

Marshall University

Marshall Digital Scholar

0064: Marshall University Oral History
Collection

Digitized Manuscript Collections

1998

Oral History Interview: Jesse J. Trent

Jesse J. Trent

Follow this and additional works at: https://mds.marshall.edu/oral_history

Recommended Citation

Marshall University Special Collections, OH64-576, Huntington, WV.

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Digitized Manuscript Collections at Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in 0064: Marshall University Oral History Collection by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact zhangj@marshall.edu.

RELEASE FORM

Deed of Gift to the Public Domain

I, Jesse J Trent, do hereby give to the Marshall University (archives or organization) the tape recordings and transcripts of my interviews on 4-26-98.

I authorize the Marshan University (archive or organization) to use the tapes and transcripts in such a manner as may best serve the educational and historical objectives of their oral history program.

In making this gift, I voluntarily convey ownership of the tapes and transcripts to the public domain.

Lynnda Ann Ewen, Ph.D.
(Agent of Receiving Organization)

Jesse J Trent
(Donor)

4/30/98
(Date)

JESSE TRENT BY: REBECCA ADAMS

MR. TRENT RELATES TO THE INTERVIEWER TOPICS SUCH AS COAL CAMPS IN LOGAN, WV, MOUNTAIN TOP REMOVAL, THE BUFFALO FLOOD IN MAN, WV IN 1972. HE MENTIONS BRIEFLY THE LOSS OF A NEPHEW IN WORLD WAR II, RELIGION AND IT'S IMPORTANCE. HE ALSO DISCUSSES THE JOBS HE'S HELD IN HIS LIFETIME.

Subject: Living in Appalachia

An Oral Interview With: Mr. Jesse Trent

Conducted By: Rebecca Adams

Date Of Interview: April 26, 1998

Transcriptionist/Typist: Rebecca Adams

0576

This is an oral history on Mr. Jesse Trent. He is 85 years old and resides in Man, West Virginia.

Mr. Trent grew up in the coal camps of Logan County, West Virginia. In this interview he tells of his life growing up in those camps and how it is different from today. He had nine other siblings, his mother was a housewife and his father was a coal miner. After he became older he married a woman named Edith and became a coal miner also. He took classes to become a mine foreman, in fact, he became the youngest mine foreman in the state of West Virginia. In this interview he tells stories about the mines, his family and how he lived through the Buffalo Creek Flood.

Rebecca Adams: This is Rebecca Adams and I am interviewing Jesse Trent, my uncle, on April 26, 1998.

RA: Okay, if you want to, you can just tell us your name, your family, your brothers and sisters, your mom and dad and where you grew up and everything.

Jesse Trent: Just start with my parents?

RA: Start wherever you want, your parents, when you were born, where.

JT: My name is Jesse Trent, born December 2, 1912 in the little town of Simon in Wyoming county. My parents were Sampson and Allifair Trent. We lived in this area until I was about 4 years old. Dad, at that time decided to come into Logan county where there was more employment available. The mines were beginning to hire men and opening new mines. He decided it would be best for the family to come down where he could make a little more money than he could in the area where we were. So we moved to Accoville which was on Buffalo Creek, five miles, six from the east of Man. And that was our first home in Logan county, was on the Accoville flats. Don't remember too much about that because I was so young. Dad worked there for quite some time and we finally decided to leave there and move to a little town called Bengall, which was opening up new mines and new people. We moved down to that environment and at that time, the year I don't recall exactly, trucks were not available for hauling household stuff and things of that kind, so we either had to use a wagon or boxcars on the railroad. I think we moved by wagon, I still don't recall too well what it was. But we moved into the Bengall community and lived there through World War II, World War I, I'm sorry. I was old enough then to begin to remember a few things. I can remember the call for the boys going into the service in WWI, of course I was too young for it and Dad was exempt because they needed miners at that time. We lived there until I was about 8, 9 years old, 10. Started school, started grade school in a little two room school building. The principal of that school was named Ramond Walls. And a lady by the name of Belle Altizer was the other teacher. Two room school they had up to sixth grade, and all the kids of the community went there. After the sixth grade they went to Man to the Junior High School, where the 7th, 8th and 9th grades went, and the high school at that time. They later divided and had the two schools. We lived there for several years, the grade school, just on the outskirts of Man, between Man and Kissler, that

