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(SNP079) Zada Lam interviewed by Dorothy Noble Smith, transcribed by Sharon G. Marston

Zada Lam

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ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
SHENANDOAH NATIONAL PARK

NARRATOR: Mrs. Zeda Heney Lam
INTERVIEWER: Mrs. Dorothy Smith
DATE: August 3, 1978
PLACE: Swift Run Gap

TRANSCRIBED BY:

Sharon Marston

COMPLETED DATE:

February 19, 1980

D. S.: We are interviewing Mrs. Lam who lives just west of Swift Run Gap. What was your maiden name?

Z.L.: ^A Heney

D.S.: ^{HANNEY} Heney. H E N E Y?

Z.L.: That's right.

D.S.: Where did you live when you were growing up?

Z.L.: At the top here. At the entrance of the Skyline Drive.

D.S.: Okey. Who was your nearest neighbor? Can you recall?

Z.L.: Well, uh, my uncle Sammy was the nearest. But there were so many ^{of} the same distance.

D.S.: Yea. Okey. About how far away were the homes?

Z.L.: Bout a quarter of a mile.

D.S.: That seems to be about general the way they were. Now you say your Uncle lived there. Who else were your near neighbors?

Z.L.: The Deans, The Shifflets, The Beasleys, Lams, McDaniels, ^{COLLIERS} Knightens, Smiths.

D.S.: Okey. Now, what size family did most of them have?

Z.L.: Well most everybody had from around five to seven children.

D.S.: Five to seven children..uh..

Z.L./: Uhhum. Five in my family.

D.S.: Five in your family. Now your father, what did he do to support you all. Did he use the trees?

Z.L.: Yea, they peeled bark...in the earlier days..peeled bark and hauled extracts to the tannery in Elkton. And they tended crops. And they got uh money out of them.

D.S.: Uhhum. Now, how would they haul the things into Elkton?

Z.L.?: In spring wagons.

D.S.: In spring wagon.

Z.L.: Now who is going to know what a spring wagon is?

D.S.: Oh, we all know what a spring wagon is. Did they use horses and mules or just horses?

Z.L.: Both..horses and mules.

D.S.: Both. Uh, how many did your father have?

Z.L.: He had four horses and two mules...most of the time..because a lot of the time for the wagon they'd hook up four horses. That's the way we went to lawn party..rode on hay..

D.S.: What was the lawn party?

Z.L.: Well, they had the lawn party in town...which was seven miles away. We'd look forward to that..to going on Saturday night to the lawn party.

D.S.: And what would go on at the lawn party?

Z.L.: Oh, we'd make things go on. We'd buy a cone of ice cream for a nickle..

D.S.: Yea..oh, good ole days.

Z.L.: Two scoops..and that's what we had to look forward to..And at the lawn party..the local people would sing. They'd sing hymns...A lot of it was gospel singing.

D.S.: Yea. Was there any musical accompaniment..like with banjo and fiddles..?

Z.L.: Yea, they had banjos, and fiddles, and guitars. Violins. They knew how to play.

D.S.: Uh. I know they knew how to play. Do you know if any of those banjos were made from the skin of a possum?

Z.L.: I don't know about the skins of a possum...but they made the strings from cat guts.

D.S.: They really did. They really did.

Z.L.: Cat interals.

D.S.: Yea, uhuh. You say your father had a large garden. What did he raise?

Z.L.: Everything that you could mention, ~~that you could raise~~..we raised there. Anything that comes up in a garden..we raised.

D.S.: How did you keep the skunks and coons and things like that out..?

Z.L.: Well, the dogs kept the skunks away.

D.S.: Yea. You had a lot of dogs. Most people did.

Z.L.: Yea. Because they done a lot of hunting.

D.S.: Yea, that's right. What would they hunt?

Z.L.: Well, they had fox hounds, and they hunted foxes..which ~~they~~ ^{was} they are a sport mostly..

D.S.: Did they use the skins..the pelts for anything..?

Z.L.: Not at that time, I don't think they did. Then they had the squirrel dogs..they hunted squirrel and foxes. Coons. Had regular coon dogs you know.

D.S.: Yea. Sure. When your father took the ~~wh~~ produce into town.. there were quite ~~a~~ different ways that the people in the park or on park land..got money. Some of them got credit in the stores and some of them got cash. Which did your father get? If he took like a dozen eggs in did they give him money for it or did they give him credit at the store?

Z.L.: Well they usually got flour and ~~wh~~, which you could not raise wheat in the mountains you see..so he usually got a barrel of flour to last you in the winter. He would buy it by the barrel And sugar, and karesene

D.S.: So in other words, it was sort of like a trade?

Z.L.: Yea, cause you raised everything else. You didn't have to have very much.

D.S.: Yea. Did you have a mill anywhere near that you would take your corn to to *be ground*.

Z.L.: Yea, right at the foot of the mountain.

D.S.: Right at the foot.

Z.L.: We shelled corn at night, then put it in a bag threw it across the horse and carried it down to the mill, had it ground, best meal you ever tasted. Made the best cornbread. And the best mush. Who would know about mush now?

D.S.: How did you make mush?

Z.L.: Well we'd put a kettle on..put water in to boil..and uh, then put salt in it..stir the mush in..put some butter and let it cook til it was thick. And then eat it with milk. Delicious!
Anyone that hasn't tasted that has missed something good.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Now, when they took the corn to the miller did they pay the miller, or did the miller take *10%*

Z.L.: Takes outso much corn.

