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Jo Webb

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ORAL HISTORY

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Date 11-2-73

Vickie Mount
(Signature - Witness)



APPALACHIAN CULTURES

Anthropology 455

Sharon Kalmon Weed

Jo Webb Talking About The Good Old Days

In Appalachian

PREFACE

My interview was with a delightfull old man named Jo Webb who will be 85 years old this January (1974). He lives at Route One, Ona, West Virginia. To get there, we drove up Seven Mile to Barkers Ridge and along Barkers Ridge and far as the road would allow and parked our car. Then we walked along the top of a hill for several yards. We turned and walked down the hillside and walked, and walked, and walked. Jo lived in a house built by his family about 80 years ago. It was wired for electricity only several years ago. I thoroughly enjoyed listening to Jo reminisce. I gained a good bit of insight to the days gone by in Appalchia.

Jo is evidently well loved and well looked after by his neices who do what they can to make life happy for him. I must say the climax of the day's venture was a tour of his barn, root cellar, smoke-house and his out house. Jo's neices painted the out house, green on the outside, turquoise on the inside, and decorated it with beautiful pictures of flowers and birds from current Woman's magazines. Jo definitely had the character and good sence of humor to appreciate their efforts. After the tour and the tape. I notice what appeared to be home made biscuits on the table and asked Jo if he made them. "Sure I made them" he replied, "they came out of a can!"

As we were leaving, Jo invited us to come back, and we certainly hope to do so.

Others present at the interview were Miss Vickie Mount, Mr. Webb's great neice and my husband, Hy Weed.

Sharon: What are the most important differences you notice between the way things are today, and the way things used to be.

Jo: Well, there's lots, altogether.

Sharon: Tell me about them.

Jo: People don't even know how to make clapboards anymore. They know nothing about making clap boards. I've riced -- I've rolled thousands of them. Clapboards, you know. We used to go up there on these hills and cut down trees, three, four and five feet full and just peel the tared-barkoff of 'em, you know, and leave the log lay there, din't know what It's fer, don't you know. Didn't know what that log was fer. Roll them in log heaps and burn them up., look what's it's worth now in lumber, and stuff like that.. We had a saw mill right up here the first en we moved in. They saw. Saw lumber, you know, soft lumber sech as poplar and lind. Something like that. You know what poplar and lind is, don't ya?

Hy: Yah.

Jo: They sawed that soft wood for \$2.00 a thousand when we first moved here; and hard wood, \$3.00 a thousand. Now you got to pay a way up here up younder, about \$60.00 a thousand to get a little lumber sawed. You can't you can't - you can't afford to cut your

own timber and saw it. Can't do it, you can buy lumber the cheapest. This old farm's got a lot of lumber on it. Good lumber. Plenty of it. Thousands of feet. There' about a hundred and fourty acres in here. And a, you can't afford to cut it. Look what ya get to give that saw mill man. You can go buy your lumber the cheapest. Yeah, when we first moved here, we just clear off this land, ya know never no timber cut of it. Never was. Great big timber much as, I well expect 4-5 foot through. Roll'en in log heaps and burn 'em up., ya know. Roll 'em 'em into the hollers, ya know. It's all hillside, mostly and they'd all roll good. Roll them in to the creeks and get shut of them. Now that's the way it used to be, ya see. Didn't know what that lumber was worth. Didn't know nothing about it. Where you work? Down there at that office where she works.*

Jo: Yes you ought to remember it. Quinn brothers over there, that long mill they tore out.

Hy: Yah.

Jo: Cross from twelfth Street down there over there. I worked there, I run a mixer there for a long time, but I didn't make, I didn't enough ta turn in.** they just give me what I call a paulper check.***

*the office is the Department of Welfare and he refers to his great niece, Vickie Mount who was present during the interview.

**didn't earn enough quarters for Social Security.

***Jo is referring to prouty benefits.

Sharon: What did you do when you were working at the mill?

Jo: I run a mixer. Mixer, ya know. Jest dump in, ya know, and a when I got it all mixed, it didn't take but a few minutes to mix it. I had sixty, sixty sacks. Hundred pound sacks. I'd have to draw it out, you know, after it mixed. I put in everything, your lime, alphafa, meal, everything, you know It made the feed. Feed meal. Then after it got mixed, -- jest took a minute to mix it. I had to get my sacks you know and catch it. 100 pounds in a sack. That was my job there. A great big lot of my out side work made rail road cutting ties, you know, rail way men's work., work- en on a section driven spikes with an eight pound sledge hammer. I followed that a long time.

Hy: You said you'd lived out here abut eighty years. Did you build this house?

Jo: Huh?

Hy: Did you build this house?

Jo: Yeah. Heck yeah. I scored and hewned--I scored every log on it. Got right up on it and chopped. Scored and hewned 'em, you know.

Vickie: What's "scored" mean. What do you mean by you scored them?

Jo: Huh?

Vickie: What do you mean by you "Scored them"? What's that mean?

Jo: Well take an axe, and get up on 'em. Maybe he don't know nothing about axe, he's from town. Get up on a log you know. And chop. Get up on it and hew it you know. My borhter hewed it. He's older than I am. He's ninety-- he's a he's a ninety. He's ninety-one. He stays right over there in the hollow.

Hy: Do you remember how long it took you to build this house?

Jo: House? Not very long, no way. It didn't take very long. It's a hewed log house, you know.

Vickie: This is News papers on here (the wall) isn't it?

Jo: No that's a, that's a plaster.

Vickie: Plaster?

Jo: How, a what you call it?

Sharon: Plaster Paris?

Jo: Well anyhow it's stuff, ya know, ya put in it as plaster instead of some other stuff. Then it's got the tongue-glued floor in it.

Vickie: What's that?

Jo: Huh?

Vickie: What's that?

