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(SNP113) Ella Shiflett interviewed by Bob and Pat Momich

Ella Shiflett

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A TRANSCRIPT FROM A TAPED INTERVIEW OF

MRS. ELLA SHIFFLETT

POCOSIN MISSION, CABIN, and GENERAL AREA

Bob Momich
Pat Momich

A TRANSCRIPT FROM A TAPED INTERVIEW WITH MRS. ELLA SHIFFLETON 11/13/74

I: What was your relationship with the mission, how did you get to know about it, were you born there, did you go to school?

M.S.: I was born there and I went to school there. It was the only place that you could go to school 'cause when I was growin' up we didn't have no school (high) in Stanardsville and a...the mission school was all the school we had to go to. And a lot of the children back there in those mountains....it's so far from the upper Pocosin 'cause they couldn't afford to walk you know in the and they had no other way to go

I: So you were born there, in what year?

M.S.: I was born there, let's see, I was 74 the 23rd of June now you count back

I: That was 1900

M.S. That's right cause on the 23rd of June I was 74 years old.

I: Before I forget.... this question has been on my mind for a long time.... Do you know somebody named Sanderson?

M.S.: Named what?

I.: Sanderson....now there's a fella.....somebody, I forget his first name.. we'll see it once we get up there..etched his name in the doorway of the mission and it says...." This church went up and down in my lifetime". It was somebody Sanderson...I just thought that you might be able to remember.

M.S.: Samuels? (this was the correct name)

I: Samuelson.....

M.S.: They's the oldest family that was livin' here in the mountains and... the church went up in their lifetime, I'm quite sure of that.

I: Was the mission kinda like a church sort of thing.....were there many children born there..?

M.S.:

M.S.: Oh....that mtn. used to be fulla people.....I was tellin' the other Ranger (Bonanno) that took me up there the other day that the big rock church would seat over 100 and nearly every Sunday it would be crowded. But you see there was a lot of houses in that neighborhood...all up and down that hollow (Pocosin) there was lots a houses....everywhere in those mtns. there were houses and a.....

I: Can you recall some of the names?

M.S.: Well now there's a Mr. Bob Taylor (not sure on spelling)...he's dead and gone....he lived down there in Pocosin Hollow.....and there's a Mr. Harm (on) Taylor...and Mr. Zach Taylor....and the ?Brooks Taylors house.. Oh, it's just a lots 'n' lots a people in there....Breedens....Taylors not too many Lams. The Lams lived down toward the Middle River on the Lam Mountain side Note: The Middle River can apply to many rivers in this area.

M.S.(cont.): They didn't live around here at the Pocosin Mission. And the first preachers to serve there was Mr. Paul and Mr. Bob White and Mr. Green. They was the first preachin' ministers that we ever had in the mtns..... and the first ?bishob work we ever had was Mrs. Clarence ~~COOBBED~~ Towles and Mrs. Mary Towles was the assistant...they lived in that little log cabin there were we've been before up there where we've been to church. And all the... church we had when I was born up there was ...we had the church and the schoolhouse together. We had school in the church...a...both of em were the same purpose you know.....preachin' and we had school in it. There's lots a t times that church would be just full and they'd have revivals....like they have now and people back in the hollows they'd work hard they didn't have no income cept for workin'.....They made there a livin' that a way and they made ? stave wood. They had a stave mill in the mtns. and that's where they worked at to make their living.

I: Stave mill?

M.S.: Stave mill, where you make your staves that you make barrels out of and ..a...you could see that there wasn't no lazy men around...they worked.. a...or they starved. They farmed their fields..and they maked...a..the other Ranger wanted to know what those big rock piles were for. Well, I said, "They had to pile their rocks so they could plant their corn and then they.. a..made their food where in the fall of the year, wasn't anybody had a bakery..they was too poor to have bakeries. And...a.. they'd dig holes...they'd have their turnips, and they'd have their cabbage, and they'd have their beans, and the only way they could save their beans in those days was to make "snaps" out of them. I don't know whether you all ever seen a "snap", but they let 'em get real full...?????.... And they'd pick them and string them up on strings and hang them to dry and then they'd ...most everybody'd had a big ? full of snaps the at one time. And then they'd bury their turnips..they'd have a turnip hole where they'd bury their turnips, and they had a ~~potato hole where they;~~ ~~bury their~~ ~~potato~~ hole where they'd bury their potatoes. That's the way that they kept their food from runnin' out. And then they'd always have apples ~~too~~ ~~around~~ around the house. 'Course the orchards is all dead now...just about every one of them. And they'd...a...everybody'd make a kettle of apple butter. That's the sweets they had..they'd very seldom have anything sweet 'cept apple butter

I: Then the basic reason for the Mission was , a church, ^{as school} and somewhat of a hospital, I guess?

M.S. That's right. For years and years I can....I guess a....Henry be the first...a...well, I can't remember when the first preacher came in there but, I can remember Mr. Breeden.....but there's years and years they didn't have no industry in the mtns.

I: Now what about the lower Mission, was that build before.....the upper Pocosin Mission?

M.S. no, the Upper Pocosin Mission was the only mission that ever been in the mtns.the first mission that's ever been in the mtns., and then a.. ...they built the Lower Mission. And the people from the Upper Mission would come down to the Lower Mission for a.. Sunday school and..school. They run the school up there about a year or two after they left their

M.S.(cont.) little cabin up there but a....then finally they had to come down there... ..and they had no other way to come but to walk and just about everyone of them did go to school.

I: How many years of school did you have there?

M.S.: I had six years of schooling up there and I had...a..then I moved down to the Lower Mission....this lady had her first baby and I came down there to take care of it...and I stayed down there at that mission for three years and I went to school down there. I went to school nine winters. That was all the school we had...was there at the Mission school.

I: Were the children of all different ages?

M.S. Whazzat?

I: Were the children of all different ages that went to school there?

M.S. That's right, and they'd always take the children into the school at the Mission....at five years old. You see if it was really bad, then the little ones couldn't get to school. The only way in the world they could get to school was to walk, and they had a long way to get there.

I: Then they had to have an older brother to help them along.

M.S.: Oh yes, the older ones would take them, but they'd always take them after five years. Now Donna was four, the youngest one was four, and after we left the mtn., and after she's born at Lower Pocosin.. ..and then I left there and then we a...went to Arlington for a year and we moved up here on the Middle River(note: Mrs. Shifflit seems to refer to the Conway River(PATC) as the Middle River) And you see they took her so early into school she graduated at 17 and you see they will always have a year early in school that a way. If it hadn't a been for the Mission, would never a been no a.. education in the mtns...so we can all give 'em credit for that.

I: Did you live right at the Mission or did you walk to the school too?

M.S. Did I walk to school? Yes indeedie, I walked to school, If I got there.. ..honey, you'd be surprised,...do you all know where Roach's Mtn is at don't ya?

I: That's down south of Pocosin(thinking about Smith-Roach Gap), isn't it?

M.S.: Way on down in Pocosin there....you know where the fire trails...a... fireca...the cabin is up by..a well now that's a ..you go on thru that old big field on back that a way(pointing north)way over towards Roach's Mtn. The kids walked from Roach's Mtn. to Upper Pocosin for school and they walked on the other side of the Drive to get to Upper Pocosin for school. I don't know how many miles it was to make it but, they walked... 'n if it wasn't too bad they were out there every morning.... 'cause it was the only way they had to get any education

I: Well did a lot of the kids want the education or were they forced into it?

M.S.: No indeedie they wasn't forced into it, I've seen boys come to that school in evert morning. Some of 'em was so poor they couldn't afford gloves..

M.S.(cont.): their hands would be soo..cold they'd be cracked open..might be blood be comein' out of them. They...all of them just loved to go to school ..oh indeed, you have to force children to go to school a whole lot more ~~so~~ these days than they did then. School was the right thing to them.

I: Where did you live? Did you live out at the Mission?

M.S.: I lived at the Mission..a..they...I lived with my family in the mountians at that little..where that little wabin sets 's where we lived, that's where I's born and raised(refering to Pocosin Cabin-PATC). And after they closed the Mission up there, they wanted me to come down and take care of the baby, so I come down and I stayed with the Mission.

I: So you spent, you said, six years at the Pocosin Mission for your schooling?

M.S.: Yes, I went to school up there six years, then I come down the mission, Lower Mission, then I went to school down there for three years. All together..a...nine years.

I: Why was the Lower Mission built..a..

M.S.: Why?

I: Yes, why.

M.S.: Well, it got so many more people down there than there was at the Upper Mission and then..a..it was so bad th get in out there when they..a..it was bad you know. And they had nowhere to go then but in horse and buggie, they didn't have any car at the Upper Mission at all. And they didn't have any at the Lower Mission for years and years after they moved down there...and a.. but the Mission was the first people to ever have a car in the mtns, and I can a...when they...they first got a one they was so afraid when they drove of the mtn., they'd get..cut down big trees and tie it to the..behind the cars.. wa.. to hold it back...they was that scared. You could find trees all over the foot of the mtn. where they'd..a..tied them on the back of the car.

I: Why did the Mission finally just close down?

M.S.: The Upper Mission?

I: Well, both of them.

M.S.: Well, I tell you one thing a..the people all moved out of the mtns. so, there wasn't..a..you know, the Park takin' it and the people all moved out and there wasn't enough people to run it...now the only church you have to go to a is Grace Church in Stanardsville. This is the only church we have to go to. They have a beautiful rock church and rock mossier on the Middle River here, I don't guess you all have seen it yet.. but a this is our church we go to now(points out a church as we pass thru Stanardsville)this one right here....but, that's why they closed it down , everybody moved out, but that mtn. was fulla people before the Park came in there.

I: So, that's the reason that it was closed down tho, because of the Park.

M.S.: Taht's right....that's right. You know, people lived good up there too. They was kinda poor..but, they always managed to have clothes to wear ...and food...and there was never a family that was on walfare...and none of them ever got no social security either....'cause there wasn't none to be drawn then. But they lived. And you know one thing about it, they all lived to be a ripe old age to...that's right. They walked, they'd walk to the mill, they carried their groceries in on their back, and they walked clear from up there where I lived where that cabin is at on Skyline Drive down here to Kinderhook and McMullen(two Piedmont settlements) and get their groceries. ...and carried it back on their backs..and they even walked down there and get their meal and flour and carried it back...and they all lived to be a ripe old age. Very seldom did a young person died in those mtns....as far as I know.

I: I heard mention earlier abuot a flu epidèmic that, supposedly, hit around 1900 or so...Did you ever hear about that?

M.S.: Yes, I did. That was when the World War I was..that killed a of those people. We had done moved down..a...we'd already been down at the Lower Mission for quite a while....and I was unmarried then, when that a epidemic killed all those people... Yes, it killed a lô of people.....mind you everyone that got it died.....I had it but...I just lived and that was all. There were quite a few people.

I: Was it the policy back then for the ladies to have their children at the Mission or did some of them just have their children at home?

M.S.: They had most all of their children was born at home..and they was with midwives. Wery seldom anybody had a doctor.

I: Was there a doctor at the Mission?

M.S.: No, a..well..er...well the lady..a...that ran the Mission she had had a medical course.

I: What was her name?

M.S.: Mrs.Florence Towles.

I: Mrs. Florence Towles?

M.S.: That's right, T_O_W_L_E_S, Towles. And that...a...a..mossion up there was named Pocosin Mission because and they had a Post Office that was named Towles Post Office.

I: Right up in that area also?

M.S.: That's right.

I: Why was it called Pocosin Mission..a..was there somebody around with the last name of Pocosin?

