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### Oral History Interview: Lewis M. Crook

Lewis M. Crook

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ORAL HISTORY

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Date November 3, 1981

Lewis M. Crook  
(Signature - Interviewee)

6225 Gary Drive  
Address

Barboursville, W. Va.

Date December 14, 1981

Beth Wyatt  
(Signature - Witness)

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## MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY OF APPALACHIA

HUNTINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25701

The Marshall University Oral History of Appalachia Program is an attempt to collect and preserve on tape the rich, yet rapidly disappearing oral and visual tradition of Appalachia by creating a central archive at the James E. Morrow Library on the Marshall campus. Valued as a source of original material for the scholarly community, the program also seeks to establish closer ties between the varied parts of the Appalachian region—West Virginia, Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky.

In the Spring of 1972, members of the Cabell-Wayne Historical Society joined with Dr. O. Norman Simpkins, Chairman, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and Dr. Michael J. Galgano of the Department of History in establishing the program. The Historical Society and other community organizations provided the first financial support and equipment. In April 1974, the Oral History program received a three year development grant from the Marshall University Foundation allowing for expansion and refinement. In 1976, the program became affiliated with New York Times Microfilm Corporation of America. To date, approximately 4,200 pages of transcribed tapes have been published as part of the New York Times Oral History Program. These materials represent one of the largest single collections of Appalachian oral materials in existence. Royalties earned from the sale of the transcripts are earmarked for the continuation of the program.

The first interviews were conducted by Marshall University History and Sociology students. Although students are currently involved in the program, many interviews are conducted by the Oral History staff. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to participate in the program by taking special topic courses in oral history under the supervision of Dr. Robert Maddox, program director since September 1978.

The program seeks to establish contacts with as broad a variety of regional persons as possible. Farmers, physicians, miners, teachers, both men and women all comprise a significant portion of the collection. Two major types of interviews have been compiled: the whole life and the specific work experience. In the whole life category, the interviewer attempts to guide subtly the interviewee through as much of his or her life as can be remembered. The second type isolates a specific work or life experience peculiar to the Appalachian region and examines it in detail. Although both types of interviews are currently being conducted, emphasis is now placed on the specific work experience. Recent projects are concerned primarily with health care, coal mining, and the growth of labor organizations.

Parts II and III of the Oral History of Appalachia collection were compiled by Dr. Robert F. Maddox, Director, and processed by Ms. Brenda Perego.

Dr. Robert F. Maddox, Director  
Ms. Brenda Perego, Processor

Lewis M. Crook (Mitch) was interviewed at his home on Pea Ridge, 6225 Gary Drive, Huntington, West Virginia on March 18, 1980. The interviewer is Nancy Wyant whose father, George Pease, is also retired from Huntington Alloys. Mitch Crook mentions the early apprenticeship program, the strike in 1957, and his ongoing affiliation with the company via trips to Sudbury, Canada to give training.



N.W. What is your full name?

L.C. Lewis M. Crook.

N.W. And how old are you?

L.C. Fifty-nine.

N.W. Okay, can you tell me when you started to work at the Nickel Plant?

L.C. July '41, 1941.

N.W. Had they started, ah, work production at that time?

L.C. No, war didn't start until December the 7<sup>th</sup>.

N.W. Okay, so what were you doing when you first started?

L.C. I was a laborer when I first started. Hired in as a laborer.

N.W. Doing, just lifting and moving things?

L.C. Yeah, just labor work.

N.W. Did you start out as an apprentice? No?

L.C. No, I started as an apprentice in January '42.

N.W. Did you come out of college or high school, how did you just...?

L.C. Just high school.

N.W. Okay, you just applied? And got on?

L.C. Yeah, I had a friend help me.

N.W. You worked, did they work 8 hour shifts then or was that 12 hours?

L.C. Eight hour shift.

N.W. Six days or five days?

L.C. Uh, usually five days. But you didn't know what day you was a going to have off. Some times you would

L.C. have a day off during the week and you'd work Saturday or Sunday. Maybe two days off during the week, work Saturday and Sunday. You didn't have a schedule, (pause) five days.

N.W. When did, and you started the, okay, you started the apprenticeship program in the following January?

L.C. Um-hm, January of '42.

N.W. Okay, and what was that training like? What did that consist of?

L.C. Well, it was in, ah, roll grinding department. And at that time the war, it started, you know, and we was doing a lot of plungers for the navy.

N.W. Um-hm.

L.C. And we had to grind them down to a certain size and then we'd put a super-finish on 'em.

N.W. Was Mr. Hubble in charge of the apprentice program then?

L.C. Well, E.J. Kiser was the holder of the apprentice program then and Hubble, they hired him later on as a teacher in the apprentice program.

N.W. Did they have classes there at the plant? Did, where did you have to go?