Jo: That's lumber that's made to fit a floor. And they've got a way of running a saw along, ya see, and let that, let that go together, ya know, and put it in that ream. In that, ya see, In the floor. That's what you call a tongue-grove floor, you know. It got a double loft up there. Now all the air that can get in this house a toll is just what comes in them doors. Now, I'll grab me an old big coat or or a quilt or a some of us will and when it's real cold weather let it 'bout on the floor there. And that, and that keeps the air out. Yes, I've, I've scored, all these, I've scored every log in here.

Vickie: What about your wood out there, how long did it take you to make, chop all that?

Jo: Oh it didn't take long.

Vickie: You went out and chopped the trees down and split it all up?

Jo: I got about thirty cords out there. That's something there aint another man got in this country. I've had them even come from I don't know where you know, to come out there and took pictures of me a bustin' and a you noticed it, didn't ya?

Hy: Yeah.

Vickie: Umhum.

Jo: No I wasn't too long. I got the fellow that I stay with here, you know he's got a power saw. And I've got the boy whose daddy you know on the hill with his power saw, ya know, two of them. Didn't take long to power saw then, ya see. I just roll them off on over the hill. Load them in the Jeep, Haul 'em up there and bust them up there and bust them up. No old time people people, I know old times. I'm and old timmer myself and you can't change me. Been a lot of them like to change me from old times-- they can't get it away form me. Because I'm just and old time believer. I've been here all these years clapboard-making, these people don't know nithing about clap-boards, ya know.

Sharon: What is a clapboard.

Vickie: I don;t know.

Jo: Vickie, ya take a big log, and saw it about that long. Then you take a wedge and bust it up. And the ride it up ya know and put it -- you see these on this barn up here? Well, that' clap-boards. I ride 'em, I ride 'em out of timber, see. Put 'em on my barn shed. Well, there's alot of people I've got to there in the smoke house, I don't know were it is and old time bark fudge, you know, you used to fudge pine bark with.

Sharon: You mentioned a smoke house. Are you still using the smoke house? Have you smoked your own hogs?

Jo: Yeah.

Sharon: How do you do it?

Jo: Smoke house? Well, the smoke house, ya call it, that's the little house out there. That's waht we used to smoke meat in, ya know, call it smoke house.

Sharon: Are you still smoking meat?

Jo: No, aint got none. I quit fooling with hogs.

Sharon: How did you smoke them when you did have them?

Jo: Whay you have to get them dressed, ya know, ill'em. And cut 'em up and so on, ya hang'em up I got little hanger in there made out of bushes, ya know, that my daddy made back there and he's been dead forty-three years. He made them to hang meat on the, ya know, tie strings around them. Cut, stick holes in the meat. Hams and things, hang'em up. I had an old kettle, old kettle's out here now. We put that on it, you know, that take green hickory blocks, you know. Shouvel-full the fire, then put on the kettle, and a put that hickory smoke, ya know. It makes it sweet. Sweet smoked meats, ya know. Smoked with hickory wood, ya know. Oh a lot of people, lot of people don't know what it is, smoked meat,

They call themselves buying smoked anymore, ya know. Ya know they buy it and put it on it. Ya see, it's that black gob it aint smoke either. I went down there and talked with a Mrs. Fleth used to be down there. Died, he died ya know I've been to the farm up the river yander, and a he asked me all about smoken meat. He said I aint never seen no meat smoked. "Well" I said, "Buster I can jest tell you all about it." He said that makes, they tell me it makes meat smell good and taste good. "and I said, "you jest try it and see the difference. I said you go out here and buy you smoke. You aint bought noghing. No smell to the stuff. Yes, I've smoked kettles of meat. Lord, many and many of year, I've smoked meat. Hang 'em up and maybe kill 2-5 hogs to dress--maybe it's 4-500 lbs, ya know, well, that's a whole lot of meat for a family. Then I'd take and make me and my mammy would take a bread pan now and make it near pretnear twice full of sausage. Now that's something else. I we knowed how to make for I growed my own sage here in the garden ya know to winter it. Growe my own sage, we took the salt and pepper and a mixen, just keep mixen, mixen it. Frying and tasting it, ya know, till we get it just eat good and the way ya want it. Now we made two big dish pan fulls of that stuff...sausage, now you talk about something good. Then she had two skilletts. Big skilletts, ya know, she set upon the stove. And she'd cook it. Fry it. Get it ready to eat. Well there's a lot of people that don't know that,

ya see. Let greese come over the top of the sausage, ya see. Well it can't spoil, ya know It's the same as meat in there. Now you talk about something good, well ya open one of them cans..may be solid in greese plum through, ya know. Just set it in the oven of the stove a little bit, your jar, ya know. And that let's it give. Then you can go to prying your sausage out with a fork. Put it in a pan and go to eaten it. Lord, we've made I don't know I how many lbs of that sausage we've made in time. You don't hear of no sausage anymore. You can go down here to this here junk shops here and buy you some sausage here and you aint got no sausage. You aint got nothing. I wish you could see the difference in it if I just had some to show you. I seen a man down there one time a making it at twelfth street, ya know, he was he was a making sausage, and he had old scraps, ya known, jest every old thing. Grinden it up there now to sell to the people ya know, to sell the meat place, ya know. Store and meat place, where ya cut meat. He'd take all them scraps, ya know and sell it to the poor people. Now, I didn't like that a bit. I told him I wouldn't have it.

Sharon: Did you ever preserve any other foods, can foods or...

Jo: huh?

Sharon: Did you ever can foods?

Jo: Can foods?

Sharon: Yeah, ya know vegetables, and that type of stuff?

Jo: Oh Lord, yes. We canned, well Lord talk about canning, we always did. We've got a cellar of stuff right out there now. Tomatoes. Girl that stays here with me, ya know, lives in a younder and she's got all kinds of tomatoes juice. I bet ya I've fixed 75 gallons of tomatoe juice in there now.

Sharon: How did you fix some of this stuff?

Jo: Huh?

Sharon: How did you fix this stuff? Would you like to tell me how you make it, after you picked it, what you did with it to preserve it?