M.S.: Well, it"s a...it's a..it's a bank.....it's a river...well, it's not a whole river either...or I call it a...well, it's a hollow they called Pocosin Hollow and they named after Pocosin Mission. There's a hollow goes on down from the Pocosin Mission....and on down towards the Middle River. Maybe you've been up and down there...walkin'.....a lot of those Rangers has.

I: Yes.

M.S.: That's why they called it the Pocosin Mission.

I: We've been walkin' down the.....we walked thru the Pocosin Hollow once.

M.S.: Well, that's it.

I: That's where you said that a lot of the cabins were.

M.S.: A..that's right. There were cabins all up and down that hollow..that's where the people lived. You'd wonder how they ever lived....seein' as how what it takes these days for a person to live but....they lived. I knew a lots a times but I can't remember today...women would come up out a that hollow and come past our house, bright and early, sometimes the sun wouldn't even be up up and down the Skyline Drive....we called it the "Deadenin" then 'cause it's all cleared up....you could look for miles and miles..it wasn't nothin' but a bluegrass sod and they'd be goin' in there to dig for ginger and ginseng.....and they'd come out of there in the evening with a big bag of ginger and they'd take it home and they'd strip it, and dry it, take it to the store and sell it, and buy their clothes with it. And another thing about it, they...they'd a...a it was alot of cherry trees and apple trees back in the mtns. then and they'd dry cherries and pick cherries and dry 'em, they'd go in and the mtns. and skin a great big piece of bark and they'd make a...a thing out of bark..a...to dry their cherries on. And they'd dry apples...and that's another way they made their They would have to work hard to live I'll tell you that.

I: You mentioned the deadening, ———I know what a deadening is but, where was it in relation to the Mission or the old cabin(Pocosin Cabin(PATC))?

M.S.: Well, the cabin sets just where we called the deadenin', all through there was..a..all cleared up. People would bring cows up there every summer from all over: Harrisonburg, Shenandoa, 'n everywhere, to graze. That place 'd be fulla cows and a..they'd come up there in the fall of the year and carry them back to home and a..then they'd bring them back in the spring again, but that's what we called a deadenin' right out that Drive, and you could see f for miles and miles, 'course it's all grown up now. We used to have a.. so many good, I reckon you know what pure water you have up there to drink and, they used to have all kinds of springs up there and every spring had a name. One of them was Green Spring, one was ?Kibler Spring, ?Bob Alas? Spring, ?White? Spring, one was ? Spring, and one was Cool Spring, they had a name for every spring. And I don't know whether you've been to all of them or not but, they're beautiful springs. They had great big....ah, water just gushin' out of there.....real good cold water.

I: There's one right at Pocosin Cabin, right now, you know the cabin that's there.....there's a spring right behind that one.

M.S.: Right behind the wabin?

I: Yes, do you remember what the name of that one was called before?

M.S.: Well, I don't a..I don't know what you called that because when the Mission

M.S.(cont.): was out they had to carry their water from the Samuels' Spring. Maybe that's the spring, 'cause they had to carry water from over there at Mr. Samuels'. That was the first family.....you know that the church was built there in their time.....it was Mr. Zeke Samuels? and Mrs. Anne Samuels that was the name of the couple.

I: And where did they live in relation to the Mission?

M.S.: Oh, they lived..a..it was right there in sight(of the Upper Mission) it was about as far as that cabin there (about 100 yards)....and they ..a.. the old lady, as long as she was able to do it, she always cleaned our church. She cleaned the little school house which we had people and then when they built the Rock church she cleaned that. She didn't live too long after the Rock Church was built [note: Mrs. Shifflett refers to the Rock Church as the only stone structure we can see at Pocosin today].

I: Who actually built the Mission?

M.S.: Oh, that Mission up there [note: outside of the Park there is another mission which is labeled as the Lower Pocosin Mission on the Sept. 73 ed. of the PATC #10 map. Mrs. Shifflett sometimes refers to the Lower Mission but, for the most part, this interview deals with the Upper Mission(not actually marked on the PATC map)]

I: Yes.

M.S.: Mr. Billy Graves

I: Mr. Billy Graves?

M.S.: A huh, he was a rock mason, you know. He built it.

I: And it was built definately as a mission, they didn't convert it , maybe from somebody's home or something like that. Mr. Graves built it to be a mission.

M.S.: He built the Rock Church after the Mission had been closed up there. And it was a lot of people in the Park, as I say then and a..they a..a..I guess he decided he was gonna build a...a rock church up there cause they didn't know if the a..Park would take all the people out....and there was this beautiful place there for it then....all cleared and everything. So he went ahead and had the Rock Church built about..a.. it wasn't but a few years before all the people moved out 'n' the Park and so they tore the Rock Church down....but I think it was a terrible, big mistake.

I: O.K., I think I'm a little confused here, the Upper Mission....and the Rock Mission. Which one is the Rock Mission.

M.S.: M.S.: The Rock Mission is down on Middle River, they sold that. This was a rock church to but..a..the Rock Church was built..a..but it was named the Pocosin Mission...but still then he built the Rock Church(built out of rock) ..a..huh...that's right.

I: O.K., So the one that we're going to visit today.....(Upper Pocosin Mission)

M.S.: Is Pocosin Mission, is Upper Pocosin Mission.

I: And the Rock Mission is on the Middle River?

M.S.: That's right.

I: Where is the Middle River? I don't think that I've ever heard of it.

M.S.: Well, you just left...when you's at Dean's store(near Kinderhook)
....that store.

I: Oh, O.K. that's.....

M.S.: Well, you coulda turned around there at Dean's store and in about 5 minutes you coulda been up there...to the Rock Mission.(PATC map #9 shows a Middle River Chapel along the Conway River on Va. county road 667 about 2 miles above Kinderhook, Va. indicating again that the Conway River may have at one time been called the Middle River——note the Lower Pocosin Mission on county road 637 2 miles due west of Kinderhook and away from the Middle River.)

I: I see, O.K.

I: When she's talking about the Rock Church, I believe that she's talking about the Pocosin Mission.

M.S.: Ya, that's right,,they had a rock(building material) church up there too. They had two rock churches.....but...a..the one on Middle River they naver have tore down yet...a..a guy bought that. He bought the Rock Mis...a. Church there,the the Rock Mission house, and the Rock Church. He bought it all. And he got all that...a..nice building....I wish sometime that you all w'ld rode back and see it. A Mr. Hayward Hood owns it now and he got it all for 15 thousand....land and all. Oh, it's a beautiful place.

I: Did Mr. Graves supply all the money to build the Church too?

M.S.: No, he just a...the Diocese of Virginia....that and the..a.... people give'em charity to, you know, that's ..a..how the Church was built. And that's the...one lady give all the money to the Rock Mission and the Rock Church...a..on the Middle River.

I: Pat, I think that you were going to say something about a rock mission or something....you were going to explain it a little bit more? You said something about a...the Rock Mission was also the...two rock missions.

I think you were confused 'cause we're talking about the the Rock Church next to the Pocosin Mission that was built out of rock.

M.S.: Yeah, that's right

I: It has nothing to do with the Rock Mission.

I: Oh, alright

M.S.: That was Pocosin Mission but, they had a rock church built there, but this one on the Middle River was the Rock (church) Mission....that's what they call that.

I: So the Diocese of Virginia supplied a lot of money for the Pocosin?

M.S.: That's...and they...a...donated a lot of money...rich people did, they'd have a thousand dollars give to them, you know, for different people would make a will, you know, out and will so much to the church, the Diocese of Virginia, and that's why they had all of those churches built in the Mountians. It was a gift to the Diocese of Virginia in the mountians and then they had these churches built, and then a lot a...they built that mission up there at a..Pocosin Mission. Why, the men in the mountians, they worked so hard, they went there and they'd...a..go and help saw the logs and bring them into the mill, we had a sawmill up there and they helped do every thig they could and you see that was just built for nothing you could say hardly. It was the labor, they didn't have to buy the labor.

I: Is the Diocese of Virginia a particular denomination?

M.S.: Well, it's the Diocese of Virginia it's..it's..it belongs to the Episcopal Church.

I: What were your services like?

M.S.: Huh?

I: What were your services like?

M.S.: Oh, we had wonderful services, we had..we..that church would be full we had wonderful services and we had wonderful ministers as long as we had anyhting goin' on in the mountians. I think it a..one..sometimes..a..but the people got so they idin't want to come to church like they should.... and they don't go to church like they should these days...they're all.it's ..a..fall away from the Church some way or another. I's readin' here in the paper, tain't been just here the other night that if you's in a church in Russia and there wasn't a thousand people in there you'd be surprised... said there might be a thousand people in every church in Russia...but here ..'round here..there's very seldom anybody goes to church no more. Back in the mountians tho..they's a plenty a people and people looked forward to goin' to church and I knowed people come to that church on Sunday, arain, snow, pourin' down and then they'd make it up there and say come on and took what clothes they had and come on to church, and they had to walk every foot of it too.

I: Did they stay...was it an all day affair or...?

M.S.: No, they'd go..we had a..in the mountian we had our service every morning at 10:30, and then after service..why..you'd be say..about ten, eleven people gathered up and go to...let's see now, if I..there at my home..there'd be a whole big bunch go back there and they spend the day there and go on home in the afternoon...have their dinner with us and never think anything about it.

I: Did you have music in your service?

M.S.: We had every..but the organ but, we had wonderful singers in the mtn., you'd be surprised as I's tellin' the Ranger there the other day, I said, those people was livin' today and they and they could go on like that and a they could make a fortune..a..singin' . They could play any kind of music...we never had nobody playin' no music. They could play banjo, fiddle, guitar, organ,...Mr. Samuels, everyone of her boys, she didn't have no girls

M.S.(cont.): she didn't have..she had seven..eight children..seven or eight boys and them boys would go out there at that Mission..you see they lived right there at the Mission...went out there and played their organ and sing.. I wished you could hear it. Now I..you'd..you'd..you'd be surprised..and then they had a...a..all the entertainment they ever had in there in the mountians would be a dances in peoples homes, they'd have a in the fall of the year they'd have a butter stirrin' and they'd have a whole big crowd a gathered there to a stir butter which wouldn't come off 'till 'bout twelve, one o'clock, mind you when you make butter you make about 40 gallons, and a then some would dance and some would stir butter. Always have plenty a music, plenty of good music...hillbilly music..as I call it. You know that hillbilly music 's on the..a..TV now don't you...and radio, and things like that. And..a..then they'd have bean stringin's where they'd pick beans, and they'd have bean stringin's, and then they'd..a..have big dances. That was all the entertainment they had...they had no shows...to go to. The church and that was all the entertainment they had, and then..a..they'd have bingo parties, things that the church..a..some..about one night a week in..a. for the people to go to....entertainment fer young ones.

I: You talk about a lot of people, how many are you talkin' about?...approx.

M.S.: Oh,...you mean livin' in the mountains?

I: Yeah, like all these people gettin' together for bean stringin' and for butter churnin' and for....goin' to the church.

M.S.: Oh,.....you mean that. Well, I'd tell you, anywhere from 50 to 75.

I: Is that right?

M.S.: That's right, you'd be surprised.....

I: How'd they all fit in?

M.S.: Huh, well,..you mean fer these..a..a..entertainments and fer these bean stringin' things?

I: Uh huh.

M.S.: Well, some of them 'ld go in and dance, some of 'em 'ld stayed by the apple butter kettle and..a..a..stir apple butter..and talk a might and then the ones that didn't dance could come out and stir and the others go in and dance. They'd really have a good time....once in a while they'd have a fight ...but not....very seldom. It's a wonder they hadn't had more than they did have...the more education than what they had in the...and the way they had to live.