D.S.: Ten percent..around ten percent. Yea. You know that was a very good way of working it wasn't it.

Z.L.: It sure was.

D.S.: Right. Were you around when the chestnuts were out?

Z.L.: Yes mam.

D.S.: What was the reaction when the chestnut blight came?

Z.L.: Well, we really missed the chestnuts, because we usta take the chestnuts to buy our school books. And then we'd save them for

wintertime too.

D.S.: Right. And didn't a lot of people feed chestnuts to the hogs?

Z.L.: Yea. We'd have to get up early to get to the tree before the hogs got under the tree. He likes that chestnut tree.

D.S.: So you had about four horses, you raised pigs, and chickens. Any sheep?

Z.L.: Yea. Sheep, pigs, chickens, cows, horses, We raised them all.

D.S.: How many cows did you have?

Z.L.: Five. Most of the time.

D.S.: Five! Then you must have had excess butter that you could trade too, didn't you?

Z.L.: We didn't trade butter. We gave it away. We gave it to our neighbors...in case...we had butter and our neighbors didn't have it...we'd carry the butter and give it to them. ^{Grand} had a little tiny bucket we'd put a print of butter down in and then finish filling it with milk and carry it to your neighbors. When they didn't have any. People divided everything that they had with their neighbors ^{those} that wasn't no selling. No welfare. Nobody lived on welfare. Didn't ask for anything.

D.S.: No. They were a very independent people.

Z.L.: Very independent..they sure were.

D.S.: Yes. and when there was sickness everybody went and helped didn't they?

Z.L.: They sure did. Men sawed up the wood and put it on the porch for the sick man...the women carried their food..done all the work for the people. They didn't have to hire anything done. People worked for one another. Everybody lived neighborly.

Yes

D.S.: You mentioned school. Where was your nearest school?

Z.L.: Sunny Side.

D.S.: Sunny Side? *(showed picture)*
(a brief pause) Oh! Now isn't.. now that was
a one room school house?

Z.L.: Yes mam. We finished the seventh grade there.

D.S.: Okey, now..this Sunny Side was how far away from your home.

Z.L.: Oh, it was around two miles.

D.S.: And you walked it?

Z.L.: Yes mam. We walked it and enjoyed it. Sometimes my father
would take us all on the slide when it was a deep snow. All
the kids would come and gather..he'd get the slide out and
all the kids would get on the slide. And slide us to school.

D.S.: Ah! So then you went regardless of the weather didn't you?

Z.L.: Yes. The weather didn't bother us.

D.S.: Was this a seven month..uh..out of every year?

Z.L.: Seven months.

D.S.: What did they teach in this school. The reason I'm asking this
is that Carl Shifflett..maybe you know him.

Z.L.: Lives over this way?

D.S.: Uhhum. He said that they mainly emphasized arithmetic.

Z.L.: They did.

D.S.: Uhhuh. He said because this was so necessary for all the young
people to know it well. And so they did emphasize arithmetic.

Z.L.: They sure did.

D.S.: More than they do now a days. And I bet you all learned how
to really read and write too didn't you?

Z.L.: Yea.

D.S.: Which is more than can be said now a days. Yea.

Z.L.: We had a chart then. You started on a chart .

D.S.: A Chart?

Z.L.: Yea, now you know what a chart is?

D.S.: Yea. What is a chart?

Z.L.: Well, it's a great big uh...leaves

D.S.: Want me to shut this off. Yes. What she was describing was sort of like a scroll, that hung from almost the ceiling and the one sheet would have little ini...the letters; and then the next sheet would have the word cat with a picture cat of a cat underneath.

Z.L.: And a pig, and a dog and a..any kind of animal so you could learn how to spell its name.

D.S.: Right. Yea. You know I heard a cute one the other day. This man said that his grandfather said about him. Said yea he has learned how to write real well, but he can't read what he has written. But this one room schoolhouse. Do you recall the name of the teacher? Or did you have several?

Z.L.: We usually had anew one every year.

D.S.: A new one every year. Yea.

Z.L.: And you wanna know why?

D.S.: No. Why?

Z.L.: Well it was..well they had to walk to school too.

They walked..they boarded in our home. But they walked to the school. Some teachers taught three years.

D.S.: But they boarded in your home?

Z.L.: Yea, in my home and my uncles' home. See they had another school house on the other side...in Green County. I lived in

Rockingham and my uncle lived in Green County...which was just.. oh just a few steps across there, to their house. They were our closest neighbors you know. And they boarded a teacher for Green County and we boarded the one for Rockingham.

D.S.: Did you get much money from the teacher for the boarding?

Z.L.: Nah. We didn't ask much.

D.S.: Um..

Z.L.: I really don't remember. But it was very little. But we just enjoyed having them in our home. Because some we just ^{felt} got so close to and they did us too. Kinda like ~~like~~ they were at home in our home. And they wasn't hard to please. What we cooked they ate and liked it.

D.S.: Uhhum. Speaking of cooking. What was a typical meal. Now you had, I imagine, three big meals a day.

Z.L.: Yea. Three cooked meals everyday.

D.S.: So breakfast would be..roughly what?

Z.L.: Well, hot biscuits every morning. Buckwheat cakes sometimes. And red eye gravy most of the time. That was made out of ham.. the red eye gravy was..but lot of time we made the gravy out of side meat, too. Which we thought was awfully good.

