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Oral History Interview: Beulah McKeand

Beulah McKeand

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RS: Taping today of my cousin, Beulah McKeand, for Anthropology 455 in the second summer term of 1973. This tape will eventually go to the James Morrow Library for its Oral History of Appalachia Project. Beulah McKeand has lived all of her life in Wayne County, West Virginia, mostly on her old homeplace.

BM: Used to stay all the time here.

RS: All the time here?

BM: Go down to the Marietta place on Sandy, but I've been here every since.

RS: Well, most of her life here in back of Ceredo, West Virginia. The address is Huntington, Route 4, and I'd like to start out, Beulah, by asking you just to give us a brief rundown on your family and your childhood, if you could do that.

BM: They's eight of the children, four boys and four girls. And two of the boys dead. Bill and Ben, both dead out of the bunch.

RS: Are all the others married and away from here?

BM: Yes, Dorian, little girl that she was, was the last one. Why, she's a grandmother.

RS: Are you the only one that stayed back here on the homeplace?

BM: Yes. Shirley stayed here till bout a year or two ago, off and on all the time and since he got this last woman he's down in Kenova.

RS: Tell us about your going to school and that, your education when you were little.

BM: Well, we went out here at Walkers' Branch. We just went to the eighth grade. That's as fer as they taught then you see, out there. I tell you I believe the eighth grade then would be about what they graduate at most of these high schools. Cause they had to have the lessons then.

RS: Was it a one room school?

BM: Yes sir.

RS: And how many teachers did you have?

BM: Just that one teacher, Miss Annie Wilson was the first teacher we had and she'd have about, I think one time there was sixty scholars in there from the first to the eighth grade. History classes and English and Arithmetic, and everything else that away.

RS: Was she the only teacher that you ever had there?

BM: No there was Wallace Porter and Miss Plymale and Annie Copley and (inaudible) taught bout the third school we went and she taught up to Christmas and then she got married and Annie Copley finished up on it.

RS: Uh, huh. You said school, was that a different school building?

BM: It's all at the same place.

RS: Same place.

BM: And then Floyd Harrison got two years out there.

RS: Uh, huh. I've heard you talk about Floyd Harrison before. You want to talk about him some?

BM: They taken him in on trial, he wasn't quite eighteen years old when they taught the first school out here if he did give satisfaction. That's when Nelson McKeand had trustees in in school. He couldn't be beaten, and they just kept him.

RS: That's the best teacher you had wasn't he?

BM: Well, he's fine but I don't know he take interest in the kids and give head marks from the first grader on up to get every fellow interested in the job. We had um out there that couldn't teach fourth grade arithmetic.

RS: He was good in history too, wasn't he?

BM: Why, everything. And Sara Gun said why just lay the book down, said he can make a better book that that was (laughter). I don't know why he give up school teaching to get into

that law job that he's in but he, I guess more money behind it but I don't think I'd want in that job.

RS: You don't, you don't think that the law profession would be any better?

BM: No, a fellow has to take too many wrong sides of the road.

RS: Well tell us what you think about the politics of Wayne County.

BM: I don't, you want me to put down everything (laughter).

RS: Go ahead just tell us.

BM: Well it's kind of a mixed up job to my notion.

RS: It doesn't please you?

BM: Well who would please. Some fellow suppose to be something and be honest and talk about stealing \$20,000 sixty years ago that was put out for a bridge across Twelve Pole and just keep right on. And it don't matter what some of um would do, down here, there's a fellow down here ought to be in the penitentiary, done something and these Masons go up to Wayne to the judge and get up there with him and they'd turn him loose. If he wasn't stealing one thing or in something, he was in something else. I think such people as that ought to be taken care of.

RS: Do you think it's the same way on the national level too?

BM: It's that way from start to finish.

RS: Well tell us what, uh, tell us a bit about some of the, uh, your older family like your aunts and uncles, what do you remember about them?

BM: Do you know I got studying up since you've been gone and grandpa's, they was nine in old Jamie McKeand's first bunch of kids.

RS: Yeah, yeah, go ahead and tell us about them, what ones do you remember? James Taylor McKeand is your great . . .

BM: Great grandfather, yes.