I: And..and at the church service you'd have many...how many people?

M.S.: Oh, I...that little church...that little school house as we call it. We had to use it for church too until they burnt it...built the rock church. A...I'd say that little thing 'ld hold...oh, around 100 people 'cause 'twas a real big frame a...a..school house. It was school house big enough to help all of those children into school. And that church would be full every night when they had big meet...a...service in the month you'd usually have service on Friday night and on Sunday....now that was the time they went to church. And don't think they wouldn't come out of that hollow and everywhere

M.S.: (cont.) fer that church. They loved to go to that church. I'm not sayin' that 'cause I'm a mountain person, but I lived in them and I know ...I know all about it. I..a....that...they..they...ahd a..a..real kind heart, and they do anything they could for anybody...don't care if it was a stranger or who it may be...why they was willin' ta help you in every way they could. And a...you didn't hear tell of such things a happenin' a.... back in those days when I's a growing up in the mountains...of people killin' each other like they do these days.....and a everything that's a happenin'..you never heard tell of that. They'd have fights but.....to go as far as killin' anybody like that....never.

I: Did the people of Pocosin Hollow very often see the people in some of the other hollows throughout this area?

M.S.: Did what?

I: Did the people in Pocosin Hollow ever see the people in the other hollows throughout this area very much.

M.S.: You mean when they's livin' in there?

I: Uh huh.

M.S.: Oh, yes. They visited each other regular.....they visited each other ...they'd come in each others home the day...and I tell you..it's..it's the only reason...the only ones that had a little money left had a birthday party. And you ..a..when they had a birthday party they'd call maybe some firends, and then they'd invite all the people around..and..a..they respected the old people. I can say one thing today..they really liked to take care of old people....and if they had anything special, old people had to be around there with them....and it was very seldom they ever had a birthday partybut, when they did...why...they's gonna invite ever..all the neighbors that's close around to it. And they'd get up way before day and they'd haul bark to Elkton from up there at that little cabin there you...a...there at the Upper Mission. And they'd get up way before day..I'd say around 1 or 2 o'clock and they'd load the bark before...the evening before that and then they'd carry it over to Elkton to Colver's Tannery. They was livin'over there at Elkton then and they...they had a tannery there then they hauled there bark over there, and I just can't remember what they get a load..... got a load for it there but, they didn't get very much. And then they'd they had the stave mill and they'd all have to haul staves over to Elkton ...to the....train, you know, where the train come by and pick up the..... the staves and things to haul them away. They didn't mind gettin' up way before the day.....they didn't pay any attention to that...I tell 'em. I go down there to ~~Arlington~~ to visit my children there, and they say, "Mom, you lay in the bed in the morning and rest". I say, "Listen here, you never gained nothing by layin' in bed if you lay there in the morning there." I always got up early all my life and, I said, I feel like I want to do it now. It don't hurt...you c...you get used to thing like that....it don't bother you a bit to get up early.

I: What was the name of the tannery again?...Colver's

M.S.: Colver's, they ran a tannery in Elkton there...I think all of them is

M.S.(cont.): dead except one and I think that one is just . There was Herbert, 'n' Reese, 'n', Herbert 'n', Reese ...and...a...Arthur. They were the and I think there was another one...there was four brothers and they was all millionaires...and they owned the tannery in Elkton then....that's been closed for quite a few years now.

I: Now, the men around the Pocosin area would get the bark off of the...what, the chestnut trees, and the oaks?

M.S.: Would do what?

I: They'd get the bark off of the chestnut trees and the oaks mostly?

M.S.: Oh, they'd get the...get the off'n the oaks...but very seldom they'd cut a chestnut tree....but, in the spring of the year, you know, when the sap'll drain they'd go in the mountains and they'd peel this bark and they'd go clear back there at a...they'd leave...sometimes in the.....where.....er.. when the sap got a raisin' in the timber, they'd leave and they wouldn't come back home, you see, for about a month. They'd go back in to the George Washington forest and they'd peel bark back there and have a...you know, a train used to come in there... and a ...they'd peel bark back there and they went and come...the sp..be gone b..some of them 'd be gone...some of them 'd be gone for months at a time....if they didn't have any bark to peel in here and around in these mountains but, most of the time they had a lot of bark year 'round up on the Drive and and 'round here.

I: Well, I imagine they needed the chestnut trees more for the nuts than they did the bark?

M.S.: Oh,.....when I was a child, you could go out and in the fall of the year and.....and my mother used to make and I don't see any of them these days...but it was.....an awful risk if you didn't have no trees ..I could....go out..in back and rake up my apronsfulla nuts in just a few minutes...a...just bushels if you want to stay out there...you can just pick up a bushels of 'em. And it was a guy over to Shenandoah made..named Mr. Jim Breeden...and he'd come up there...here on the Drive just where we lived and he'd a..he'd pick up these chestnuts and he'd take them over to Shenandoah and sell 'em for us. He'd give us about 10¢/gallon for them. But.... Lord, you could pick up a...people would pick up bushels of them..chestnuts in a little while.

I: Now how did the men a..how did this Mr. Breeden get up here, and how did the men get the tan bark off. Now, the Drive wasn't here?

M.S.: They had dirt roads...dirt roads....that's why they had to go so early, you know, they bumpin' over the....they hauled it over on wagons..no trucks. Wagons and mules.

I: But, the Drive wasn't...I mean there wasn't a dirt road where the Drive is now was there?

M.S.: No,..no there wasn't no road here.

I: But, roads just went over the mountains?

M.S.: That's right....that's right. No, the road went right around thru here

M.S.: (cont.) and it didn't go this way at all (the Drive)...right over the Drive there and down in and around Elkton they had a dirt road. That's the way they hauled all of their stuff...and they had mules...very seldom they had horses..... Oh, look at the snow. I reckon it was a might cold up here this morning wasn't it.

I: It was a little chilly.

M.S.: Now, another thing about it, you didn't...you know where the Lower Mission is at?

I: I've seen it on the map..but, I've never been there.

M.S.: Well, now this is right around here is what you call #3 camp.

I: What is it #3 camp?

M.S.: #3 camp, #1 camp, and #2 camp....well now we us...I used to get dinner, and I used to have quite a family...I had a 5 then...the youngest one wasn't born then...and a...down there at Lower Pocosin whole bunch of us....they had ball games up here at #3 camp.

I: The C.C.C. camp?

M.S.: Ahh, that's right. And a...we'd go up to there from here after dinner to the ball game and on back home that evening. Now I don't know how many miles that would be but, it's was quite a walk back. Oh, we enjoyed that, we didn't get tired very much. Or, there'd be a might near all the people down there at the...a..Lower Pocosin would walk up here...all the ones. They had all their ball games on Saturday evenin's if it was real pretty, if it wasn't 'course they wouldn't have it. Very little entertainment anybody ever had in the mountains. Never heard tell of a theatre, we did. Do you live back here at the #2...a...a..back at Big Meadows?

I: We live at Big Meadows.

M.S.: I think that Big Meadows is a beautiful place.

I: Yeah, we all like it pretty much.

M.S.: And you know up here on this Drive, and down there where we used to liveyou could raise cabbage heads...oh, they were that big-a-round...and just as. And you can't find cabbages as sweet as those cabbages....and you know what we got a head for 'em?.....we'd...we'd...we'd make everything we could to sell and they'd have a little left to eat. Ten cents a head was all we got forr the biggest ones.....and there was a right good salad.....you could make. And they'd cut those cabbages and haul them into town on the on the wagon. And that's a..over here ta Elkton And that's what we'd get for our cabbages....and look what they have to pay now for a pound. A whole lot more than we got for a whole head of cabbage.

I: What did you use..a..the cabbage for...mostly?...sauerkraut.

M.S.: We'd make...a..60 pound or better of kraut every fall. All the people would have a..a..whole barrel. It don't have..don't need no taste you know, it's pure..it's pure..a.. it don't make no taste at all..it always..a... make ..a..barrel and a..we'd take 'em all and..a..cut them heads up real

M.S.(cont.): fine and one was half and the other one you put a little salt there with it...and you talk about something...it was delicious. That kraut that they made those days was...you know, there ain't no there ain't no kind like that now. I make it now, but I make it in jars...and it's nothing like when you used to make in barrels. And then we'd...as I's talkin', we'd bury ..a hole the cabbage...you could go in any time of the winter you wanted and get you some cabbage to cook with. Did you ever see anybody cook cabbage?..You never?...Oh, it's delicious. We cooked a cabbage pretty near all the time. Cook cabbage and make a big pot of corn bread.....they'd have corn bread...ya see that's another thing that's really delicious.

I: This Pocosin road...was this here?

M.S.: Oh, yes.

I: All of the time?

M.S.: This is the old road..this here road was here all the time.

I: Was there ever a road that went down below the Mission...down to the hollow?

M.S.: Oh yes,...oh yes indeedie.....now all of this land was cleaned up when we lived up here.(at this point we are just at the beginning of the dirt road that leads to Pocosin Cabin)

I: This is part of the deadening?

M.S.: Yeah, this is part of the deadenin'....all of it was. You'd be surprised how a...a..pretty and all it was up here when we lived up here..... ..it was beautiful....but, it sure has grown up here now.

I: What was it...like a meadow up here?

M.S.: What...like a meadow?

I: Yeah.

M.S.: That's right, just exactly like a meadow....it was all on back here and and all that Drive up there honey, you could just stand and look for miles and miles....you might see a big oak tree, or a sycamore tree, or a..something like that but,.....the roads weren't fixed up like this....the cattle kept it all grazed down..all the time. It was a beautiful place.

I: Where did they get most of their oak trees and oak bark?

M.S.: That..they'd...they sold it.

I: Where did they cut them down...well if this was a meadow, was it down in the hollow there....down below us?

M.S.: Oh, they...down in the hollow and at different places around in the mountains here. Now that there is where....let's see....if there's a rock pile there below where we had our yard at....it's where I was born and raised there.

I: Right here...a..O.K.a....,just for the tape, we are at Pocosin cabin right now.

I(cont.): Now was your cabin, the home that you grew up in....right there where that cabin is right now?

M.S.: Honey, ifn there's a rock pile there...it's just the same place 'cause we had put a rock pile in..a..in below us and we had a..a..part of it was logged and part of it was planted...now that's.... And you know, that was all cleared out and you could....it was so clear out there and here..you could stand and look for miles and miles. Wasn't any of these trees was here..was a beautiful view...it was a beautiful view. And we...a right back over there was where our spring was at...we had.

I: Yeah, see where that green thing the green covered thing...that's the spring.

M.S.: And then we had...we had cows...we'd always have plenty of cows..... and a..you say that green thing is the spring?

I: Yes. It's covered over. Now we can go on up there if you like.

M.S.: Well now if that green thing is where our spring was at....well then the house musta set right back here....'cause that's too close to it.(Mrs. Shifflet seemed to think that her old cabin set about 15 feet west of the present location of Pocosin Cabin)

I: A little of the west of it is now?

M.S.: A huh, that's right.

I: There's a peach tree sitting right out front there...was?

M.S.: No, that wasn't there when we lived here...tho we had orchards. Down in here..below here we had orchards. Now...you take...this is our house, right down there was another house....on down over that was another house..... on down below that was another house.....it was filled with houses right down this hollow.....dozens of'em. And every one of them would come up and come out to...to the church every night and every day. And the one that I'm talkin' about would walk miles and miles to school was Roach's Mtn and that's on way back here. And then some children lived down over....you know where the Drive overlooks there?....way down on the other side of that Drive there....they would walk down here to Pocosin Mission to school.

I: That's a long way!