Jo: Why, you don't do nothing olny jest a cook the juice down, ya know. Jest let it be in it's own juice, ya know. You put, put your tomatoes on the in there in a pan or what ya might, ya know. She uses a big dish pan or something to cook it in you know. Then take it out and squeeze all the juice out and put it in the can. Why sure.

Sharon: I noticed that you still have plenty of tobacco in the barn, do you grow your own tobacco? Tell us about that. I've never seen tobacco grown. I wouldn't know how to do that.

Jo: Why you can see it right out there just like it grew. See them suckers? Ya see what's green out there in that patch?

Vickie: Tell them what a sucker is, they don't know, what that is.

Jo: Huh?

Vickie: They don't know what a sucker is. Tell them.

Joe: A sucker is after you cut your tobacco in the fall ya see. Now there's suckers out there bloomin' that high. Looks like ther's good it tobacco, but, you they won't sell it on the 'bacco, we got orders here the market manager to keep that all off of there. People used to save some of them suckers, ya know. You cut it off, ya know, and put it on your sticks and hang it it in the barn and then there suckers comes afterwards. All that grewed out yonder that you see in the patch. That every bit grewed after I after I cut it and hung it in the barn.

Vickie: What do you do with the tobacco that's hangin' in the barn now? What are you going to do with it?

Jo: Well, I'm going to take it down to the market.

Vickie: Yeah, but don't you have to tie or put it in bundles?

Jo: I've been tying a little today, just a little.

Vickie: What do you do when you tie it?

Jo: What ya do when ya tie it, I just bolt it down, and put it on sticks. We put it on sticks, ya know. Tie it and jest put it on a hand-you've seen tobacco hand, aint, ya? Just place it on sticks, ya know, and take it down there, ya know put it all on baskets. No them suckers, them suckers every one grewed since we cut it.

Hy: How long does it take after you cut the tobacco til it is ready to go to market? And what all do you have to do?

Jo: Well it aint too long. I expect a couple or so months or a little better. It's pretty well dried out. I got mine out there now, ya know that I strip off a little, but some of the chips tips of it ya know, well didn't hit get quite as ripe, as some of the rest. It's got some green, one of two leaves, ya know on the stalk it's green. Taint quite cured up. That's the reason I'm leaving it hang up there now, but I tied a little, ya know. Well I come to one or two of these here, ya see, it's green, I've just I got plenty of room up there, I just pitch them over there, ya know. Just let them cure up, ya know, while I'm tyin' the rest. It'll cure up in three or four days or a week after ya pull it off of the stalk. It takes pretnear that long. That cat's never been curried since I..since the girl's been gone* Boy you talk about

*Jo is referring to his neice & nephew who live right next to him. His nephew had open heart surgery. And the neice is staying with relatives in town so that she can have access to the hospital.

an old man missing somebody, if I don't miss then folks, that's supposed to be here, I won't tell it...My, my, my. I miss 'em. I told her up I seen her going up the hill. When they started, I didn't know if he was coming back or not, but I believe he's going to get to come back now. I looked for him to kick out. You know that that now you're doing something you go to cut a man's heart out. You're getting right where he lives. You know that? Yes, sire, that's where that man lives. Now I seen him starting up the hill and I just wondered if he ever get back, but he's pulling it pretty well. Mighty good boy too. Yes sir, that girl's got a mighty good man.

Vickie: This is the only thing you heat by isn't it. Your wood stove.

Jo: Huh?

Vickie: This is the only thing you heat by isn't it? Your

Jo: Why sure that's all I heat by. That heaten stove..

Vickie: Tell them how you cook on that stove in there.

Jo: Cook on it.

Vickie: Yeah

Jo: Lord anything I can get to cook.

Vickie: No. I mean how. I mean it is a wood stove they don't know. They probably have electric.

Sharon: I've never seen a wood stove.

Jo: I've got a shed full of dry wood out yander. Dried pine, ya know, cut green. Ya know know what a green pine tree is? Huh? Well you see those green ones you see right on the hill younder round. Old green pines. And there aint another like it. I cut that I've got five cords out there to do me a year now. Well I take a axe and I got a chopping block out there and I hew me some kindling, ya see. I hew it off with my axe then I got plenty of paper here I just take a little paper and put it in my cook stove and put that kindling in it, ya see. Set the fire and it's done gone in a few minutes.

Vickie: Food on that stove is good, isn't it.

Jo: Huh?

Vickie: Food cooked on that stove is better than it is on the gas, isn't it?

Jo: Well, yes, gas a they tell me gas cooking haint aint as good

as a wood stove. I don't know that, ya know. I don't know that, I aint never cooked no gas. They cook with some kind of gas here. They got it down around the house there two big.

Vickie: Bottled Gas.

Jo: I don't know about that, but regular gas, like I expect that you folks may have. They tell me that just cooking and eating off of it is a whole lot the best. I don't know. I don't know how. I never cooked with no gas.

Sharon: Do you think kids, when you were little, younger were a lot better behaved then they are today?

Jo: People.

Sharon: Uh-huh? Were they better behaved when you were young, then they are now?

Jo: My goodness, I reckon. Why people in his world are getting to be a sight, if yer talking about that. You just see how people a doing. Just see what they're a doing! Look up yander. Some of them said, "well what they ought to do to old a president and them, ya know all that house full up there I said mister, I'm going to tell you something you just stay out of that, that doesn't belong to the poor man.

Them's all big bugs, ya know. See where it's at. Presidents, and big senators and congress, they're all in to that there a-- you know what kind of mess I'm talking about, you heard it. Now that's another sight, aint it. My God to tell the truth there's several of them guilty in that.

Vickie: What did you used to do when you were young for entertainment?

Jo: Huh?

Vickie: What did you used to do when you were young for entertainment?

Jo: Entertainment?

Vickie: Yeah. For fun.

Jo: Oh sometimes, old dad would take me for some little old thing and give me a darn good paddling.

Sharon: Did you ever get in much mischief when you were young?

Jo: Get what.

Sharon: Get in much mischief when you were young?