was a very good community. We had a mine superintendent at that place, a lot of children. At the beginning of each school term, we would spend the day at his office passing out school handbags and pencil and paper sets. Which all the kids enjoyed those very much. At that time we couldn't afford very much and that was like getting Christmas. This gentleman was there for several years and he did all he could for the community, presented a nice playground and things of that kind in which we had never been accustomed to. The administrator of that mine, the superintendent and the mine foreman decided to move, and they went to Wilburn to another new mine. Dad decided to go with them, so at that time we moved to what is now more popularly known as Rita, at the post office. This was another nice coal mining community, they built a new one there. Today there is a mall there in the same site. All the houses are gone, all the signs of the mines are gone, you can't recall anything of the early days, but it was a nice community and all the nice people helped each other whatever one family needed, if the other had it they shared together and things of that nature, much more than what we do today. This community survived for several years until the coal mines worked out and they went into, uh, started going down as far as the community was concerned and eventually there was nothing available to work. And miners, mines all moved out and later on they started tearing down all the houses and communities. In recent years, about ten years ago, when that mall came in, they finished leveling the community and built a mall at that place which is now in existence. It takes up the area where we used to have the playground and the school, and the hills that we used to hunt in, and it is an entirely different lifestyle than what we were acquainted with at that time. Still some of the old relics are around I have a picture of the community, it still shows all the houses and the outhouses each house had an outhouse and a coal house. It's quite well known as being one of the better communities in Logan county at that time. We stayed there until the year of 1926. During that time a lot of new people started coming in. The first automobile that came into Buffalo Creek came in in boxcars. Street cars came in in boxcars and unloaded between Bengal and the little town above it. They belonged to the superintendent, the chief electrician and the mine foreman. That's the only people who had automobiles in those days. The superintendent took me a ride in the first car ride I ever had. One day I was sitting on the front porch of the old company store and he came by, reached down and picked me up and put me in his car and said "Do you want to take a ride? Take a man with me." I was the only kid in town who could brag about that for a long time. I really enjoyed Mr. Robinson, that was the man's name. I remember it so well. Mr. Robinson later retired from

coal mining and moved in to Logan and went into the insurance business. There is still an insurance agency there under his name after all these years. Things started to, and as we started going down, Dad lost his job at that place and was out seeking employment and we move to main Island Creek, in the little town of Yuma. That was in the year of 1926. We had a Model T Ford that Dad had bought in 1924. That was the first car in the family. As of today I still have a Model T lug wrench and spark plug wrench as a survivor. When we moved there I had finished sixth or seventh grade and after we moved into Yuma, I had to at that time, well, I had to go to Logan to Junior High School for the eighth and ninth years, and things just from that time on, I missed one year, then went back to Logan High School and finished school there, and then went into coal mines after that. Started in the mines in 1933, before the union was formed. First job that I had underground was on what they called the Bull Gang, that was the crew that just did anything, that needed doing, at the grand old sum of 27 cents and hour. Believe that or not.

RA: (Laughs) No!

JT: \$2.16 a day and we walked in those coal mines and out on our own. That was low coal. I remember that real well. From that time on I continued my education by night school, learning more about the mining and the supervising end of it and etc. In 1933 I was issued a state mine foreman's certificate. I had to wait until I was 21 years old because they did not issue them before that. But I passed the examination August, and I had to wait from August until December until I could get my certificate. Because of age. From that time on I just worked in the coal mines at various positions. Up until the time I retired in 1978, 79. I was fortunate enough to see coal mining change from all the phases that it went through from the time that they had hand loading right on up to the modern day equipment. The sad part of it is, down through the years there was so many people that worked in the mines, work was available for most anyone who wanted to work. At one time we had as many men working at Lorado and Amhearst as what there is in all of Logan county today. That's the way the mining was done, but with the high powered equipment that they have today, they are mining more coal that we were back in those days. That's pretty well summarizes the early life and the times that we went through.