M.S.: It's a long way....but you wouldn't believe it...oh, you could go back to Roach's Mtn. you'd think that anybody was crazy to try to walk to school..... but those boys come. They come to our house here every morning....real early and some of them..co...come and they'd be nearly frozen...they'd stop in and warm themselves...we'd warm....they'd...it'd..warm good before they'd start on down to school 'cause it was the only house that they had to stop at you see between their house and school.

I: What was your name before you became married?

M.S.: I was a Breeden.

I: A Breeden

M.S.: Yes, that's right.

I: I wonder when that cabin was built(Pocosin-PATC)?

I: I understand that that cabin was built....actually somewhere else and they brought it here piece by piece and they assembled it here. I may be wrong. I don't really know where it was originally. Now....

M.S.: Now right up..right up..up...right..right up above that a...cabin there was a big sawmill and stave mill and the people used to....they had this a.... little a...cart with two wheels on it and the way they got the logs from way down there in that mountain....they'd put the logs.. they had this a what they called a hoister right up there below the sawmill. It had these big...oh,...cog chains come out that biga round...they'd..put it to that hoister and they had this what you call a dinkey...but it was a thing with a little a...it wasn't too little it would hold about 6 or 7 big logs, and they'd lower that thing down the track... they had a track up and down these mountains everywhere and then when they got down there and got their logs on it why they'd...they'd take this thing up here and turn it some way 'nother and pull all of those logs up out of the mountains..to the sawmill. That's the way they got their logs to the mill from here.... because they couldn't have any other way because the...it would be too steep for the horses to pull out and then they bring it do n here to this big field.. they'd take it all out there and then that's where they'd move the wagons at... a...the bark and the staves to go Elkton.

I: I see. How did they turn the mill?

M.S.: They turned it with steam....they ran with steam. That's how they turned the sawmill and the stavemill. And Preacher Hall and a..he would walk from down here at this mission....he'd get out some evenings...and you couldn't hardly believe this....he'd get out some evening and walk over to Elkton and back.

I: How did he make it?

M.S.: I don't know he made it but he made it...he'd come by out house here some nights just about...long summer days it was just about dark and it was a stort day then it would be way after dark when he got back...but he walked every step of the way over there and back. I walked from here to Elkton.....I guess I was about 10 or 11 years old when I walked over there....and we didn't rest but three times. I remember we sit down along the road and rested three times. I guess that's how come I'm goin' to""stay" 'cause a I walked so much and got so much exercise...I thing that's why all these people in the mountains lived so long...because they...they had to walk might near every... Now, you imagine anybody gettin' out here and walkin' way down here on the Middle River and carryin' their groceries back. And that wasn't hereit was all back up here in these mountains and everywhere they lived.

I: Middle River was your closest town?

M.S.: Middle River was store was out closest store...that's where we had to do all of our dealin', and Mac Mullen. Now, you know where MacMullen is at now don't you.

I: Yes, I think so.

M.S.: Well now, MacMullen and Middle River a store a was all the stores we the closest stores we had to.

I: But Elkton was the "big city".

M.S.: That....Elkton was the Big city then.

M.S.: But, we very seldom ever got to Elkton. The only way we could go to Elkton was to go to Elkton on a wagon and that was a.....I remember the first time I was ever in Elkton they had a...a...Robertson's store..a..Robertson's store and they had all of these wild animals....and you know what we had to pay to go and see that show? Oh, they had all kinds of a animals.....25¢ a piece. Now I thought that it was the biggest treat of my life.....well, I've seen the show once since then. That's the way we had to live up here in the mountains.

I: Now we're paying about 2.50 cents.

M.S.: Well, you could get a...when we lived up here in the mountains you could buy all of the sugar you wanted for 25...5...cents....5 pounds for .25¢. And coffee for .15¢ a pound. I remember when I used to go up to the store and buy a real nice piece of...a yard of material for a 70¢ a yard. And you look now. I tell you, times have really changed...it's really changed.

I: Well, then you had a pretty easy walk from here to the Mission to go to school then.....compared to the other people?

M.S.: Yes,..oh yes I did, I really felt sorry for them. As I say, they'd come to school some mornings...they didn't have no gloves..and their hands would get so cold that they would chap and blood would run out of them. But they come out of this hollow and everywhere down here to this school..!cause it was the only school they had to come to. And some would come and wouldn't have no lunch they'd have to go back...and if it was near they'd walk home to lunch and if it wasn't they'd be without lunch until they got back home that evening.

I: Were your parents...or your...yeah, your parents and cabin a..were forced out because of the Park...is that right?

M.S.: No, we moved to a...we moved out from up here way before the Park because we got so big and all and there wasn't enough a land to farm to make a livin' on then and a..you..a..that..made a right smart money and he bought a..a..... farm down off the mountain here....it's right above MacMullen. And we moved from there...oh, people stayed there in the mountains a long time after we moved out....and..a..that's where we lived until my parent died.

I: Were a lot of people moving out of the mountains because there wasn't enough land and it wasn't as productive as it used to be? Did most of them stay here?

M.S.: Most all..most all of them stayed here until the Park run them out...all of them.

I: Did they..did most of the people resent that?

M.S.: Yes, they did. Some of them cried because they had to leave their homes. ...especially the old ones. The young ones didn't seem to mind 'cause they wanted to get out, you know, they thought that..a..they'd have something else special to do...havin'...to live in the mountains....but the older ones..it really hit 'em hard. I tell you a fact..they didn't live long after they got out of here.....the older ones didn't.

I: Well, this was the only type of life they knew and,,and I guess it was a little hard adjusting.

M.S.: That's right. The only life..the only type of life they lived, and you know in these days you could a..all these people that lived in the mountains in

M.S.:(cont.) in those days, they could get out here and a hunt anywheres they wanted to.....didn't have to have no hunting license...they could kill as many thing as they wanted...animals that they wanted,..and you'd be surprised that.. Do you know what pheasants is? Why they could get out here and in the evening kill 4 or 5 of them in just a little bit.....and it's a very...they didn't.... people around here had very few chickens because a...they couldn't have them on account of foxes. And they didn't keep but very few dogs....none of them didn't. Well now, I don't know...reckon any family that I know of had over 2 or 3 dogs. And down home I think we got about a 12 or 13 hounds. C.W., how many do we have there at our house?..... C.W.: Oh, about fifteen. Oh, they have dogs....usually 22....we've had a we've got a...they got a blood-hound down there now. I's kinda fraid of that thing when they first got it but, I'm not afraid of it now...he's actually a nice one.

I: Do you think that the people were treated fairly when they were moved off... now weren't they given some property and some livestock to try to start over again?

M.S.: Yeah, I think that they treated them fairly...but they didn't have as much land you see that they did back in the Park here. But you know, those days people could make a livin' ofen....well, I tell you one thing about it, we had a little field right back down there..where we always put that in corn. You know, in the mountains you can't raise much corn....there's times we used to try...but, you could raise cabbage, and 'tatoes, and turnips..you could raise all...and buckwheat. Now, right over there we'd always have a turnip patch where we'd...all of them but...a..clean off this a these little patches and get all of the rock off of it that we could and they'd have a potato patch, and a turnip patch, and a cabbage patch, and a buckwheat...a field of buckwheat... but you could have just a little place of buckwheat and you could make several barrels of flour. What in the fall of the year they'd..they'd..each pack a... people in the mountain here would a barrel...a barrel of buchweat flour around. And they'd get on up and go to the store and trade their buckwheat for wheat flour ..they'd get a barrel of wheat flour. And 'course and they'd most all of them had to buy their cornmeal...'cause you can't raise corn up in here..and that's how they got their bread...but they'd get it near buckwheat....time 'cause you could raise all of the buckwheat you could up here in the mountains but you can't raise wheat and you can't raise corn.....very seldom you ever had any luck with corn or wheat. We never did try to raise wheat 'cause that was out of the question...but...you could just raise plenty of buckwheat and, the thing about what..they'd have the meat...they'd have the hogs and you would never have to fatten a hog. With the acorns and chestnuts they comed in as fat as they could be. Do you all like pork? Well, now you just didn't have to bother about your hogs a bein' fat...'cause the mast out in the mountains would..was all the food the hog wanted to be fattened off of. Why on the fall of the year, and in the spring, they would always a buy them a barrel of fist. Every.... pretty near....pr..person in the mountains might near would always have plenty of fish. Why you could get a big barrel of fish for 5 dollars...a real big barrel of fish. Why they'd buy a barrel in the fall, and a barrel in the spring...and that was...they always ate plenty of fish...and then the hog meat was the only kinda meat they had. They never had no other kinda of meat..... beef...well, that was out of the question....never had no beef.

I: Well, you said that you had cows up here?

M.S.: We had milk cows, Yeah, we'd always have a..we'd have two or three milk cows. We always had plenty of milk in the winter and if you worked it right you could have plenty of milk in the winter and plenty of milk in the summer.

M.S.: We always had plenty of milk but, you could raise potatoes up here, and cabbage...you wouldn't believe it if you could see 'em..how big and all they'd be...potatoes, cabbage, and turnips. You just didn't have 'em...a you could have luck with those every year just plenty..many..of 'em.

I: Did you see many deer up here?

M.S.: Honey, when I's brought up I never saw a deer. I remember I had an aunt that lived right down underneath here,oh, this was cleaned out...it was a field down there. We had a big barn down there. I went down there one evening well you know when the neighbors got out of one thing..why they'd have to borrow.. say I got out of sugar, this week, why I'll borrow sugar from a neighbor until I got to go to the store the next week and they was always real nice about that.. and I went down there one evening..they sent me down...kinda late one evening to buy some sugar. Now right down there a..it was the only animal I ever saw beside a..besides a fox, and a squirrel, and a rabbit.....I saw this great big long yellow thing comin' out through the woods. To this day I don't know what it was. But, I was by myself and I...I..I'll never forget, I was scared to death. But, it just a hopped right on down through the field here and down to my eyes I went on down there but, I got someone to come on back with me 'cause it was gettin' kinda late but....I don't know what that thing coulda been...no it was was as long as the front part of this car here.

I: What did it look like?

M.S.: It was..it was a..long and was right yellow lookin'.

I: Was it cat-like?

M.S.: Yeah, cat-like. It was kinda made like a cat....but it didn't seem to bother me. It was right close to me and, I just looked at it and it looked at me and it went on out through the woods.

I: Did it have a long tail?....did you notice.

M.S.: Honey, I just don't remember now. I was just so scared.....but I remember that it favored a cat. I believe...I believe..a..let's see now, I've seen things like that in the book but I can't remember now what it was. And I often thought that that is what it was, but that the only.....no deers.... never...all we used to..have to get up early every morning and a go up and hunt the cows every morning in the deadenin' as we would call it. Well, you could stand and see the cows for miles and miles and we'd always have a..a.. bells on them...and we'd get up and go in the deadenin' and hunt for cows and in the morning and night...never see nothin' 'cept the cows and the horses and things like that that people bring in the deadenin'. I never seen no other kinda animal....unless it be a fox or something. Once in a while you see a ..that

I: Do you think that they were hunted off?

M.S.: Well, I don't know why 'cause the people in the mountains had but very few dogs....I don't think that they were even in here then. I think the mountains was so open with a people...many people lived in the mountain that the.... they just didn't bother to come around close enough.....(tape check-1min.elapsed)
These you just couldn't go some times, it would stall, and the only way they had to a...to keep the roads open would be to a get a great big a log and take the mules and hitch 'em to it and run it up and down the road....if the mules could get through the drifts. Never have a...had nothing...these a....

M.S.:(cont.) machines that push the snow off there like they do now..... never had one like that then. You just had to go through things like that the best you could in those days.....but, somehow or another they made it. They all lived happy to.

