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S. H. Boland

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ORAL HISTORY

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Date June 25, 1974 J. H. Boland
(Signature - Interviewee)

121 Reardon Street
Address

Winton, W. Va.

Date June 25, 1974 Nicky Elder
(Signature - Witness)

An Interview With:

Mr. & Mrs. S. H. Boland

Conducted By:

Vicky Elder

Place:

Hinton, W. Va.

Date:

June 25, 1974

Transcribed By:

Brenda Perego

copy

I interviewed Nettie Boland and Sam H. Boland from Winton, W. Va. They were born in 1902 in Summers County, W. Va. where they have remained all of their lives. They speak of their childhood and work experience. I found Mr. Boland particularly interesting because he has been fire chief of Winton, W. Va. (volunteer fire Dept.) for forty years.

VE: I am Vicky Elder and I'm interviewing Mrs. Hettie Boland, who has lived in Summers County, West Virginia since nine-1902. Mrs. Boland, can you tell me about your home and your early childhood?

HB: Now you want me to tell you bout? I lived at Laurel when I was a child and my father was in the timber business. When we moved back to Elks Knob Mountain we build this, uh, new home, and I went to the Elk Mount Church.

VE: What kind of church was it, was it, what denomination?

HB: It was a baptist.

VE: Describe your early school, did you go to a one room school, er?

HB: I went to a one room school house had a Mrs. Thompson for my teacher, that is one of my teachers, and there was about thirty enrolled.

VE: What kind of subjects did you study?

HB: Oh, arithmetic and spelling and reading and all the general subjects.

VE: Uh, what did you do when, when you were young, did you have to help around the house and help with the cooking and all that?

HB: Not until I was about twelve years old.

VE: Well tell me some of your duties.

HB: Oh, I cooked and worked in my garden, we had a garden and I had a horse and I took care of her.

VE: What was your horses' name?

HB: Kate.

VE: Kate (laughs). Well did, uh, did you have a kitchen garden just for your family or did you raise crops to sell on the market?

HB: We just raised our own food, we didn't sell any.

VE: Well what did the neighbors do, did the uh, did they help out like if somebody was short of a certain food, would they help each other out?

HB: Very little. They have, uh, uh, certain time in the year when they have wheat and the, the thrash machine comes and then all the men come and help thrash the wheat.

VE: Uh, what did your new house look like that you build on Elk Knob?

HB: Well it was beautiful. We had six rooms and three big porches and a well on the porch.

VE: A well on the porch?

HB: Uh, huh. We pumped our water.

VE: Right off the porch?

HB: Right off the porch.

VE: How was it built?

HB: Well it had a platform come up even with the porch and, you've see these old timey pumps, haven't ya?

VE: No (laughs).

HB: Well anyhow, you, there's a pu-pump handle and you just start pumping and then put your, pump your water.

VE: Huh. Uh, what did you do for entertainment when you were younger?

HB: Oh, we played croquet, we played horseshoe, we horseback ride, and just things like that that country children have.

VE: You mentioned before that your parents died when you were quite young, how old were you?

HB: Oh, about, uh, eleven.

VE: Well tell me, do you mind talking about that, tell me about that.

HB: You mean?

VE: How they died.

HB: Well just, uh, my mother died from childbirth and my father just different diseases.

VE: Well, were there, were there any boys in your family, er, did you have any sisters or brother?

HB: Say sisters and brothers thats died from birth, died at birth.

VE: You mean, well didn't you have any sisters, you weren't were you left an orphan after they died did you have anybody you could go live with?

HB: I had two sisters and we lived in our home together.

VE: Well how did you survive, just the three girls?

HB: Well my father left us money in the bank.

VE: Did you have?

HB: And we raised our own food.

VE: Oh, you had to do all the farm work?

HB: And we, uh, yes we didn't, we didn't farm in a big way, we had our garden and our potatoes, our chickens, we, we raised hogs had our own meat.

VE: Oh, you had your own meat, just hogs or did you have any cattle like beef?

HB: Yes, we had cows.

VE: Who slaughtered the, the meat for you?

HB: Oh, we'd hire a man.

VE: To come in and do it?

HB: Yes.

VE: Well did you feel like you were deprived or anything not, you know, your parents dying so young.

HB: Well anyone does when they don't have a parent.

VE: But you all seem to have made out alright (laughs).

