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ORAL HISTORY

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Date November 24, 1974

Robert S. Hart
(Signature - Interviewee)

3639 Piedmont Rd. Huntington, W. Va.
Address

Date November 24, 1974

Mary S. Hart
(Signature - Witness)

AN INTERVIEW WITH

Ruby S. Hartz

CONDUCTED BY

Mary S. Hartz

DATE

November 24, 1974

PLACE

Huntington, West Virginia

TRANSCRIBED BY

Robert R. Ratcliff

MSH: I'm interviewing Ruby Spurlock Hartz, my mother-in-law. She resides at 3638 Piedmont Road in Huntington. She is sixty-five years old and was born on March 20, 1909. The date of this interview is November 24, 1974; and I am Mary S. Hartz. Now . . . (giggle) . . . uh, tell me a little about your childhood, uh, where were you born?

RSH: I was born in Holden, but we came back to Wayne County when I was about (sigh) six or eight months old, my fathers health wasn't to good there, and aside from that I think that my family just wanted to get back among their elders up the little hollow where they knew people and among their kind. We lived in a little log cabin on my grandfather's farm. My mother (sigh) was a very ambitious young lady, she had her chickens and her cow, and she could sew and she did all the stuff in the garden, that was her work. My father worked out in the fields and also he and my grandfather did quite a bit of, lot of timber work. And when they weren't busy raising their crops, why they were timbering.

MSH: Right in Wayne County?

RSH: Uh, their farm, at the head of Garrett's Creek. I think my grandfather had around five hundred acres possibly a little more.

MSH: Uh, huh.

RSH: At the head of Garrett's Creek and timbering was the way of making extra money. The farm crops fed them and their cows and horses, but for the extra money the timbering brought that in.

MSH: Where did they, uh, take the timber, how did they get it to wherever?

RSH: They would get to Twelve Pole and from there it was floated down Twelve Pole to, I suppose Ceredo or to the Ohio

MSH: But they did float it down . . .

RSH: Yes, they floated it down, down the river, made rafts. One of my grandfather's brothers was killed in a logging accident. It was dangerous work but never the less, we have dangerous work now, too.

MSH: You say you lived in a log cabin?

RSH: We lived in a log house. It still stands. And just a year or so ago siding was put on the little log cabin that we lived in. Might tell you about the upstairs of this log cabin. It was suppose to been haunted. Course "haints" is what they said

then. My father and mother didn't believe it. They just couldn't believe it. But one Sunday afternoon late fall, a cold fall rain. We came from White's Creek where my mother's parents lived. Got in just about dark. And, all of a sudden we heard someone walking, upstairs. It was an unfinished loft or attic, well they felt surely someone was up there. So my father put a chair on my mother's trunk and stood so he could look up there, in, inside, got his head through the hole that went up in, the little opening that went up into the attic. He looked . . . no one. He come down on the floor, the walking would resume. Put his head up there . . . no one. And that went on, I think, the rest of the time they lived there. My mother said she didn't mind it when, so much except when she be left alone and said many a time she climbed the logs on the outside of the cabin and would look through the (sigh), the cracks between the logs to see if there was anything, but they never say anything. But nevertheless on rainy days and dark nights that walking would start. She would stand it if she, if she were alone, she'd stand it as long as she could then she'd grab me (laughter) and take off down the road, down the holler to my grandmother's.

MSH: Do you remember it, could you hear anything?

RSH: I don't remember it. Because we left the log cabin when I was three years old. And I just don't, I don't remember that part. I do remember playing out in front of the house on sunny days. My only toy was, I suppose it would resemble a kiddie car, it was more or less like a little milk stool. It had a little bridle on it and I would make it walk all over the yard, it didn't have wheels but in riding it I would make it carry me all over the yard. I also remember when my mother and I would be left alone and she'd take me out on the grassy knoll near the house and I would pick little, little forget-me-nots for her and I always loved flowers, she always made a big fuss over them and was pleased when I would bring them and my sons as they grew up when they would find a flower they'd always pick it and bring it to grandmother because she loved flowers so much.

MSH: Did she have alot of flowers around her house?

RSH: Oh yes, she had a green thumb.

MSH: But you, you picked that up from her then?

RSH: I suppose so. I just can't, I can't let her flowers, I can't throw her flowers away. If they die, I'm sorry, but I can't take care of them like she did. I don't have the green thumb that she had.