RA: Were you the oldest child? How many brothers and sisters did you have?

JT: How many which?

RA: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

JT: Brothers and sisters? We had a family of, we had six girls and four boys in our immediate family. We had two of them die at a very early age. A brother and a sister. My bother dies when he was only about two years old and a sister who was about 18. The others of course down through the years passed on. Today there are only two of us left. That's my baby sister and myself. That's all that's left in our immediate family. Mother and Dad were buried over in the old cemetery over near Oceana, they were buried in the old family cemetery at Simon, but when they put in the dam over there they had to be moved. The rest of the family is just scattered from wherever they happened to be living at the time that they died or close to it.

RA: Did all of them live in West Virginia or in Appalachia after they became an adult?

JT: Yes. All of our family remained within a radius of 75 miles from Man. But all of our children have moved on. One girl is still in this area, one boy is in Alabama, one is in California and the other one died in 1978. We have been in and around these mountains all of our life. After retiring, my wife and I decided we would maybe go to Florida, so we went down there and spent a couple winters, and we have been very thankful since then that we did not make a mistake in selling our home and moving down there.

RA: When did you meet and marry Aunt Edith?

JT: Well, my wife and I graduated the same year from Logan High School, and that is where we first met. In our homeroom class she sat behind me and pestered me all the time (RA laughs). Pulled my ears and biting things, getting me in trouble with the teacher, the she would hunker up and get away from it (both laugh). But we were married shortly after we graduated in the Spring of '32. And we have been very fortunate. Our children have been very healthy and done real well. We don't have too much to complain about, the Good Lord been good to us. We have been married now for 64 years.

RA: Wow.

JT: Not very many people attain that goal.

RA: No, not very many people. So um, when you were growing up, were you raised in a religious household, did you go to church on a regular basis?

JT: Yes. We had just a small community church in the town, at Wilburn where we lived. The methodist church was where we had our first boy scout experience. The first boy scout troop south of Logan was organized at our church in Earling. The boys at Wilburn were invited to join. It was only a mile and a half. We didn't think nothing at that time to walk. We really enjoyed it. The local minister Rev. JB F. Yolk Jr. was the scout master or the, he was the assistant scout master, (pause) I'm trying to think of the name of the scout master himself, he was an engineer, but anyhow, we had three real good adults to guide us through the scouting years. I remember those days real well because it was something very unusual. When we got uniforms back in those days, we thought now we got it made (both laugh) That's the first time that I haven't been able to recall that scout masters name. (Pause) But it was a good life, for us. It was rough, there was no question about that. We didn't have all the worldly things we have today, but what we did have we enjoyed, and what we didn't have we tried to attain through our own efforts or we did without and let it go with that.

RA: Do you remember the first job that you had?

JT: The first job I had was for the well digging crew that came to Wilburn, and I got a quarter a day for carrying water for those guys.

RA: How old were you?

JT: At that time I would have been around 13 years old. But my first job that I got any real money for was a janitor of our two room school. I got sixteen dollars a month for that. I got eight dollars for each room. I would have to go get out on cold winter mornings and go build a fire, we had big barn size stoves in the school room. I would go build the fires and have the place warm by the time the kids came to school. But I was king of the hill on pay day. (Both laugh)

RA: Grandmother talked about how she used to ride the bus to school and you were the bus driver.

JT: That was after we moved to Yuma when we had school buses. When we were going to High School, the boys in school drove the buses. We were permitted to do that. I think we matured a little bit quicker back in those days. And we lived in Yuma at that time, and the school bus garage was down in an area in Logan where Shoney's is now. The school bus garage was there. And we as drivers had to be there every morning ready to pull out at 7:00. At that time there was a big electric power station in Logan, and every morning they would blow the whistle there at 7:00. When that whistle blew, we pulled out and went in our different directions to pick up the kids and bring them to school. I had, one year I drove all the way to Crystal Block and hauled the kids down and after that I had the short run to Henlawson and the whole area was pretty well divided by kids, you had the long run and the short run, and we hauled the Junior high children and the senior high and the others stayed in the community schools at that time. We had as many as 100 children to haul each morning between the two runs. At that time the county did not own the buses. The school buses were, the transportation was contracted to private individuals. There was a fellow by the name of Richard Kirk that owned the buses that we had. We answered to him for what we had to do.