- RS: Great grandfather, yes.
- BM: That lived across the creek over here. Why there's (inaudible), why she's grown and she went to go to the, one of these big Baptist conventions there over across the creek and they said it was very late in the fall and the (inaudible) and many say that was what caused her to take TB. I don't know. And then there's Thomas Seeon, he died when he was a little fellow and then another little girl named Iranner said she turned black around the fingernails and she wasn't more than two year old when she died. Whole lot of (inaudible) that people don't remember. I hear grandpa talk about them.
- RS: Yeah, those are the young ones that we tend to not hear about cause they didn't have children of their own and they don't have any.
- BM: So there's three of them out of that crowd that's dead. They died when they were young.
- RS: What about the other ones, the ones that did grow up? Tell us about them.
- BM: Well, there's Martha that married that Guy Palmer. She was going with seven fellers at one time and her dad come in and said she had to make her mind up on someone (laughter). Said she turned loose her lamb and taken the wolf (laughter). An I guess it's a fact.
- RS: Now, who was her lamb?
- BM: There was a feller by the name of, uh, what is his name? Man is. Jim, uh, give me a second.
- RS: Uh, I don't know.
- BM: Wait a minute, I'm thinking.
- RS: No, you're thinking of, not old Jim, great grand Semons?
- BM: Yes, that's it. She picked him and said that's the finest feller that ever was and they turned him down and taken Guy Palmer and he'd come in drunk and beat her, whip her with a bottle and everything else. I don't think a fellow'd give me but one whipping like that and he'd a been in (inaudible).

RS: That's interesting. I didn't know she'd been dating Payton Semons.

BM: I don't know who the certain ones told her dad to come in and said she had just one thing to do, make up her mind one summer and (inaudible).

RS: Now, she was about the age of your granddad, wasn't she? They were the oldest?

BM: Yes, I think they was.

RS: Yeah, now who did your granddad marry?

BM: Evaline Sims up the other side of the highway at Proctorville.

RS: She was a Sims from Proctorville? And how many children did he have?

BM: Just the three boys.

RS: Only one of them grew up to manhood? Is that how it goes?

BM: Well, the youngest one lived 16 years till he died with just diabetes and then Herst was 22 years old when he died with the consumption. No wonder anybody just lay out and let the snow, come up a big deep snow and lay down in a fence corner and get covered up (laughter).

RS: They were hunters weren't they? Isn't that why they lived outside so much?

BM: I don't know, said he'd just get out and run till he couldn't go any further and just crawl up in the fence corner and let it snow on him.

RS: Isn't that amazing?

BM: But they said for strength, but I don't know how it is, Kay Byner said they were down here at the creek one time and him and Kay were always swimming or something and acting fool, he picked up a, one of these great big railroad ties and you know how heavy that was. Just throwed it like he was throwing a slick stone. And one t me my dad was up in Posterville and I heard it last time I was down at Tom Dixon's was eating supper. Said if he hadn't been on the ground and seen what was done he wouldn't have believed it. He and Jerry loaded dad up a second bushes of potatoes up there in that pasture and he carried them down to that shanty at the bridge. Wonder a fellow hadn't fell down, isn't it?

RS: Yes. So how old was your father when he died?

BM: He was 81.

RS: And who was your mother? What was her name?

BM: Lillie Francis Dixon.

RS: Tell us, then about, then about, oh well, we haven't gone back through your grandfather's brothers and sisters. We went through himself and Martha. Who are the others besides the ones that you named that died when they were young?

BM: They was uh, Jase, Buck and little John McKeand that died. You know that Sam McKeand or old Sam McKeand that he had two kids up in Pennsylvania?

RS: Yeah, I'd heard of him because he sent postcards to my grandmother. He was called Sam Jones, wasn't he?

BM: I think so.

RS: Yeah, Sam Jones McKeand.

BM: I tell you when Sam was a baby, it's been 50 or 60 years, he come in one morning and I think he'd been out to Nelson's and stayed there all night and before breakfast he'd come down the (inaudible) of that house and come there and he stayed about a week or two around in this country. He went around to Staylors and all around in there.

RS: Yeah, my grandmother's postcards from him are from Nebraska, he was out visiting the west. I remember the postcards because it had one of those big threshing machines or something.

BM: Now, he's from, he's up in Pennsylvania and he's back up there and he's got a girl up there, doesn't he?

RS: Yes? I kind of lost track of them.

BM: Yes. And he turned out to be a preacher.

RS: Well, see he was named for a preacher. Sam Jones was a famous evangelist in these parts. Were there any other children to that Jim McKeand or was it just Sam?

BM: Let me see. He had a sister too that was up in there. June, wasn't her name June? Yes. Sam and June those two was.

RS: How long did Jim live? The old Jim McKeand? Or that Jim?

BM: He must have died young because they said them kids was little when he died. And she married again, she married a Day.

RS: Now, I'm going to ask you to go way far back and see if you can remember many of your great grandfather's brothers and sisters, remember down there at the old McKeand brick?

BM: All I remember of that crowd is old Uncle Nels.

RS: Old Uncle Nels?

BM: Yes, lived out there, married, lived out here up at the branch there. I guess all the rest of them was gone then. Dead. Cause Aunt Sue died up at the Branch up at Uncle Nels.

RS: Do you remember Uncle Nels' wife?

BM: My goodness yes, as well as yesterday. (Inaudible) wasn't Georgia Pine her mother?

RS: Yes.

BM: She was a great big heavy, about as wide as that door (laughter).

RS: What do you remember about her?

BM: I don't know (laughter).