D.S.: Sure. It was good.

Z.L.: Then we ate it with the hot biscuits and we had fried apples, and then we had..this was for breakfast..fried apples, cottage cheese, we ate that with applebutter on hot biscuits. And sometimes we had eggs, but not very often because we had to save the eggs to buy sugar and coffee, kerosene. Which was coal oil then. Now it's kerosene. And then on Sunday's we always had eggs for

breakfast.

D.S.: Oh so you had something to eat that was a treat.

Yes.

Z.L.: Eggs and ham. Country ham. That was delicious.

D.S.: Did you do your own curing of the hams.

Z.L.: Yes mam. We salted hams then.

D.S.: Yea. Did you eat any beef?

Z.L.: Well when we butchered a beef we did; but, we didn't buy beef.

Not very much.

D.S.: So you raised cattle too.

Z.L.: Yea. For the beef we wanted to kill. Put them out in the high grass, and then we'd feed them grain when we got them ready to kill.

D.S.: Yea. How many of those did you have usually?

Z.L.:

(Temporary pause in tape and when it continues - *another picture*)

D.S.: Oh, that was a chestnut. Oh boy.

Z.L.: But you can't see it very well.

D.S.: So you lived in a nice big two story house...

Z.L.: Had a porch on the back..A lower one and an upper one.

D.S.: Yea. Gosh. And your father built that himself?

Z.L.: Well with the neighbors help.

D.S.: See that's it. Everybody did help.

Z.L.: You would help one another.

D.S.: Then how did he get the wood for that. Did he cut down the trees and take it to the saw mill.

Z.L.: Cut the tree and took it to the saw mill. Sawed the lumber.

Sawed the window frames, and everything and then we had a ^{STAVE} ~~Stave~~
mill down below there that *made staves*.
Now here is the *stave mill*. And the men that worked on it.
That's right below our house,

D.S.: That was right below your house.

Z.L.: Uhhum.

D.S.: You..oh you have. I was going to say what you should do is
right the names of them. But you have. Very good.

Z.L.: That gave people jobs. One was ^{uncle} Pete Beasley. He was the main
joiner. *Take the staves* like this you know and you would get
the strips. Let me show you something. That's Jeff.

D.S.: Who's that?

Z.L.: That's our .

D.S.: You say your father had a store.

Z.L.: Where was the store.

Z.L.: Located right behind the ranger station now. Right behind it.

D.S.: What did he sell?

Z.L.: Well, everything in the line of groceries.

D.S.: Well, then why would he take things down to another store.

Z.L.: That was before he had the store. See we started from the
beginning.

D.S.: Alright. So then he started *his own stave*

Z.L.: Said okey we gonna have a store.

D.S.: Okey so he had his own store

Z.L.: That's right.

D.S.: And did he sell to the mountain people?

Z.L.: Yes. All the mountain people dealt with him.

D.S.: Alright, then if they brought produce in..now like eggs and
so on..what did he do with them?

Z.L.: Well a lot of times they came there and picked them up. Some-
one come by in a wagon or some kind of vehicle and picked them
up.

D.S.: Yea.

Z.L.: And if they didn't then he took them to Pritchard's at Elkton.
He was a produce man.

D.S.: Okey. Yea. Uhhum.

Z.L.: Very few there now.

D.S.: I know it. How about beans? Did people dry their beans?

Z.L.: Yes mam. Just like I'm doing now.

D.S.: How would they do it. Would they string them up or what?

Z.L.: A lot of people strung them and a lot of people put them out on
big sheets and put them up on the buildings to dry.

D.S.: Same as they did apples?

Z.L.: Yea. Then they'd have snitz and dumplings during the winter.
Nothing no better. Nothing no better than dried beans. I have
five trays drying right now. I haven't got them out yet.

D.S.: Then they would keep all winter long, wouldn't they?

Z.L.: Yea, you'd put them in a clean bag..you dried them until they'd
rattle and you'd put them in a clean bag and tied them up and
hung them up. You didn't leave them lay down;you hung them.

D.S.: Oh, where would you hang them. Like in...

Z.L.: In the out building. So that..anyplace that was dry.

D.S.: In the spring..you had a springhouse didn't you?

Z.L.: Yes mam.

D.S.: And in that you kept your milk, butter, cottage cheese, anything else. Meat. Did you ever keep meat in there.

Z.L.: Yea. We didn't have a refrigerator. So a lot of time if we cooked meat and we had some left over, we'd carry it to the springhouse. Put it in a jar and put lids over it. Like plates or something. ~~Did you ever hear of canning meat.~~

D.S.: Did you ever hear of canning meat.

Z.L.: Yes mam. We canned meat.

D.S.: You did?

Z.L.: We canned a lot of meat. Canned beef..pork.

D.S.: How would it taste?

Z.L.: Taste's better than it does in a freezer. Much better. Because it kept it's flavor.

D.S.: How would you do it?

Z.L.: Well we'd slice it in chunks..put it in cans..seal the cans..

D.S.: You'd have to process the cans though?

Z.L.: Oh yea. Everybody boiled their cans then..put them in hot water.. a lot of times we'd take them to the old black kettle..fill it full of up ~~with~~ water and make a fire under it. That's the way we did the cans. We carried it to the spring..we had a big spring.. and we did it right there and then you could rinse them with cold water after you got through boiling them. Rinse them with cold water.