RA: So, when you were growing up, you lived in the coal camps? Did you still live there after you got married or did you move out? After you got married?

JT: No we still lived in the coal camps after we got married. We lived in Yuma. We first started housekeeping in Yuma. There used to be an old theatre building that had an apartment upstairs and downstairs, we got the upstairs until we could get a house. After about, oh, we lived there about a year and a half, we got a little three room house down at Monitor at that time. We moved over there and that was where our second boy was born. He was born while we lived there. We lived in that community until, um, we lived in four different houses while we were there, after we were married. We left there in 1938 and went to Lorado. And worked up there until about 1943, I believe it was. Then we went to Kopperston and stayed about a year or so, then we came back to Logan county and been there ever since. And the Good Lord willing, that is where we are going to stay. We have found in various travels, since we've retired we have traveled to all but three states, but we've never found people as helpful and as kind as they are

in the Appalachian and we have encountered many people who have had the same feelings about it.

RA: I was going to ask you, we have been talking a lot in class about Mountain Top Removal, and what they're doing, and I wanted to know if you had an opinion on it.

JT: I have a VERY strong opinion on it. I don't think that it should be done. I don't think these mountains should be changed by man. God made them like they are, and I think that if we go underground and take the minerals and so forth out of there, then we should not disturb the outside. Especially the coal mining and cutting the timber. They're just devastating almost like a Garden Of Eden of what this country was at one time. But these big companies move in and they move out. They demolish the territory and run out the coal and the timber and they move on and leave us with what's left. In fact one of the companies that is working here today in removing it moved the equipment out of Alabama to do this with, where they had devastated an area down there. They're not the only ones, they're all about the same. Just recently our Governor signed a new bill, that will let them fill more and more of our streams than what they were, and its going to prove to be a very unpopular thing because it is devastating all our water supply that's always been at times, when I was a child you could go up any of these hollers, if you got thirsty you got down and took a drink of water out of the stream, but now you can't do it.

RA: Do you think a lot of people in the area have the same opinion about Mountain Top Removal?

JT: I say about 90% of the people have the same opinion.

RA: You don't think that it's a positive progress?

JT: No, I do not think that it is progress.

RA: I don't think so either.

JT: The sad part of it is the way they are doing it know they are going to waste an awful lot of coal that is under the surface, and they're making it even harder and harder to get to it. A lot of it will never be mined because of the work that they are doing. Any other questions?

RA: (laughs) Yeah, I'm trying to think of the other ones. Are there any stories that you can remember from when you were younger that stand out in your mind? Something that you think that you will always remember?

JT: Yes, there's one that stands out. When I was just a boy and we lived in Wilburn and that mine there was rather low coal, and instead of having the equipment that they work with today, they used ponies to haul the coal with. And right within a 100 yards of where the mall is in Rita now, was the barn where they kept those ponies. And there was an old man by the name of Short, Sam Short, was the barn master. He would let the boys in the community come down and ride those ponies to the mines every morning to do their days work. We all were available for it. We all wanted to ride ponies. But if you rode a pony for him that morning you had to go back to the mines that evening after it done it's day's work and bring it back. And you had to lead that pony, you couldn't ride it after it had done a days work he would not permit that. If he did catch you on one it didn't bother him one bit to take a big old long whip and he snap that thing like a firecracker, and crack you a time or two with it. He'd say "That pony's done it's day's work, and it is entitled to its rest, get off of it." (RA laughs) That sticks in my mind after all these years that he was so kind that he wanted to take care of his animals. That was one incident like that I remember very well.

RA: I remember a while ago there was an article in the paper that you had your picture in, and some things that you had said. I've forgotten what it is now, my grandmother cut it out, and I was going to ask you about that. About the article in the paper and what they had said to you.