You know, my youngest daughter has never been here....where I used to go to school. She lives in Arlington now...she has two little children. I wished you all could meet my family. I have four down there and two up here. I have a three daughters that live down in Arlington and a...one son. The son drives a bus and one of my daughters a husband works at the Secret Service place and a...the other one is a bus driver. He drives a bus a in a....my son-in-law is a bus driver and a....my son drives a bus too...and then a my youngest daughter as I say, never did....been up here where I went to school and where I was raised. Her husband is a..with the town police. She has two little girls. She adopted one and she had one....they're really cute.

I: Was this all clear through here?

M.S.: Well, you know those little things you see up in there(shrub)? Well, you didn't...you didn't see things like that when I lived up here. You might see trees through there and then in a..in a spring of the year,..you'd be surprised, you could go through these woods and these buttercups, as we call it, and these a..a..what d'ya' callit...I know you'd know what I mean with all those wild-flowers..it was some of the prettiest flowers would grow through these woods you ever seen Oh, it was beautiful. Now....now this used to be a big field, and that used to be a big field.

I: Did anything grow on it or...just a that?

M.S.: They'd farm it...they'd farm it and a..a..buckwheat a...and anything that they could farm it in. All back in a..all back in here was a...cleared up..... now I was...the church that we had...on the...the first church I can remember.. there was one up here that sets rightin there.

I: O.K., For the sake of the tape, that's a little bit north of a...

M.S.: The old Mission....that the Pocosin Mission. That sit right there, and then..then...finally the Mission moved down to the Lower Pocosin Mission and then they built the Rock Church up here because you see, there was a lot of people left lived up here in the mountains without any..a..without any church to go to so they built that....and we..we'd walk up here to this church every morning and we'd walk back down to the a..Lower Mission..a...Lower Pocosin Mission had a church in the evening...at 2:30. We didn't think anything of it! And you'd be surprised at the people that would be at that church every sunday morning. The Samuels' you all talkin' about was the first ones.....remember all the church....they lived right out there...right out there. Oh, this was nothing but a real pretty grassy place.

I: And what would that be a...what??? is that some hollow down in there? Does that have a name? Just south of the Mission here, right down in the little hollow(See Fig. 1, point B).

M.S.: Yeah, well now I don't..I don't know...well...when a hollow that..a..... what they called that..any name, but Mrs. Samuels, these two old people, well I told you about the boys that could play so much music...and just picked up

M.S.(cont.): any kind of music...with their ears and sing it, they lived right out there. And she'd ...would clean this church. She'd do it all by herself ... just as long as she was able.

I: What was the little wooden building there?

M.S.: That wath....that was the Mission.

I: That was the first Mission? And the squared log thing was the....

M.S.: And the first Mission that was ever built in these mountains is layin' right there.

I: O.K., the squared log building.(See Fig. 1, point C) They built that first and then they built the Rock Church...later on?

M.S.: That's right, they built the Rock Church years after that was built.

I: O.K., the Rock Church is the building just south....of the old Mission.

M.S.: That's right.

I: O.K.....O.K., we are at a squared log..a..structure just..just east of the concrete marker down at Pocosin and, Mrs. Ella Shifflett is going to tell us about the squared log building, and down a little bit to the south, as I have noted, there's a a stone building which she calls the stone(Rock) Church. And this a this building here was not built by Graves?

M.S.: No.

I: The squared building.

M.S.: No....No...

I: Who built this one, do you know?

M.S.: I can't remember to save my life....,who built this thing

I: And a....

M.S.: I know that the Samuels' would know who built this.

I: And you a...this was here long before you were born?

M.S.: Yes it was, cause I remember that it was here.

I: O.K., and this front part here was the livin' quarters?

M.S.: That's right, and it had windows from the bottom floor to the top.. it was...it was a beautiful little cabin. It was a pity that it had to go down the way it did.

I: And that's where the mission worker.....lived?

M.S.: And that's where they lived.....Mrs. Towles.

I: And then on this side was the kit.....

M.S.: It was the kitchen and the little dining room on back up there.

I: On the south side....the kitchen and the dining room?

M.S.: That's right.

I: What was that hole back there with the cement in it?

M.S.: Huh?

I: There's a hole back there about that wide.....that long....cement.

M.S.: I don't know..... Unless somebody had....made it for a little aa....
....down underneath the ground you mean?

I: Yeah.

M.S.: To look at this place now and look at it when I used to come here.....
it's certainly run down..... It's kinda sad in a way...it used to be such a
happy place you know and...everyone goin' and comin' 'n'.

I: Well, if this....if the mission worker lived here, they had the services in
their homes....before the church was built or what th.....

M.S.: No, they had...they had....service in the old school house that stood right
down there.

I: O.K., so that was...the old school house was(See Fig. 1, point A)set off to
a the northwest.....from here.

M.S.: That's right. They had..they had to have service and school in the school
house cause they couldn't have...couldn't afford to have...a church then but a...

I: O.K., but that was not done in the old wooden church, this was just living
quarters?

M.S.: That's right.

I: For Mrs. Towles?

M.S.: That's right....T.O.W.L.E.S...that's how you spelled it.

I: I see...I see. I had originally thought this is where everything happened
right here.(squared log building, point C).

M.S.: No...no...this...this is the mission lady's quarters..where they lived in
here, and down there was the old school house and the church and then finally
they built the Rock Church here.

I: Do you know when the Rock Church was built?

M.S.: I just don't remember to save my life when that was built...but I guess
I could find out for you.

I: But this....the Rock Church is the thing that Mr. Graves built...he was the
mason?

M.S.: Mr. Graves, the mason, built that church.....and that was one beautiful church...I wished you could see it before they tore it down.

I: Now after this one.....ah, why did they close this one down and build that one?

M.S.: Well, ah...the lady here had two children and only way she had to get out and in was by horseback. And so they just a....a..the bishop decided to build a house down at the Lower Mission and then she moved down there and there was too many people back up and in the mountain.... This old school house was torn down you know, and he decided to build his church up here for the people that lived back up here in the mountains.....and you see the Park....he thought they would live here all of the time but you see the Park come and left them.

I: So.....a....he didn't try to fix this old wooden building up....instead, he built that one?

M.S.: He built...yeah,...that's right...but, my aunt lived in this here a..... house for years and years. She died in here.

I: And what was her name, do you remember?

M.S.: Yes, Estell Breeden.

I: Estell Breeden?

M.S.: Estell Breeden.....she died right there in that Mission...but, she lived out here after the mission people left and a...and when they left there they.. see the Park took it then. And nobody else...they wouldn't rent it to nobody else.

I: What was the building to the left hand side of the Church building?

M.S.: That's just a little tarriff?????....building,....what we had the a bill??? up on you know. The bishop would go in there you know, and...the vesper room, and dress in his a robe before he'd come out you know.

Yeah, this used to be a right pretty little place here. You see back here where they used to have their a their kitchen was sit right here?

I: Yeah, this one right here.

M.S.: This one right here was the kitchen, and on up....right on up in there was the.....

I: Tiny isn't it?

M.S.: Yes, it was tiny but, it was but they had their little flame fixed up here and it was so cold and yet was warm as it could be.....there's a piece of the old flue.

I: Did it have a fireplace over here in the corner?

M.S.: No, they..nev...they didn't have no fireplace here. They just had the stove ...stove...

I: A wood stove?

M.S.: Yes ma'am.

I: That's how they kept warm huh?

M.S.: That's how they kept warm.

I: Boy, I'll bet you it got mighty cold here in the winter?

M.S.: And then they had a little a four lid cook stove. It just a had four tops on it, you know what I'm talkin' about? And they had that sit right in the corner and it it was beautiful. You'd be surprised that that bishop and things would come up here just for to spend the week-end. You'd just be surprised.

I: And they'd live right here in this building?

M.S.: They lived right here in this little building. They used to have some pretty rose bushes and things around here but, all of those is gone now. And you see this here was a little a...they had two more, this was a little dining room here. It come out here....back there was this little room they kept a company in this side. It's all changed....kinda.

I: And the far room over there?

M.S.: Huh?

I: The...what was the far room over there?

M.S.: That...they just kept that....they put you know, a just a some things they didn't use you know...right away....store their things away in it.

I: Where did they sleep?

M.S.: Up stairs.

I: There's an upstairs to this?

M.S.: That's right. It had....

I: A little loft?

M.S.: Huh?

I: Like a loft?

M.S.: Yeah, they had a some nice bedrooms upstairs. And they had a little garden you see where the garden was back here. Right up there was the garden

I: What did they grow....mostly? All kinds a things?

M.S.: They'd grow beets, and potatoes and beans and....and things like that. They had a right big garden here. They...now the way the Mission would get their garden a....a farmed...the a neighbors would come down and farm it for'em. They wouldn't charge 'em nothing they just work out their things for them and they'd end up makin' money offen the garden.... . Now that there little space back up in there was the garden. They used to have some beautiful lilacs bushes back here. I think that was one of my favorites....it looks to me like it's dead.

I: But most of these trees were not here when you went to school?

M.S.: No indeedie....no. you..jus...eh..the chestnut trees is the things that a stood around from here and ivy. Do you know what ivy is that blooms pretty in a...pink every summer?

I: Mountain laurel.....right. A huh, sure do.

M.S.: Well, they had a lots of that too when I was here....and oaks! It was just about all just...the mountain was....oh, you could see for miles..you can't see nowheres now but you sure could see a long ways then.

I: But this was pretty heavily populated in through here, there were a lot of homes you say?

M.S.: It was true, it was. On back here up at the...you know where Meadows' ah....field, big field back there.....well, there used to be a beautiful place back up....two families lived back there. Well, let's see Meadows and the Taylors lived back there and then on back of that was the Dean familt lived.

I: O.K., now this is all off to the south of the Mission here, down in this hollow?

M.S.: And you know a where the a the picnic...South River Picnic Grounds is at well, right down below the South River Picnic Grounds is, there was a lot of people lived in there....just a lot of them.

I: Yeah, there's some pretty falls there too.

M.S.: Yeah, beautiful. Well, I'm afraid of the falls. Every...all the people in the mountains...at 4th of July used to go back to that falls where....just for entertainment. They'd all meet there and bring their baskets. I said that it was one of the most dangerous places they could go to have entertainment 'cause some of them get to drinkin' you know and could fall over the...they's lucky they didn't do it. But they'd go the 4th of July go back to those falls and spend the day, and have their picnic.

I: Can we walk down here to the stone.....a.....?

M.S.: Yes indeed.

I: There's a graveyard right down there.
Right down there?

M.S.: Oh, it's a big graveyard down in there. They had only two graveyards right here in the mountains. Back...the Dean.....Dean mountaim they have a graveyard back there.....and down there at the is what they callrd it, and then a.....this was the Samuels' graveyard here.

I: O.K. now, this.....O.K., the Samuels' graveyard that she's talking about should be almost directly west of the old stone mission. Kind of south then or south-southwest(See Fig. 1, point E).

O.K., there is a name etched in here. It says: this church has gone up and down in my lifetime, and I think it says a...is it W.E.Lam? Do you know of anybody by that name?

M.S.: W....E....is that a W.E. Lam?

I: W.E. Lam.....L..A..M..

M.S.: I know one named Willy Jackson Lam. He lived right up down...go down

M.S.(cont.): the road there and go down there. They'd always come up here to church on Sunday.

I: They lived down in Pocosin Hollow?

M.S.: Ahuh.

I: And there's another E.B.Samuels, born here 1915....visited here July 21, 1974

M.S.: E.B. Samuels?

I: Yes.