D.S.: Sure. Speaking of the spring and water. How did you do your laundry?

Z.L.: Well you wouldn't thought it was easy, but it was. We had a big old tub..wash board..scrubbed your clothes..well we used that uh

black kettle then that you boil it in water...to wash your clothes in. Then after we washed the clothes..all the sheets we'd put back in the big old kettle and boil them to make sure there were no germs left. Specially if anybody had been sick...we boiled all their clothes. The clothes that they had used and all the bed clothes. And you boiled your clothes til they was just as white as snow. Hung them out..you didn't see any yellow clothes..they was all white.

D.S.: Sure. That lye soap was suppose to be..

Z.L.: Well we made soap. People didn't buy soap until later on in years.

D.S.: Right. Did your mother make most of your clothes?

Z.L.: Yes she did. She was a nice seamstress.

D.S.: Did she use treadle machine?

Z.L.: Treadle machine.

D.S.: Did your grandmother ever tell about spinning...

Z.L.: She sure did. She kept a spinning wheel. She spun all their wool..made their clothes..made their socks..knitted socks..

D.S.: Now let's talk about church. Where was your nearest church? Or what church did you go to?

Z.L.: I went to the Fern Hill Church, which the people built themselves. Everybody got together..felt like they needed a church. First we had a tabernacle. And you know what a tabernacle is?

D.S.: Uhhum. Only you better tell it for this.

Z.L.: That's just a building with a roof over it...no sides to it.. and benches..and then the altar was in the front. And everybody went to the tabernacle and worshipped. And it was always filled.

There were enough people to fill it because when you had service at that tabernacle everybody come. Nobody stayed away from church. That was our church then but later on we built a church. So the people got together. they raised money by selling extract wood..some would sell chickens..some would sell eggs..anything to raise the money to start the church. Wasn't long until we had a church. It was beautiful.

D.S.: How far away from your home was the church?

Z.L.: Right across the road.

D.S.: Oh, that was handy. Um, the minister was he from the neighborhood or..

Z.L.: No he was sent from college. From the Shenandoah College. Over at Dayton at that time.

D.S.: Oh, uhhum. Did he live with anybody or..

Z.L.: He lived with us.

D.S.: He lived with you too.

Z.L.: And we'll never forget him. He was only seventeen years old when we came there to practice and when we had our church dedicated, he wasn't old enough to dedicate the church, so we had to get another minister. And his name..I'd like to call his name. He was one of the finest boys you ever met. His name was Carl Hiser. And after we finished the church, we wanted to name it Hiser..Mt. Hiser. But there were so many Fern's around and the ferns were so beautiful that they decided to name it Fern Hill. That's the name he wanted to give it. So they gave it the name he wanted instead of naming it for him.

D.S.: Ah, uhhuh. So everybody came regularly to the church.

Z.L.: Yea, when the church was dedicated, there wasn't room in the church for the people. So many, they had to stand on the outside.

D.S.: Oh, isn't that wonderful. People had to walk a long distance, some of them, to church too didn't they.

Z.L.: Yea, they was a place known as Dean Mountain which you...

D.S.: Yes!

Z.L.: Well they walked from Dean Mountain there to church.

D.S.: Oh my goodness.

Z.L.: And the best singers that you've ever heard come from Dean Mountain. There was a man that sang base..he understood..see we had singing school so people sang by note..didn't sing by ear..well some did too. But they learned the notes through the singing master. And this one man..his name was ^{BIDD} Big Meadows.. because everybody will know him if you mention it...

D.S.: Big Meadows?

Z.L.: Bidd - B I D D - was his name. Everybody will know him. Bidd Meadows everybody called him, and he lived at Big Meadows.He was a base singer..and the finest you'll ever hear.

D.S.: Did you with your applebutter boiling..did all the neighbors get together for that?

Z.L.: Yes mam. Everybody helped everybody.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Did you make it sort of a party..or did..was it a job to get done?

Z.L.: Yes, that was one job we looked forward to...was applebutter boiling...

D.S.: You peeled apples all one day.

Z.L.: At night..we had apple peelings too. The neighbors came in and helped peel apples too. We'd put them in barrels as we peeled them..so we'd make applebutter by the barrels of apples we had..so many barrels per kettle ,

D.S.: And the applebutter boiling, was this done in the day or night?

Z.L.: We hoped it would be at night.

D.S.: Sure..it was more fun then wasn't it?

Z.L.: Stir all around the applebutter kettle..once..once around the kettle and twice through the middle..and then you were suppose to kiss the person you were stirring with. Boy and a girl usually stirred, *end track!*

D.S.: Yea. Did they have things to eat while you were doing this?
~~Or~~ did they play music?

Z.L.: Yea, a lot of times they played music.

D.S.: Was there ever any dancing?

Z.L.: Oh, we had cider. We drank cider. Not strong cider, just sweet cider.

*sign
track 2*
D.S.: Yea. Was there any dancing at all? To kill the time while some people were stirring others would dance?

Z.L.: Yes they would dance sometimes. My father didn't allow much of it ~~much~~ because he didn't think it was right for us to dance.

D.S.: Oh he didn't. I wonder why?

Z.L.: We'd do the Virginia Reel and that's about all he'd ever allow us to do.

D.S.: Do you recall any of the tunes that were played? Any of the music? Turkey in the Straw?

Z.L.: Yea and Red Wing. Uncle Josh.

D.S.: Uncle Josh?