L.C. We, uh, they had a school room out, out front over the front office, and then they changed it later on at the machine shop, where the machine shop office is now.

N.W. Yeah.

- L.C. Then they moved it out to the, the west gate.
- N.W. Do you remember how many men were in that class with you?
- L.C. Oh, there was, uh, they had different age that would have different classes. I'd say they, machinist and roll grinders, they had steel workers, pipe fitters, they was probably, uh, 50 men or maybe 75.
- N.W. Wow, that's a lot.
- L.C. Altogether, doing different trades.
- N.W. Yeah, how many, was this, ah, month or yearly, um, apprenticeship? How many?
- L.C. Four years.
- N.W. Four years.
- L.C. Four year apprenticeship.
- N.W. And uh, did you work 40 hours a week and go to school too?
- L.C. 40 hours a week.
- N.W. And go, went to school too?
- L.C. Well, we went to school, uh...
- N.W. How many hours was school?
- L.C. I think two evenings a week, we would go to school. Three hours, 3 hours each evening. We'd go from 1 till 4. We'd work until 1 o'clock.
- N.W. Um-hm.
- L.C. And go to school from 1 till 4, two evenings a week.
- N.W. What sort of things did they teach? For, to you?
- L.C. Math, and uh, geometry, logarithms, we had logarithms,

L.C. and uh, of course we had a little English and we had the I.C.S. course too.

N.W. What's that?

L.C. It's a, I can't remember what that I.C.S. stands for now.

N.W. Was that the International Correspondence?

L.C. Yeah, International Correspondence.

N.W. Okay.

L.C. We had to, to finish that course. That was mostly on our own.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. They sent us the lessons, we worked them, sent them back.

N.W. Was the math to help you be more precise in what you were doing, with a product?

L.C. Well, you see, we worked with micrometers and did a lot of float work.

N.W. What is a, what was it, a micrometer?

L.C. Yeah.

N.W. Okay, does that measure?

L.C. It measures, it measures the diameter...

N.W. Okay.

L.C. Of a circle, you know, circle.

N.W. Okay!

L.C. And we'd measure the diameter of it. Of a shaft or a rod.

N.W. That was uh, was that, what was there primary product

N.W. back then? Did they have just one or two? In 1941, '42? ..

L.C. What do you mean? In metal?

N.W. Yeah, where you were working.

L.C. They had the K-mont out and B-mont out, the inkanel out and the nicke.

N.W. Mm-hm.

L.C. Uh, the A-nickel and uh, back uh, after the war they did a lot of plater bars which was I think most of them were, say nickel. I think most of them were, say nickel.

N.W. You were in the apprenticeship program then, well, quite a ways into the war.

L.C. For four years, yeah, I finished in '46, I believe it was..

N.W. '46. Well, how did the war effort at Huntington Alloys effect the work there? As compared to after the war was finished? Was there a difference in what you were doing and what they were producing during the war, then after the war?

L.C. Oh, yeah, after the war all the work that we did during the war, it was almost all cancelled. They cancelled practically all of it, see, and uh, that's what I was just saying about the platers bars.

N.W. Uh-huh.

L.C. See, we started getting platers bars.

N.W. What is a plater bar?

- L.C. It's usually, it's a bar about 18 inches ...
- N.W. Okay...
- L.C. In length, about 3 inches wide and about, ah, 3/4 of an inch thick. And we, we finished them on a circus grinder, put a real good finish on each side...
- N.W. Uh-huh, yeah.
- L.C. And, uh, they were used for jewelry, they'd take a gold plate...
- N.W. Oh, yeah.
- L.C. Take 'em and roll, roll gold out on each side of it and roll it into 'em and they'd plate them and make, make jewelry with.
- N.W. That's interesting.
- L.C. Then uh, they uh, they put in the extrusion during the war...
- N.W. Um-hm.
- L.C. Like those seamless tubes, you know.
- N.W. Yes.
- L.C. And uh, that, that's a big business formed down there now, the tubing business.
- N.W. Is that their biggest, their biggest...
- L.C. Well, I don't know if it is the biggest, it's one of the biggest, Burnau, you know...
- N.W. Yeah.
- L.C. Has a lot of that now. Instead of, uh, being at Inco or Hunting Pipe.
- N.W. So you were in the, uh, roll grinding department,

N.W. what, the rest of your career at Huntington Alloys?

L.C. Except for, I think '48, they had a big layoff.

N.W. Oh, really.

L.C. Yeah, and I was layed off of the roll grinding, worked on the, I think, three different departments. I worked in the merchant department, the sheet <sup>metal</sup> department, and the refinery. 'Till I got changed to bid back in at the roll grinding.

N.W. When was that?

L.C. '48, 1948.

N.W. So, you were just off...

L.C. About six months.

N.W. Six months.

L.C. Probably, I lost, uh, six months roll grinding seniority.