RS: Okay, And you don't remember any of the other brothers and sisters that lived there at at that house, the old brick?

BM: No, because they was all dead. See, Sandy, my goodness, and all of them was gone then.

RS: Uncle Nels was the only one?

BM: Yes, he was the only one left.

RS: What about, let's see, we've gone through Bascom, no we haven't. Do you remember Bascom?

BM: Yes.

RS: And his family?

BM: I remember him, but I don't know about, there, Johnny is the one that Joy here, I don't know if she lost her mind or what, is tied up to. I can't see for my life what she done such a thing for but she didn't do it all by herself without she had help.

RS: It takes two, doesn't it?

BM: I never seen them make much in my life (inaudible), they commence wrestling and go right on down to there amount of two pennies and I stood right down here by this gentleman at Henry's that Jenny and that twin of Jim McKeand's talked into (inaudible) now I said you just, you just listen, if you want to get burnt you just go right ahead and get into it and if I had I'd of hit the nail on the head. (laughter). And he got in another mess from bad to worse. Looked like if he'd a gotten burned one time he would go watching what he was doing.

RS: Yes. Tell us what you remember about going to church in these parts. How many different kinds of churches are there?

BM: There's the Church of Christ that's built down here in 1911, it's about the first one that's been around here anywheres close. I used to go in here at Dixon's and they all go over to the Baptist.

RS: Those are about the only two churches in these parts?

BM: Used to be a Methodist on the other side of Hank Haney's in , but that's a long time ago.

RS: Is is still there?

BM: No, they tore it down. They tore it down and it's been gone I don't know how many years.

RS: Wasn't your granddad kind of a jackleg preacher for a while?

BM: He was a preacher (laughter), yes. I reckon he didn't do any covering up, just what the plain truth was, he just let it rattle. That's one thing they couldn't get him doing. He said he wasn't going to lie for no man and my dad didn't either and it didn't make any difference what they done to him, he wasn't telling no tales.

RS: So he didn't stay a preacher then?

BM: No. I'll tell you what he preached, said the last time he had his last sermon at Taney's Branch. There was a lot of ladies coming in really (inaudible), they'd been big enough for plowboys and he about got his hat and walked out.

RS: That was the last one?

BM: Sometimes they'd get right on his nerves. He couldn't stand to save his life someone, some of these tricks.

RS: Did you always live on this farm when you were a kid?

BM: Ever since I can remember I've been right here.

RS: And this was your father's farm too? He grew up on this farm?

BM: No, he didn't grow up here (inaudible). Lived over there where (inaudible) was at and then he was up on Haney's branch and the shanty's down there on, a long time, where Back, they got this over at Back McKeand's, you see. Course he lives right down, used to be a little house (inaudible) on the upper flat down there.

RS: What do you remember about your great grandfather McKeand's second wife's family, the Semons? You know, Elizabeth Semon? You remember them talking about her?

- BM: Yes. They said she was a good woman and Sallie and Dean and that other girl out at Nels' and that other girl out in the West.
- RS: Lide.
- BM: Lide. She's dead isn't she?
- RS: Yeah, yeah.
- BM: I never did see her. I seen these others.
- RS: What do you remember about them, about Nels? Did you play with their kids when you were little?
- BM: Yes, I used to go out to Nels', that's about the only ones that lived around here close and we lived on top of the hill and we'd drop down and stay all day. That's where we stayed out there, I guess about 57, 58 years ago one New Years day and I asked Kellie, I said, "You know who was out at your house then?" and she said, "I don't know". That's when we thought Sam was a comin', we was out there and stayed all day or two.
- RS: So you've known most of them then? You know most of their children? And what about Sallie, my grandmother, what do you remember about her?
- BM: Aw, have a big laugh and a good time. I guess (laughter) it didn't matter where she'd go she'd have something to laugh. That's about all I know (laughter).
- RS: What do you remember about life out there on Doc's Creek? Did you ever go out there to stay with her?
- BM: No, I didn't. After we went to work up at Abbott's and this one and that one got scattered this & that away, we didn't get to go visiting very much. The biggest time I stayed away was when Tom Dixon lived up here, moved up here in the hollow, and work kind of got slack up there and they take'd a week without Laurie and I and I just let Laurie have the full time and I, they had to have

somebody stay over there and I stayed over with them a right smart. I wish I was back that a way again.

RS: You do?

BM: Why, yes I do.

RS: How long did you work at Abbotts?

BM: About 15 years.

RS: Was that the only job you ever had in the city?

BM: Well, I worked a little while at the sewing job but that wasn't very long.

RS: Did you like working in the city?

BM: I liked that painting job and if I had it back again. I said the other day I wished I was back up at Abbots and everybody there. But nearly everyone that was there when we was there is gone, dead now. Old Man Abbott, Mr. Ballangee. Ballangee was the Vice-President, you see.