Z.L.: Yes.

D.S.: Haven't heard of Uncle Josh.

Z.L.: You haven't?

D.S.: No. Two Cent Gal?

Z.L.: Nah. *Don't know that.* Well they'd play a lot of hymns too.

D.S.: Sure, right. Uncle Josh? Have You any idea how that tune went?

Z.L.: I can't sing.

D.S.: Whistle?

Z.L.: No that was mostly talking.

D.S.: It was a talking..?

Z.L.: Yea. We had a record of Uncle Josh, and that was mostly talking. but that Red Wing that was all music and that was good.

D.S.: That was a good one. Yea. Did you ever hear the tune Fox Chase or Fox Hunt?

Z.L.: Yea, I think I've heard it, but I don't remember it too well.

D.S.: Yea. That must have been beautiful. I've been trying to get a recording of that and haven't been able to so far. Um, now, all of you helped in the garden didn't you?

Z.L.: Yea, just as soon as the children got large enough..everybody went to the garden.

D.S.: Yea, and you all helped with the milking and taking care of the cattle. Were your hogs allowed to run loose?

Z.L.: Yea, they run loose in the woods most of the time. Well sometimes we fenced them off from the cattle...*& the*...sheep...we had a regular place for the sheep..that was on top of the hill we had a sheep building and we just kept sheep in it. And then we had the

buildings for the uh, different animals. Kept mostly chickens in the chicken house, but then we had a side there for geese, we had turkeys, geese, ^{ginny's} ~~ginny's~~ chickens...that's all I think.

D.S.: Uhhum. That's a lot.

Z.L.: And ducks. We had most every thing.

D.S.: Ducks. Uhhum. Then you must have had a pond.

Z.L.: Oh my goodness. We had a lot of ponds.

D.S.: Did you have to chop the ice during the winter so the cattle could drink the...?

Z.L.: We have. We had a big watering trough. They went to the watering trough...to drink. But sometimes it would freeze over and then we'd have to chop the ice and let the stock out of the barn. Then one time we had such a deep snow...it was in March..don't recall the year; but, we had this deep snow and we all..us kids had to shovel the snow until we shovelled a path so the stock could get through to the watering trough. That was fun!

D.S.: Yea.

Z.L.: They would let them out of the barn. They couldn't go anywhere else..they had to stay in the path...and then soon as they drank, they'd turn around and come back to the barn. Snow was so deep. That was a long time ago.

D.S.: Yea. Were there any particular illnesses that you recall?

Z.L.: Yes, there was the old flu.

D.S.: During the war..1917. Uhhum. That got a lot of people, didn't it?

Z.L.: Yes, it sure did.

D.S.: Did Dr. Ross come up to your area?

Z.L.: Not Dr. Ross..Dr. Shacklet..Dr. Shacklet and Dr. Louis and Dr. Gordon.

D.S.: Where were they from? Elkton?

Z.L.: Elkton.

D.S.: How would you get in touch with them?

Z.L.: Call them by telephone.

D.S.: You had a phone in your house?

Z.L.: Yea, we had two phones on the mountain. One was ours and one was my uncles...at that time. Earlier we only had the two. And we'd call the doctor for all the people around. And they'd come in the buggy. Then we had a dentist named Dr. Pennington, and he only came through on Sunday's. That's when we'd have to wait if we had the tooth ache during the week we couldn't have our teeth pulled until Sunday.

D.S.: I wonder why he came on Sunday?

Z.L.: I guess he thought he'd catch more people. Mostly during the week they were in the fields..in the summertime..they were in the fields or in the woods or somewhere. He'd probably get more people. Take care of more people. I remember when he took care of me one time.

D.S.: What about it?

Z.L.: He pulled my two jaw teeth! Never had cocain nor nothing to put on them. They just sat you down and pulled your teeth. And you could hollar if you wanted to.

D.S.: Yea. Oh boy, yes.

Z.L.: I sat in a rocking chair. I never will forget it. I didn't do much rocking though.

D.S.: Huhuh. Oh you poor girl. How old were you then?

Z.L.: Well, I must have been..that's when I pulled two jaw teeth.

I guess I must have been around..they ached, that's why I pulled them..had them pulled.

D.S.: ^{He} You never filled teeth? ^{He} You didn't fill teeth?

Z.L.: Not much. They let them decay..we let them decay first. Too long a time ^{between} to the dentist's travel.

D.S.: Now while we are talking about medicines..I know your mother must have known a lot of herbs. Do you recall any of them and what there uses were?

Z.L.: Well early in the spring we could hear them talking..we had to have blood medicine. We got to give them something for their blood. So it was tea...sassafrass, calmumas , I believe is how to spellit. Calmumas Tea and Sassafrass.

D.S.: How about if you had a cold?

Z.L.: Well if it got to bad then we'd have to have a *Paultice* put on us.

D.S.: And that was made out of what?

Z.L.: Mustard. And some lard. We'd call it mustard *paultice*

D.S.: Was there any corn meal in that?

Z.L.: Well, I guess you'd have to put some corn meal in it to keep it from blistering.

D.S.: Did you ever hear of the corn meal and onion *paultices*. Did you use those too.

Z.L.: Yea, we used a lot of onion *paultices*. for a lot of different.. let's see we used the onion *paultice* when we cut our foot.

I think. Cut our feet. Stuck a nail in it.

D.S.: Oh. Did it work?

Z.L.: Yea.