N.W. Um, okay. Well, can you tell me a little bit about working in these other places? The sheet metal?

L.C. Well, uh, in the merchant metal, uh, I worked, I worked on the, what they call the 14 inch mill.

N.W. Okay.

L.C. And you run out rods they start, ah, a hot ingot through, through one mill and, uh, they'd be different shapes and, ah, in the rolls and when they come out they would come out as, a 3 inch rod...

N.W. Okay.

L.C. About 20 inches long. And, uh, they had different

L.C. mills there in the merchant mill. They had, ah, a mill they had to start out with a hot ingot and they'd, it would come down to a quarter inch of water for the grindment, they'd twirl it up.

N.W. Um-hm.

L.C. And ship it out. A lot it was, uh, I think they used a lot of that wire for welding rod and different...(pause)

N.W. Well, this, did the safety standards change a lot from when you started until when you retired?

L.C. Oh, yes, they, ah, they have a real good safety program now compared to what they had.

N.W. What did they have when you started?

L.C. Well, they uh, about all they had when I first started was, they just had the first-aid, but, ah, they had Doc Brady out there and he had one helper, maybe or two. But now they have nurses and ambulances and they have a couple of men that goes through the plant who checks on the hazards that, out in the plant. So, ah, they have improved quite a bit over the year.

N.W. Did you work in the sheet metal too? Is that right?

L.C. Yeah, I worked in the hot mill.

N.W. Is that the most dangerous?

L.C. No, but it's real hot. (chuckle)

N.W. (laughs) Right.

L.C. Um, that come out with the ingot. Run through the



L.C. mill and you would have to catch it with tongs.

N.W. Okay, I've heard about that.

L.C. And, uh... ..

N.W. And flip it over?

L.C. Yeah, and run it vack through the mill and then when it would get through the mill you'd, they'd take it over to the shears and cut the ragged edges off of it. Make it...

N.W. Sounds dangerous to me.

L.C. uh, it any size they want. And uh, there are a lot of dangerous jobs there at the plant and you've got to be careful.

N.W. Yeah. ...

L.C. Working, lot of them. (pause) One thing, the foreman will usually tell you when you come in on one of those jobs, you know. He will tell you what to look out for, how dangerous it is and most of the older men always helps the younger men to, you know.

N.W. Yeah. (laugh) And you mentioned one other place in '48 that you worked.

L.C. I worked in the refinery for 2 weeks.

N.W. 2 weeks. Okay.

L.C. That's the most dangerous part, really.

N.W. Is it?'

L.C. That's where they, most of the hot metal, where they pour that hot metal, you know?

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. And tha, uh, it can explode really.

N.W. Really?

L.C. Some of that, uh...

N.W. Is that where most of the injuries come from?

L.C. Usually when they have an injury in the refinery it's really a pretty bad one.

N.W. A fatality?

L.C. Uh, yeah, there's been a few men killed in the refinery.

N.W. More so before the safety standards were improved?

L.C. Oh uh, I would say so because you, uh, I would say in the last en years, I don't think there has been anyone...

N.W. Did you ever see anybody? Who?

L.C. injured too bad. Well, I've seen people injured but not, ah, not real serious.

N.W. Well, how did your job change after you got out of your apprenticeship, um, did you go on to be foreman or...

L.C. No, I worked a couple or three years as a leader on the night shift.

N.W. What's a leader?

L.C. Well, you're over, over the other men that's workin' on the shift with you and you sort of over-see what they are doing and you report it back to the foreman on day shift the next day and uh, see if the shop is running smoothe, anything that's

L.C. not running right in the shop, you, it's your responsibility to see that something is done about it, call the night superintendent or...

N.W. Such as equipment breaking down or...

L.C. Right. And uh, on the night shift, you know, they have a night superintendent for each shift.

N.W. Uh-huh.

L.C. If anything serious happens, why you get a hold of him or whoever is in charge, you know, and let them.

N.W. Did you work one shift most of the time?

L.C. I spent, uh, about 11 years on the 4 to 12 and the rest of it on daytime.

N.W. Really? Did you like 4 to 12? Or...

L.C. Well, it wasn't too bad. You could sleep late in the morning but, you'd miss...

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. everything in the evening, you know.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. 'Cause uh, what was going on in the evening, why, like football games in the fall.

N.W. Yeah. ...

L.C. You didn't have a chance to go to the Friday night games.

N.W. Did you know any of the inspectors down there on the 4 to 12 shift? Did you know, uh, Kenneth Wyant?

L.C. Yeah, I knew him. ...

N.W. Did you?