RS: That's the picture framer? Tell us how you got in there if you went in every day from here. That's a pretty far piece, isn't it?

BM: Just skip right up here and take off down the road a walking.

RS: You walked every day?

BM: Why you (inaudible) hardly get a horse and wagon on this road then. There wasn't hardly nobody travelling then. Sometimes back early in the fall or summer you'd get a ride (inaudible) in that way.

RS: Didn't you ever ride a trolley car or anything like that from Ceredo?

BM: Rode the street car then, you see.

RS: Was Abbotts then in Ceredo?

BM: 14th Street and First Huntington. We'd get off from work there and we'd come in here and there'd be cows and this, that and the other and maybe we'd work till 9 or 10 o'clock before we'd get done (laughter).

- RS: Yeah, we noticed two guineas when we came up here.
I'd never seen a guinea till we came up here. Somebody had to tell me what that was.
- BM: Over there, there's a lot there, ain't they? He had a while bunch of guineas here, along winter, spring, I, I'd all the time say somebody was in that lot and let them out. About 2 o'clock at night I had to get up and go up there with the dogs and some of them flew way over yonder and I think the dog got one or two of the crazy things. He had about 10 or 11. He had an old big mean hen had white streaks on one side, an airplane or something would come and he'd just come walking up to me and just go to hollering, just like he was trying to tell you something (laughter).
- RS: Yeah, that's what they said, that those are supposed to be like watch dogs or watch birds, as it is. There they go now. Tell you when somebody's coming.
- BM: Yes, I don't know. I think this (inaudible) comes in about dark and they're out yonder and they have a big time.
- RS: Do you have many visitors up here?
- BM: Huh?
- RS: Do you have many visitors up here? People come from town?
- BM: Yes, several, just take it now maybe every day for a week or so there'll be somebody here and they they'll miss a week or two. Like Shirley Doll. He's been. That woman he's working for went to North Carolina. He's, She's been on vacation for two weeks. He said "I swear I've never had such a time in my life. I never got to sit down." He'd have to get up early in the morning and stay up late down there.
- RS: Does he ever bring his children up here? Or they're grown up aren't they?

BM: They're grown up.

RS: See the last time I was here, they were little kids (laughter).

BM: I'll bet. Their oldest girl is married, you see.

RS: She was 9 years old the last time I remember.

BM: (whispering) She'll be a mommy in August (inaudible) (laughter). Shirley says he's going out there in two weeks, or a week or so.

RS: Where does she live now?

BM: Out in Nevada.

RS: Oh, and what about the boy?

BM: He's down here all the time. That's the one I was talking about going out there. And the baby.

RS: Oh, the little Shirley, okay. Now, what's their father's name?

BM: Shirley.

RS: That's what I thought. See, I had those confused, yeah.

BM: That's the reason Dad always called him Little Shirley and got to call him rung. I tell you I never saw such a set of people nickname in my life like this McKeand stock.

RS: Yeah, why don't you go through some of those, they all had nicknames, I know.

BM: They go call this Sandy McKeand Sandy, but his right name was Alexander Buchanan.

RS: Yeah, is that the only one that they called by another name?

BM: And you know the Henry Clay McKeand died, the brother to Sandy McKeand, then.

RS: Yeah.

BM: Said he'd just lay around and hunt and have a good time and I think TB got him.

RS: Yeah, he was another one of the old bachelors. And Uncle Nels was a bachelor until way late in life, wasn't he?

BM: About 40 years.

RS: Uncle Sandy never married.

BM: I think the gal that he had his heart kind of set on, that George Hopley, over here that left this country (inaudible), McKeand had left here down at the mouth of the Red River.

RS: Oh yeah, that was. .

BM: Dow here, over at the Hensley Place.

RS: That's the McKeand that went to Cincinnati, didn't he?

BM: Eddie Willis is his right name. That old woman (inaudible) called him "Little Dutchman". Grandpa said he'd be walking over around that bottom over behind the gas station after he left, he said "I'd give anything to see my Little Dutchman." You know he was a tailor by trade.

RS: No, I didn't know that. He isn't the one that took the load of lumber down and they didn't hear from

BM: He's the one I'd know, took a lot of timber they'd, when they was down at Cincinnati and went to collect wood and then never come back (laughter).

RS: Little Walter. He's a relative, yes. Then what were some of the other nicknames? Did Henry Clay have a nickname? Henry Clay McKeand?

BM: Well, they called him, I'd don't know as he did. They used to call Uncle Nels "Gillum" all the time cause, uh, course that old lady's name was Gillum, wasn't it?

RS: Well, his name was Nelson Gillum.

BM: They'd call him Gillum all the time, some times graddad would.

RS: No, his name was Nelson Payton. That's right, his name wasn't Gillum. It was Sallie, my grandmother was Sallie Gillum. So they, so their nicknames didn't have to be anything like their names at all, did they?

