help them. He gave a lot of people work but, of course he got them for as cheap as he could get them. He paid them off with anything he could you know. And...well, anybody knew, he was crooked, he was as crooked as a...Yes he was. But he was well thought of by an awful lot of people. And he did...he was good to a lot of people. But then he was...if he wanted to be he could be really dirty. He could be plenty crooked if he wanted to be. Was a nice looking man.

I: Yeah, looks like he was by the pictures.

MJ: Well he came up there when he was fourteen years old. Nobody ever knew where he came from or nothing about it. Didn't know...never heard of him. He just came up in there and started out and that's where he ended up to be. And he...at that time he didn't have even, I guess he didn't have a dollar in his pocket when he come up there. What he made he made right there on that mountain. And he got started and of course then he had tourists come up there and that's where he really got on his feet you know. And then he just went from little to much is the saying. And kept on until he died, practically a millionaire, probably was.

I: Let's see, at that time now, the road, the Skyline Drive today as going to Skyland is about the same road would you say or pretty different?

MJ: No, it's a lot of difference in the road. Yes it's a lot of difference. The road went way out to the right of the Skyline Drive. Way out in the fields, through the fields. And the water used to run in that road, from springs out through there you know. And oh just as clear as crystal and I'd walk out there, and we'd go out there and walk in that water.

I just loved to walk along there in the summer time. It was so clear. You could cool your feet off, because I was bare footed. And then I knocked this end off my toe on a rock. And then step in the water and did that ever hurt! It burn and hurt.

I: Did most of the families, you and the Weakleys and some of the others there...Did I ask you the names of the other families?

MJ: No.

I: There was a Frank Weakley.....

MJ: Frank Weakley, then he had two sons\*\*which was June and Acrey Weakley and they both lived up there for a long, long time and finally, of course, like everybody else they had to leave the mountain. But then he had four daughters too, and two of them, two or three of them, I forgot which it was, two or three of them died when the flue epidemic was in 1918. (These girls were living and working in Washington, D.C. at the time. They were not on the mountain.) And she...his youngest daughter, married Kern Weakley, John Weakley's son. When they got the news that their two girls in Washington had died with the flu Ruth said "Why I'll be next". She was living up there then. She was living in that house I told you was close to them. Her and Kern was living there then. And she said "I'll be next". And she did. She died in three days. Three days from that she was dead and buried.

I: Did the flue hit quite a few families there at Big Meadows?

MJ: Oh my yes. Well no. Really and truly I think she was the only one up there that died from it. I had it and my brother Clifford had it. I don't know but for days I didn't know anything. Yes, just a lost time.

I: Did you have much problems with illnesses up there?

MJ: No, huh uh. No indeed. But when I had the flu I couldn't eat anything. So one day I just, seem to me I can remember just looking around and I thought "Well gee, where have I been?" Or something like that you know. And I asked Mum for tomatoes, in the winter time. I asked her for some canned tomatoes. And she went and opened a can of tomatoes. She said she just thought "Well I was going to die anyway" and she'd give me what I wanted. So she went and she got a quart of tomatoes and opened them and set down by the side of the bed and I ate every bit of that tomatoes. That was the best thing that I ever tasted in my life. It just hit the spot you know; it was all I wanted. And I had no more than got it all down before it all came back up - every bit of those tomatoes. And from that on I got alright. Now I guess I needed that. That was what I needed. But I began just right then to get alright. And then my brother, he got it, in the night. It just took that all of a sudden. He started to cry a way in the night, and Mum got up. He was the baby then. She got up. He couldn't get his breath. And she did everything she could think of. Vic's Salve and all kind of liniments and everything

\*\*It is my understanding that Emmet Weakley("Uncle Emmet") was also one of Frank Weakley's sons. He married Ardenia, Mrs. Judd's mother's sister.



and she greased him and wrapped him up real warm and walked the floor with him the rest of the night. For a couple of days he was just as good as dead. But we both made it.

I: Did you have any home remedies or did you ever have...?

MJ: Oh yes we had home remedies. Yes indeed. We used a lot of home remedies.

I: Did you ever use plants and stuff?

MJ: Yes, uh huh sure. We used a lot of home remedies. I still do. They're the best kind.

I: Was there any that used the things growing up there?

MJ: We used to use chestnut leaves, and blackberry roots, and ...lots of different herbs. Right now I can't...Lot of the mints, horsemint, bergamot, and a lot of...tansey and pippsissewe, that was for the kidneys, and I could go on and on and on. I can show them to you up there. Lot of them I can't remember right now. <sup>Sore</sup>Hourhound that was...My great grandmother used to make candy out of that for colds, sore throats and cough. She would take that and honey and boil it down til it would...pour it out on a plate and crack it. Take the pieces of it.

I: That's for a cold?

MJ: Uh huh. I mean it really worked too. Really did. But there's different things. I can tell you one remedy that Joe Cave, old man over at Piney Grove (Pine Grove is a community in the valley, west of Black Rock and Big Meadows Lodge) told us one time. There was some people up at Skyland and they were out on a hike and they went way back where they got lost. They went over the wrong ridge and they got lost. So in the night, from their home, he heard them holler for help. And he went out, he answered them. And they hollered for him to get a doctor. One of the women was very ill. So he told them to wave a light. So he could see them and he'd come to them. And he took his lantern and he took...He asked them what was wrong and she said she had indigestion. She was just about dead. They had eat a bunch of chestnuts was what they had done. She'd eat too many chestnuts and it had give her indigestion. So he took this board - a chestnut board - he kept with that. And he took that with him, and his lantern, and he went up into the mountain. And he just made a fire and he laid this board over the fire to get it real hot. He told her to sit down on it - to sit on it. And she sit down on that board and as soon as it was cool a little bit, he'd heat it again and she'd sit on it. And it wasn't no more until her indigestion was gone. Yes indeed. These things are good to know. They really are. Yes, it works. So he cured her indigestion and they get no Doc. She was fine. It wasn't long until she was on her way home.

I: You say that...

MJ: Different kinds of herbs for different kinds of ailments. Course I still study that. I get an organic magazine. I have an organic book there. And I use that stuff. I don't take drugs.

I: Well a lot of medicines come from that anyway.

MJ: I tell you I'm allergic to about everything you could take in drugs anyway. And I don't take them.

I: You say that you yourself were delivered by your great-grandmother?

MJ: Yes, I was delivered by my great-grandmother. The one I showed you.

I: She was a pure blood Indian?

MJ: Yes uh huh.

I: Do you know how your great-grandfather met her or anything like that?

MJ: No, no that I don't know. I never heard. I wish I did. I'd just love to. There's no way to find out though. The others are even all gone. Be no way to find out.

I: Have you ever heard any stories about her or anything like that?

MJ: No, no. She was a great old lady. She had the nerve of a rattlesnake. If she said move she meant move. Nothing would ever scare her, tell you that. She went down to Syria one time, to the store. Bunch of men was there on the porch and a barrel of molasses had just come in, that morning.

RAN OUT OF SIDE 1, ON MY TAPE. DECIDE TO FINISH THE INTERVIEW AT ANOTHER DATE.