HB: We lived five years.

VE: Together?

HB: And me and my two sisters together on the farm.

VE: Where did you meet your husband?

HB: I met him at a family by the name of Lilly's and they, they had a bean stringing and a square dance.

VE: A bean stringing, what, all the neighbors meet, come?

HB: We get together and string beans and that, and they go to put beans up in the fall canning, they get together and string their beans.

VE: Oh, it's like a social.

HB: Each, each helps each other.

VE: Oh like a social event nearby?

HB: Uh, huh.

VE: Uh.

HB: And then they serve.

VE: Well what, what did uh, what were the courtship practices how did they, did they just, are they anything like today? You didn't have cars to ride around in, did you?

HB: We didn't have cars, but we had horses.

VE: Oh, well tell me about that.

HB: Well, I had a horse and the, my husband had a horse.

VE: Uh, huh.

HB: My husband to be, he had a riding horse so that's the way we would go places.

VE: Did he come and pick you up on his horse?

HB: No, I would take mine and he would take his horse.

VE: Oh. Well, uh, what did you do like when you went on a date, where did you go and what?

HB: Oh, we went to church and we would go to square dances, and we would go to ice cream socials and pie suppers, and box suppers and.

VE: Did they make their own ice cream?

HB: Yes.

VE: Everybody made their own? What do, what did your husband, what kind of work did he do?

HB: Well he worked in the timber before I married him, and then he worked at, in the mines for a while.

VE: The coal mines?

HB: Uh, huh. Run, run a motor in the mines. And then he worked for the government.

VE: What do you mean running the motor in the mines?

HB: Well they, they have a motor they run back in the mines to pick up men and coal and things, and he would run the motor.

VE: What kind, was he?

HB: That was his job.

VE: What kind of work did he do for the government?

HB: He worked up on the Alderson Reservation, Alderson Prison.

VE: Alderson Prison?

HB: He, he built, he built those roads up there with the prisoners.

VE: What roads are you talking about?

HB: Roads all around the prisoning, prison building, he.

VE: Oh, and he worked the prisoners?

HB: Uh, huh. He would work as many as 75 at a time.

VE: Oh my goodness.

HB: They were men. They have women up there now.

VE: What kind of religion practices did, did you have, did you, were you required to go every Sunday or did you just go when the work was done or what?

HB: We went every Sunday, we wasn't required to go.

VE: You just enjoyed going to church?

HB: Enjoyed going to church (break in tape). And let me tell you something else that I didn't tell you awhile ago about the church. We had a pastor that came by when I was a little girl and his name was Reverend Ernest Garten, he's now dead, and he loved to come to our home he loved my parents, and he, he would come to our house most every Sunday for dinner and we would fix up big nice meals, and bake pies and have chicken, and oh we'd just have wonderful meals. And they all, all the pastors that ever came to the Elk Mount Church always did come to our home.

VE: Was it the Elk Mount Baptist Church?

HB: Elk Mount Baptist Church. And after, after my parents died the pastors would still come to, to our home with my two sisters and I, and we'd always have other girls who'd come home with us. One time we had as many as twelve girls and twelve boys, we all had a boyfriend (laughs) that came to our house. And we just had a wonderful time. But, but uh, we would bake pies and we'd have ham dinners and chicken dinners, and my father always killed beefs we'd have a big beef or two every winter. We, we didn't have to go to the store now and pay the big prices down (laughs) like we do now.

VE: Well how did you keep your beef, uh, all winter long, how did you keep?

HB: Well we would can some of it and, you know, you could hang it up and the winters were cold and, uh, refrigerator some of it and, and alot of it would keep you could hang it up for a long time.

VE: How do you can the beef?

HB: Just hang it up in a, in a smoke house and it would keep.

VE: How would you can beef?

HB: Well just like you cold pack it, you cold pack it.

VE: Umm. Where, where were you married?

HB: Well uh, I was married in Ironton, Ohio at a pastor's home, by the name of Reverend Summers.

VE: Why did you go to Ironton to get married?

HB: I had left the farm at that time and was with my sister for six months. She lived in Ironton, Ohio. And then we sold our farm and went to Ironton and then I was married there and I didn't go back to the farm.

VE: Who did you, how come you to sell your farm?

HB: Well we couldn't farm it like plowing and raising big things like that and my other two sisters were married and they didn't want to live on the farm.

