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George Frederick Moran

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ORAL HISTORY

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I, G. F. Moran, the undersigned, of
Huntington, County of Cabell, State
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- G.F.M. Closed for a period of 5 years.
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Date 10-15-83 G. F. Moran
(Signature - Interviewee)

412 13th Street
Address

Huntington, WV

Date 10-15-83 Wallace Howes
(Signature - Witness)

Moran, George F. "Peck"
10-15-84
2 tapes

Note: Interviewer questions/comments in regular bold print.
Interviewees responses/comments in italic print.

Continuation of taped interview with George Fredrick "Peck" Moran, October 15th, 1983, tape 2 of 3.

Yeah, he had control over it. He wanted to know where they were all the time.

That was departmental policy, that they had to call where they were, if they left to do something?

Oh, yeah, uh-huh.

Could they ever get off early? Or they had to finish their shift, once they started?

Yeah, they all used to-, at 6 o'clock, they'd all meet down at City Hall to call the roll.

Six in the morning?

In the morning, the day shift would call in. They didn't have a general. . . . And at 6 o'clock in the evening, the day shift and the night shift would all meet down there, and they'd call the roll.

Oh, they had a regular roll call every morning?

Every night at 6 o'clock. No, in the morning they'd call in. He didn't have 'em all to come down there at 6 o'clock in the morning. They would just call in.

When they had the roll call in the evening, did they stand in formation?

No, they'd all, they'd. . . rolled seats and benches down in-, City Hall was down behind, do you know where the library is?

Yes, sir.

[inaudible]

Oh, this is the old City Hall you're talking about?

Yeah. I don't know how they do it now. I guess they still have a roll call down there. Yeah, I imagine they do. The cruisers all meet down there now, I imagine. But all the foot men, they'd leave down and some of them they'd get on-, them that had to go far

out, they'd get on street cars. You remember the old time streetcars?

I've heard of them, that's all I know.

Run by rail, had a rail and a trolley wire up there.

And the police officers would use this to get them to the place. . .

To get to their beats, yeah.

And how many hours would they have to walk a beat?

Twelve.

They literally stayed out on a beat for twelve hours?

Mmm-hmm.

That'd be rough in the winter time, wouldn't it?

Yeah, it was rough in the winter time. Though sometimes they'd stop in a place and get warm, things like that. Didn't mess around. He had 'em dressed up pretty good. He had, he had heavy raincoats for 'em and heavy uniform coats, big old coats down to their ankles. [chuckling]

What happened if they were chasing a suspect or a criminal on the beat? Did they call in, "Hey, this guy's heading so and so"?

Probably would, something like that. Or get a hold of someone.

As far as any stories you heard or maybe you saw, if someone, a beat police officer was chasing a criminal, did Chief Sam Davis always try to be personally involved? Or did he wait?

No, if he was down at headquarters, he'd go out there.

First he'd go out himself on the beat and help chase them down?

Oh, yeah, go out there.

Was he a pretty good runner and stuff like that?

Oh, he stayed in good shape all the time. He had a punching bag down there. He lived

next door to me. I mean, I lived next door to him. He had a punching bag down there, and man, he'd get up, he could make one of them things sing. You ever see this boxers in training? (Yes, sir) He could do all that stuff.

Oh, he had. . . did he have the punching bag in his own personal house?

In his back yard. He had it in his back yard out there. Had it set up, like these kids set the basketball things up side the barn, you know? Like that.

Did he have a set workout hours, so many hours per day?

I don't know. Seemed like he worked out an awful lot. I know he could-, he'd go like this with a punching bag, come like this and [inaudible] and come back this way and hit it again. Man, he could make that thing talk!

Huh. (He was good) Did he ever go undercover, that you know? Or did he always wear his uniform?

Yeah. When he was on duty he wore his uniform.

Did he ever go out and like the plain clothes detective, when they went out to try to gather information, did he ever go out there and do that? Or would he wait, have someone else do it and. . . ?

He done it. No, he always, when he was on duty he wore his uniform. He might have sneaked out in his clothes when I didn't know it, after dark when I was in bed.

I mean, if there was an extra strong case going on, did he go out?

Oh, sure he'd go out there any time.

If he was tracing down someone whom he suspected of having left the state or something, did he. . . ?

Oh, they'd go out of state and get 'em. Yeah.

He would go personally to get them.

Oh, he'd bring 'em in, yeah.

Did he go by himself? Or did he have. . . ?

Sometimes he'd go by himself or take someone with him. Or send somebody.

Would he send teams or just individual men?

Yeah, he'd probably send. . .sometimes he would send that dispatcher, Wilson would go.