L.C. Let's see. He died, ah, when?  
N.W. '64.  
L.C. '64.  
N.W. He worked there a long time as an inspector. Did they have special training for that? Is that something that you could catch, uh, before the inspectors looked at the product to see if the quality was alright?  
L.C. You mean in the work we did in the roll grinding?  
N.W. Yes, uh-huh.  
L.C. Oh, yeah, we would, uh, on the rolls we ground, we grind rolls for well, the primary mill and the strip mill...  
N.W. Um-hm.  
L.C. and the, we ground some rolls for the merchant mill. But, we never had to have an inspector for those rolls, it was up to us to see that the roll was, uh, had the right finish on it.  
N.W. Um-hm.  
L.C. Because if it went to the mill and they put it in the mill and they was a bad strip that came off it...  
N.W. Hm-hm.  
L.C. from the finish on the roll. Well, they would come back on the roll grinder.  
N.W. Um-hm.  
L.C. See, so...  
N.W. To raise caine, huh?

L.C. It was our responsibility and our foreman to see that we had a good enough finish on that roll. The material that came off the mill would be passible then the inspector would inspect the metal. That the metal would roll.

N.W. Uh-huh.

L.C. And then if he turned it down, that's when it would come back on the roll grinder.

N.W. Did you get better and better at this as the years went by? Is this something that you, uh...

L.C. Yeah, I improved and, uh...

N.W. Proficient, and come, yet an expert at it?

L.C. And uh...

N.W. Sort of by feel?

L.C. And uh...

N.W. Do you feel if it's good? Yeah?

L.C. Well, you could uh, you tell by the way the machine is running and uh, the grinding wheels over the, over the years. And uh, made improvement in the machines, the machines were a lot more sufficient than they were back uh, when I first started and uh...

N.W. Do you remember who your first supervisor was that you worked under?

L.C. Odd Hash, was a German.

N.W. Is that right?

L.C. He was from, he was from Portsmouth originally and...

N.W. Uh-huh.

- L.C. He worked with Sanno, him and, uh, Spat Wallon, he was the superintendent of the machine shop, Carl Ramsteam, and they was all C & O men.
- N.W. Well, how did they come to work there, do you know?
- L.C. Well, when they started the plant, back in 1922.
- N.W. Yeah.
- L.C. Uh, they hired several C & O men.
- N.W. So, they've been there since the beginning?
- L.C. Yeah, they were...
- N.W. They had been there 20 years by the time you got there, huh?
- L.C. Yeah, they were machinists. Really Odd Hash, Spat Wallon, and Carl Ramsteam, they were all machinists. And uh, but they, I think he worked at shops down in Portsmouth, Ohio. I think maybe that's where Spat Wallon was raised to, in Portsmouth. And H.M. Brown he was the superintendent of the plant for quite awhile. He was a C & O man too.
- N.W. Um. I didn't know that. What do you, what do you remember about the '57 strike? Were you involved in that? When did the unions come in?
- L.C. That was, that was an 11 week strike, I believe it was.
- N.W. 11 weeks.
- L.C. We went on strike in January and went back to work in April.
- N.W. Wow.

L.C. Yeah, I was off, I didn't work.

N.W. You did not?

L.C. For 11 weeks, no.

N.W. 11 weeks, you didn't have any strike benefits or anything? Did you?

L.C. No.

N.W. I mean, it was just... What were the issues? I've always wondered?

L.C. At that time I think it was money.

N.W. Money.

L.C. As well as I can remember.

N.W. Do you remember how many men were off? How many men were involved in this?

L.C. I think there was around 1500.

N.W. 1500 men.

L.C. At that time.

N.W. Did they take a vote to strike? Was there a lot of debate whether to come out or not?

L.C. Yeah, they, ah, a lot of controversy over the, over the votes cause they had a voice vote. . .

N.W. Okay.

L.C. And uh, some of the men didn't like it.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. And they tried to call another meeting and uh, something happened that didn't pan out to try to get another vote. I think finally when they did settle, it, they only got 2 or 3 more cents upon

L.C. the hour.

N.W. Oh, really?

L.C. So they really didn't gain a whole lot by geing off.

N.W. That's a long time. What was the, ah, feeling among the men that they, they would be willing to stay out for so long? They must have this, must have, ah, taken awile to build up.

L.C. Well, when you, ah, when you elect the, your union officials, you know.

L.C. Yeah.

L.C. Whatever they fight for...

N.W. Um-hm.

L.C. Uh, you being a union man, you have to try to back them.

N.W. Okay.

L.C. So...

N.W. Well, when did the union come in to Huntington Alloys, do you remember?

L.C. Well, uh, I think they tried to start it in the late '30's and I think maybe during the war...

N.W. It took hold?

L.C. I took hold and got going a little better.

N.W. Okay.

L.C. But, it never really got strong, I don't think until after the war. And I think maybe we, had a couple of little strikes, I think, before, before the big strike.



N.W. I didn't know that.

L.C. Yeah, but, we were off a week or two.

N.W. Yeah. Well, who were the union leaders through this strike, do you remember their names? Was there a main one, was there a main, a force behind this one?