MSH: Yeah, uh, you stayed in the log house until you were three you say?

RSH: Um, hum. And then my great grandfather died. My great grandfather was Reverend James Oliver Garrett, a prominent Wayne County preacher or, but really a circuit rider
[MSH: Uh, huh.]. And I bet he died, he had a, a stroke in 1913. February I believe, I wasn't yet four. Anyway, my grandparents moved from their house, which was a rather large house for a country house and it was rather well built and they moved down to stay with my great grandmother and look after her. They wanted us, my father and mother and me to come to their house and live in it while they were gone with my great grandmother. But great grandmother proved too much of a problem for them. So after one year, maybe a little over a year, they wanted to come back to their house, and by then it was getting time for me to go to school and my parents liked the idea of going down to, to my great grandparents house because it was very close to school. If we continued living at the head of the hollow I would have had at least two miles to walk around the side, side of the hills to get to school. So they liked the idea of getting down closer to the school. And by the way, that schoolhouse is still standing, it's across the little bridge and upon the bank in front of, uh, Ravencliff Wood Lodge.

MSH: And there's a roadside park there, too.

RSH: Ah, yes, the Shirley Birgess, UM, Ferguson Roadside Park is there. It's the white house just above it upon the bank. I might mention that Ravencliff Lodge, first was Poe's Raven and Mrs. Poe was my great aunt and she married a Mr. Poe so when they opened this restaurant why, naturally it was Poe's Raven, so that's how it got its name.

MSH: . . . and then it, they kept the Raven on it and called it Ravencliff.

RSH: So now it's Ravencliff.

MSH: Huh.

RSH: Now my first teacher, at this little school, was "Crete McClure. Lacrichia, I believe, was her real name but anyway she was Miss Crete to me. Then we called our teachers "Miss" and their first name. She had been warned that I was a very shy child and just wouldn't talk in school, or wouldn't talk to anybody. So she came prepared, she had a beautiful little china head doll that she brought the first day. I was the only first grader. All eight grades were taught in this school. She call me up to

the desk after school started and asked me what she had. Of course, right off, I said "a doll." And before I realized it she had me talking. I wonder if we teachers today have that much ingenuity and that much thought about how to handle these problem children that we have. I'm afraid I didn't have. I had said all along I wasn't even going to school. No indeed, I wouldn't go. But my father's two sisters came, they and Nell lived back up at their own place at the head of the holler. They came riding, my older aunt was in the sidesaddle and the younger sister behind her, riding astride. And she put me up on her lap, on the sidesaddle, and took me to school. I was very happy to go for a ride with her, I didn't realize I was going to school until I was there so they really, they had me in school without my knowing that I was getting there.

MSH: Um, how old were your aunts, uh, did you . . .

RSH: Now you've asked me . . . (sigh) . . . well I imagine the older one was an, probably an eighth grade student anyway, and the other one I imagine she was, well, uh, she's four years older than I, so that settles it, she was in the fourth grade. And there was another brother, father's, uh, younger brother was also in school so I was in school with two aunts and an uncle. We had the double seats then. The teacher put me in the seat with a older boy. I didn't like it, that almost killed me I was so shy and so bashful that that just (laughter) always dread everything, but I got along just fine. I went my first three years to that, that little school.

MSH: And then what?

RSH: Well I might tell you about my other two teachers. I didn't tell you about Miss McClure, or Miss Crete. She was the daughter of, uh, Professor McClure who had the Oakview Academy at Wayne. That all of the early Wayne countians were educated at, Oakview Academy [MSH: Oh.]. And her father had that. But she had been away to college as well. My next teacher was Mae Sansom. I believe that she is named Bias now. She taught until not to many years back. And my next teacher was Shirley Burgess, the one that the, uh, Shirley Burgess Hart was named for. Her parents had this store on, down where the old Burgess home for, uh, homeplace is. I believe that Judge Ferguson lives there now. And they had a store there and my mother would save her butter and eggs and about once a week she'd get on the horse, ride him sidesaddle of course, and get me on behind take the butter and the eggs to the store and she would exchange it for whatever we needed. Sometimes it would be a pretty print calico or a dress for me. Sometimes it would be salt, sugar, flour. Not too often flour because

my grandfather raised wheat and they would take their wheat and their corn to the mill to be ground. So that we didn't too often buy flour or meal not unless it was the end of the season and we were running out.