M.S.: E.B. Samuels?????? One of Mrs. Samuels' sons was named Tom and one was named Seul???, and one was named Joe, and one was named Johnney, and one was named Cicero, and one was named Tiny?? It couldn't have been one of her children.

I: This fellow, E.B. Samuelson born here 1915.

M.S.: E.B. Samuels?

I: So that would make his 60 years old now.....somewhere around there. You was about 15 years old when he was born.

M.S.: Well, I should remember.....E.B.? Well another thing that a..... a lot of people in the mountains that a....a..maybe called their children nicknames sometimes, and it coulda been one of her boys.....

I: Maybe those are his real initials and they didn't call him that.

M.S.: Ahuh. I know all of them well but, a..all of her children well but a.. but I don't remember none that time.

I: What was that little thing down there...that wooden thing that's fallen over?

M.S.: Well, I don't know what that might be...a..some of the paint from the church.....

I: It looks like it could have been part of the side of the roof.

M.S.: Yes, that's what I was thinkin'.

I: It was either blown down there or carried down there by somebody.

M.S.: Now it....I don't know whether it's a growed up....

I: There's another name in there: Mc Bride. It seems to be a little bit more recent than the others.

M.S.: I don't know is a McBride lived back in here in the mountains at all... that's new to me.

I: Can you kind of give us some idea of how the church was arranged, now the part that is still standing here you said that a... (Fig. 1, point F)

M.S.: This..that...ah..this part is the vesper room. That's where the minister go in and put his rope on, before he'd come out to have the service. But I have seen this church fulla people up here. And you know,,I'll never forget one night we had a Preacher Fisk, George Fisk, he's dead now, here one night to help. Big meetin'for us...a big meetin, a revival you call it, we call it a big meetin', and a there was two guys that used to drink a lot and they was gettin' up in years, and I'll never forget that how they set in here that night and cried....those two men. It was really sad.

I: The a bottom part of the building was made of stone, but this was all wood up above this, isn't that right?(Fig.1, point G)

M.S.: No..no,.....

I: It was all stone?

M.S.: It was all stone, every bit of it was stone like this, all except around the windows. Just like you see right there, all of it was built just like you see the vesper room.....clear up to the top. *Course...in those days I guess ..a..the bishop got it made for....oh, less...real less than half what you'd have to pay now to build it because you could hire labor for little..nothing. All the people in the mountain would come to help day after day...free of charge, they wouldn't charge a thing...I...

I: Did they have any heat here?

M.S.: Oh yes, they had heat. They had it heated with a wood stove, they do.. usually had one at the back and one at the front....alwaya...always nice and warm. Cause the Samuels' would come out here and they'd build a fire early in the morning you know. Tell you standin' here and think about how many people gathered here at this church, this place would be full around here and all gathered to go home with people for dinner, you wouldn't imagine that it ever happened.

I: It's so quiet now.

M.S.: Eh,...it is quiet.

I: You said that people would come here to church and afterwards they would go to somebody's house and spend the afternoon?

M.S.: Right up that road there when we started home from church, there'd be about a dozen or two people go home with us might near every Sunday for dinner. And we enjoyed it, and we'd always have plenty to fix for 'em. We enjoyed it, and then they'd go to different places...down here to Mrs. Samuels' And then it was a.....a couple lived down here.....a...Mr. Charlie Taylor, some would go home with him for dinner. They's all burjed there in that cemet-ary there. Used to be a bunch of..right pretty cementary there but, it's all gone down now. All this here used to be nothing but gress, you wouldn't believe it, but it all was nothing but grass. And from here out to Mrs. Samuels' house was just nothing but bluegrass sod.

I: Where was a the front of the church. I heard you speak of the fr~~ont~~ and t the back, now the front is this facing off to the west where the steps are still.

M.S.: That's the front and that's the back.

I: And the..the preacher would stand down at this direction off to the east.
(opposite to the steps) Note: Mrs. Shifflit refers to the front of the church as that end with the steps OR the entrance way.

M.S.: We had a..we had a real nice pulpitaa there, real nice balconys and every-thing there. It was really pretty. Shame it all...and you know, this church didn't...wasn't used very many years after the a...built it...before they.... people come movin' out of the Park. Very, very few years after they built this church it was used. That...when they was a usin' it, we'd come up here might near every morning and I rode...I used to ride a horse up here some mornings if it was real cold, and I'd get up here and my feet would be just numb. If it was pretty, we'd always walk 'cause a lot of people didn't have horses to ride you know. I'd walk along with them. We'd always had two horses..... we had two horses and two mules. And my husbands daddy give him two mules when he got married.

I: What's the thing that sticks in your mind the most, that ever happened here? Do you remember that day?

M.S.: Well, what sticks in my mind the most is was a wedding here. But it wasn't in this church, it was in the school house there. And I....I..... remember the people lived down...lived on Lam's Mountain, that's way down off the. There's Pocosin Hollow, you go down there to Pocosin Hollow right down that road there you know, and you turn off another road and go on down to Pocosin Hollow. Well, a these people lived down Pocosin Hollow and up on Lam's Mountain. Have you heard tell of Lam's Mountain?

I: I think it's on the map we have.

M.S.: Well, both of them lived on Lam's Mountain, and they come up here and got married. They got married right over there in the little school house right there. And I tell ya, honey your takin' my picture and I'm a sight, and a she didn't.....they was so poor they didn't have no clothes to getr married in. So they came here to this mission and she had clothes to send in you know to..to..the mission for poor people, and a they come out...or to give them some a clothes to get married in and then when she had this here a a coats with these here a...long tailed..frock tailed coats; well, she dressed the man up in that coat and she went and a the back room there and picked out the bride the prettiest dress she could find. And they got married in the old school house down there, that's what we used to do. Preacher Green married them and then after the...the wedding she bought them a ca....a little cabin at the Mission there and had a little entertainment there for them. That's the most excitin' thing ever happened around here 'cause it was the first weddin' that ever had been in the mountains and I tell you, everybody was here. You couldn't begin to feel.....oh, that's a apple isn't it? Well, where did you get that at? Well, did you ever? Somebody musta dropped that here.

I: Somebody or something!

M.S.: Animals, maybe squirrels.
What was that little green thing you hit?

I: Hawthorn, that's hawthorn.....hawthorn.....a type of rose.
Were you married up here?

M.S.: No, I wasn't married up here. That's the only wedding that I can ever

M.S.(cont.): remember. That's the only wedding that was ever in these mountains 'cause you never did hear tell of anybody ever gettin' married up here. That was the first wedding and the last one. Although down here at the Lower Mission...down here it was a lot of weddin's down there. Several weddings were down there but, this one up here was the only one was...that happened up here in the mountains. And the was the most excitin' thing that ever..... that ever happened in the mountain was that weddin'.

I: Let's go down and look at the graveyard. O.K., could you show us the graveyard?

M.S.: Oh, yes. It's just right down here. There's quite a few people buried in this graveyard. Mrs. Samuels and a well her....she had a son, he left here to go on Roach's mountain one night when he froze to death right up on the other side of Skyline Drive, and they a.....my husband and a whole bunch went to look for him the next morning.....cold as blazes that night. He tried not to get him to go, this was Joe, and they found him a layin' back down here at ...oh, it was this side of Roach's mountain...might near..up near where the Roach's lived. They found him laying there at the...it was a cabin back there that an old lady used to live in but she was gone that night, and he done got so cold that he couldn't get in the cabin. He'd a had to break the door down but he was done so cold and numb that he couldn't.....and they found him dead the next morning. That was awful. I come down here to see him, they had to cut his clothes off of him. They was froze to his body, they couldn't get them off any other way. And I, so they...he was buried here, and a son Johnney was buried here, and she had another one died in a New Jersey. He was a buried up there and she had another one buried down here on Middle River Mission and this....she's got three dead and buried here and all of the rest are buried away from here....'cause they all left. It's right around down here, the graveyard is. They had two big cast iron stoves there but the neighbors would always fix plenty of wood for the...for the church. They never did have to bother about that.

I: This just be the apple tree that a.....

M.S.: Now it could be.

I: I don't imagine that was there when you were here, it's right in the way of the steps.

M.S.: No, it wasn't....wasn't there.....it wasn't there when the.....you know a lot of these tree come from a the squirrels and things a carrying them..... seeds...here yonder.

I: Now, this is it right in here?

M.S. No, it has a...a lot of tomb stones. I mean little marks...they didn't have no tombstones in those days. They lived right out down this road and that family was so poor they didn't....they had to give their children away. You know, that is awful. When they give them away they'd come here just a crying, oh, it was so pitiful. I was been married then, and I had three children of my own.....we lived down at Lower Pocosin then and I tell you, it was.. it was pitiful. I think that there was ten.....nine or ten of 'em.

I: And what family was that?

M.S.: It was a Mr. & Mrs. Charlie Taylor.....their family.

I: And this road you say used to go down to the Samuelson place and down towards the Taylors.

M.S.: I think the road that had been down to Mrs. Samuels, I think it went right up from the a....right out through there somewheres. It was on the other side of the cemetery, I know that the cemetery was on this side on the way out to the Samuels' house.

I: O.K., it was on the opposite side of the cemetery from the Mission..... there should be a road heading down there.

M.S.: Yes, that's right.....ther..th...the road that went out to her house was on the other side of the cemetery.

I: This road here goes on down and it goes past the cem..a cemetery down there a...sort of near the base of the road that goes past South River.

M.S.: Oh, you mean at..a..at a.....probably.....

I: There's some Meadows buried down there and some other folk.

M.S.: Yeah, that's a what they call the Taylor cemetery. Ahuh, that's on Meadows' side over there...that...it used to be that used to be a pretty place too. It had two big houses over there that they were beautiful homes., all of it cleared up. Each family...one family had fourteen in it, and the other one had thirteen.

I: I don't think that's Park property down there?
Were the Meadows' related to the Taylors?

M.S.: Oh, a no, they wasn't related to the Taylors.

I: Well, when I went down I was real confused in that cemetery because there was a, almost looked like a monument, there that just said Meadow on it, and then there were several unnamed stones sort of like these ones that.....

M.S.: Well you,...were you talking about Dean mountain cemetery, aren't you?

I: No, no it's not the Dean cemetery. I know where that one is.

M.S.: That's right on Skyline Drive.

I: That's right on Skyline Drive.....right on down this road.

M.S.: Well, then your talkin' about the Taylor cemetery.....another cemetery on back here on the Taylor place. Now, Taylors and the Meadows, they lived right close together.....their farms joined eachother.....and that's how they had that cemetery that name.

I: Why is it that there were no headstones, is it because the people really couldn't afford it?

M.S.: Couldn't afford it.....they couldn't afford it.

I: Now was it a a..the thing to do back then, was there was a headstone and one at the the bottom of the grave?

M.S.: They'd put a little rock at the head and one at the foot.

I: Did they usually try to carve their name in the...in the headstone or not?

M.S.: Well it...they a they had something that they put their name on there and what time they was buried but, it didn't stay long.....it didn't stay long.

I: How many people do you imagine are buried here? Was this..was the graveyard here when you were a living here?

M.S.: This graveyard was here whenever ...first whenever I can remember anything, because the Samuels'.....people after them was all buried here..... lot of people is buried here. I don't even know. Now that used to be a the Samuels' had that....field right back there, they used to have that in corn and buckwheat and things. This was cleared land back in here...every bit of it.

I: Oh, I bet you this big tree, I bet you that was here when you were here?

M.S.: Oh yeah, as I was sayin', back in the deadenin' as I call it them big oak trees there that you see a through there.....it was the only trees and you once in a while there was a big sycamore trees, you know what they are don't you? Well, you see a lot of them in the deadenin' but, very seldom did you ever see.....and chestnuts. And the oaks was what they would peel for bark and when they peeled all of the oak trees around here that was big enough for bark why they'd go off to other places.