L.C. There was, ah, I think it was Sharkey. (pause) Was the president. Can't remember his first name.

N.W. That's okay. Was Archie Jarrell involved in the union back then?

L.C. No, Archie, he uh, he might of held a small office then.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. But... He might of been a committee man or something like that.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. But, uh, I think it was in the, maybe late 60's before Archie really...

N.W. Yeah, yeah.

L.C. But, uh, strong in the union, he was. I guess he was ah, in as president longer than any other.

N.W. Is that right?

L.C. President of the, of the union I think. Or while I was working in, was in there longer. And see, we had a six week strike I think while Archie was in there.

N.W. I didn't know that. Another one?

L.C. Yeah.

N.W. Do you remember what year that was?

L.C. (pause) I believe that was in about '71 or '72.

N.W. Um.

L.C. A six week strike.

N.W. And this was over wages again?

L.C. Wages and ah, retirement pension.

N.W. Pension.

L.C. I think it was.

N.W. What were they, what were they asking for?

L.C. It was a, mostly on retirement. They always ask for 30 years of full retirement, you know.

N.W. Did you get it? ..

L.C. No. (laughs)

N.W. What did they get? Do you remember?

L.C. Not until uh, well, actually the union never did get it. ...

N.W. Oh.

L.C. The company just uh, up and gave it to us. But, we really didn't have the thirty full retirement at thirty years when I retired. So, you know, I retired at 55.

N.W. You did?

L.C. I could only get, I could only get, uh, 70% full retirement. And I had 30 years, '34 years of seniority.

N.W. 34 years, 'huh?

L.C. But, uh, they have improved it a couple times since I left. I heard they got a...

N.W. Have they...

L.C. How much improvement they've made but they've improved quite a bit.

N.W. Why did you retire so young? Just because?

L.C. Well, my wife had a retirement, that's one reason.  
(chuckles)

N.W. (laughs)

L.C. She had a retirement and if it hadn't of been for that we couldn't of afforded the retirement.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. But, with two retirements, why...

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. We'd make it alright.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. If they'd quit raising the prices...

N.W. (laughs) Oh, tell me about it! Oh, okay, when did you become involved with the Canadian Rolling Mill? When was the first time you, uh...

L.C. May of '77, first year after I retired. (pause) Bruce Goodrich called me one evening, I was setting here. He called me and asked me if I'd like to come to Sudbury, help him teach roll grinding. I told yeah, I wouldn't care to come up here and spend some time with him. It ended up that I'm still going.

N.W. Well, 'how many times have you been up there?

L.C. Uh, I don't remember, I usually...

N.W. It's quite a few.

L.C. Been four, I was up there four times last summer.

N.W. In one summer?

L.C. One summer. Two weeks, two weeks at a time.

N.W. Do you teach, teach classes? Or, or are you there as a consultant?

L.C. I teach the men, they have, they've had some trouble, they hire men and they, ah, leave and I have to train another one.

N.W. Oh, yeah.

L.C. What happened, they layed off some trainees at the Copper Clip Smelter...

N.W. Uh-huh.

L.C. Machinists trainees, so they hired 'em in up at the rolling mill, the rollin mill in Sudbury. And I trained their foreman that they hired and then one of the machinist trainees that they hired, I trained them. Then, uh, the men of Canada decided that they wanted to strike for awhile and uh, it happened that they was out 9 months.

N.W. 9 months.

L.C. And' uh...

N.W. For wages?

L.C. Well, uh...

N.W. You don't know?

- L.C. I don't really know. Wages and retirement.  
pension.
- N.W. Yeah. Boy, that's a long time.
- L.C. So uh, after the 9 month strike was over with,  
these trainees gets the chance to go back to  
Copper Clip and finish their apprenticeship, you  
know, finish the training program so they, they go  
back and they have to hire new men in and, you  
have to train them. (pause) Train them in, you  
know, on the jobs. So that's what's happened  
mostly up there. But they uh, they're in product-  
ion now, so they are getting along pretty well.
- N.W. Did you say there's one at Sudbury? Is that, that's  
the mine, isn't it?
- L.C. Well, there's several mines around Sudbury.
- N.W. Okay.
- L.C. They mine the ore and then bring it into the  
smelter, you know, and then they process it and  
then it's shipped to here.
- N.W. Okay.
- L.C. In bags.
- N.W. Bags.
- L.C. Yeah, it's, craftsmen, shipped in the ore is, they  
don't send it in big, uh, pieces like they used to.  
They used to send it in and they'd process it here  
in the calasine.
- N.W. Okay.

L.C. And ah, they do all of this in Sudbury now.

N.W. How many men do they uh, employ up there? Do you know?

L.C. Oh, they have right around 20,000 employees in Sudbury.

N.W. 20,000?