Jo: Well not one third of what people does today. Kids.

Sharon: Tell us about some of these things.

Jo: Oh, kids are ten times as, ten times aint nothing to what they used to be. Used to dad and mam made some of them mind; today, they don't do it. See where it's at. People don't take care of youngins. Jest turnt 'em loose like cattle, let 'em go out yander anywhere, see where it is at. That's that was it goes.

Vickie: Did they have cars back when you were young?

Jo: No sir, there wasn't no cars.

Vickie: They didn't?

Jo: Huh?

Vickie: They didn't have cars?

Jo: They didn't have a car, no trucks, the first tobacco ever we raised here. And I was in the tobacco house, the first man, the first year that the old house, the old tobacco house, first started ya know. Way back yander. And I was pretnear the first one in the house and I've been there about every year since. Up in the tobacco house. And we had to take on the wagon or sled if there was a big snow on you could take on a sled. If you know what a sled is.

If you don't, I have one sitting up yander, I'll show it to you. You can load it on a sled or take it on the wagon. And at the first beginning down there, if you know what I'm talking about, They had barns down there. Two barns as big as them tobacco houses is now. And hourses, ya know, they had stalls through it. Stalls this way, and stalls over there. And horses. Everybody had to put there horses in somewhere, ya know. Well, I went by once or twice. I had to go down to twentieth Street, ya know. To get a livery stable to put my horse in, there wasn't room. And you can go in there now in zero weather. And, I've been in there, you can go in that barn that big barn not a bit of fire no where and lay down and go to sleep. Jest as warm.. Horses, ya know. So many horses in there, ya know. They had it pretty well built up. Them horses so many of them their breath, ya know, kept that building as warm. Now a man won't believe that, would he? But it's so.

Sharon: Did you have a lot of horses at one time?

Jo: Oh I aint never had a whole lot of them. I've had a few teams. Pretty good ones. We aint done no great big heavy farming here at all. Just so much, ya know. I've got passed that about. I've just about quit. 'bout quit farming.

Sharon: Did you ever raise any animals to any extent? Chickens?
Or anything like that?

Jo: Oh, we used to here have a good lot of chickens, yeah, we had a lot of chickens but not for a few years we done away 'em. The old hen house is out yander now nothing in it bout to fall down. I'm getting too old and crippled up to build it up again. No you talking about if I don't know this country around here. Don't ask no other person cause I've been here now 80, 83 years, right here. I moved here when I was two years old. And the third day of January, I'll be 85 and that's coming pretty quick now. I'll be 85. I've been here, so I was just two when I moved here.

Vickie: tell us what you used to do for fun? Didn't you used to go to pie socials and things like that?

Jo: Say listen, girl. Fun, there didn't used to be no fun like there is now. You know that.

Vickie: Well, what I mean is after you got your wood chopped and all that, what did you do?

Jo: Well I didn't do nothing much?

Vickie: Did they have radioes then?

Jo: Sometimes go fishing. Wasn't no such thing as radio or television then.

Vickie: There wasn't?

Jo: Why no.

Vickie: Well what did you do?

Jo: We just had to do the best we can. We didn't know no better, don't ya see, girl.

Vickie: No, I don't understand.

Jo: Well back there when these things was, there wasn't no then, then there wasn't no televisions. Wasn't no automobiles, My daddy died and never seen no automobile, nor heard tell of one. He never heard tell of an airplane up yander. You never heard tell of nothing like that back there. Ya didn't have no judgements to 'menber nothing bout it, see. Ya, we got along just the same as well right now.

Vickie: Yeah, but didn't ya go to church?

Jo: That fun, that fun. There was--some of us old boys used to, before it got daylight, slipped out and got us a pint of whiskey, ya know. We called that having fun.

Vickie: Yeah, that's what I meant.

Sharon: Did you ever make your own whiskey?

Jo: Huh?

Sharon: Did you ever make your own whiskey?

Jo: No, mam, no. No sir, but I've drunk some of it. No in twenty years, though. Ya know this whole lot of mine up here. I've watched others, you know, and that turned me agin it. I aint got no use for whiskey today al all. No you, you talk about fun back here for boys and kids. There wasn't no fun.

Vickie: Yeah, but you went to church didn't ya? Things like that.

Jo: Oh yes, I went to church, yes.

Vickie: What I mean by entertainment is by fun, what you did after you got done work. That's what I mean.

Jo: Oh we'd just sit around like we are. That's all we had to do.

Vickie: And talk?

Jo: That's all.

Vickie: Ya visited a lot, didn't ya?

Jo: No, back yander, talking about automobiles, well, Lord I remember there wasn't sech thing as an automobile. Wasn't no sech thing as a airplane. Twasn't thought of ya see. No.

Sharon: Do you think it is kind of exciting having things as airplanes, T.V. and cars around?

Jo: Sometimes there alright and sometimes their a darn nuisance. Their ruining the world today. Them things right there is a running 'em. These old televisions. Now a lot of people won't like to hear that said, but listen, if you could drop back and see when I was a boy, you a say, "he's telling the truth.

Sharon: We'er trying to see it the way you used to see.

Jo: That's ruining the world. A lot of girls no clothes on. I've seen girls on that thing many a time, not only girls, I put some boys in too. That I was just absolutely ashamed to look at. I'm tellin you the truth. This abomination to the world. Ruining other kids, ya see. That entices other little girls and things, ya see there. That there entices other little girls to go for all that dog gone kind of stuff well you can get put today and you can take the ball games go up there to church and find five or six ya know settin there. Ya might get to asking about the rest of