VE: Well how old were you when you were married?

HB: Twenty one.

VE: Oh, you mean you lived with your married sister and her husband?

HB: For six months.

VE: (Inaudible).

HB: In Ironton, Ohio.

VE: What happened after you were married, what did you do then?

HB: I came back to Hinton. We got us apartment and I was married and we lived here in Hinton.

VE: What did you do, did you ever work or were, did you?

HB: No, I was just a housewife. Uh, I was going to tell you about our, our, uh, peach and orchards that we, we had plenty of apples and plenty of peaches on the farm and, and one time a, one time, uh, people out there were making moonshine liquor out there on the mountain. (Laughs) they were stealing our peaches (laughter), they were stealing our peaches to make peach brandy. So I got my pistol and I shot up through the orchard at um (laughs).

VE: (Laughs) did you shoot anybody?

HB: No, but they shot back at me with a shotgun.

VE: Did you have any trouble with them after that?

HB: No. But they didn't come back because they, they were afraid to come back (laughter). But what, we had one man out there who was, he was nice to us and the people in Hinton would call out there and he was making moonshine, and they would call out there and say, uh, call to another man and say there's a storm a coming. And we would call this man that we liked and we'd tell him there was a storm a coming and he would hide his still and they didn't catch him.

VE: Wait, when, when you say storm a coming, what's that mean?

HB: Well they meant that, uh, uh, revenue officers was on, was on their way (laughs). Cause they would, they would come they, that's the way they had of, uh, notifying um, you know, that, that the revenue officers was a coming they'd just say there was a storm a coming.

VE: Call what, could they say it over the phone, er?

HB: Yeah, they just say that on the phone but they didn't say anything about the revenue officers they'd, just say that, that and the people knew, you know, what they meant.

VE: Well did this moonshiner live near you?

HB: This man that was making the still, oh, he lived about a couple of miles but he didn't make it in a big way.

VE: Did he sell it or did he just make it for himself?

HB: Well I think that he sold some, but he made some for himself, but he didn't, he didn't get drunk (inaudible).

VE: What did he do after you called him, did he ever give you any moonshine free?

HB: Oh, I didn't want any of it.

VE: Oh, you didn't (laughs)?

HB: We didn't drink (laughter).

VE: Did you ever get to see his still?

HB: One time.

VE: What did it look like?

HB: I wanted to see how it was made and so I, he and my, me and his wife slipped up on him and he was making this moonshine liquor and so I seen how it was made, and how the line was curled around and how the liquor come out and everything and the fruit he put in it and.

VE: Were there many stills near where you lived or just?

HB: No, that's the only one I really knew of. Only one I ever did see, but uh, I imagine there was other people that did make it out in there.

VE: Since there were only three girls living on a farm did anybody ever try to take advantage of you all or try to steal your other crops or anything like that?

HB: Nothing, only just, uh, nothing only just to get these peaches to, to make uh, peach brandy.

VE: Well did you ever sell your peaches or did you can goods?

HB: We canned them for our own use (VE: But you) we didn't sell um. Uh, we didn't sell our apples, we put them up for winter use also had our own potatoes for winter use, there was plenty of them and we canned all kinds of fruits and jams and jellies and preserves.

VE: Huh, well did you ever go into Hint-did, did you live near Hinton, how far were you from Hinton?

HB: Well it was about, uh, bout ten miles.

VE: Did you ever have to go into town to buy anything?

HB: Oh, we come to town to buy our clothes and our shoes and our uh, our uh, groceries like sugar and coffee and flour and things like that, that we had to have.

VE: Well how would you get into town?

HB: Well a neighbor, get a neighbor or somebody to bring us.

VE: Did they have cars or buggies or what?

HB: Well we usually come in a, a buggy or a wagon.

VE: Were the roads paved?

HB: No, they were dirt roads.

VE: How, well how did you get in in the winter, could you come in then?

HB: We didn't come in the winter very often we'd usually get us a big supply when we did come, and we didn't have to come very often because we had all this food at home.

VE: How, are your sisters older than you?

HB: Yes, both of them are older than me. I, I just have one living sister now, uh, my, my older sister is dead.

HB: Nothing, only just, uh, nothing only just to get these peaches to, to make uh, peach brandy.

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VE: How old is your living sister?

HB: She's 74.

VE: Did she stay in this area too?