MSH: You raised wheat, [RSH: Yeah.] how'd you do that?

RSH: I have a cradle in my garage that he used to cradle wheat with.

MSH: Um.

RSH. Now don't ask me how you cradle wheat, some way or how they would cut it and this cradle when and they, it, bundles would, the wheat would fall in it and then they would tie it in bundles and make the wheat stacks. And later it would be thrashed.

MSH: Where was the mill, was it close by?

RSH: I imagine, well I'm sure that for a good many years they took it to the mill at the falls of Twelve Pole which is at Dixon. My great grandfather on my, my father side had the mill at the falls of Twelve Pole. And I'm sure they took it there when [MSH: Um, hum.] I was a small child but I don't remember him for too many years and I just don't remember at, well we, we moved from the country when I was nine years old, so I guess that just about took care of the, the milling [MSH: Um, hum.] part of it.

MSH: Where did you go when you moved from the country?

RSH: We moved to Kenova during World War One, 1918. My father was guarding a, on a bridge, the Norfolk and Western rail, railroad bridge at Kenova. And they, my parents felt that it would be better for me, that my chance at getting an education would be better if we moved into town. So I was, I'd had three years of schooling and at the mouth of Garretts Creek. But when I went to Kenova I was so afraid that I would be behind the town youngsters I couldn't keep up with them, I took the third grade again. They didn't give me a test or anything like that to see what I could do. It was so easy though that from then on out I was, I was the head of my class because I was a year ahead of them, practically, with my knowledge then and from then on out school was very easy for me. I might say that rather than push children, to get them ahead, it might be better to, to let them go a little slower and I believe they could do better in school than to push them so fast.

MSH: Sort of let them go at their own pace even, uh, . . .

RSH: At, not any farther than their own pace, not any faster than that. If they are the least bit backward in any subject I feel they should have another shot at it because then they would grasp it.

MSH: Uh. hum. Did you, how long did you live in Kenova?

RSH: We lived in Kenova the rest of, I was in Kenova until I was married. I graduated from C-K High School. I might tell you about that. C-K High School, the old main building, was built in 1922. The uncle that I went to school with at Garretts Creek, desired further education very much. So when we moved to Kenova he came and lived with us and went to high school. The old high school was in Ceredo, we didn't have a high school in Kenova. And in the May, 1922, the graduation exercises for, for the Ceredo school was, uh, the exercises were held in the new building which is now old main at C-K. It wasn't completed, we had to go up the fire escape on the back of the building because the front entrance, all that was not completed. During the summer it was completed and, and September I started, entered seventh grade. September, 1922, seventh grade in the old Ceredo-Kenova High School building. And, was there for, until I graduated in 1927.

MSH: Um, and what happened after that? After you graduated?

RSH: After that, my father was, and mother were determined that I'd have a greater opportunity than they. They were determined I would go to college. I was the first one in the family to go to college. So I went to Marshall. One of my English teachers (inaudible) had, had been having difficulty with students from Marshall, not passing freshman English. Many of them were having to repeat it. So they imported a very good teacher, a Joe Bailey from Virginia who really taught English. When I went to Marshall my English was, it was easy because Mr. Bailey had given me such a good foundation. I made A's in my freshman English and after that I was able to work so I was student assistant in the English department for, we called him "Uncle Bennie" Franklin, for three years until I was graduated. I think it was three years and two summers I was student assistant in the English department. Of course that helped financially quite a bit as well as it gave me a good foundation in English. I had to learn it in order to be able to grade the papers.

MSH: I'm curious about how much the tuition cost at Marshall then. Do you have any idea?

RSH: That I have forgotten, but for my grading papers I was paid twenty-five dollars a month [MSH: Oh.] and I spent many an

hour grading those papers. It, it took time to do it correctly, to check all of those grammatical errors.

MSH: Uh, hum, uh, did you, when you went to Marshall did you, what did you major in?

RSH: I majored in home economics. That pleased my father very much. He thought I would be able to sew and to cook and even if I didn't remain in teaching I would have a good background for being a homemaker. Not a housewife. I resent being called a housewife very much. I like to be thought of as a homemaker, not a housewife.

MSH: Did he, that, he thought that this would be good just for you to be married and be a homemaker then?

RSH: Right. He didn't expect me to teach school all my life and he liked the idea. While I went I had the, in my mind that I wanted to teach, to study math. But, (sigh) it turned out that it was home economics and I enjoyed it very much and I'm thankful now that it was home-ec because the way my life turned out it really helped me out quite a bit. But I knew how to, to be a homemaker.