BM: Then they, they called one of them Sue, one of them they called Betsy Carter and her right name was Elizabeth (laughter).

RS: Yeah, and what about some of the other, like your brothers and sisters. Did you all have nicknames.

BM: Yes, they'd call me Sook sometimes and Laurie, they got to calling her "Cat" sometimes because when she was little she'd just scratch just like a cat (laughter).

Female Voice: What did they call you?

BM: Sook.

Female Voice: Like Sookie?

RS: Sookie? Now, that's what they'd call my grandmother. They called her Sookie and they'd call her Shoe too.

BM: They'd say a dag gone time looking for a cow or be calling her or something. They said I'd be going along up in the woods, no matter how far up in the hills, I'd go up there with Uncle Bill Turner somewhere and drive in a buggy, an no matter how far away the cattle was, I could almost always see them.

RS: How about some of the others? Did they all have nicknames? Do you remember the nicknames of any of your, uh,

BM: They'd call Ben, a lot of times they'd call him Thacker, cause he looked like the Thackers (laughter). And Bill, they called him Bill off straight.

RS: What about your, what about your grandfather's brothers and sisters, do you remember any of them having nicknames?

BM: No, I don't know if they do.

RS: They'd call my grandmother Shoe, cause they said she was just as comfortable as an old shoe.

BM: I thought of Sandy and Betsy Carter and there was only about two in that crowd that I remember their names and they called that little 'un that left here, they called him Little Dutchman.

RS: Didn't they call your grandfather anything, like Samson? I mean with a name like that it looks like they'd have a nickname for him.

BM: They was, they was calling him Stress all the time.

RS: Stress? What was the reason for that?

BM: (laughter) I don't know. I tell you, they could do some, sometimes awfulest names.

RS: What about the Wilson bunch, did they all have names? Lee and his brother and sister?

BM: No, I don't know so much bout that bunch, but I was never ever there as much, round them.

RS: Um. She was the one that was buried in a, in a vat of cement, wasn't she? Didn't they pour cement around her, or something?

BM: Yes, and they ought to put lard.

RS: What?

BM: They ought to put lard over her.

RS: What do you mean by that?

BM: They said out of all that big crowd to cook for you know how small these little tiny teacups is, she'd put out one little teacup of lard to do that day's cooking with all them boys in and everything else.

RS: So they should have put her down in lard?

BM: I believe in being close, but there ain't no use in spending, spending a chigger where he's taller (laughter). Deny yourself something to eat, till you're going to stay here forever and everybody else and do everything, and I don't believe in such stuff.

RS: She lived pretty long, I mean she was pretty old when she passed away, wasn't she?

BM: I think so. I don't, about 80 or 90 or somewhere in there. You know she died about 57 years ago or 8. She died in January before Sam was born on the 22nd day of February. Cause we'd been out there on the point, then you could see all over the country. Then those trees hadn't grown up. Then you could see up the hill over there, up to the graveyard.

RS: You remember any of the burials around here, what they were like?

BM: No, I don't remember so much about them.

RS: How many cemetaries are there for the McKeand family? That you remember? There are,

BM: That one up on the hill, is the only one around here that I know of.

RS: But your dad isn't buried up there, is he?

BM: No, not here. These two places here is all I know of around here.

RS: How many's buried back there?

BM: That's the old Master Charles place there used to be some McKeands buried over there, but I think they've taken most of them out of there.

RS: I know, I was, I supervised the removal of a couple of those. I'll tell you who it was. It was your great grandmother that they moved. They moved her back up on the hill.

BM: Yes, granddad went back and raised all their mothers.

RS: Yes, and it was the one you told about falling in the river too, Columbietta. They moved her back up there on the hill.

BM: Yes.

RS: Well, how many graves was

BM: And you know what else they done up there too? They went to putting them graves down (inaudible). They went to shovelling that little Jim McKeand (inaudible) cause the other day I was up there and they said he found another piece of an old white shirt. I tell you they do something wrong. Everything wasn't done.

RS: Now, which child was this, the little boy you were talking about?

BM: Shirley Doll, the little one, the boy was here, and he's up there till they moved those dad blamed extra graves out of there. I remember all the time when the fence 11 years ago was on the outside where the old fence used to be and there was 2 graves on the inside then. There was old Jim McKeand and little Jim.

RS: I didn't know little Jim was there.

BM: (inaudible) as short as he lived.

RS: That's really interesting.

BM: And they put that old Aunt Susan's tombstone in the wrong place. Her bomb, grave is right over, beyond Betsy, Betsy Carter they called her. Cause I was the only one to put the cows around when Wilson had the pasture like that. I had to get the cows and there's that great big long, just a fair length of the grave all sunk in. I said "Dad", I said, "Who moved that?" I said, "That's our Sue's grave." He finally went up there and filled it in. And they set her tombstone over in the corner instead of putting it where it belongs.