JT: Well that was, uh, we had a community meeting here trying to get improved roads between here and Logan.

RA: Oh, yeah, the roads.

JT: We are driving over the same road basically that we did back in 1924 when Dad bought his first automobile. Of course it was all dirt road between here and Logan at that time. Model T's had their own little told kit and they had a wrench that they called a Model T lug wrench, and a spark plug wrench. It was a combination. And that was used, it was not uncommon to have flat tires back in those days, that was used to remove the tires with or spark plugs if you had plug trouble. And that is one souvioneer

that I have and the remarks that was made at the time pertaining to that was when we were trying to get permission for a new road, that various people were telling how long it had been since they were promised a road and I made the remark that we had been promised a new road from the days of the model T days, and a lot of people did not know what a Model T was, so I brought the wrench out to show them. And the Model T was an old ford touring car that had 21 inch wheels on it. It had what they called split rims and had your own tools, you had a pump that you had take off and patch it and pump it up again. And I said yeah, we had been promised new roads ever since this was a popular item (both laugh). I think it's time now to get the road done. I think that just within the past ten days now it has been approved and I think that we are going to get one.

RA: Well, that's good.

JT: They're going to build a four lane, I don't think we need a four lane, two lane would be ample, but if we get four lane we're not going to turn it down, we'll be glad to get it. But there had been, every administration since that time had promised new roads in this area, but we didn't get them.

RA: Did you have a favorite subject when you were in school, was there anything that you liked to do better?

JT: I liked history and biology, of all things (both laugh) My two favorite subjects. Especially the civil war era. I've always been fascinated by that.

RA: Did you ever serve in the military?

JT: No, I had a very short military career. I almost went.

RA: Oh really? (Both laugh)

JT: I was working at Lorado at the time of the draft of WWII and at that time I was about 28, 29 years old, had three children at that time. And I was mine foreman. I was one of the youngest mine foreman in the state, in fact at one time I was the youngest in the state. The procedure for the draft at that time was to have a preliminary examination by a doctor or someone in the area, and I got my call to go in the service. And I was to be examined by a doctor in Amhearstdale, we lived in Lorado at that time. And I went down

for my exam, and while I was in there a telephone call came to the doctor, that said send me back. Said we need miners as well as they need soldiers. So on the basis of my employment I stayed in the mines.

RA: Did you want to go to the war?

JT: Yes. After Pearl Harbor I would have been more that glad to go.

RA: Oh really?

JT: Later on, of course, one of our nephews was killed overseas in WWII.

RA: Which nephew was this?

JT: He was living with us at the time that he went in the service. He and Edwin and Wallace were all three about the same age and all three of them went in the service. All of them had a rough time over there. Ersal was killed in machine gun fire.

RA: So Edwin and Wallace were your brothers?

JT: Edwin was but Wallace was the nephew.

RA: Oh okay, so he was the one.

JT: Yes.

RA: So they all went to the war and you stayed home and worked in the mines? Is there anything else you can think of? Any stories?

JT: No, not right off hand. Except the big depression.

RA: Oh yeah.

JT: Things were pretty dog gone tough back then. Back in the early 30's. That's when I went in the mines. They were paying the big wages. Things were pretty tough then.

RA: Do you remember anything about the depression, anything that you went through?

JT: Yeah there is several things that come to mind but a lot of you don't even want to think about. There was times when you didn't know if you were going to have enough to eat or not, and there was times when you didn't. Didn't have proper clothing or anything. People shared and shared alike. And they were honest. That's one thing that I remember more than anything, the honesty of people. There was one incident that I remember after we were married and moved over at Monitor in that little three room house. I was working in the mines at the time and I went to work about 1:00 in the morning and came out about 6:00 and come home and eat breakfast. One morning when I was just about finished somebody knocked on the back door. I went to the door and a young man, I'd say he was probably about it his mid thirties, and he apologized for interrupting us and asked by any chance would we give him something to eat. I told him yes, and I told him to come on in. I said my wife is just fixing my breakfast and she'd be glad to fix yours right at the same time. He said no thank you, I won't come in, I won't intrude. He said it was bad enough to come and ask for something and then come in the house. But he insisted that he not come in, so my wife fixed him a plate and he ate on the back porch. He got through, knocked on the door and brought the dishes back in. He thanked us very profusely for it and asked is there anything I can do to pay for it, can I cut some wood or do something like that? I told him no, that we were fortunate enough just to be able to feed him and we didn't want any pay for it. There were an awful lot of good people on the road at that time who didn't have any means of support, they were hunting for it. They were almost too proud to ask for something to eat when they got hungry. Before these days when we have all of this charity stuff now.