L.C. INCO does.

N.W. I had no idea it was that... There were 20,000 men off for 9 months?

L.C. Yeah.

N.W. Well, how did that affect uh, Huntington?

L.C. Well, they uh, they had enough stock-piled.

N.W. Oh.

L.C. See, in ore, it uh, I don't think Huntington slowed down a bit in all the time they was off. (pause) So, your main, uh, role in going to Canada was not even necessarily as a negotiator but just as an instructor and a trainer?

L.C. A trainer roll grinder.

N.W. You will have trained enough people up there that they can train others too?

L.C. Yeah, see, I trained their foreman. The first man they hired.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. They hired, they hired a foreman and I trained him on the machine before I trained any other men. And while I'm gone see, with what I was

L.C. able to teach their foreman see, he can, the other men that I train...

N.W. Um-hm.

L.C. He helps them, you know, 'so that a, then when they feel they need me back, they just give me a call and I go up and stay a couple of weeks.

N.W. That's not bad. Do they pay your expenses?

L.C. Oh, yeah.

N.W. It's like a vacation?

L.C. They take care of me.

N.W. Do they?

L.C. Yeah. (laughs)

N.W. Where is this located? I mean do you get there plane...do you just fly in?

L.C. Yeah, they have a, it's about the size of Huntington, Sudbury is.

SIDE TWO

N.W. Okay, we were in Canada and you were uh, teaching the foreman.

L.C. Yeah.

N.W. Oh, I know, you were uh, going up four times last summer and they were taking care of you.

L.C. Yeah, they uh, they have me a motel reservation and a car at the airport. And uh...

N.W. Do you get the VIP treatment? (laughs) (pause) I'm going to put "big smile" in parentheses.

L.C. Both.

N.W. Did you develop a course per, say uh, a definite course um, a particular period of time that, for your training?

L.C. Well, we had a, I couldn't follow any uh, certain course. They have uh, three different type rolls. They have a work roll for the, the roughing mill, and a work roll for the finishing mill.

N.W. Okay.

L.C. And they have a back-up rolls for the roughing mills and back up rolls for the finishing mill. And uh, it's a different a, they have different set-ups, you have to use different bearing box on the next of each different set of rolls. You have to, well, we had to uh, first I had to get out all the bearing box to find the right size for each set of rolls. Then we had to set the machine up. As we was doing that, why they boy I was training would be making notes so he could refer back to them later, you know. And uh, each man that I trained while he got along pretty well. Since I left.

N.W. Do you have any idea how many men you have trained altogether?

L.C. Uh, four different men.

N.W. Have they asked you to come back this summer too?

L.C. Well, I think I'll have to go back maybe the next two weeks. They know that I returned from Florida



L.C. in April, they usually call me.

N.W. You have done this, this will be your third year, your third?

L.C. Yeah, since, ah...

N.W. Since '77.

L.C. Since May of '77. But, ah, the year that they had the 9 month strike...

N.W. Yeah?

L.C. Why, I didn't, I didn't go up but one time, that year. (pause) During their 9 month strike they used salary men, they came up different divisions of INCO.

N.W. How did that work? Did they have training?

L.C. Well, the union. See, they was trying to get the plant into operation see, they wasn't producing anything at the...

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. So, the union allowed them to go ahead and work and try to get the plant into operation. So, uh, INCO has to pay their salary men anyway, when the men are on strike, so (pause) I think uh, I think Goodrich told me that they had uh, 25 salary men in from Copper Clip and different divisions of INCO in Sudbury to help them get the plant into operation.

N.W. Um, it seems to me it would be dangerous trying to get unskilled people in there to uh, work

N.W. those machines.

L.C. Well, they uh, they didn't have any trouble, they ah, there's never been any bad injuries in there, a few cuts and bruises I think is about all.

N.W. Um-hm.

L.C. You take a salary man that's not used to working out in a plant like that, he's careful of what he picks up. (laughs)

N.W. Oh yeah, yeah, I see what you mean.

L.C. They didn't have to get many hARRY, they was on strike. (laughs)

N.W. Yeah, oh yeah, I see what you mean. So, you go to Florida every summer or every winter now, is it, what, right after Christmas?

L.C. January, February, and March.

N.W. Homestead?

L.C. Homestead, yeah.

N.W. Your trailer, is that an Airstream? Do you have family down there, or is your family most up..

L.C. No, no family, just friends that we have met over the years, gone down.

N.W. Do you have children? I don't think I've ever asked you that.

L.C. We have two.

N.W. Um.

L.C. A daughter in Long Island, New York and our son's in Columbia, South Carolina.

N.W. Do they have children?

L.C. My son's got two, a boy and a girl

N.W. I've noticed...

L.C. My daughter doesn't have any.

N.W. the grandfather and grandmother sign.

L.C. Over there see, over there, this is my daughter here.