them. They went away in to the ball game somewhere, ya see. Left the church, going in taking after that, don't ya see. Letting the church go. That's what a lot of them's a doing. Great big lots of church folks is doing that today. I know it fer I see 'em. They take off after something like that and left the church go. No you talk about going back to old stuff, Lord, I've I remember when there wasn't nothing. First crop of tobacco we ever raised here. We a way back in the beginning when we first moved here, ya know. Right here why we only got from one cent to seven cents a pound for it, at's all. From one cent to seven. And they took the old trash what makes the best now, that's the bottom part, they call the trash end now ya know. It brings the most money now. No, back when I was a boy for fun I started working on the railroad. Pounding railroad spikes ten hours a day. Now I'm agoing to tell ya what I got. I got proof, I got a ninety-one year old man over here me and him worked for years together and shantyed on the railroad. We got a dollar and ten cents a day. Then if you lost an hour, they docked you. Now a day, not hour. A dollar and ten cents a day is all we got. Now look what they're getting. 15-16 dollars a day. Workin' on the rail road tracks. See where it's at. Like when I was a boy, Lord God, you didn't get no pay for nothing. Wasn't nothing fer ya. No sir. See the old pay car come rolling up. They didn't have no paper money then. All they had in the world was gold, ya know. Maybe through ya

if you got in a full month, they'd through a twenty and a ten dollar gold piece, and a little change and tell ya to hurry up and get out of he pay car. Hurry up. Pay cars would run from way yonder, anyhow. Plum through to the C & O Shops paid in gold. My that's what I got workin' on the rail road track. Now what's a man going ta make, what's would make now. A dollar a day? I'd like to know. Go down there and get a hamberger and give a dollar for it. I remember you can go down and get buy all this here, well we call them windys and hot dogs and things, ya know, five cents a piece. Go down there now and get ya one. Last fish luch I got down there was, I believe just last spring. Last fish lunch I got, I got a fish lunch, ya know and Root Beer. And they charged me a dollar and I believe a dollar and 18 or 19 cents. For that little fish lunch...you used to buy them for ten cents, all you want, see. Now they keep on with such stuff as that as that how's poor people-going to live directly? That's what I want to know. Yes, that's what I want to know is how they are going to live directly if they just keep on with the price. I used to know by giving the boys a dollar and two and three dollars for a hamberger over yander in the old counties and I thought that was something awful didn't know it was come back home to me. But it did come right on over here.

Vickie: Did you used to make your own fences.

Jo: Huh?

Vickie: Used to make your own fence? Did they have bobwire and stuff back then?

Jo: Oh yes, when we first moved here, mister, you wouldn't know nothing about it if I'd tell ya. You aint old enough. You live in town, I know ya don't. We commenced and run across three hills here. That way. I run a ridge fence plum down and across through here over a mile, altogether. And cut timber ten foot long, big trees. Take, didn't have no sledge hammer at that time. Get out a big tree ya know and take a knot off of it, ya know, and make mountain mall, ya know, and bust rails. Now I've got a brother or two that helped bust rails to help build that fence almost a mile around this place. What you's call a rail fence. Ten root, ya know, just rails. Bust 'em. Now you know that's a job too. That was a job too.

Sharon: Was there anything that was easy back then?

Jo: Easy?

Sharon: Uh-huh.

Jo: Well there aint nothing yet. I aint found nothing easy yet.
Only I'm just getting so doggone old that I can't do nothing hardly.

Vickie: Tell them about that pit that you were telling me about
the other night.

Jo: 'bout what?

Vickie: That pit.

Jo: Pick?

Vickie: Pit. P I T, you know, that your daddy made. You and
your dad made it.

Jo: Me and my dad didn't make it he made it.

Vickie: O.K. tell them about that.

Jo: Well that was oh well that going back, that was over in
Lawrence County Ohio.

Vickie: Uh-huh.

Jo: Ya see. Ya cut cord wood, ya know. Well they cut that wood,
ya know four foot long. Cord wood, a, a burn, burn characoal,

ya know. And they'd build kettles as big as this whole house. And they commence here ya know in the middle, and stand it all on the ends, ya see. Build a fire right in the middle of it there. Git it started then they pit they go aroun' it. With one roll of wood, ya know and they wagon cord loads. And they'd get on top of that and take another one, get on top of that and take it back, and then they'd rake the hillsides, they'd rake the hillsides, ya know. Maybe, maybe forty, fifty loads of leaves, put over it you know. Put leaves over it, ya know. And pack them. Then they'd cover with 'bout that much dirt. See? And that don't let it burn only jest a little at a time, ya see. It'll burn with out blasen'. That's that's a the way they used to make characoal over there. I can go over there now and show you old pits where they used to have 'em. Oh, I used to know a whole lot and some I don't know, might know what to tell you about. If I just could remember anything about it. But I can't keep everything in mind.

Sharon: Did you ever go to school?

Jo: Go to school? I went to school but I don't know nothing.

Sharon: What were the school's like?

Jo: Now I'm a going to tell ya. Schools, well they had just common teachers. then. Ain't like it is today. There wasn't

no high school these big schools and colleges. Wasn't no sech thing back there, no. And as far as I concerned there wasn't no hospitals. There no hospitals in Huntington nowere. Wasn't no sech thing as hospitals back when I'm telling you about now. If a doctor had to come out here he'd have to ride the horse or come in the buggy. See where it's at? Come from Milton, Huntington, where ever he wanted to come from. No these hospitals here. Wasn't no undertakers. Man, women, kid died, they just put him in a box, took him to the Cemerary and burried him. My old daddy died right here. Six men took him right up the road right up that hill right up there. And took him over to the cemetery. We got a cemetery over there on the hill, ya know. They packed him. Six men now, packed him up this hill and round the ridge to the cemetery. There wasn't no a wasn't no undertakers. Man down here on this creek made caskets. One over there at Ona made caskets. Well, if you'd see one of them you wouldn't know what to think about it. They make 'em, they made them, ya know, commencing here like where they laid him in, ya know. Like here. They commenced here big fer yer body nd taper them off like this. for your feet. They run tapered, ya know. Jest made out of nothing but planks and just black coverin' over them. It wasn't didn't have all dressed in silk looking like a well man wants to lay down in it. No. All that silk and stuff wasn't in 'em in