HB: No, when she got married she went to Ohio to live.

VE: Why did you decide to come back to Hinton to live?

HB: Well my husband was, he wanted to live here and so did I.

VE: Did your husband still work for the government when you were married?

HB: After we was married he worked for the government a long time and then he went to work then for the (break in tape) company and also for the fire department.

VE: Oh, what did he do with the fire department?

HB: He was, uh, he was fire chief for about, oh, about forty seven years.

VE: Forty seven years, well how, how?

HB: He just retired this year, 1974.

VE: Well for pity's sake, forty seven years.

HB: Yes.

VE: Was it a volunteer fire department?

HB: Yes, it's a volunteer fire department but, but he also he went to several fire schools, and he went to fire school at Morgantown and, and taking all that fire training.

VE: Well how did, did they have fire trucks then, back then, what did they use?

HB: Well they had, they've got an old fire truck but now they have, they have three or four trucks now and they've got one new one, they've got this year.

VE: Well, what did the old fire trucks look like?

HB: Well I can't describe then, of course the pictures are in all the magazines of that, you know, the first ones that came out. But, uh, course there's a big improvement on them now.

VE: Well does he still work with the fire department?

HB: He's still in the fire department, he's still treasurer of the fire department.

VE: But he just resigned as fire chief after forty seven years?

HB: Yes.

VE: And the, in Hinton?

HB: Yes.

VE: How has Hinton changed since, alot since you first came here?

HB: Oh yes, they're building two banks, two banks here in Hinton now, and they're building a new bridge across New River, and uh, new furniture store.

VE: What about the population, how many people lived here when you first came?

HB: Oh I just don't remember but at that time, uh, we had the railroads here and, and the yards and roundhouse and everything which of, they don't have now and very little railroading goes through Hinton now.

VE: Well is that how the city was built up, from the railroad?

HB: Yes, uh, railroaders.

VE: Is that what most of the population was, the railroaders?

HB: Well I wouldn't say that was all of um, but there was a whole lot of um that was railroaders. And alot of um are retired here now, railroaders.

VE: They're still here, are there alot?

HB: They're still here.

VE: Are alot of the people that, uh, you knew back then still here now?

HB: Well there's quite a few and there's been of course alot, alot of um have passed on, but then we had the Bluestone Dam here now too. And uh, that building that employed alot of men at that time.

VE: Were, were the men trained here, did they leave after it was built?

HB: Uh, some of um yes. They followed these, you know, dam building, whoever build dams, and uh.

VE: Well, you said your husband was a volunteer fireman, was he paid from the beginning for the fires?

HB: Well they pay um just a little bit for each fire that they, they had then, oh, maybe two fifty.

VE: Per fire?

HB: Per fire, at that time when it started.

VE: Well two fifty was alot forty years ago, wasn't it?

HB: Oh, I don't know (laughs). (Inaudible mumbling.)

VE: Was he the first fire chief?

HB: No.

VE: You mean they had a volunteer fire department before then?

HB: They had, they had another fire chief or two but they wasn't in there very long.

VE: Not forty seven years (laughs).

HB: I just don't recall, but not very long.

VE: What were the schools like in Hinton when you came here?

HB: Well they, they've always had pretty good schools in Hinton.

VE: Well did you go to a country school, you didn't come into Hinton to go to school did you?

HB: No, I went to, I went to country schools but my, uh, son and daughter went to school in Hinton.

VE: Well did the country schools just have one room?

HB: Uh, huh, they went to the eighth grade.

VE: And all the grades were mixed?

HB: Yes.

VE: Well how did the teacher teach eight grades at one time?

HB: Well we only had one room and one teacher and they got to do it, that's all I can say.

VE: What kind of chairs did you have to sit in?

HB: Had benches.

VE: Benches, no backs to um?

HB: Yes, they had backs to um.

VE: Well uh.

HB: Seats.

VE: How was the room heated?

HB: With a wood stove.

VE: In the middle of the room, where was it?

HB: Uh, yes about the middle of the room.

VE: What kind of books did you use?

HB: What kind of books?

VE: Uh, huh.

HB: Well they, you mean english and spelling and things like that?

VE: Yeah. I mean did you have, did each grade have it's own book or did, how did that work?

HB: Well sure, each, each grade would carry their own books and she'd give them their lessons and teach um.