N.W. Okay, oh. (long pause)

L.C. Don't you know Lee, Lee Parsons?

N.W. Um-hm.

L.C. That's her there. Over there was (pause) a, she's my daughter-in-law.

N.W. I don't know her well, I went to school with Cindy.

L.C. Well, is Cindy about your age?

N.W. Uh, yeah. Um, do you see them very often, do they come in?

L.C. Oh, I see the grandchildren about 4 times a year, I'd say. My daughter and her husband usually comes home, they come home for Christmas for sure every year.

N.W. Do they?

L.C. Sometimes they come home during the summer. We usually make one trip up to New York every year.

N.W. I have family in, what is it, Farmingdale, Long Island.

L.C. Betty and Bud live in Huntington, Long Island.

N.W. Huntington, um-hm. What does it take you, about two days to get up there?

L.C. I can drive it in one day. It's only 620 miles.

N.W. Can you, really?

L.C. It's a hard drive, but you can drive it in one day if you want to.

N.W. Yeah, well. (pause) Of course just two of you, you don't have to make so many pit stops.

L.C. Yeah.

BOTH LAUGH

N.W. So what do you do all winter in Florida, just, do you fish?

L.C. Fish.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. (pause) And just loaf around and do anything you want to. You don't have to, after 5 years, in Florida, uh, especially down in Homestead. We've seen about everything there is to see.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. We've been down the Keys a couple of times, we've been to the Everglades two or three times.

N.W. I've never been there.

L.C. Well, you can, uh, work real hard and, ah, make a lot of money and retire, Nancy, then you can go to Florida.

N.W. (laughs) I think I'm going to have to work on that for a couple of years, Mitch. So you keep out of

N.W. trouble up here by gardening, do you?

L.C. Well, I, ah, the last three years I've, ah, had a pretty big garden.

N.W. That's what you told me.

L.C. So, uh, (pause)

N.W. Do you keep in touch with the men that you used to work with much, do you?

L.C. Yeah, a lot of the men that I used to work with came to Florida with us.

N.W. Oh, really.

L.C. Stayed at the same campground. Ray Bias.

N.W. I don't think I've met him, I don't think...

L.C. He stays on the Ohio River Road.

N.W. And he worked in the...?

L.C. Roll grinder.

N.W. With you.

L.C. And there is another boy, Jack Sayer, he was down at Homestead the first year he retired but, uh, he didn't like it too well, so he's been going to Naples.

N.W. Okay, that's just south of Sarasota, isn't it?

L.C. Yeah.

N.W. Yeah. (pause) And you say you had no trouble at all adjusting to retirement.

L.C. Well, uh...

N.W. Did you have any apprehension at all? No?

L.C. I'd planned, I'd planned on retirement before I

- L.C. retired.
- N.W. At 55? Uh, you had, you always wanted an early retirement?
- L.C. Yeah. (pause) I wanted to make sure I had some leisure time before I died. (laughs) (pause)
- N.W. Do all the things that you wanted to do, you travel and loaf?
- L.C. Yeah, but, uh, I haven't travelled except going to Florida.
- N.W. Yeah.
- L.C. Yeah, the first year I retired we ah, we went to Colorado Springs and then on over to Grand Canyon.
- N.W. Um-hm.
- L.C. And uh, back Petrified Forest and...
- N.W. Yeah.
- L.C. on back but that's the longest trip we've taken since I retired.
- N.W. You like to go where you're going and get there, huh?
- L.C. Yeah, I don't ah, know where I'll take another long trip in the trailer or not.
- N.W. That's, that's a lot of work, pulling a trailer.
- L.C. Yeah, especially uh, way the gas is now.
- N.W. I know if, you get, what, 8 miles to the gallon with a trailer? Yeah?
- L.C. Yeah and uh, so I might be able to take any of those long trips cause you don't know where you can get the gas or not even if you can afford to

L.C. buy it, see?

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. If I ever go on another long trip out west, I'll probably just drive in the car, you know, and...

N.W. Yeah. You, do you have any friends that have had a difficult time adjusting to retirement? Do you feel like it is just your basic attitude that's made it so pleasurable for you?

L.C. Uh, not one that I can think of right off, uh, but, ah, has had too much trouble, I don't think, uh, 'bout their retirement. But, I've heard uh, a lot of people say that so and so didn't, didn't like retirement. They'd rather be back to work.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. But, uh, the boys I know that retired about the same time I did, they seem to be adjusting to it pretty well. Uh, Bias, and Jack Sayer, those I just mentioned, they both have trailers, you know. They get out and travel around in the trailers. Find little odd jobs to do around, you know. Why, there's ah, there's plenty to do seems to me, like there's more to do around the house then there was when I was working. They must have been the things that I let go while I was working. (laughs)

N.W. Yeah, well and you don't notice them I'm sure. Do you do anything else besides, ah, garden and uh?