MSH: What, uh, where, where was your first job after you graduated from Marshall?

RSH: I was graduated from Marshall in 1931. Before I was graduated, teachers had been hired at Ceredo-Kenova. I was hired to teach, of all things, physical education at Ceredo-Kenova High School. At that time politics played a very important part in Wayne County schools. A wonderful home-ec, uh, physical education teacher was let out and I was hired to teach phys-ed. The home-ec teacher had been there for many, many years. Her politics were right, she would stay for many, many years. There was no possibility of them putting me in the home-ec department. But my family was Democrats and we did have quite (sigh), command of quite a good many votes. So, they made room for me. I detested physical education at Marshall. I had a doctors excuse for four of the six hours that I had, was required to take. But coming out in 1931 in the midst of that depression I was glad to get a job no matter what. So, I accepted the physical education teaching position at C-K. I went straight on over to Ohio State that summer, studied physical education. Taught physical education the following year the best I could. The next summer I went back to Ohio State. And I worked off a teaching certificate in physical education. I taught the second year, physical education. At the end of the second year the Republicans had got back in power. So my friend, the Republican teacher

who'd been let out was rehired. And I was sent to Buffalo High School to teach home economics and that pleased me immensely. I just was going to town teaching home-ec there. Enjoyed it very much. "J." Justice H. Bowling was my principal and he was well pleased with my work. But after two years as home-ec teacher the politics changed again and I was shifted back to C-K to teach phys-ed again. And the good phys-ed teacher, the one who really adored it then was well trained in it and very capable, was let out the second time. This time she left Wayne County, I think she went over, back somewhere in New Jersey and never did come back to Wayne County and I can't say as I blame 'er, after two let downs. So I taught phys-ed again for the next seven years at, uh, C-K.

MSH: Um, do, have you always taught, have you always taught in Wayne County or did you ever teach in any of the other counties?

RSH: No, it's been Wayne County. In 1942 I took leave of absence, a maternity leave of absence. My husband didn't want me to teach any more ever, but World War Two was going on then and he felt that he well my husband was Jewish. And he felt that World War Two was being fought because of him and his people. He felt it his duty to become involved. So he enlisted in the fall, in August of seven, of, uh, nineteen seventy, nineteen forty-three. Uh, we were buying a home and I knew that on his pay we couldn't keep, keep up the payments so I went back to teaching again. My mother came to live with me and take care of my baby, and I taught two years at Vinson. And again I was teaching physical education. My beloved home economics I only, I had that only two years.

MSH: Really? Uh, can you think of anything else to say about teaching?

RSH: Well I could go ahead with it. When my husband came home from service and, uh, September forty-five. I had started school at Vinson. Armistist had been declared and he, he, he came home. So he didn't want me to be a school teacher all my life. He said he had just, was beginning to break me in, to get me broken in to being a housewife, a homemaker and a mother. And all of his good work had gone down the drain in the two years I had been back teaching. So he wanted me to stay home, to make a home for him and, and *(due to tape player malfunction, the following section of transcript was lost when portion of tape destroyed.)my baby. So I, I did. I stayed at Vinson two weeks until they found a teacher to replace me. I wasn't, I didn't teach any more until after his death. My husband was drowned in 1948. And I was left with two little ones. One, one son five and a half and one nineteen months. I still

felt that* my place was to take care of them. In the meantime my father had died and mother was living with me permanently now and we did the best we could. I did all my indoor painting and as much as the outdoors as I could, everything that could be done in order to save money so that my sons might have the college education in time. But one of my former, fellow teachers saw me one day and I was very tired so she said "well you're crazy, why don't you get on the substitute list and pay someone to do some of that work." So left me thinking, my youngest child then was five and one half, so why not. So I put my application in and I substituted, beginning in the spring of '52 I believe it was. I substituted until he was, my youngest son was eighteen and graduated from high school. Then after his graduation, I went back full time and I did ten more years full time at Vinson High School. But this time I felt I was too old to jump around doing phys-ed and I'd forgotten all the home-ec, so I taught English for ten years.

MSH: What do you particularly remember about, uh, some of their food preparation, how, how dependent were you, were, was your family upon what you grew there on the farm?