VE: What would the rest of the kids do while she was working on one grade?

HB: Well they would study their lessons and be ready for her when they, they got their lessons.

VE: How long were you in school?

HB: Each day?

VE: Yes.

HB: Well you go at nine and out at four.

VE: Did you get a lunch break?

HB: Yes, hour.

VE: Did you live close enough to home that you could go home or did you?

HB: I would take my lunch.

VE: Did your sisters go to school with you?

HB: Yes.

VE: How did you get to school, did you walk?

HB: Yes, bout a half a mile.

VE: Did you ever ride your horse?

HB: No, not to school.

VE: Did you go in the winter when there was snow and everything?

HB: Why sure.

VE: Just walk right through the snow?

HB: Why sure.

VE: Where did the school teacher come from, did she have a degree from a university or did she, was she local?

HB: No she wasn't local, she, uh, had been in college. And we had, uh, different teachers came from different places.

VE: Did they stay long?

HB: One of um boarded with us one winter and stayed with us.

VE: Well that was nice, wasn't it?

HB: Yes.

VE: Did she (laughs), did she help ya at home?

HB: Yeah, that was required of her.

VE: Did she pay, pay you for staying, er?

HB: Why sure she paid a board.

VE: Did the other, were the other kids jealous that she was living with you?

HB: No, they wasn't like that.

VE: How come you had extra room in your house, how old, what grade were you in when she lived with you?

HB: Well I was older then and we'd built our new home by that time.

VE: But were your sisters still in school?

HB: My two older sisters wasn't, I was.

VE: How come she choose to live with you all?

HB: Well, she just liked us I guess.

VE: Did you all ever make quilts or blankets?

HB: Not as a child I didn't.

VE: I mean as you got older.

HB: No, not when I was at home.

VE: Not until after you were married?

HB: Not til after I was married.

VE: Did.

HB: My sister would sew, my older sister would sew and she would make our clothes. She'd make beautiful dresses.

VE: You mean you didn't have to buy very many clothes?

HB: Not a whole lot. She didn't make coats, we'd buy our coats and shoes and, but she would make most of our dresses.

VE: What kind of sewing machine did you have?

HB: A Singer.

VE: A Singer?

HB: Uh, huh.

VE: A real old pedal type?

HB: Uh, huh.

VE: Where did you come by your sewing machine?

HB: It was my mother's.

VE: Who taught you how to cook? Did you just pick it up?

HB: Well my older sister cooked and of course most of it I did it my, on my own. And I canned fruit before I was married.

VE: Do you still can and keep all that stuff?

HB: Oh yes, I have all those goodies.

VE: (Laughs) do you can every year?

HB: Every year.

VE: What do you can?

HB: All kinds of food. Beets and beet pickles, cucumber pickles and beans, peaches, pears, berries, tomatoes, everything that's good.

VE: Are you glad you stayed in Hinton all these years?

HB: Yes, I like it very much. It's a nice little town to live in.

VE: Has it, uh, filled up quite a bit?

HB: Well no, not since railroading it, it hasn't. There's no, the younger generation of people have to go to other places to look for work.

VE: Did your children stay in the area?

HB: No, they went to college, my daughter went in to her nursing and my son is a musician.

VE: They both left Hinton?

HB: Yeah, they live in St. Albans and Huntington (break in tape).

HB: We lived at Laurel and my, my father and my uncle was still in the timber business then, and they'd buy up big tracks of land and, and cut the timber and we had several teams of horses and oxen, these old oxen had big long horns that, uh, had brass tips on the ends of the horns. And as kids we use to get on their backs and ride um and that was just an awful lot of fun.

VE: Did you ride them while they were pulling the plow?

HB: No, when they would come in from work and feed um then that's when we would get on um and ride um (laughs). And while we lived alone we had that big, uh, flood was in 1913, alot of people lost their homes and their cattle and their horses and our garden was washed away and our chickens was washed away. And that day I can remember it so well because my mother had taken us across

the mountain to a little country store, it wasn't close to the river, and it wasn't close to flood and we didn't know about it till we hear it rained awfully hard and it had, uh, while we was at the store and we came back across the mountain and we knew that, that there was something happened. They'd had a real cloudburst that's what happened up, up where we lived and of course that raised all the rivers and you could see houses and horses and haystacks and everything going down the river.

VE: Nobody was prepared for it, it just hit?