RS: Sometime you'll have to take me up there and we'll move it. You know, put it where it belongs.

BM: And another thing I'd have done if I'd been up there doing that, everyone of them big tall trees is, fell down over the fence, tombstones and the like, and everyone would come out to a finish. Cause sooner or later they're going to come down. And if I was up there standing up, they couldn't fall no way on earth what they wouldn't hit a tombstone or that fence.

RS: Yeah, that's a good idea. I hadn't even thought about that. Cause there are those big trees and they are going to fall. Cause those other old trees have fallen on the tombstones.

BM: And before that fence was ever put up there, it went right down over that hill. What are they going to do a job, like I told Sam a building this house, like to better study it a long time a fore he starts.

RS: You believe in thorough preparation.

BM: Didn't hurt before you get it started, is what I believe.

RS: And then how many graves are back over here over your house? Did I notice, you know there's a little graveyard back there.

BM: My Mom and Dad, there's 4, 6, 7 graves back there. Ben's got two kids buried out there. Then there's one Bond out here and (inaudible) and Mom and Dad.

RS: What do you remember about that bunch of McKeands that lived down there, I guess that they are McKeands, lived down there where Katy Browning lives, lived. Do you remember that bunch?

BM: Well, there was Granddad and his dad and all of them lived on that place, I reckon clear up through there, the whole other side of the creek nearly one time. Clear out to where, to where Laurie Ward lived.

RS: Did you go out there?

BM: I've been out there once, a time or two. But you know, they went, when that there man of Laurie's (inaudible) about a year or so ago. I said that they'd just taken the house grandpa lived in and shoved it down in and that there Ward boy and girl built a new place out there. The one that married Doc Shirley's boy that keeled over dead.

RS: No, I don't know which one that is.

BM: I think it was that girl, Lloyd. I believed it's what they called her. One that married George Shirley. She teaches school.

RS: No, I guess I don't know them. I've never met them. There's plenty of people around here I haven't met. I've found that out, you know.

BM: Well, I guess that's me too. As long as I've been here. A woman came up here about 2 or 3 weeks ago asking me about someplace over the hill. I said, "Woman, I couldn't tell you any more about what's over the hill than why God made this country, cause that's all built up new and I don't know anything about over there." And up here beyond the gas station, that there Henry's up there and that there Stewart works down there is about the only one I know up in there.

RS: Yeah, this place has really changed fast.

BM: One of these days I'm going to have to go to the top of this hill, one of these days.

RS: What do you remember about Ceredo and Kenova when you were growing up? Did you go in there?

BM: You know, we've peddled all over that place ever since I can remember till I knew about everyone in that Ceredo and Kenova down in there. I could tell you who lived there, but anymore, it's just all like it is here - strangers. Cause nearly everybody who was there a long time ago is all dead.

RS: Do you go in there to visit very often?

BM: Used to when Uncle (inaudible) was there, I'd be down there a right smart bit.

RS: What about, about, don't you have a brother who lives in there? Sam lives in there, doesn't he?

BM: Sam's in Kenova.

RS: Don't you ever go visit him?

BM: Once in a while I stop in there. I tell you (inaudible) one comes here the other day and go down the other day and come back. Never did go and stay no time.

RS: He comes down here and visits you, doesn't he?

BM: Yes. He was down here a while ago. He bring a lot of wire, electric wire, something he was bringing out for something. I don't know what he tought he was going to do and brought some flour up here. I'd a started to the mail box when he passed through. I saw him coming up the hill.

RS: Who do the guineas belong to? Are they yours?

BM: They belong to Shirley Doll.

RS: That's little Shirley, right?

BM: Yes, that 'un we give him about 10 and these little fellows weren't as big as little quails and I raised them and that's what this dog or whoever it was who went and got in there and let the dog out, let the guineas out.

RS: What other kind of animals do you have around here besides the guineas?

BM: We had rabbits, but they got out and the dog got one, two. He sold most of them. You talk about something to eat, I never seen of anything in my life that could beat them rabbits.

RS: You like rabbit?

BM: I used to eat rabbit, but I couldn't anymore to save my life.

RS: What about chickens? Do you have any chickens out here?

BM: He's got about 30 of the big hens and a bunch of little ones, about 28. I tell you, he'd go, he'd get a load of feed today and put it on the back porch. And the first thing he'd do is get a cup of feed and go see about the chickens.

RS: You don't have any cattle up here, do you?

BM: No, I wish I did have a good cow to keep everything off.

RS: Do you find it hard keeping up the place?

BM: I just tend the gardens out through there. I want you to go out and look at the garden directly and, uh, just cut the weeds around the house, (inaudible) what I done out yonder, I wished you'd (inaudible) out that road. (inaudible)

RS: I had some other questions I was going to ask you. Do you remember anything about medicine around here, any kind of folk medications? Any kind of roots and herbs that were used for medicines of any sort?