RSH: Almost entirely. As I told you they raised the corn and the wheat which was taken to mill to be ground into corn meal and, uh, and flour. Before the mill they, my grandfather would bring great baskets of corn into, into the sitting room and at night we'd all sit around shelling the corn, getting it ready. We would try to have, well we had a meal sack I think they called it, anyway, it was a very, very heavy white cloth, sack. And it long, and they would put half the corn in one end and half the other and throw it over the horse's back to carry it to the, to the mill to have it ground into the meal. I think that they paid the miller, uh, the miller would get a certain percentage of the ground grain as pay for doing the grinding and I suppose he sold it for what he didn't use, I don't know, but anyway that is the way paid for having it ground. Now the vegetables they grew all of their vegetables and fruit. My grandmother, as I told you, they had a rather large farm. They had bought smaller farms from various people up at the head of Garretts Creek, on the right fork of Garretts Creek and these smaller farms, the families would have had their own fruit trees. So grandfather liked to think he didn't have to put up with neighbors, he wanted it all for himself. So grandmother would get on the horse and go to orchards, various places on the farm to gather fruit. Sometimes it would be gooseberries, sometimes it would be rhubarb, apples, peaches, plums, what have you, but over the farm they had all their fruit. Well, the only time we ever bought anything was at Christmas, we probably get an orange or two in our socks

at Christmas time but that was the only fruit that was ever, I can even remember their buying. The grapes, all of that was grown on the farm. They raised hogs and beef. Every now and then beef would be killed and we would have our fresh beef. And I don't remember their ever drying it or canning it. It would be, some, someone would beef and then the, every one living, the neighbors around would, would share that beef but putting away beef I don't remember it.

MSH: It would more or less be eaten.

RSH: Fresh.

MSH: Fresh right, right then?

RSH: Uh, huh, and I also mutton, occasionally a sheep would be killed and we would have our mutton. And of course everybody raised hogs. That was the staple I guess, was pork. My grandfather would always have two or three huge hogs and grandmother would render lard, she would have several cans of lard, enough to do with through the year. They didn't, they killed, butchered a hog usually near Thanksgiving time, at least after it was cold enough that the meat could be frozen. They would leave the hog hanging out in the open over night so the meat would be frozen. I suppose that was part of the curing, I don't know, and then it would be brought in and cut up and smoked and treated with pepper and molasses and sugar, all that stuff to cure it.

MSH: Did you have a smokehouse?

RSH: There was a smokehouse and I can remember seeing the hams hanging in the smokehouse and the sides of bacon. Grandmother would also make sausage and for that she would fry and then pack it in stone jars, I think you've seen some of the stone jars down in my basement [MSH: Um, hum.]. She would pack it in stone jars and pour grease over it and then put the lid on it and seal it with sealing wax. They also made apple butter and put it in those stone jars.

MSH: Oh really. Just a great huge jar, a stone jar? That what you're talking about?

RSH: No, no, no.

MSH: Oh.

RSH: A half gal-gallon, half gallon, quart jars. Grandmother usually had it in half gallon jars. I didn't, I don't remember seeing jars when I was a little girl. The glass jars came in a little later. Now those glass jars were those greenish tinted ones.

MSH: How did you, uh, shall we say can vegetables then how, how was that done?

RSH: Tomatoes sometimes were put in these stone jars. Now they had a tin can for tomatoes and the lid was put on with sealing wax. But I don't remember canning beans or apples or anything of that sort when I was a little girl, that came after the glass jars.

MSH: Were they, but were they dried beans?

RSH: Oh yes, we dried beans, leather britches my grandparents called them. That was green beans. We would break them and dry them in the sunshine. We'd dry apples. The coal house roof was a rather flat, slanty roof and the apples would be put on the coal house roof to dry. So that, well I, I suppose so the chickens and so on couldn't get um and I don't know why else. But anyway they'd be put up on the roof to dry. The green beans, I remember being put on a, they had a long back porch, upstairs back porch and they'd be spread on the porch floor there. I once tried to dry beans, I dried them in my attic. They were all right. I had them inside a hung window on newspapers on the floor in my attic and opened the windows everyday, let the sun shine on them. They were all right.

MSH: When they're cooked do they taste pretty much like a green bean?