HB: Nobody was prepared for it really, it just struck all at once because we wouldn't have been out in it had we know it was going to come. And we had, where we fed our, our cattle was in a, a bottom land and that's how come our chickens to wash away because they were in these boxes eating corn where we had fed the cattle so the boxes and the chickens all went down the river.

VE: Well what did those people do who'd lost their homes?

HB: Well, of course, that wasn't right around us, it was on up on the, on the Greenbriar River where they'd lost their homes.

VE: Did people send them food?

HB: But no one lost their homes up in the country there where we lived.

VE: Did people send them food and clothing?

HB: Well I imagine so, see we lived a mile from the river and of course I wouldn't know. But uh, uh when we came home though our hogs was all in a big pen, I don't remember how many we had and you could just see their noses and their heads sticking up over that water and they were, they were fenced in and they couldn't get out and so we opened the gate and we did save our hogs, they got out, swam out. And then when, course then after that flood we lived there for quite a while, oh maybe a couple of years and then we moved back, uh, to uh, Elk Knob. And if someone didn't come on to see us on Sundays we'd get lonesome, but usually there was someone there most all

the time, neighbors or friends and we'd always serve them something because we'd always have pie and cakes baked. And the, uh, in the fall of the year we all, all get together and have an old timey molasses pulling, and uh, the farmers around there would raise cane and then they would take a horse and had a machine they would grind this juice out of the cane and then they would put it in a great big, uh, container, flat container then have a molasses pulling and people would gather up and just to get together for this molasses pulling.

VE: Did you ever have taffy pullings?

HB: Oh yeah, we'd make taffy and have taffy, pull taffy.

VE: Well what about, uh, hayrides, did you ever go on a hayride?

HB: Oh yes, we'd put our horses to a big wagon and hay and on it and go, sometimes to church once in a while or a, to a maybe a supper, you know, box supper or something like that we'd go on a hayride.

VE: Uh, did the, when the neighbors came did they let you know they were coming?

HB: No, they'd just always drop in they don't, they don't (laughs), they don't call you. But we'd have these, uh, like I said these box suppers and have a lot of fun at that.

VE: What, what was that?

HB: Well the girls would fix up a box of food and the men would go and they would buy um and then ever who bought your box you, you'd eat with them.

VE: What if somebody bought your box you didn't like?

HB: If somebody bought you didn't like you still have to eat with them or else, else be rude.

VE: Well did they know who's box it was before they bought it?

HB: No, not all the time, sometimes they would, the boys that

would want to eat with certain girls they would get around and find out who's box it was and, and I don't care how high it would go they would buy it.

VE: Was there alot of courting or did, did you date alot before you get, got married, or did you just?

HB: Oh yeah, sure you did alot of, of old timey courting and, and dating.

VE: How was old timey courting?

HB: (Laughs) how do you mean?

VE: Well is it just like dating today?

HB: Why sure. It's all the same procedure (laughter).

VE: When were the roads paved, can you remember?

HB: Well it, in the, when they had the WPA was when they paved the first roads out there. And I just don't recall the year of the WPA.

VE: What about cars, when did you get your first car?

HB: We didn't have our first car, we didn't have our car out there, one boy that, by the name of Martin got his first real car out there. He would come out and we would go car riding with him.

VE: Well did you wear dresses all the time, did you have any pants, what kind of clothing?

HB: We always wore dresses, I never wore pants.

VE: How come, you didn't like um?

HB: I still don't.

VE: When did, uh, did you ever get to go to movies or anything like that, when did they come in?

HB: Oh, we would come to town to the movies once in awhile and the, and the, they use to have a big Fourth of July

celebration in Hinton every year and we would always get to come to that.

VE: What kind of celebration, was it like a fair?

HB: Oh, something similar to it. They'd have a band playing and, and uh, have, uh, different things they would sell and, and a parade.

VE: Who'd be in the parade?

HB: Oh, just everybody, everybody that wanted to be. They'd have a, a prize for the largest family and the one that come the farthest distance.

VE: What did you do about, uh, you know, like if you get sick, did the doctor come to your house or?

HB: Sure, but we had a doctor who lived in Hinton and one lived in Talcott, West Virginia, and uh, by the name of Dr. Ryan and he would always come when we, when we got real sick and needed the doctor.

VE: What about for snakes bites and stuff like that?