I: O.K., these trees are just south of a the Mission(See Fig.1, point H), or SSW.

M.S.: But this sure has growed up in a hurry.

I: A lot of memories down here for you.

M.S.: We used to...Mr. Samuels used to have a little old dog he's about, oh, about twice as big as the one the fellow has with you all. He used to come out here and his name was "Penny", and he'd sic Penny after us. And this lady that would come back up here, Mrs. Marks???, and teach school after she moved down at the Lower Mission....she had a ?stile?, you know what a stile is? It's a kind of wooden box you step to you get up on a horse. Everybody rode side saddle in those days. And he'd sic that dog after us and we'd run and get up on that stile and oh, we'd have a time.....we'd really have a time.

I: But the people around here were pretty self sufficient.....I mean everything they had they made themselves or they grew themselves?

M.S.: Everything they...had nothing gave to them. They had no income comin', no other way exceptwork hard for it. No welfare checks, no social security checks or nothing. And they ate what they raised in the mountains. What they go to the store to buy would be sugar, and coffee and bakin' powders and sodas like that. That's what they'd go to the store and buy.....and a clothes and a.....that's what they'd get. But what I say, they'd make what they had to eat now, and you know ,I think that's why they..... We have a doctor that a bought a place here ,Dr. Cullin? from Maryland, and he says that a food like that is so much better for you than food you buy at the store. He said that it was fresh right out of the earth. And you know I think that's why those people lived so long because they eat what come right out of the ground and they'd bury what they.....when they dug it out of the ground, why they'd put it right back in the ground until they used it. And a they did but very little cannin', they'd can blackberries and a some peaches.....

M.S.(cont.): some of them had some peaches and made apple butter as I told you, and that's what they ate. And he says that's probably how come they lived so long. And then they got plenty of exercise along with it. They could eat just all they wanted and they wouldn't gain no weight like people does these days. They could run it off just as fast as they put it on.

I: What was that fence up there grand ma? There's a fence right up there.

M.S.: Well, that fence used to be the company farm. See this belonged to the Samuels'. And that's a....a I think it was what they call a....the head man of it was Brown, his name was brown I believe, I ain't quite sure but I think it's Brown. And it's a company farm, and he always rented to the people in the mountains.

I: What do you mean.....a company farm?.....again.

M.S.: It was a company of people that bought these two farms, it was called the Upper Place Farm and the Middle Place Farm. It was.....three farms right along together down along the Pocosin road here, and they'd rent those farms to people every....every year for about.....oh, they paid about 15 or 25 dollars a year for it and they'd farm it. And it was a company of people that a...four.....eh...maybe four here would buy it you know from the company.

I: But these people lived somewhere else?

M.S.: Yeah, they lived....I think....I tell you what, they lived at Luray. I can remember that much 'cause when they sent the checks off for this place and all, they sent it to Luray. And so that a.....

I: Now a lot of the people that....that talk about the way that the folks used to farm here say that a lot of the people didn't farm very well, and a lot of the soil just couldn't produce that much anymore. Do you agree with that?

M.S.: No.....I don't agree with that because they.....my uncle would plant the same a...a..cabbage patch, same potato patch, same cuc..turnip patch, every year and he'd just.....grew fine.....no fertilizer, no nothing. The mountain land was really rich. And another thing about it, it was awful light..... I reckon that's how come the crops grew so big.

I: Who did most of this land belong to?

M.S.: Well I tell you, the truth, I reckon it belonged to the a...a..one man from Shenandoah, Mr. Kite. He owned a.....I don't know how many hundreds of acres around Skyline Drive, and he owned a lot down the...there at Pocosin too....Pocosin Hollow. And that's where most of all of my people lived at was on his mark. Except this company farm and this belonged to the Samuels' in here, I don't know how many....and over there that belonged to the Meadows' and the Taylors. And each one of them owned a piece of itexcept the company farm. But if you wanted to have a little....clean up a lot on their place to farm, why they'd...they would let you go ahead. You could farm as many years as you wanted.....they didn't say anything about it....there wasn't no rent or nothing. Although the Company Farm would make you pay them they...they charged you rent....you'd have to pay them. And that's the way it went.

I: Were some of the people a squatters....a did they just...start living on the land even though they didn't own it?

M.S.: Uh..uh...no,no.....not that. They'd always ask permission to ...now I tell you, this man that...Mr. Kite that owned all of this land up here on

M.S.(cont.): the Drive, well he was a awful kind-hearted man. And he loved to help around with people. He's the one that had the stavemill and sawmill in here to furnish the people work to do to live off of besides farmin', and he's the one that would let the people live on his land and he wouldn't charge them nary a cent for it. Why you could live there forever 'tillthey...'till the Park run 'em out and and he never did charge them no rent.

I: Did you know many of the other people that lived on the other hollows..... or did you just.....

M.S.: Oh did you mean down in the a...a..Pocosin Hollow?

I: No, did you know the people that lived...maybe a...up towards Lewis Mountain or down maybe towards South River?

M.S.: Well, I knowed them up on Lewis Mountain and that was Mr. Scott Roach and a and a Mr. Willard Lam, and Mr. Edgar Lam.....they lived up there..... and I think that that was all that lived up on that a Lam Mountain except a down towards the Pocosin Hollow. And then a.....and what otherplace did you say?

I: South River.....did you ever interact with those people....did you trade with things....for things with those people or did you just stick right around Pocosin here?

M.S.: No, no....those people lived back there we'd they...we'd go over here to the Meadows' and visit them but, on back of the Meadows'....towards the South River ground, the people that lived down in there we never visited. But Mr. Wes Meadows, he never did have no education much except what he learned himself....it was no school here in the mountains. This mission worker married a Mr. Wes Meadows' son Arther. They lived over here, where you see that cemetery is at, and a he..he'd go back there on Lam's Mountain there in a I mean over there at Dean's Hollow and he'd have Sunday School for those people and he taught them everything he knew about it. And then a they sa... he'd it's on a.....all the school they had back there. A church I mean a church they had back there.....him a goin' back there and learnin' what little bit he could and preachin' out of the Bible to them. He'd go back there every sunday and a have Sunday School for those people back there at Dean Mountain..... Mr. Wes Meadows' son.

Side 2 of recording tape

M.S.: All these people back in here raised big families. And raising them, I often say that there's nothin' harder.....and all of them worked hard. And in those days you never seen somebody lazy.....I don't think I ever saw a lazy person in...in all my life in the mountains.....and that was Amon?????. His mother worked hard, his father died and she worked so hard and he wouldn't do a thing but walk the road.....and to this day he won't work. But now he's the only one I believe that won't work that was raised up in these mountains.

I: What was the average size of the family?

M.S.: Well you very seldom ever seen a family under 7, from 7 to 12 and 13 to 14.

I: Wow, how did they do that?

M.S.: And you know one thing about it, you know one thing about it, they were always happy. Happiest people you ever saw, you never seen them depressed a or lookin' discouraged and things like that. They just went to work and raised a family and was happy with it.

I: Don't you think they needed a large familt to get all the work done maybe?

M.S.: Well, I never had thought of it in that way but a they sure had big families. And another thing about it, what they no...huckleberry time, you know what a huckleberry is, well, they....there wasn't no huckleberries around here but they goed a across the mountain at Page County to pick huckleberries. And they'd go early in the morning and pick waterbuckets and waterbuckets full and bring them back. And then they'd sell 'em, and what they didn't want to use themselves they'd sell 'em and then that's another thing they made money off of to buy clothes. I know that they used to put the.....they had this old buckbaord a buggy, you know, the buggies that had a little place in the back of it, and they'd go over there and they'd a fill that big washing tub fulla huckleberries in just a little bit. Sell 'em, bring 'em home or well, they'd sell a lot of them 'cause they couldn't eat all they picked. They would can a lot but, they never would use all they picked you see, they'd sell them to buy some clothes with.

I: I was kind of surprised that you said that was music here because some of the books that I've read seemed to say that the people here were really too too involved in just trying to live than to learn how to play something.

M.S.: Well, it's a, well I have a brother-in-law, my hushands brother, he lives down here....was it Bill that said that he had not met him? He lives on a farm adjoining ours. You should ask him about the music in the mountains here. As I say, all these Samuels boys here could play music and those down in the hollow here, my husband, and his four brothers would play most any kind of music you could.....never one of those could play the organ like the Samuels' did. They never had a organ to practice on. But you see, the Samuels boys did.... they come out here to the Mission and.....practice on the organ.

I: Was there somebody around here that made the instruments.....or how did they get them?

M.S.: They'd buy them. You could go to the store and buy a banjo or a fiddle, or a guitar. Some...fiddlers you...they was out of this world. You don't hear no one play a fiddle like they used to back then....like they did in those days. Now banjos either, they just pick it up and and learn them some.. ..that's what I've been after him for. His grand-daddy could play banjo, fiddle or anything like that.

Singers too, I wished you could hear the Meadows^r and the Samuels^r would come here to this church and sing it..on Sunday and a it...at Friday night service. They was really good singers.

I: How often were there services here?

M.S.: They had it every Sunday and then every Friday night and then once a year they'd have a revival. That would be an all week revival.

I: What did the preacher do the rest of the time?

M.S.: Well, the preacher didn't live here he lived in Stanardsville. They'd go to different places you know and hold a service. Like they'd have service here one Sunday and they'd go to another place and hold it that evening and then they'd hold a revivals here and yonder and then they'd have meetings one night a week in other churches....the Episcopal Church you know.

I: How many other missions were there.....like this one throughout the mountains that you knew of?

M.S.: Well, they had one up on Roach's Mountain.

I: O.K., where is Roach's Mountain before we go any farther? I want to make sure before we get that.....is it towards Lewis Mountain?

M.S.: Yeah, that's right. They had one up there and a and one here and one down at Lower Pocosin. That's the only missions they had around here...in those days. And Middle River that's the only ones they ever had in all my life.....the Rock Church on the Middle River.

I: The thing that's confusing me is down south of Swift Run thereis a Smith-Roach Gap and I thought that that was what you were thinking of. (looking at the PATCmap) So if it was just north of us, it would be up around Lewis Mountain somewhere. It's not too far away.....mile and one-half, two miles?

M.S.: Well, I wouldn't doubt it.....it's not very far from me. And that's the only ones that I knew of was those three. Well, now Lams Mountain that's what you call Lewis Mountain because the Lams lived up there.

I: O.K. you used to call that Lam's Mountain.....we call it Lewis Mountain today.

M.S.: A huh that's right....because it was a middle.....all that lived up there was Lams. That's why they called it Lam's Mountain. I never was up there but one time and that was for a funeral.

I: Lam is a pretty popular name...so is Breeden. Especially in the Shenandoah Valley, there are a lot of Breedens.

M.S.: Yes, there was a lot of Breedens lived around here.

I: A....you lived up where Pocosin Cabin is now and then shortly before the Park bought it up you...your family left.

M.S.: We moved off.....he found this place that he could get for real cheap and we moved off.

I: And that place was where now?

M.S.: It's down.....it's down near MacMullen

I: MacMullen

M.S.: Right near McMullen

I: And you lived there for several years?

M.S.: Yes, I lived there for several years and then a....but a....I went to the Mission here for three years after I left the school you know I told you and then I went down with my folks down there and stayed until I got married.

I: And once you got married where did you move to?

M.S.: I lived at Pocosin.....I lived there at the Pocosin Mission....my husband owned a farm there.

I: Lower Pocosin Mission?