RSH: (Sigh) well I'll take the canned green beans regardless to the leather britches myself, but rather than not have green beans at all they were good. And they were a change from the dried beans, uh, like pintos, navy beans, that kind of dried bean. Now of course we raised those too. We would let the bean ripen on the vine, let the hull get yellow and kinda dry like on the vine and we'd pick the bean and shell them and let them dry. If the bean hulls were all dry, sometimes they would be put in a sack and take out some kind of a board or something and pound that sack to, to break the, the shells of the beans. And then empty out a few at a time and let the wind or you, you'd blow, blow those shells to blow them away to leave the beans without the, the shells, the hulls that would be there. I can remember doing that. And of course we gathered nuts, that was a part of our growing up in the country, we always went out gathering nuts in the fall, stored them and enjoyed them all through the winter. My grandmother used to use the walnut hulls to dye cloth. It made a very pretty brown and she would use it to dye. My great grandmother raised flax to make the linen and to dye the woolens. My great grandmother

did that. I, there are some blankets that we still have a little bit of them left that the, were the wool was carded on the farm and the cloth spun there but. My grandmother didn't do that, that was back in my great grandmother's day. So I don't remember seeing anything like that done. But grandmother would dye, dye cloth with the walnut oil and poke berries she would gather when she wanted to make a pretty reddish-purple, she would use that for dye.

MSH: How about, uh, gathering greens in the spring, did you do that?

RSH: Yes of course why even did that after I moved to Westmoreland (laughter). You can take the girl out of the country but you can't take the country out of the girl. So my mother and I, that was, of course before Westmoreland was as thickly settled as it is now. There was nothing in the block below Vinson Memorial Church. We'd go down in that lot and gather greens, oh yes, I remember doing that and in the early spring we enjoyed them very much.

MSH: Um, hum. What sort of combination do you remember, anything?

RSH: Oh there you have me. Mom knew the names of them but I don't remember. Dandelion and, uh, plantain and cresse green she called then, I think that was water, watercress. Poke sometimes but I just don't remember the names of them. I knew, I knew the plants from what my mother would show me [MSH: You recognized then.] but I don't remember the names, um, hum.

MSH: How did, uh, oh . . .

RSH: Then I, I'd send em out to drying. We also pickled. Now, we didn't have, we didn't have canned beans like we have then now, but mother always pickled beans in huge jars of pickled beans and she'd pickle corn on the cob and make kraut, saurkraut out of cabbage, we always had plenty of that and that was the variation of our winter diet. That was our vegetables for winter. Course potatoes, and we really thought we had something when we had fried potatoes and saurkraut and fried pork of some kind. We thought we really had the, a delicious meal. Chickens were common but not as common now. We, to us now fried chicken is an everyday thing. But then it was fried chicken on Sunday. Or maybe chicken and dumplings. We didn't have chicken nearly as often as we had pork, that was the main, main meat. Of course there was hunting. My father would go hunting. We'd have squirrels, rabbits, sometimes when the creeks were up he'd go fishing. I don't know if it were allowed or not but anyway he'd go at night and I don't

how he did it but he'd come in with fish (laughter). And also he'd come in sometimes with frogs and we would have frog legs. So we didn't go hungry even though we don't have the foods that we have today, we have the different kind.

MSH: Some people in our, in our class have mentioned how foods at each meal of that day seemed to be the same and have a lot of potatoes with lunch and dinner and like that. Is that true?

RSH: Yes, yes, my father wanted fried potatoes for his breakfast and fried potatoes, bacon, eggs, hot biscuits, gravy and of course occasionally it was ham and eggs, but bacon was more common than ham. We seemed we had more of that. The ham was kept more for special occasions. And then of course potatoes again at noon, potatoes again at night. Yes, potatoes were the mainstay. And they raised them of course, always, plenty of them. We had a cellar that the potatoes were kept in and apples would be kept in the cellar also. That was our fresh fruit in winter, the apples that would be stored in the cellar. And the, the pickled things would be kept in the cellar.

MSH: Um, hum. How 'bout, uh, the way they were cooked. Did you have a closed stove or an open fire or . . .

RSH: Well, uh, when my grandparents lived in what they always referred to as the old house, they had an open fire. It was a fireplace, open fireplace and I still have the three legged skillet that grandmother used and I have the old iron tea pot that we'd hang on an old rack in the fireplace. But after the, my grandparents built their new house, my father helped build it, it was built before he and mother were married and in the new house they had a, a coal stove. Course they could burn wood in it also, coal or wood. And the cooking was done on the stove in the new house. Now, my parents always had the wood stove in our little log cabin. I remember we had a little wood stove that we cooked on, wood and coal. Oh, by the way, back to my, to our haint, sometimes the haint would throw down a load of stove wood in the kitchen, but they'd hear that. But that, that was it, they never could see any extra stove wood, but it would sound as if a load of stove wood had been thrown down behind the kitchen stove.