those days. My old daddy died, burried him good. What they called a real burying. \$40.00. Yep, my old mammy died. They burried her about \$60.00. That's the way it goes. Now what have they got? I got in the Milton bank up there about, well four, bout a fourteen, fifteen hundred dollars. I put up there to burry me. It's going to take, ya see. Just back a few years ago, not very many, you could burry a man good for a hundred dollars. Now think of that, will ya. See where the times is going to and what they was then. Lord, it's getting to be a shame. If it keeps this up a few years longer, I don't know little children comming up going to do. There're going to get in a mess. See what it takes to burry ya, Lord now and what it used to be. No there use to be there wasn't such thing as an undertaker. You couldn't call no undertaker. There wasn't none. You couldn't call a doctor. If you did you had to walk or ride in the buggy or ride the horse. I seen 'em ridding all over these hills here on a horse, ya know, a buggy. There wasn't no sech a thing as a car for him to ride in. There is just as much difference now in times as is day light and dark here, I'll say well 75 years ago. Just about as much difference as it is in day light and dark as it is in times and people. Why people is getting to be a sight.

Hy: Did a you ever go to a grist mill or anything like this?

Jo: Grist mill? Listen man, I reckon I did when I was just a boy. Used to be a grist mill over here next to Ona. Call'em Howells mill over here almost pertnear Ona. We'd hook up our horses and wagons, we had a wagon then, ya know. W'd hook up our horse and wagon and put two or three sacks of corn in it, take it over and have it ground get our meal and bring it back home. Then the fellow lived right here below me, he's dead now. He had a grist mill for years down here. Right down there. I didn't have far to take it. Just shell me a bushell, ya know, and lay it on my back and take it down and grind it. Take it in the kitchen and throw it down. Yeah, I know all about these grist mills. I've been there many a times.

Hy: Tell us how they worked and what it was like inside one.

Jo: Well yeah it worked up, it's just a a , well it's just a wheel there to grind the corn., ya know. That's all I can tell. But you got two rocks, ya see. These two rocks. Whatever they call the doggone things, ya know and a and a they come right together. That's what your corn grinds in. Goes in there, close up here ya know and them rocks. They had, he had a tractor to pull it. Them rocks he had to sharpen them every so many years, ya see. Take a pick and they was so hard you couldn't ever hardly pick one of 'em. Hardest rock in the world. They're made

that way to keep them from getting in the meal. He picks them up rough., ya know put them right together throws the corn in what we call hoppers, ya know there. Run right down between them between rocks and they trind it. The he's got a spout run out there and catches your meal. Lord, I reckon I've seen them grind many a many times. No sir, these times are just about played away, mister. I can tell you that right now. You take poor people right now, they're going to get up agin it one of these times. The rich man is going push him out. They're pushing him now. Yeah, there going to push out. That's according to the Bible too, if you'll read it. Bible tells you possibly what the rich man is going to do directly. He said how hard for a rich man to ever get in heaven. Well how hard--he aint going there. They can take these big buggies and hearse and these big wagons and put five horses to it, ya you and pull these big presidents around, rich man, ya know. Thet's no reason they went to heaven. I won't venture to say that any of them get there. Now it's the truth. They're all rich men, you know that. Big bugs. Remember what old Simon, ya know, he was the first rich man in the world. When Jesus Christ was born into the world. Simon, Simon the Sorceror, sorceror, Simon the sorceror. He was the only rich--real rich man. And he wouldn't have nothing to do with the poor fellows, ya know, that's the Bible right there if you want to read it. He wouldn't have nothing to do with the poor.

So he goes to Jesus by night don't ya see, slipped off he didn't want the poor to see him. He was going to his'n pay the money fer it. Going to buy salvaiton, ya see. Going to buy his rights in heaven. Cause when old Simon got done talking the Lord told him what to do. He said go Simon and sell all thou hast. Sell it all and give, and distribute it it to the poor. And come and follow me. That's, see that's how he arrived. But old Simon didn't do it according to the Bible. I guess, I don't know where he went, but he went somewhere.

Sharon: Did you used to go to church a lot?

Jo: Oh yes.

Sharon: Do you think that that is part of the problem today?

Jo: I go to church yet some. I'm just kind of tied up here with the kids. I don't go to Sunday School much. They're up yander and I'm a trying to stay up and look after things. I'm doing a poor job and all. I hates is cooking. I hates to go to cooking and mussing around. I like to see a women stiring stuff on the stove instead of me. Most all, I go to church and Sunday School.

Sharon: Do you think that that's part of the problem with kids today? Cause they don't go.

Jo: Well I don't know nothing about that, but there's a whole number of children that don't go. Plenty of them don't go to Sunday School. No, there aint no one ever try to get them to go.

Sharon: When you were young did you ever get in much trouble or mischief?

Jo: Oh no. No, I was never was nothing bad or that kind.

Sharon: Did some of the boys around ever get in trouble?

Jo: Some of them did, but I didn't, stayed out of it. I aint much on a lot of trouble if ya have to know it. I try to be good to every body and I, I like for everybody to be that way with me. And of course, most of them is. I'm going to tell ya right now, if you watch yourself, if you watch yourself and stay out of a lot of this stuff, why you aint going to get in to nothing. People aint going to mess with you much. You know I never had a man to walk up as old as I am and ask me what I ever told something on him fer, something like that. Cause I won't do it. I watch that. Keep after myself..If I know something, I keep it to myself. If you do that you'll get along pretty well. If you don't, you won't get along very long. Someone will come up and smack you along the side of the head.

Hy: Can you tell us about when you went to school, what it was like in school? What the school was like and how it was built.