HB: We never was bitten by snakes.

VE: Did you ever hunt game like rabbits?

HB: Yes, we went, we've killed rabbits.

VE: Did you miss the country life after you moved to Hinton?

HB: No, it, it's hard work and I'd rather live in town (break in tape).

VE: Mr. Boland, can you tell me a little bit about your childhood?

SB: Uh, whenever I was six years old I started to working, uh, farming, planting a garden after they quit the garden there'd be plants to beat together the crops for the, in, send it into the, uh, saw mills where my dad was operating saw mills at that time. Alright, then after I become eight years old I went to work driving cattle, a hauling

me as fire chief and I held that for at least along with the other work that I had done for thirty nine years and six months I was in, I've, I've been a member of, in the fire department for forty eight years; so on June the first of 1974, I resigned my position as fire chief.

VE: Uh, Mr. Boland, could you tell me about, uh, your early school?

SB: Oh, about the school, well during, during the period of the time that I, whenever during the summer months I would do this here work then whenever school opened up in the, in, generally in, in September and we would only have, sometimes four months of pre-school. And uh, finally we went up to where we would have as much as six months of school and the school house is nothing compared with what the children has today. I would have to, whenever it, it, it didn't make no difference how cold it was nor how deep the snow was or how much it was a raining I walked three miles to school and three miles back home in the evenings. And the school house that I first went to school in was an old chic-with old floor with big cracks in it that when ever they swept the floor instead of sweeping the dirt out the front door like that they swept, just swept it down through and underneath the cracks and it went out. And had a big old iron, cast iron stove about four foot long and about eighteen inches wide and about thirty, thirty inches high and they take and we fired that there with wood then whenever it'd get so cold like that that the teacher let all the kids pull their desks up around the stove and sit around the stove and study and have their classes there until such a time that it would be, that it warmed up and so we could go back to our seats, regular seats that a way. And uh, we would, uh, we would go to school that a way all the time that a way and so at, uh, I finished the eighth grade of school when I was, uh, fifteen years old and I finished the grade school. And then the rest of my school that I have got, that I've had to get, pick it up between times like that such as, uh, the government was a having a school here, and uh, the government was a having this school for testing and inspection of building material for to build dams and big building and underground work and stuff like that, and I'd taken that there, uh, schooling from them and that gave me a five hour college, five hours of college, uh, from the time I started that school till it

was finished. And then course up between the time before that, why I would take short courses of different things that I, that, that I would need for to build my education up more to, to where by that I, that I, that I could get a high school diploma, not a high, yeah, a high school diploma. Plus these others after that, that I would get so much college credit during the time that we'd have it like that. And then, so if be I've had my ups and downs but I've had I guess as many ups as I've had downs, so.

VE: Can you tell me a little bit about when you worked with the prisoners?

SB: Well, yeah, that was back, back there, in fact during the time that I would be, be during these other works, you know, such as foreman on such and such a job like that there that I would have to pick up this extra stuff of evenings and things like that, they go to night, night school like that and study um. Then you take courses and mail them into the different, uh, schools. And uh, on, by the, by the help and the consideration that I got through the general public and everything and the friends that I had coming up through there why I guess, uh, to not go to school, have the chance to go to school like some people did like that, right straight on through and everything like that, that I've been pretty fortunate to, to upgrade my education as much as I did. Oh, oh well while I was a working for the government, whenever I was a working for the government we were building the Federal Industrial Institution and that work that I was a doing was done with all federal prisoners come out of Atlanta, Georgie and Ft. Lavenworth, Texas and we would get those, we would, uh, a, a swell bunch of men would serve their time and we, we would get a new bunch from one of those different prisons to come in and we'd work um like that. And all of those prisoners that I ever worked, not trying to brag or put a big feather in my hat or anything like that, but I never had a finer bunch of men to work in my life and what those prisoners was. They thought, they thought that the sun raised and set in me because I was the only fore man or anything like that whenever they would come to me with some of their troubles or something nother like that, I'd set down talk their troubles over and try to put um on the right track and go before the head guard to work their problems out with these head guards to where by that they didn't take any of their time away from them or