MSH: Did you ever, to go back to that, did you ever have anybody tell any stories of anyone who had lived in that house?

RSH: Well the people before had heard something. But, uh, people

who lived there, well I asked about it two or three years ago when I was visiting back out on the farm and we went up to the old log house and I asked the folks if they had ever heard anything. Of course they hadn't, they just laughed about it (laughter) but, I'm glad they didn't.

MSH: Uh, you say you still got some of the old cooking utensils. What, uh, what other things have you kept?

RSH: Well, I have my great grandmother's corner cupboard. It's a huge thing, you know, it's, it's, oh I'd say seven feet tall anyway. It was taken to my grandmothers house and before my grandfather passed on I bought it from him, then with his having the use of it his lifetime because he just couldn't have kept house without that corner cupboard. Anyway, after he was gone I had it refinished and I am very proud of my great grandmother's corner cupboard. It, down through the years it had several layers of paint put on it and the mice had played in it so I, it was refinished. They had to put in some little plugs of wood to fill up the, the paths the mice had made from shelf to shelf. I also have a, a chest of drawers that my grandmother bought from a lady who was moving from one of the farms grandfather had bought from them and it's said that this chest was brought over from England. I don't know the story back, how far back. The lady's name was Maude so grandmother and grandfather always referred to this chest of drawers as Old Maude and still if I'm speaking about it to my aunts or uncles why it's Old Maude that I'm talking about. It's a very pretty chest, solid cherry and the legs on each side are kinda twisted rope I guess, anyway it's a very pretty chest. I also have a parts of antique thread in a spool cabinet that came down in my family. I have one of them at home and the other one I gave to Maury and Susanne. It was on a, came to me from my mother's side of the family. And we're proud of our old fashioned spool cabinet which . . .

MSH: Ummm . . .

RSH: Another thing we have is a wagon bench. When I moved into my house in Westmoreland a Mr. Warne, W-A-R-N-E, on third avenue refurnished furniture. One day when he was doing some refurnishing for me I spied a, a bench, a seat in his shop and I asked him about it. Well he didn't seem to know much about it, but he was willing to sell it, anyway I bought it from him for a couple of dollars. It is, has the wood hickory bottom and it's a two seated affair with the back and the arms. A few years ago in the antique section of the Advertiser, uh, Huntington Advertiser I saw a write up about it and a picture and it's supposed to be a wagon

bench. A long time ago when families went to church on Sunday, they went in the wagon and they would put one of these benches in the wagon, in the back of the wagon for, for the family to sit on. There were usually two seats in the wagon, but two seats in the wagon didn't always hold all the family so they had these extra, these wagon benches to set up in the wagon for more members of the family to sit on. And my Aunt Susanne had one in their house now and seem to be proud of it.

MSH: It's a little different from the deacon's bench in that it has the post there in the middle, in the back. It looks like two seats.

RSH: Yes, it's not as fancy as a deacon's bench by any means, but still it's an unusual something.

MSH: Yeah, right, unusual, uh, don't you have some old tools or cooking utensils or anything like that?

RSH: Well I have a, I have a candle roll that was in my great grandmother's family. And I have a, I think they call it a fley, no wait a minute, wait a minute, adz, and the adz was used in making shingles. My mother's, it came from my mother's home. My grandfather and my uncles used it in making the shingles to put on their house. It was, it also was a log house and the wooden shingles were, they used the adz in hewing out the shingles to put on the house [MSH: Um, hum.]. I also have a, some kind of a saw filing tool that's an antique. I had my saws sharpened and filed last weekend. The man who did it, a Mr. Bradshaw, was very much taken with this old saw filing thing. He said it was an antique and he was very anxious to, uh, buy that. I haven't made up my mind yet whether if that goes or not.

MSH: How about, uh, isn't there a quilt?