BM: Yes, yellow root and ginseng. Grandpa used to have, uh, that black (inaudible) and speaking of that, I knowed somebody, I'll have to ask Sam if he knowed what that was.

RS: What did they use them for?

BM: Well, yellow root is a fine stomach medicine, things like that. And ginseng too, I guess. We've got a right smart patch, let it grow plumb around in that old butcher's house.

Female voice: Ginseng?

BM: Yellow root and ginseng too. Dad set it out.

RS: That's still growing? How long ago did your Dad die?

BM: 1954, that's about 16, 17 years ago, hasn't it?

RS: And that's still growing, the same plant that he planted?

BM: Why yes, the seeds fall off of that's that in the woods, yousee. And it comes up (inaudible) and it keeps right on digging. Had some way back yonder down the hill, had used to have a yellow patch over top of big kind of hill, patch down there. Feller across the creek, said he found a big bunch of ginseng down the church top and he, Jerry said, "I want to tell you something, you put it up there, you let it alone and stay out and tend to your business."

RS: Can you still take it into town and sell it? To drug stores?

Female voice: \$30.00 a pound.

BM: Why, it's worse than that there, wasn't it? I remember one time when it was \$40.00.

Female voice: That's what they're getting for it in Lawrence County, Ohio. \$30.00 a pound.

BM: Maybe it was the ginseng that was the highest. It's higher than yellow root.

RS: You ought to go out, go out and get yourself some and get some money. Get some money. Make some money that way.

BM: Got to have a whole lot to dig. I told (inaudible) 'bout all that's in this country. I don't know how you'd get through this country, you dig out that stuff. You couldn't get at it. That old honeysuckle's that deep from her to that (inaudible). Dad used to have that high road and he couldn't get in there. I never seen such doins in my life.

RS: Did you grow tobacco here?

BM: Yes, Dad used to have tobacco and Granddad (inaudible). He'd have 3 or 4 scraps. He'd have a big trap of cane. He'd have the tobacco and here would be sweet potatoes and here and there was a tree on the place breaking down with pears - have to go 2 or 3 times a week to town. Take a 2 horse wagon load. I'd run down, down town to take 2 bushels of pears and jump right out. I bet you couldn't do that now.

RS: No.

BM: And pick beans along with (inaudible). I'd go over there and pick them beans and get 4 or 5 bushels and have that little dump cart, that 2 wheel cart they've got at (inaudible) Sid & Cecil. I'd take 4 or 5 bushels of beans, I'd don't know how we'd get them all picked.

RS: What else did you grow around here? Did you grow corn?

BM: They had corn. Roasting ears, beans, melons. Had a regular frolic here on Sunday (laughter).

RS: Did you ever go to town to buy your own food, or did you just grow all your own food?

BM: Well, we'd have to have flour and meal and a lot of those knickknacks.

RS: Did you ever have your flour ground?

BM: No. We'd have the meal ground. Over at Bill Ferguson's, he used to have a mill, over here, you see.

RS: You remember going to get it ground?

BM: No, Dad, that was a long time ago. Dad just always used to go up the branch and go that away.

RS: Did you ever use the tobacco yourself?

BM: (inaudible) I don't need none of that.

RS: What about your Dad?

BM: None of them ever used it. That old stinking green stuff. Dad would be (inaudible) that tobacco and he'd come in in his sleeves. He'd always roll his sleeves back to his elbows in the summertime, I don't care what would happen. And it would take him 15, 20 minutes to get that old gum on there (inaudible) and clean it off. Don't tell me about that stuff.

RS: What do you think about smoking today?

- BM: I don't think very much of it (laughter). I don't know how they stand it.
- RS: What uses did they make of the tobacco then?
- BM: They sold it. There was money behind it.
- RS: Oh. Didn't they ever do anything, do anything besides, uh, smoke it? Did they ever use it for anything else?
- BM: Lot of times, they'd put, that uh, honey packed melons and lay them stacked, they'd strip the tobacco along the (inaudible) side of the melons (inaudible). Used to boil it down, boil to juice and get (inaudible). What's it going to do to a fellow's inside?
- RS: That's right. What about alcohol? Did y'all ever drink?
- BM: Nobody done that until these gentlemen got to goin over to the (inaudible) section (inaudible).
- RS: Yep, yep. You want to turn that off? Now, I'm going out with Beulah to her garden and she's going to show us some of the plants and tell us what they're used for. You were telling us about this new fangled plant?
- BM: (inaudible) had yellow blooms on it late this fall.
- RS: Where did it come from?
- BM: That's what I don't know. There's a bunch came up there, one bunch come up out in the back yard. Look how scattered out in there and I seen a bunch tween here on the upper side of the road down a tween here and Henry McKeands.
- RS: Uh, huh. You don't know what it's for? What's that stuff that Dad just cut down?
- BM: That's a milkweed. That there's good for bee bites, I don't know what else.
- RS: How do, what do youdo, just pour it on?
- BM: You break that and the milk runs out of that and you just put it on the bee bite. There's a German woman up in Pennsylvania that told Aunt Mary what to do.