D.S.: You know that's the thing about all these herbs...

Z.L.: It drew the poison out. And we used a lot of turpentine too.

D.S.: What'd you use turpentine for?

Z.L.: Well if you stuck a nail in your foot..that;s the first thing you'd do..pour turpentine on it. Kill the germs.

D.S.: Did you ever hear of Kerosene and sugar for a cough?

Z.L.: Oh, I should say so. I wish I had a dollar for all I've taken.

D.S.: Did it do any good?

Z.L.: Sure. Didn't have anything else..it had to do good.

It was too far away for a doctor to come. Sometimes ^{he} ~~we~~ wouldn't get there for two days after you called him. Depending on the weather. If it was bad weather, he couldn't come. The roads were bad at times and they would get muddy and the mud go almost to the hub....of the wheel of the buggy.

D.S.: Yea.

What?

I think he did..sounds as though he did.

Say for instance, somebody..a neighbor...got very ill or..

yea..got very ill. What would happen? Would you all take food to that home?

Z.L.: Sure did--everybody did. Everybody was concerned about their neighbors.

D.S.: Yea. It was really like one huge family, wasn't it?

Z.L.: That's right.

D.S.: Was there much visiting back and forth? Between ^{people in} one area and another?

Z.L.: All the time. Everybody visited everybody. One person didn't feel they were any better than the other.

D.S.: No. Did you do this mainly on Sunday?

Z.L.: Yea, mostly on Sunday. Like I'd..we'd go to our neighbors house maybe way up on themountain..close to Dean Mountain.. we had..there was an elderly couple up there..Mr. and Mrs. Shifflet. And all of the young people just loved to go to their house. And eat. Cause they cooked hay beans.

D.S.: Cooked what?

Z.L.: She cooked hay beans.

D.S.: What are hay beans?

Z.L.: The beans we are drying now were called hay beans that people dried. And you mention it to these young people ^{now} and they don't know what you are talking about.

D.S.: No. How would you fix them then, to make them called hay beans.

Z.L.: Well, we dry them. See you called them dry beans, but then you called them hay beans. Cause you dried them like hay.

D.S.: Oh, ah ha. Okey.

Z.L.: You've never heard of hay beans?

D.S.: No I haven't.

Z.L.: When you eat these dried beans you'll be eating hay beans.

D.S.: How were they cooked? Were they boiled?

Z.L.: In a black cooking pot.Put them on and you remove the uh

D.S.: Shell?

Z.L.: Yea, from this black stove and put them in a black cook pot with a hunk of side meat and boy were they good,

D.S.: Umm. And you know that has more nourishment, they have discovered, than anything else. How did you keep your vegetables over the winter? Did you have a root cellar or did you dig a trench? to put the turnips and cabbages in?

Z.L.: Well we had a cellar that had a roof on it, but it was under-

ground..just had the roof and the door underground..but we had it dug out so we could get to it..

D.S.: Oh, root cellar then?

Z.L.: Yea. That's where you would keep your apples and your potatoes, and well we burried the cabbage, in the ground out in the garden. Making a trench...

D.S.: Head down?

Z.L.: Yea. and bury the cabbage and the turnips. And that's about all..sometimes we burried potatoes too. Yea we burried a lot of pota toes.

D.S.: And they came out just as fresh as when you put them in.

Z.L.: Yes indeed...the cabbage especially.

D.S.: Cabbages were big weren't they?

Z.L.: Great big! my land they'd be like that.

D.S.: Sure. I've heard nobody has been able to grow cabbages like they did up there.

Z.L.: Nobody has. Since they left the mountain. See my father took in..now this is the way he made a lot of extra money too..which wasn't much..cause he took in cattle from the valley. They'd drive them up here in the spring..early in the spring, they'd drive them up to the pasture to stay all summer. And then these men would always eat at our house. They'd come for dinner you see..we had dinner in the middle of the day. We didn't have it in the evening. And these men would come to eat and we'd cook something of everything we had you know..you'd put a lot on the table so there'd be enough for people if they come in because you always ask people to eat. Everybody did. They didn't go

away without eating. Maybe you fry a ham..boil a cabbage..
and they didn't want cabbage because they didn't like cabbage.
And I can hear my father say..well just try some of this
cabbage, and they did. Then they would come back to eat
cabbage.

D.S.: Yea. It had a sweetness to it.

Z.L.: Yes it did. And they were well seasoned with the side meat.

D.S.: Yea. Uhhuh. Um...Did you ever..I do know that some people
would burn off patches of the woods to grow huckleberries..
so huckleberries would come up better in the spring. Did you
ever hear of that?

Z.L.: Yea. Some people would go set the woods on fire. ~~staked~~ ^{squish}

D.S.: Yea. I have it on tape. I even know the names of the people
that did it. Now really..You said you usta raise some cane.
I mean the sugar kind.

Z.L.: Well we raised both kind.

D.S.: Did you make sorghum.

Z.L.: Sorghum and molassas. We had a machine..we borrowed the machine.
We would bring it to the mountain you know. That's when we
would have fun..making that sorghum molassas. See it run down.
Stream go down and catch the syrup as it come out..put it in
jars...

D.S.: Did you ever use snow and put sorghum in the middle of it to
make candy?

Z.L.: Not with snow. We made the molassas..we made the candy but we
didn't use snow.

D.S.: Did you have taffy pulls?