anything like that and if one of um done something or nother that was to somebody's interest and everything like that, I would go to the foreman guards and build that man up and so that's one reason why that all the men everytime a new bunch would come in they would get ower here to these old prisoners that had been there awhile and ask them who could, who's job could they get on the line to work with, who was the best foreman and stuff like that. All of them I couldn't tell um was, all of um would try to get on my programs all the time like that, and uh, so that, whenever you, whenever you do something like that for a man or something nother like that it makes you feel pretty good. Oh, well sometimes I'd have, sometimes I'd have more than a hundred, sometimes I had, oh, anywhere from fifty to a hundred and twenty five of um to work and all I had to do was just go along tell this man alright, you do this here today and whenever that is done, when you've got that done I would assign so much work for him like that a day, whenever that work was done your day is done, you can, you can go on in to the camp. Well that made um feel good, you see, because that, you'd get some men, you know, that was real honest to goodness workers, workers just like if you were paying them five or ten dollars a day; which they would believe the government camp couldn't take federal prisoners out and work um on the, on the job as that kind without giving um some kind of a com-compensation, so the government they would give just the regular men twenty cents a day, alright if I had a man that was a truck driver he got fifty cents a day, if I had a man that was, uh, driving horses teamsters they got twenty five cents a day. The tractor men, the road men, big and shovel men they got seventy five cents a day. And uh, well whenever, whenever one of um would come to a promotion and everything like that, you know, and I would promote him from one, from the low rate of pay to whereby that he could get the high rate of pay, boy, that was tops. And the religion, oh.

VE: Yeah, could you tell me a little bit about your religion?

SB: Well religion now was, uh, when I was raised you were catholic, catholic church, a member of the catholic church. And they were six of us, uh, six of us boys that grew up, and uh, every Sunday morning we had to get up at four o'clock in the morning, get on the mule and ride the mule four miles in order to attend that first mass in the church

that our father seen that each and everyone of us did that. Then there was no use to say that we were sick, couldn't go or anything like that whenever he said time to get up and go to church that's exactly what he meant and we went to church. Allright, then af-after I grew up to become my own boss, making my own way and everything like that, somehow or another by the way that I had, had to go to church that didn't just exactly satisfy me so I left the catholic church and joined the methodist church, so since that time I've been a member of the methodist church, Southern Methodist Church.

VE: Do you prefer the old country life or the life now living in Hinton?

SB: Love the country and the city they're all, uh, they're all, uh, you take for instance now you're living in a moderate town, a moderate size town not a large town, no large town for me. I would take a moderate low town and the, but I think that people is much more, considers you more for anything that you might do or anything that you might help somebody would be if you're in a small town that a way. So I prefer the small city, the small town or small cities in preference to the country. Now I, I love the country alot and all like that, but in the winter time it's dreary, you wade snow and mud, allright you don't have no sidewalks in the country to walk on, you get out to go anywhere you roll up your pants legs, you hit the mud. Allright whenever you're in the city and you want to put on your best Sunday clothes and lace your shoes and go out and see your best girlfriend you know whenever you get there you're not a going to look like that you come out of the country nor muddy from the top to the bottom like that. So that makes a big difference there. And then, that, in the small cities that I've always lived in, that they'd been the people anytime that anyone needed any help or anything like that those people don't wait for someone to come and ask them to do it, they get out there and go in there and investigate theirselves and see what they can do for to help people like that and that they're always will-willing and ready to help anybody that needs help. Allright you go into the big town, big cities you may live in that big city in one, on one block there for several years and you'll never know who your next door neighbor is. Well, uh, the, the neighbors in the country, you got

to relieve um to help allright, but they're, they're so far and few between that you don't, you don't notice it like you do in a small town, where you're living in a small town like that. The people brings it to you, you don't have to go out and ask somebody to help, to get for you something nother like that. They'll look at you and say well Mr. Jones over here has had a bad sick spell, he needs someone to go up there and plow his field for him and help him plant his crop, said he's not able to do it. Allright you'll look out and you'll seeing several people coming in there to help Mr. Jones get that crop up so that they know that if ever Mr. Jones dies or gets off on his feet this fall he's going to have his crop already now for the gather, allright then Mr. Jones now then, take Mr. Jones name just for an example there like that, we, I've see Mr. Jones but he has that, that he knows that the other folks has helped him so he helps others and so by that, by you a helping one person they, they remember that, then they, they come around see they know that whenever they help you, whenever they get down in the same condition that you've been in then they're going to help ya. So that a way, that's one reason why that I say that I prefer the, the small cities to live in like that.