RS: Oh yeah, there's some milk on it. That's the stuff. Okay.
Look how much there is.

Female voice: People eat those pods.

RS: No.

Female voice: Yes they do.

BM: I'd hear (inaudible). I didn't know anything about that,
talking about that woman down there where he was at, and
early in the spring having it for greens. But I never
did try it.

RS: Having them for greens? Oh. Well, we'd better take some
of that with us, Kay (laughter).

BM: You been out to the garden?

Male voice: Yeah, all the way. You got some nice corn out
there.

BM: Did you go clear out on the point?

Male voice: Yep.

BM: Well, you can sit down or go with us or whatever you want
to do. He'll come back in a minute and we'll go out.
I've never seen such stuff (inaudible) on some hillside
where it belongs.

RS: Have you been trying to fight it back or just letting
it grow?

BM: I've been letting it grow, but I'm going to take it
out 2 or 3 bunches this time and put chickens on and
the first thing you know it's all going to be gone.

RS: Chickens keep it back, huh?

BM: (laughter) Now, if you had a whole lot of cattle and
a big lot of that, it'd be all right.

Female voice: Beulah, can I have some of your milkweed to
take home?

BM: Sure.

Female voice: I mean, can I dig some up?

BM: Right here, these little bunches. You don't want to get a great big one. The smaller they be the better they lay.

Female voice: We need some because my son is interested in, uh, butterflies and the woolly worms, you know, they have to feed on milkweed.

BM: You can get all the butterflies. I noticed them hanging around the porch and that there little puppy was trying to get them this morning.

RS: Well, the soil in Ohio seems to be much more fertile, than around here. Not so many mountains.

BM: You see how that apple tree down there has got a lot of apples on it and that thing down the road was a full of blooms as that was and then it got killed. I wouldn't think there'd be that much difference in that little distance, would you?

RS: Un,uh.

BM: I got me a big bunch of apples inside. Nothing I like any better than fried apples.

Female voice: Oh, me too.

RS: Right. I think everybody likes fried apples.

BM: But I'll tell you (inaudible). Said what in the world do you want to cook them apples in the peel. I said the small ones I wash off and I cut them with the peelings on. I said you've got worse things in your throat than apple peelings. Now here lays a nice one off this tree. But I'll tell you I don't know what on earth's the matter with this fruit. Why that apple tree out there by the house out there, they used to be as big as teacups. Great big striped and another thing they did in this country, is they killed all the bees.

RS: No more bees?

BM: I heard it on Paul Harvey. Back in the Spring. There was a few bees around here and now you don't see a one. Used to this milkweed was covered with them. Used to stop out along the road there in that old clover. That white clover. And they'd just be working alive. And now there's none. They've just sprayed them and killed them. Paul Harvey said they'd died by the hive.

RS: I don't know why they did it.

BM: Why, they'd spray right down there (inaudible) on top of that peach tree, down that apple tree, down there last fall. And that there's liable to kill everything in the garden, that was hurting somebody.

RS: Now who was doing the spraying? Was it the railroad?

BM: It was that electric doings.

RS: Oh, the electric company. Yeah. That's true.

BM: And for 2 weeks here you couldn't hear a bird sing after those big old wood thrashers. Was the longest time afore they'd all come back in here.

RS: That's sad, that's really sad.

BM: Musta got the bees. Now over there on that lower side, is Irish potatoes and I planted 3 rows of beans through there. They'll be ready to dig about the 20th of next month. The 25th. Then I'm going to sow a patch of turnips. I'm pretty sure Richard and his dad (inaudible) an acre of turnips. I don't surely doubt it. I kinda thought he's a going with that gal up there at Berry's. I said I don't believe in this kin folk marryin' like that (laughter). And I don't, do you?

Female voice: No. She's a pretty girl and real sweet.

BM: I know. I've never seen such a big eyed, over there at Louise's, I've seen her past. There's Betty Jo Ferguson has a cousin married kin folks. Jerry and Betty are first cousins and now their kids are marryin'.

RS: I didn't know that. No. First cousins? How are they first cousins?

BM: Betty Jo Ferguson's wife is a first cousin to me and mom's brother's kids, Tom Dixon's girl.

RS: Uh huh. And those were first cousins that married?

BM: And I'll tell you what happened. Tom Dishman married a Thacker and one of them girls of his married right close of kin right into the Thackers and that kid come it didn't have a rib one, Aunt Mary said. And look at these crippled Thackers. Don't you know crippled Thackers in Kenova?

RS: No, I didn't know them.

BM: Everyone in that crowd is crippled and that's right close and that's what the matter with him.

End of tape.