Jo: Well the schools back at that time most of jest most of them used country teachers, ya know. Course I can't say. I didn't learn nothing. I never learned, I wouldn't try to learn. Don't ya know I went to school and my dad and mam sent me right here to school and I just go there and sat around. It wasn't in me. There's people that's borned not to learn nothing like that you know it? I can't read and wright y own name. No I can't do it. But that's aint no reason I'm a dummy, though, in a whole lot of ways. You know, you take a fellow like that and if you watch him, he's, gifted. Now I'm gifted more than you think I am. But not in education. Just many things, Seems like people's gifted at things like at, but I wasn't gifted at learning nothing in school and the teacher told my daddy that he just as well keep me at home. Said he can't learn nothing. Said he won't try to learn nothing. And I never did. I went to school right down the creek down here. I went how many years, but I never learned nothing. Old schools back there ya know, schools'all around here. They tore the schools up, ya know put busses. Used to be a school house down here one away down on the creek yander, Central; oh out here, Barker Ridge. 'bout all gone now. The taking and loading them on the busses and taking them on. And count the busses and count everything, I don't see as they save nothing. What's people know about a Bob-sled today?

Nothing. You don't, and you don't, what's she know about 'em?
I tell you what they do. They get out here and cut a crooked
bush, you know, a tree. One bent this way, bent back. Pull it
down fix it and, and make a bob-sled to haul logs on, you know,
saw logs. Put your logs off these haulers you know and lower one
or two on that bob-sled and hook your team to it. And take it
to the mill. Just end, ya know. One end'll drag, see. What I'm
speaking of a bob-sled. They, they just load on, it's just a short
sled. But they load it back here and chain it to keep the front
end you know from, ya know, from draggin' any rocks and dragging
in the hedge ya know and things. Holds it up. That's a bob-sled.
I've been in many of sled, that is horse sled, ya know. To haul
with, used to haul with orses. I got the last that's in the big
barn now, and she'st just about rotted down. I've got it nailed up
all this, all this, all them tobacco in it I wanted ya know. When
it's gone, I aint not going to make no more. My horse is gone.
Had an old horse here that I give away a while back. She's about
thirty-one years old. Now that's old enough, too old to stay here,
I mean she was here. I got rid of her to keep from havin' to winter
her. Feed, ya know. Good God! You look what you pay for feed.
Right down here on Seven-Mile over here to see. Billy, the fellow
I stay with here, and he told me that if I wanted any feed that I'd
be a getting it because it's, it's about eight, eight dollars and

something a hundred. Feed for an old horse. Think of that, will ya.! I bought it for two dollars and something last spring. He said that it would be ten-twelve dollars by Christmas. Now I just give seven over there: She's about thirty-something years old. Never was nothing, no count though. Didn't know Gee from Hew, Haw from Gee. Been around a long time, mister. I done told you aint a creek not a holler 'round here in I reckon in five miles of here but what I know ever which-way ever little stream runs. Sang digging, ya know. You don't know know nothing about sing digging. Well I do. I got a whole lot planted. I expect I've got about \$500.00 worth of sang 'round this hillside. If someone don't get in there and dig it for me one of these times. Well see, I go and dig it in the fall of the year, I never start till about the frost ya know, and the seeds ripe. Big stocks of sang. Ever see a bunch of sang? Well if it wasn't so late and they're, they're done passed out or I'd show you one. I've got a they grow in bunches on top, right in the forks of them. I just strip them off, ya know, and put it in my pocket and bring 'em home and plant it. Lot of times I dig a whole lot of little roots, you know. Bring them home. Just take a stick and stick them in the ground. I've got lots of Sang all over this mountain here, but it such poor hillside, ya see and it's so light at the house. Yes, fellows know the value slip in and dig it, ya know.

God it's fifty-some dollars a pound this year! That's, that's money! And before three, four, five years longer, it'll be a hundred dollars. I'm I'm honest, I believe with the price now. You see them folk over yander, Chinese and them's got to have it. I look for it to go to a way on up to a hundred dollars a pound. No, I got a lot of Sang here, but I don't let nobody know it, ya know. Only those that's just pret near me. 'cause, if I did two or three of them knows where it's at fellows I stay with here, they never bother it. I never mention my Sang. 'Cause some old goose, he'd run and get it. That's herbs, that, that, that, aint, that grows out in the woods. You, you don't raise that here, if you raise, grow it, they won't have it. They know it. It's got to be wild Sang. Get out in the woods and dig it. And the facts won't frow out in grow out in the open. Why I can remember when this house old log house was was here, ya know. It, it was built of round logs, ya see. These is nice hewed ones here and put up with news paper. The first house he built, you know. He just hurried and built it to get in it, ya see, our of round logs. Now the fire place here, big enough, if I want to saw a fore stick, they're better, what they call a fire place, ya know. Build it out of rocks. Make a hole in it there, in the logs, and put what ya call a hearth in here of rock, then build it all up of rock. Take water and go out there and get in the mud and dig ya know and make clay, mud and daub the rocks. And if I wanted the

floor stick, all I need to do, just lay my long on a saw, log,
a five foot saw. Now it's that big.....

Sharon: You used to knot have one (a phone)?

Jo: Good God, that I, that I, it aint it aint been here too
many years, just a short time. Never, we never did have none.
That's the only phone we ever did have right there. We never
had no phones here. Didn't have no electric here till a few
years ago. The electric Company just come off up through the
holler here and put it in every little house and up yander. Any-
body that wanted it. Now that's a thing I don't know nothing
about. I never tried to read the numbers or nothing. I just
them thats calls me. Just them thats calls me, I can answer. Now,
her mammy, their home and few around here, they call me, but
now if I got to go over and dial that, I don't know a bit more
about them numbers than nothing. I don't fool with it. If they
want me, just call me. I'll answer, I've got, I know the rings.
I act like a dummy and I am part dummy, but not as big a dummy as
people think I was, when it comes down to business of course
'cause I can't read and right, aint no reason I'm a plum dummy,
but pretnear it.