RA: Do you think maybe that Appalachia or West Virginia was hit harder than any other region, or do you think it was about the same?

JT: I think we were hit harder here. Because about the only means of employment around here was coal mines, but then the other industrial states had their choice of jobs, I don't think that it affected people quite as bad as it did here.

RA: Are you proud to be an Appalachian from West Virginia? A lot of people see it as a negative thing.

JT: I am more than proud to be. I think the Appalachian people in general have always been independent and trying to help their fellow man which is something you can't say when you get out in these cities today.

RA: Well, I think that's probably about it.

JT: Well, I hope that it is helpful.

RA: Ok, well, thank you very much.

Continuation:

RA: This is a continuation of interview with Jesse Trent by Rebecca Adams. Ok, I forgot to ask about the Buffalo Creek flood. I was going to see if you knew anything about it and if you had any family involved in it.

JT: Lets see, the morning of the flood, the Buffalo Creek flood, I hadn't been to work but for just about an hour, and the headquarters at that time was at Accoville at the supply house, which is at the mouth of the hollow off of main Buffalo. We'd only been on the job about a half an hour when the phone rang and the people from the office had called to let us know that the dam had broken and the whole area was flooding, and to get word out to as many people as we could to anticipate the flood and start getting out in the clear. Two of us split up, one went one way up the creek and one went down, notifying everyone that they could find that there was a flood coming and what had happened. We spread the word as quickly as we could because time was of essence. The water was coming fast. Fortunately we got enough people notified that there wasn't too many casualties after it passed. At that time there were some people who drowned between there and Man, but there weren't many others. We always hoped that the early alert had saved somebody. There was one terrible time, there's no question about it, with everything that went on that day. I couldn't get up the creek to find out how many people had been drowned or anything that we could do to Help. It washed bridges out, and the first thing that we did to help the situation was to get materials put a bridge in, up where it had been washed out so we could get on further up the creek to help others. But there's one incident that comes to mind that when they called us down at Accoville and told us that this was on the way, the superintendent come out out and said that he saw a boy come by floating on a log. The area where we worked, there was a bridge close to us, we figured if we got there in time and had a

rope or something across we might be able to save the boy, but we never did see him, we didn't know what happened. It wasn't until about ten years later before we really found out about the boy. We did find out by a witness that they had saved the boy farther up the creek. We still didn't know that he had been. That was one thing that stuck in our mind a long time, the fact that this little fellow may have gotten by and drown because we did not find him. We were always glad that he had reached down where we were. We stayed out all day and all night. All day Sunday trying to help the people who had been made homeless by it. The national guard came in to do their bit. The news media got involved. Late Sunday afternoon, the thing that sticks to mind, that I still think was a terrible thing to do. Some of the news media came in with the cameras and came in an ambulance. Just pretending that they were going on up the creek to help someone, and as they came back down they had their ambulance doors open they were taking pictures.

RA: So they really weren't EMT's or from the hospital, they were just the media?

JT: Pardon me?

RA: They really weren't the ambulance they were just the TV crews.

JT: No, right. Instead of helping people all they were interested in was making a big headline. But where there was people like that there was also people that made real bad, heavy and deep sacrifices to help others. It was about all we could do, just try to find cover for them, try to find where they could be warm and dry and have a bite to eat. That continued well into the middle of the week, before we found all the bodies. This thing is hard to even talk about today, it was so bad that we like to leave it where it is I guess. I was really lucky that just by accident that I heard about how the little boy was recovered. It was later on and several years after. My grandson was practicing baseball and another guy, and I were standing talking about the situation, about the flood and etc., and I made a remark about the boy, and a lady standing a few feet away overheard the remark and she came down and she said "I heard what you said about the little boy, I'm sure you would like to know what happened." I said "I sure would," She said "He was saved. They caught him just a few miles just below."