Z.L.: Yea. Oh, pull that taffy til it got white...real light. And then

lay it out on paper...wax paper..if we had wax paper then

I don't recall.

D.S.: I don't think there was.

Z.L.: I don't think there was either. But you'd get it on some kind of paper that didn't stick.

D.S.: The brown paper didn't stick did it?

Z.L.: Huhuh. That must have been what we put it on. And we'd plat it. Boy it was pretty candy. Good too.

D.S.: That's right. It was. Uh. Was the same kettle used for apple butter boiling that was used for sorghum?

Z.L.: No. Don't think so.

D.S.: You know those kettles were expensive.

Z.L.: See the sorghum was made as it come out..it was hot..

D.S.: Yea.

Z.L.: We had a fire...

D.S.: There were a lot of Aleshire's...Now regarding the sled, You said you had a homemade sled. How was that made? From staves, from barrels or or...?

Z.L.: Let's see. You had to make it from something that would bend, so the runners would be up. Hickory, I guess. The runners.

D.S.: Yea, the runners. And did you have any way to steer it?

Z.L.: Yea. you put, uh, the piece in front and then you put a little chain or rope or something and draw it back and forth.

D.S.: Sure, yea.

Z.L.: Which side you wanted to go on. But most time it just went straight.

You'd have to pull it because you would sleigh ride when the snow already was deep and you'd have to make your track. Then we had a big

sled. Bunch of us would get on that.

D.S.: Oh great. That must have been lots of fun wasn't it. ^{like a} Tobaggon.

Z.L.: Yea it was fun.

D.S.: What toys did you have when you were a little girl?

Z.L.: We didn't have a lot of toys.

D.S.: Any dolls?

Z.L.: We had homemade dolls.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Something like rag dolls.

Z.L.: Yea. We made a lot of rag dolls...and then at Christmas time we would get a store bought doll. That's all we would get except maybe some oranges, couple bananas..some kind of fruit. and candy.

D.S.: Did you ever do the Kris Kringling?

Z.L.: Yea. Oh we had fun then. Everybody did it then. The people would come from Dean Mountain down to our place and we'd go from our place to Dean Mountain

D.S.: That was for twelve days wasn't it?

Z.L.: Then they would come to Swift Run too. See that's at the foot of this mountain. That's where we went to church before we had a church. ^{we} You would dress...^{they'd} my...guess who you are.

D.S.: Did you uh...this is not a very happy question...but about your funerals. Um. Oh dear. Funerals..they didn't do embalming did they? Until more recently. So what would they do, have funerals sooner. Or would they wait a few days.

Z.L.: No. ----- Well they usually had the funeral on the third day.

D.S.: On the third day.

Z.L.: Maybe in the morning.

D.S.: And the body was kept in the home?

Z.L.: Uhhum. Didn't have any other place to take it.

D.S.: Did they always stay right there by the grave until it ~~was~~
~~was~~ completely filled?

Z.L.: (an apparent nod)

D.S.: That shows great reverence. I like that
I wish they did that now.

Z.L.: *never left.*

D.S.: Did they have engraved monuments? Or did they use rocks?

Z.L.: They used stones and uh engraved the names on them.

D.S.: Uhhuh.

Z.L.: With another..with a slate rock. You know what a slate rock
is? We had a lot of them.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. How about weddings? How did you meet your
husband?

Z.L.: I met him at a cemetery.

D.S.: That an auspicious beginning.

Z.L.: I asked my cousin who he was. I said who is that boy over
there. He is right good looking. I hadn't known him when I
was younger.

D.S.: Did he live near you?

Z.L.: No. Not then.

D.S.: Uh, how was courting done?

Z.L.: Usually went to the parlor.

D.S.: Yea. And were you chaperoned?

Z.L.: You were always..there was always somebody around. They ..
you wasn't often left alone.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Yea. Right. Uh, would he come every Sunday?

Z.L.: Well, every Sunday was enough, they thought. And you had to go to church. We did most of our courting going to church and coming back.

D.S.: Right across the street..that didn't give you much time.

Z.L.: Well, that was before we had the church up there. We walked to Swift Run. Everybody walked to church then.

D.S.: Oh yea.

Z.L.: This church~~h~~ down..that still.. that was in the Shenandoah National Park too. They tore all the churches down. We tried to get them to leave them..but, no they wouldn't.

D.S.: I know. And now they are very sorry they didn't leave them.

Z.L.: They aren't as sorry as we are. Because we could have gone back and had funerals and had meetings there. Had reunions. and everything. Just like they did when they dedicated the church. Oh, that was one of the biggest dinners ^{that was} ever put out.

D.S.: Everyone brought something.

Z.L.: Everybody. Oh, we had everything on those tables.

D.S.: Well now tell me about your wedding. How was that done?
They were more simple then, weren't they?

Z.L.: Yea, they didn't pay any attention. They just got married and then came to church the next morning. And that's all.

D.S.: Uhhum. Yea. Had your husband built a house for you or...

Z.L.: Nah.

D.S.: Then where did you live?

Z.L.: Well, we lived in Washington. We went to Washington.

D.S.: D.C.?

Z.L.: Uhhuh. We lived there twelve years. But most people lived with their parents. Soon as they got married, they just went in with their parents and lived until they could get a better start.

D.S.: Uhhum. Yea. Uh, we haven't really touched on the thing that I think is one of the most important..what was the reaction of the people when the park..they knew the park was coming and they were going to have to move out?