L.C. I belong to this gun club, Nancy, but uh...

N.W. Oh, really?

L.C. We got a cabin up in Pocahantus County, you know.

N.W. I have a friend who used to...

L.C. And I spent a lot time hunting up there, you know.

N.W. Do ya...

L.C. In the fall.

N.W. I have a friend who used to have a store up there in Pocahantas.

L.C. Whereabouts?

N.W. Ah, I don't know, ah, Marlinton.

L.C. What was the name?

N.W. His name's Sheets. His father's name is Sheets also. It was a general store. He said a lot of the hunters used to, used to come here. That's a big, ah, hunting country sin't it?

L.C. Right in Marlinton.

N.W. I believe so.

L.C. We go through Marlinton.

N.W. Is that right, you go hunting every, every uh, what is it, November?

L.C. October, November.

N.W. Deer hunting?

L.C. Yeah, turkey hunting and deer hunting.

N.W. Do you? Did you ever get, did you ever get a deer?

L.C. Oh, I've killed 5 deer.

N.W. Ah, do you skin them yourself, for yourself, and all that?



L.C. Yeah.

N.W. Do you really?

L.C. Sure, you don't, (laughs) you don't leave them laying in the woods.

N.W. (laughs) No, well, no I guess not. Well, that's that's interesting. Do you, do you target shoot here or is it just mainly...

L.C. We have ah, club house out in Melissa.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. And uh, we, we got a rifle range out there and I go shoot when I want to. We usually wait until we get into the mountains and...

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. See, rather rifle flint, cause you shoot out here and then call that scoping cause you're high up on that mountain with that scope on it, you know, ah, take your chances.

N.W. Have you been interested all your life in guns? And hunting? Did you do that as ah, growing up?

L.C. Oh yeah, I hunted ah, I hunted when I was a kid.

N.W. Yeah?

L.C. Yeah, all my life.

N.W. Where did you grow up?

L.C. Out on, ah, sixteenth street road. (pause) But, ah, they had a four pole they called it.

N.W. Yeah. (pause) Did you come from a large family?

L.C. There was one brother and two sisters. My brother's

L.C. a crane operator down at the plant.

N.W. Is that right? I didn't know that. (pause) What about your sisters? Are they here too?

L.C. One sister lives out in (pause) Forepole, and the other one lives over in Sharp Court over in Barboursville.

N.W. Okay, yeah, (pause) What did you dad do?

L.C. He had a dairy.

N.W. You grew up on a farm?

L.C. (pause) An old farm boy. (laughs)

N.W. You've been busy your whole life, never sat still, you never sit still, do you?

L.C. I'm never without a job, since I can remember. I've always had a job doing something.

N.W. When did you start to work? I mean, in high school, did you work in high school?

L.C. Sure.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. Anyone raised on the farm has to, has to work.

N.W. Off the farm?

L.C. Sure.

N.W. Yeah, what id you do? What was your first job?

L.C. Oh, ah, (laughs)

N.W. Do you remember?

L.C. You have to ask, at the...

N.W. Yeah?

L.C. You have to milk the cows, every day, Nancy.

N.W. Okay.

L.C. My dad had the dairy for, for, I went to work at the Nickel Plant...We'd get up at four o'clock in the morning, go milk the cows. (pause)

N.W. Four o'clock in the morning. (pause) Did you go to the ah, Nickel Plant right after ah, high school?

L.C. Well, ah, I worked in the dairy, I was working in the dairy my dad had the dairy.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. When they called me to come to work in the Nickel Plant. (pause)

N.W. Did you know, um, Ezra Bates and Hazel? Back then they had a chicken farm?

L.C. The Bates.

N.W. Yeah.

L.C. Over there on 60.

N.W. Yes.

L.C. I knew of them, I didn't know them.

N.W. You didn't know them? (pause)

L.C. I think uh, isn't she still living?

N.W. Yes.

L.C. The old lady?

N.W. Yes, uh, yeah, she goes to my church. (pause)  
Did uh, were you all affected by the '37 flood?  
Your family?

L.C. No.

N.W. You weren't touched?

L.C. It never uh, it never got anywhere near.

N.W. How many cows did your father have? How, how large was his dairy?

L.C. We, we'd milk about 20, we'd always have 8 or 10 ahead that we didn't milk.

N.W. Why is that?

L.C. Well, it runs in a cycle, you know.

N.W. Okay.

L.C. A cow gives milk so long, then she goes dry.

N.W. Oh.

L.C. Then she has to have another calf before she starts giving milk again. You didn't know that?

N.W. No.

BOTH LAUGH

N.W. I grew up in suburbia. (laughs) Way out in suburbia. (pause) Well, thank you very much. I really enjoyed talking to you. You've really helped me a lot on this interview.

END OF INTERVIEW