When we first moved here, I was telling you about this old fire place. We go down here to this man's house. And a lot of them's gone now, dead and gone, the old houses is gone. That's what ya call a pot rack. Wood fire, you know. Fire places. No stove at all, just throw a little wood and pot racks up over it. Put 'taters and the beans, it had a bar, you know to hook on to the pot, hang it right over that fire. Cook the stuff, on the pot rack, ya know, over the fire. They hardly ever used a stove like that then, there wasn't many you know that? Right at that time, there wasn't many. My old mammy had a four legged skillet, a three legged skillett. Big thick skillett, about that big. And, about that deep. Well there's was twelve of us in the family, ya know. It took lots of corn bread. She'd shovel out on to that hearth, fire. She'd fill that kettle full of corn bread. Put it there. Shovel out fire and put it on it and then she had a lid with a hook, ya know. And she'd put it right over that and shovel it and put fire on the lid. That's the way she cooked her corn bread. Not on that stove. That way is it. Then when it came to supper, look out, here come. There a big old, a great big quart of butter mild, by George. Plenty of good yellor butter. We had cows then. Now that's the way we eat. We cooked it right on that pot, right on that fire on that kind of skillett, made of perks, ya know. We had a hook just hook on the lid, ya know, when you wanted it off. See weather your bread or not was done. Raise it up. Pull it back, Now you talk about times

like that suppose you go back to that now, what would you do?
Huh? That's just what I'd like to know. What, what would you
do to go back I say back seventy-five years? I'd just like to
see what you'd do then. You wouldn't know what to do. See this
old time cooking and eating and the way they done. Right in this
holler, there's acres and acres and acres around here of ground.
And not a bit of it cleaned up. All there the roads was just cut
out with bushes ya know just cut out. We rode up and down big
Seven Mile on a, you go to the creek most of the way. You come to
little bottoms out and in out and in the creek and out and plum
out on mouth of Seven Mile. That's about seven miles down Seven
Mile. Now we haul rail road ties in there for a living, right down
that creek. Sometimes get in the mud-holes and hang up. And get
out and push. Thrash the old horses., and run the tires off. That's
the kind of a time we used to have. I can tell you that right now.
No I never done much of it in my life. Why when we moved here, we
had a bark, made bark, put a loft in the house with bark. Now people
was poor at that time, you know. My old daddy got out here and
peeled big poplar bark, ya know, big treese. And press'em down,
ya know, in great big sh... Maybe they'd be that thick, you know,
that wide. Maybe then twelve foot long and laid it in the lofts.
Peel poplar bark and let dry, you know, and make him a loft in his
house.

People didn't have nothing to do with, at that time but and axe. By George! An old axe and an old iron wedge or something. You didn't have nothing to do with. Ya didn't know what a cross-cut saw was there. No, we didn't know what a cross-cut saw is. Now look, cross-cuts is gone, they've got power saws, ya see. By God, they get up on to one of them trees and saw it up in a few minutes and gone. Why we used to saw half a day and all day on an old tree with a cross-cut, ya know, but back when I'm talking about there wasn't no cross-cutts. People, lot of people here me tell that today u'd think I'm lying, but there wasn't no such thing as a cross cut. There wasn't no such thing as a lantern. I could just get it all together to tell you all about it, well I've seen 'em. Back there, when I was just a little boy, remember it well, and we had one right here after we moved here, they had lanterns, you know, made out of tin. You've seen leanterns, ain't ya? Made out of tin all but just a ~~whole~~ hole that big, ya know, and one side 'course, had a wick in it, ya know, like a lamp or something, and you'd light it and you'd have to walk and hold that where that hole was, ya see, to go, 'cause the res of it was tin. All sech stuff as that. Now that's going that's gettin back there, ain't it? I ain't even got a mind to tell you all I wish I could. I'm acquainted with them folk. I bought it and gave five dollars a half for it, and I got down there to Coal Grove, you know, and I was walking on the N & W

(rail road tracks. Not a thinking, you know and I thought I'd try my harp a little while, ya know, and directly I heard something beyound my harp, looked back and it was a fast train. Just about to lift me off. I wished you'd seen me getting out of there. I can't play one of them doggone things...Girl, you better play it..Uh, uh...I ain't got the wind...I caint. I ain't got it. I give out. Can you play one? I don't want that, I can't. That's a good French Harp, if somebody u'd use it. I give five dollars and fifty cents for that doggone thing.

Vickie: How old is it?

(Jo: Oh God! I don't know. It's old enough. What we call services. Did ya ever know about a service? Hm? That's a bush. Bears fruit. 'Bout all dead now. It's been years since I've seen any. They died out. We could take a bucket, ballon bucket or two, and go back up on these hill anywhere, ya know, in the bushes and pull the bushes down. It's a red sarvice, about as big as the end of your finger. We baked pies, cobblers out of it. Now, you talk about something good. I knowed of my daddy going up there when he worked over the mill, you know, when we first moved here, he'd take a rope and go up there and tie bushes down, so mammy could pick them, ya know. They're gone Chestnuts, then take chestnut trees. I've seen times right over here on top of the hill. I could just sit down one place in one of the little gullys, and set and eat all the chestnuts I wanted.

Not these little ones like they raise now, ya know, these is tame ones. You see a few chestnut trees, little ones. You can buy them today. But they ain't half as good as the old time chestnuts. I've seen then, you know, great big, and three in a pod. You just sit down and eat all the chestnuts you wanta. A blight come along, just swiped 'em.. I worked in the mountains, away back yander, we cut chestnut trees up there 'till loman, the whole earth is covered with chestnuts. Cut them down, you know. Saw logs. All such stuff as that. But's that's gone, the blights got them. Quinces, nothing my mammy liked better than quince-hoey and quince preserves, you know. Well that's all they're fit for. Did you ever see a quince? Well, we used to have a lot of them up here. And they, they took a blight; they're all gone. I aint seen a quince in years. There's a little bit of a market right there about a a anyhow the bus station in Huntington, Trailways, right up this way, a little bit. And I was down there one day, and I, I seen a bushel basket of quinces sitting in there. I said, "By golly, if I got money enough, "im going to by them!" That's right, I went in to buy the, you know, and I asked him about the, and he said you can have then for thirty-five cents a pound. "Well," I said, "I'll be a going. Don't believe I'll be a goin." Look what that would have cost me? Thirty-five cents a pound, a bushel basket. Man, alive.!