Z.L.: Well at first all the people were happy about it, because they didn't tell the people the truth. They told them that they would always live there. And they were so happy, because we were getting the road through the places and they were willing to donate some of the land and they did. My father donated I think it was twenty five acres. They asked them to and they did it. But expecting to stay there. But then after the state had bought it, donated it to the government,...get out...and they had to go.They don't tell that part.

D.S.: No, that I had not known. Now, when the people had to get out did they resist?

Z.L.: Well they didn't want to go. They didn't any people want to leave the mountain. They cried over it. The older people especially. It didn't matter to me. I was glad to get out, but I'm willing to change..the younger people did. But the older people who had established their ^{lives and} homes there and depended on living there the rest of their days because I've heard my mother say 'I hate to see these four walls go down because they've talked to me." But you had to see your home after you worked so hard to build it, and my father has just built a new service station. He had a store and a service station. He had a business of his own. But they had to get out..they wasn't allowed to have business there. That was hard. It was hard for the

older people and a lot of them died from grief. I had an aunt who died from grief. She was loved that mountain so much. She was the postmistress there. Our post office was named Fern Hill. Just like the church. She didn't live very long after she left the mountain. She was our choir leader. She had a strong voice to sing.

D.S.: Do you suppose that's one of the reason's the people have scattered so?

Z.L.: Well, sure. Of course most of the older people have died. But all the middle age people...some of them have died too. But everybody got scattered when they had to leave the mountain. Some went to one side and some went to the other.

D.S.: Did any of them go down into like Wolfe Town or Ida?

Z.L.: They went to Ida, Wolfe Town. Now my parents went to East Point. They bought a home over there. And moved to East Point. But they were never satisfied like they were in the mountains. Cause people that moved out on these big farms, didn't know how to operate the farms. Cause they'd been use to all the mountain work. Just uh...the soil in the mountain was so fertile that you didn't have to fertilize it, but out in the valley they did.

D.S.: Uhhum, yea. Did they...speaking of fertilizing....did they open up new fields with the gardens? You know garden for a while and then open up new fields or did they do plant rotation of crops?

Z.L.: Where do you mean. In the homesteads or up in the mountain?

D.S.: Up in the mountains?

Z.L.: Well they called them 'new ground'.

D.S.: Then that's it..they'd open up new grounds.

Z.L.: They open up new ground and then plant a patch. Maybe they'd want a patch of turnips or a patch of potatoes or plant corn and beans or...sometimes they did better in the new ground.

D.S.: Uhhuh. Right. Sure.

Z.L.: I know we had just loads and loads of beans all the time. We dried and canned..we didn't freeze cause we didn't have anything to freeze them in.

D.S.: Was there anything that you could think of, that I have missed, that you feel should be part of the record?

Z.L.: Well I think the mountain people have been misrepresented, so much by saying that the only way...I have heard it...the only way they had living was through bootlegging. Well we didn't do ~~any~~ bootlegging because nobody was..I mean there was some but it wasn't around right in our vicinity because nobody wanted to bootleg. But there was some of it went on and maybe that was the only way they had to feed their family I don't know, but we fed ours other ways. My daddy wouldn't allow an empty whiskey bottle on our place. If he did, he'd break it.

D.S.:Be worth money now...that empty whiskey bottle.

Z.L.: Yes it would.

D.S.: There have been so many misrepresentations and I hope we can get the story the way it should be for everybody. You know I surely appreciate your taking all this time. You're a very wonderful person, and I thank you ever so much.

Z.L.: Most of the people were raised in a Christian home. People were

Christians then. They were Christians for one another. You loved your fellow man. But you don't ^{Now} ~~know~~. You work against them. I mean the people..the majority of the people are working against one another instead of working for one another. But then they worked for one another.

D.S.: And there was no stealing?

Z.L.: No. You'd leave your doors open. Oh, that's one thing we should stress.

D.S.: Yes. They were so darn honest.

end track 2
Z.L.: Nobody ever locked a door..no matter where you go. You go to church meetings at night. You would go to town. We didn't do much going to town..we only went bout once or twice a year at night when they had lawparties. That's when we got that big ice cream cone. That's about all you got too. Because you had to work hard all week, then you got an ice cream cone to pay for it...your work. We appreciated it too. Things were really appreciated then. Everything you got, you said'thank you! And when you'd get up on Christmas morning...now we didn't know how to celebrate Christmas because we didn't know..but ~~now~~ Christmas was celebrated in a religious way not a drunken way..because people then didn't get drunk..they do now..you don't get drunk Christmas *just to have drinks* ~~then~~. Put that down there too.

D.S.: It is. It's down there. Right. Sure you did it in a nice wonderful, religious, gentle ways like the Kris Kringle's and so on..people enjoying each other. And I think the main thing that

has come through loud and clear with all of the people that I have talked to is the honor and the respect and that your name meant something.

Z.L.: It sure did.

D.S.: Right. Uhhum.

Z.L.: And if an old person would come to your house..you would be at that door holding it..the door open for the old person to come through. They didn't have to open the door..the younger ones were at the door to open the door. Do they do it now? And we better be there too. And you did the same way when they got ready to leave. And if you sat in a chair and there wasn't enough chairs..you got up...you knew to get up and let the old people sit down. Same way in church. ^{When} If we went to church, if the church was filled, the young people got up and let the old people sit down. And you didn't have to ask them either. They knew to get up.