M.S.: A huh.....Lower Pocosin Mission

I: I'm curious about theabout the plague you spoke about before....or the virus goin' around.....how old were you when you got it...about?

M.S.: That a....virus?

I: That was around the First World War....somewhere?

M.S.: Yes, that was around the First World War.....let's see....

I: That would make you around 17 or 18.

M.S.: I reckon it would.....I just didn't know, but I know I had it and I'd a liked to have died...nearly likked me. It did kill my husbands brother and it killed several people near us.

I: So you were married at an early age?

M.S.: Yes, I certainly was.

I: Most of the people in the mountains were ?

M.S.: A yes...most...most all of them were married at an early age

I: About 14 or 15?

M.S.: I guess that's why they had such big families of children.....they got an early start.

I: Since we were talking about the War, maybe we should go on with that. a... did many of the fellows here leave to go to the war or was it mostly an outside type of thing?

M.S.: A....around here....well, I'll tell you, a...there was my...a...my a..... my husband's two brothers went and a....I had a....my three sons went. He had one that got killed.....you see my three sons went....a two of them was in there for four years and the other stayed in there for three. And you know, they....all three of them come back without a scratch....thank the good Lord. The oldest one of mine was in that...right in the worst war there was..... when they landed on the beach head. Do you remember that? Did you read about that? He said that they killed them like flies where he landed, and he came out without a scratch. The other one was in the Navy and he said that sometimes he thought he was gone but....the good Lord had taken care of him.

M.S.(cont.): So, all three of them had gotten back without a scratch ...and yes, there was quite a few boys from right there in our church went to the service. And do you know that everyone of them got back without a scratch, there wasn't a one. My husbands a a brother, he used to run these big tanks, you know these big machine gun tankes, and he said that a bullet a hit him and hit his Bible and...he used to carry a little Bible,....he said that it hit that Bible and never hurt him at all.

I: Did most of the fellows a...the kids that were born here, did they want to leave....or did they really want to stay?

M.S.: Well, I tell you that most of the young ones wanted to leave but, most of the old ones didn't want to leave...none at all.

I: And when they left where did they go....a just down into Luray or did they go to asfar as Richmond or Washington?

M.S.: No, they had these homestead houses they put them in. They had quite a few down here at a....Wolftown. They have...most all the people here moved down to Wolftown in those homestead houses they had....what they called them. The Park had them fixed for them when they left the mountain.....and so, that's pretty near where all.....but I guess.....but I think those on the other side of the Drive.....they went to Luray. But they was all put in....what wasn't able to buy a....a home of their own....they was all but in the..... in homestead houses. I don't know why they called them homesteads but what kind of houses they put them in. That road is goin' on down to the a.. Lower Mission(Fig.1, point I)and also turns off and goes down Pocosin Hollow. Have you ever been down Pocosin Hollow? And right down there, the first little branch that you come to, that's what's called Wolf Ford??? They said the wolves used to come there....they used to be a lot of wolves there. I never did see one down there....but that's what they said, it was called Wolf Ford on a count of the wolves.

I: I.....but...a long, long time ago they said that there were wolves in the Park but.....

M.S.: Huh?

I: A long, long time ago they said that there were wolves in the Park but.... they've been extinct.....

M.S.: Maybe that's why they called it Wolf Ford....they said that they seen a lot of wolves there.....it must of been before my time. Pick apples - - make a few dollars and that would help the mountain women thru.

I: Where did they do most of their apple pickin'?

M.S.: Back.....we used to have an old orchard.....Front Royal and over here at this orchard near Harrisonburg.....They used to have one over there. I forget what was the name of that orchard. And they'd go....they'd go....there was two orchards.

I: That's a long way!

M.S.: But they'd go and stay in those mountains and pick. And they'd stay out there- -but they wouldn't go back to their homes.

I: This fellow that built the Mission, is he one of the Graves' from Syria?

M.S.: I just....I just couldn't say, but I don't hardly think so.

I: There are an awful lot of Graves', it's hard to keep track of them.

M.S.: It is.....but now one of them Graves' from Syria used to be a...doctor he was a doctor. You know all the doctors that we had in these mountains would come up from different places from down off 'n the mountains- -. But Mr. Graves that a....all the old Graves did.....had an orchard over there at Syria- -. And you know something.....when those doctors come from down there they'd always have to ride a horse up here to see their patients. Don't care how poor they was. Do you know how much they charged? Very seldom ever charge over \$3.00.....\$3.00.

I: During the flu epidemic was there a doctor around that tried to help people out or...

M.S.: I'll tell you one thing, it wasn't a doctor during the flu epidemic.... we didn't have one doctor was able to call and that was old Dr. Edgar Sims. And he lived right on down the river from where I live now.....just about two miles down from- -'s store. And he was the only....he done walked this far.... He come to see me and a my husband- -.

I: Do you know what a Pawpaw tree is?

M.S.: Yes ma'am.

I: When Bob and I went down to Pocosin Hollow we found some but, we never found some with fruit on it. Did you get Pawpaws?.....that grew around here.

M.S.: Let me see now. Your talkin' about them things that you eat.....is that it?

I: Yes.

M.S.: I wonder if they don't.....honey they don't...they don't grow on a Paw paw tree.

I: Maybe we're talkin' about a different thing. How about persimmons?

M.S.: Oh, persimmons.....there used to be plenty of persimmons. You could eat persimmons. You could eat all of those you want and a....it won't make you sick.

I: You gotta wait 'till their ripe though.

M.S.: Yes.....you gotta wait until their ripe or a.....

I: Did the people here seem close to the land? Did they appreciate their property.....the beauty of the area?

M.S.: Oh yes, oh yes, yes indeedie. Lots more so than I think they do these days. You know, I think the majority of people these days don't appreciate the beauty of the world these days as much the old people did. I know a lots of people used to get up real early just to see the sun rise.....and they'd never go to bed before.....a lots of people in the mountains wouldn't go to....people in the

M.S.(cont.): mountains rested their- -a whole lot more that they does now because they didn't have as much entertainment.....unless there was gonna be a bean stringin' , or an apple butter stirrin' or something like that. Sometimes they'd meet in - -and play music....everynight.....sing to it. They really enjoyed that. But a....they did like I said- -earlier at night but a..... they get up early in the morning. Very seldom they was ever in bed after 4 O'clock in the morning....very seldom. As I say, if he was haulin' bark or work- in the stave mill- -one or two O'clock in the morning.

I: What they were doin' was makin; the best use of the light...right?

M.S.: That's right.

I: What did they do mostly during the winter time when you know, they couldn't do much gardening or anything?

M.S.: Well, as I say, they'd a....didn't have nothing much to do because they - -if it come up as a pretty warm week you know they'd saw some more lumber and as I say pull out some more trees from down off the mountain somewhere back there- -. 'Cause in those days if it got bad in the mountains here you would...it was bad. The snow wouldn't...it would be months before it would ever melt- -.

I: Were there any people that did special crafts? Like were there some people that would make chairs, and another guy would.....

M.S.: No...not...I tell you, people in those days would spread....they never had no rugs. They never had no rugs 'cause they couldn't afford rugs...they just had a the bare floor. Why they'd make their- -. Did you ever see one? They'd make them out of hickory splits. And then they'd make a strips out of hickory and they'd a make baskets. They was awful- -about makin' baskets.

I: Out of hickory?

M.S.: Ah huh. They made a lot of baskets. One man, Mr. Tom Breeden, he lived back from us. He wasn't none of my folks relation. He made his own kind of - -.

I: did you ever do much weaving or spinning?

M.S.: Well, my grandmother would weave...she would weave....and she would a... she would spin enough to make yarn. And they'd knit their clothes for winter time...their socks. Those days men would wear what they called "pulse warmer" - and they'd wear those in the winter time.

AT THE POCOSIN CABIN-PATC

M.S.: Now this big rock pile....you see where that's at? Well, they had a big rock pile come clear around the lower yard so we could have a pretty level yard. But now that house is settin' too close to....our house set back this way a little bit(west). Because this one is too close to the spring.

I: There's some rocks up in there.

We can get out and walk around if you like or we can sit in the truck if you'd rather?

M.S.: I believe I'd rather get out and walk....over to the cabin and look.

I: O.K....we are now at the Pocosin Cabin

M.S.: Yes, I think it set right over there(her cabin)....'cause there's the spring out there. This is where our house set(she is standing about 50 feet to the west of the PATC Pocosin Cabin).

I: Your...O.K., your house...used to set maybe 50 feet a...west of Pocosin Cabin

M.S.:.....and we had a little garden....and then we had another little garden out this way.

I: Towards the south.

There are quite a few rock piles up in the woods I can see from here..... small rock piles.

M.S.: What's that?

I: There are quite a few small rock....

M.S.: Yeah, they..they...would pile to just a have a get them out from around the house.

I: To keep from plowin' them up every year?

M.S.: Yeah, that's right. But I wished we'd a had a chimney like this when I lived up here. Your not a kidden it's a dandy.

I: What did you have mostly?

M.S.: We had just a cast iron stove....that's what we had.

I: Not too many fireplaces huh?

M.S.: We didn't have no fireplace...but, might near everybody in the mountains had fireplaces 'cause that's all the heat they had. Now you take the Samuels' down here and the Taylors and all, they had heat from a fireplace....but we just never had one. I don't know why...we just....that's all we had. Now that, where that thing is at, the green thing is the spring isn't it? We used to have a big spring house down there and we had that thing fulla milk and good hard cakes of butter.

I: Does anybody make that stuff anymore now?

M.S.: Well, a...we..a.....- -and so I'll be churnin' now sometime soon.

I: We have a friend down in the Shenandoah Valley near Luray called Riley..... Paul Riley. He's a about your age and I think that he's originally from up around Rileyville...up near Bentonville. And he had some real butter there that was really nice...we really enjoyed it....and whole milk.

M.S.: Now me and my husband was out here...there was a couple here from Alexandria...and a...they told us that anytime..we said that anytime you want to we'd be glad to have you....but they never did get the chance to come backsee he was sick about ten years before he died. He had a terrible time. Isn't it nice here.

I: now this cabin is used....a..by some people....they rent it from the Trail Club....and they can stay here and live very much like li...probably like you did many years ago.

M.S.: Oh, they do?

I: Except now they have things like caned vegetables and that sort of stuff that you probably didn't have. But a they live in very much the same area and they cook with a fireplace.

M.S.: Well now, do you have to have permission to come in here?

I: Yes, you have to get the key from the people. It's locked up pretty solid.

M.S.: Well, it's a nice little place isn't it?

I: Yes it sure is.....they really enjoy it

M.S.: You see how nice it is in here.

I: Yes it is. You get a nice view of the Piedmont

THE REST OF THE TAPE(INS.) IS UNINTELLIGABLE DUE TO THE FAILURE OF THE RECORDER BATTERY AT THE TIME OF RECORDING.

The following few questions and answers were asked of Mrs. Shifflit after the actual recording session:

I: While you were living here did you ever hear of a place called Skyland?

M.S.: No, we never did.

I: Well, a lot of the people to the north of us here were employed by that resort.

M.S.: Well, my husband worked for the CCC people on the Drive.

I: They tell me that that spring never goes dry over there.

M.S.: No, that spring never went dry all the time that I was there. That thing gushed up out of the ground a yard across. People used to come here to get their water. We all tried to help out one another. Whenever anybody built a house we all helped. They was built out 'n logs.....about everything but poplar.... never lasted long enough.

I: I know some Shiffletts up in Front Royal.....are they any relatives of yours?

M.S.: No, I don't have any people in Front Royal. My cousin had a.....my husband had a cousin in Front Royal but.....