RA: So was this a little boy who lost his parents? Were his parents killed in the flood? And he was the only survivor?

JT: Yeah.

RA: I think I know who you are talking about actually. He was in the paper.

JT: Yes, I never did know all those years about that boy.

RA: Yeah, he's a little bit older than me now I think.

JT: A lot of incidents like that, a lot of them are not as sad and dramatic as what has happened over the years. (pause) What else was it that they mentioned in there?

RA: How has living in the coal camps when you were growing up changed since, and how are they viewed now. How the coal camps are completely almost gone, and how they were such a big part of the community back then.

JT: Well, back in those days each company had its own houses. They built houses for their miners and employees. Every one of them had a school and had a church. People always really used both as a great advantage. There were good community minded people practically all of them were. There were very few people who didn't participate. They would do what they could for their fellow man and the children. They all had a safe place to play, they could come and go as they pleased and there was nobody ever around to do things that are being done today in the communities. It wasn't a dog eat dog life like it is now. People cared for each other and worked to help each other more, a lot more so than they do today. On Sunday's your churches had church school for children and adults and practically all of them had good attendance for it, things of that nature that we don't have today. One thing that we miss today, that we don't have today is the schools. Every morning before we went into school we stood at attention and raised the flag and said the pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and went in and had a short prayer, which has been outlawed. Since those days it has been a great change in our schools, in our children and the adults. You can't blame it all on the children because it is the adult's fault. Once they took patriotism and Christianity out of the schools they have gone down ever since. If we ever expect it to be any better we have to get back to that thing that is on all the coins "In God we trust." We still are going to have to go back to that.

RA: Well, unless there is anything else that you...

JT: Oh, nothing except that story that they always kidding me about the cow.

RA: Yeah, tripping over the cow? (both laugh)

JT: That happened over in Yuma. Back in those days there wasn't any street lights in the community. At the lower end of Yuma there was a barn. People had cows down there. A lot of people in the camps had their own cows, back in those days, and their pigs and so forth. One night I had gone to Logan and come back and found the way across the bridge, the railroad bridge, so many inches apart, you had to be real careful you had to cross there, even in the daylight. I was coming across that and was coming up through what we called the bottom, vacant spots on the lower end of town, going up to where we lived, and it was dark as pitch. I couldn't see anything, and about the time that I got up close where the old barn was, where the people kept the cows, I stumbled over something. And when I did, it raised up and said "MOO!" (Both laugh) It was that old big black cow laying there. I fell right over top of that. It scared the dickens out of me, but after she moved I knew what it was. (RA laughs) A lot of little things like that don't happen anymore were amusing at the time. It was a learning process back in those days, to watch what you're doing. But it is hard to see a black cow in the dark night. I found that out.

RA: Yeah!

JT: A lot of incidents like that happened. Another one of that same nature was after I had gone up to the mines. I was going to what you called the slope mines there, and I was going in between one and two o'clock in the morning and the slope was about a 16 degree pitch like that (motions with his hand) from the outside down to the coal seam. I was walking down the slope and I had a spotlight on my head, that was after we got electric lamps and I could see two big green eyes just looked like they were rolling coming up the slope, and I was going down. I couldn't see what it was I could envision a lion and everything else. And I was too scared to run, and if I had I couldn't go anywhere because it was faster than me. So I just stopped and waited with the light on, and when it got up it was a big German police dog. It had got in the mines somehow or another and had finally found his way out and he wasn't paying any attention to me. He was heading out. When

he smelled fresh air he was gone. (both laugh) There were a lot of ghost stories about that mine that they used to tell. In fact I had an experience or two in there myself that I couldn't understand. Somebody called my name and there was nobody else in there but me. Just things of that nature. It's been quite an interesting life.

RA: Yeah. Well, I think this time that's actually it. Thanks a lot!