RSH: Oh, yes I (sigh) quilts galore. I have a quilt that my mother made when she was a girl. She has her name on it. She was born in eighty-four and a, the date on this is, her name and Lucinda Jane Smith, eighteen ninety six. And the quilt is is a, I guess you would call it crazy quilt. It's made out of silk pieces and each piece is embroidered, has a design embroidered in it and each seam is embroidered different a, well I guess you'd call them just more or less samplers because every work or stitch you can think of is on that quilt. And all kinds of pretty little flowers and birds and people's names, initials and dates [MSH: People in the family?]. have been embroidered on that quilt.

MSH: Um, hum. She made that when she was about twelve years old?

RSH: Uh, huh, yes. I also have mother's watch that was given to her when she was twelve years old. And she in turn gave me a watch when I was twelve and I have it. Maybe my grandchildren one of these days might appreciate it. Course her watch is much bigger than mine oh it, I would say is at least an inch and a half in diameter and rather thick.

MSH: Almost, almost the size of a man's watch?

RSH: Uh, huh, her father gave it to her when she was twelve years old.

MSH: Do you remember very much about the town of Wayne?

RSH: Wayne I went to catch a train (laughter), I went to Wayne to catch the train. When we would come to Kenova at, anytime, oh I must tell you about the time when I was just a wee little girl. We came to, I think it was around 1913 so that would have made me about four. We came to Kenova on the train. Passenger train went up of the morning and back down of the evening, pass through Ardel County from Wayne. But we went, we got the train at, at Ardel. Now to get to the Ardel station we had to walk a foot bridge across Twelve Pole Creek from Burgesses' store over to the station down, down the track quite a ways, over, uh, what they called a cattle guard. You know what that is?

MSH: The steps over a fence, no?

RSH: No, no the cattle guard was something with sharp points on it in the railroad track [MSH: Oh.] It'd be about, I guess about six or eight feet long on the track and that was supposed to stop cattle. They wouldn't go over that. So we had to walk pass that and on down to the little station house at Ardel. We'd get the train there. But sometimes we'd go to Wayne. I remember my mother telling me when I was nine months old she took me to Wayne and we got the train back to, to Huntington for some reason or other and, and I had an uncle living in Wayne right near the station. When I was a little girl we'd go and visit that uncle, and, and my cousins and I would get out on a lawn swing and watch the trains go by and of course wave to the trainman.

MSH: And of course these were steam engines.

RSH: Oh. Naturally steam engines and I was afraid to get too close

to a steam engine. They just make more noise than I could stand. The town of Wayne, now uncle lived down in what they called the bottom. To get up on the hill where the courthouse was we had to walk up, uh, steep sidewalk up the hill. Going up that hill we passed a colored folks home. There was only one family of colored people lived in Wayne, but they were very highly respected, very well liked in Wayne. I wish I could remember their name. I saw where one of the men just died recently.

MSH: Did he still live in Wayne?

RSH: No, he lived here in Huntington then, at his death. But we passed their home and, uh, Sansom's had a store up in the main part of Wayne. That was the main store then. I think there was still, uh, kind of a block that you walked around, but Sansom's store was on beyond the courthouse, if I remember correctly it was across the, the street in front T.B. McClure's home where, and, where he had the Oakview Academy.

MSH: Hum, is that still standing, that home, uh, . .

RSH: The McClure home is still standing but the store is long gone. But some of the Sansom's still, still live in Wayne. The Sansom home was at the foot of the hill, before you got into Wayne. I believe that, uh, it, it is now owned by the Fisher Frye family. But Mr. Sansom had a, a large family and they grew up in this big white house at the foot of that hill. At your "wriggley" bridge.

MSH: (Laughs) which has since been replaced.

RSH: Yes, of course, of course.

MSH: Can, we just have a few minutes left, can you think of anything else, any other stories.

RSH: Well, well of course my, my son is always interested in, in hearing of my father guarding on the bridge during World War One. At that time people were very much afraid that the bridge would be blown up. And of course they think of, the blow up that main, the N & W bridge at Kenova. That was one of the main arteries of transportation. So every train was checked and double checked. There was a guard on each end of the bridge that checked everybody at every train that went through. And my father watched every train, he was on the West Virginia side, there was another guardhouse on the other side of the river. He said during the winter of nineteen

eighteen the Ohio River froze over and people drove wagons,
to use their horses and wagons across the Ohio River at Kenova.

MSH: Was there ever any danger, uh, that the bridge . . .

RSH: . . . of the bridge being dynamited? Yes. Yes, uh, bundles
of dynamite were found a few times near the piers of the
bridge.

MSH: Oh, really (end of taped interview).