Sergeant Wilson?

Mmm-hmm. Sometimes. Sometimes Clingenfield. Clingenfield went and got a man one time. This is a good one. Cincinnati. And they wanted him up there and he had the extradition papers and everything. Had the handcuffs on him and the man said, "I want to go to the restroom." He took the cuffs off of him, told him the restroom was right there at the end of the car. He sat down, he waited there awhile. Went back there and looked and the man was gone. They never did find that man. [laughing] Oh, he was embarrassed about that.

Did Chief Davis chew him out, or just kind of. . . ?

He might have. Said the man had to go to the bathroom. He said "You should have got in there with him." [laughing]

Would that be the type of stuff Chief Davis would laugh at?

Yeah. Oh, he'd get a big kick out of anything.

Would he get a kick out of seeing Clingenfield embarrassed, too?

Oh, yeah. [laughing]

Would he laugh out loud or kind of just smile and. . .

Well . . .you couldn't get in that little old, you've seen them little old restrooms on coaches, haven't you? On a train, like the Amtrak out here. They have little old, little old comodes and where you could wash your hands and everything like that.

How did the man ever get away? Did they ever figure it out? Through a window or. . .

When they figured it out, he got through a window and jumped while it was running.

He could figure it out.

I believe the man got the window open, waited til the train stopped and when the train stopped, Clingenfield went back to see what, [inaudible] he was gone.

That's very interesting.

We called him Cling.

Called him Cling?

Called him Cling--Clingenfield--we called him Cling. C-l-i-n-g.

[inaudible] 1950 photograph or . . . ?

1915, it was, wasn't it?

1915.

Crazy house?

Crazy house that's on cloth, canvas?

That's the banner. That's the banner telling you that is the crazy house. And it's uh. . . have you ever been in the crazy house at the carnival?

You mean like the spook house or . . . ?

Yeah, the crazy house is the same thing. You'd go in there like this, go in the door. And they had a swing like the hammock there and two seats, two seats on each side and a door. Well, he started swinging the swing like this, you know. And then this whole outside would start curving up and you'd begin to grab your seat to keep from falling out. And he wasn't doing nothing but swinging. But this whole thing would turn around beside of you.

Who was turning this?

The man outside.

Would this be one of the police officers?

No, that was with the carnival. That crazy house is a carnival concession.

Oh, concession, oh.

The only thing, the only thing that the police had would have the [inaudible] country store. They'd bid things off and auction things off, you know.

Did the police, when I grew up, carnivals, sometimes people would tell you to be wary of people that cheated and these fixed games. Did the police keep tabs on these carnivals, make sure they're honest or did they. . . .

No, they didn't pay any attention to that. [inaudible] I know we was down there one time, I was putting a nickel on something at one of the carnivals. And the chief was with me and uh, there was a carnival set up here and there was some kind of pin game or something. [inaudible] stopped on a certain number you won a prize. And Sam Davis, I put my nickel down and he said, "Tell him to step on the button that's underneath the counter there!"

He knew it all the time. . . .

Oh, he knew it was all a skin game.

Did the concession operator, did they know that Sam Davis knew? Oh, yeah. How did they react to each other? Kind of smile or. . . ?

Yeah. Oh, it was all a skin game, you know. It is yet. It is yet around those county fairs, you know, they set up.

Sam Davis knew that, he would. . .

Yeah, he let it go, never paid it any attention. Of course, they was making money for him to buy new uniforms and different things.

Oh, all right. [inaudible]

Yeah, he didn't care.

Was he, to describe him, his personality, would you say, he said he didn't care. But would you call him. . .

Nothing worried him. He never seemed to worry about anything.

Pressures never got to him? (No) Was he a smiling type man?

Yeah, he was a kind of smiling like guy. Good natured.

[tape misses] congenial?

Uh-huh, didn't fly off the handle, as they called it. He always. . . he had to know what it was about before he got mad or. . . .

So if he got mad, he would see it through?

Oh, yeah, he'd see it through all right. Not get mad, but get determined.

How did Chief Davis react to, you said Red Light or down on the strip? Did he uh. . . ?

Well, that was, at that time, the women down there, you know, had a madam to run the joint, you know. Well, he made 'em all . . . they couldn't come up town, I mean, come past Third Avenue without calling in and getting permission. (Really?) Yeah. He didn't want them women all over town soliciting.

What would he do if he would catch one out of the district?

I don't know. I don't think he ever caught one. They'd call up, get permission to come up to say, one of the stores, you know, to buy clothes or shoes or something. They'd get permission.

So did he, Sam Davis knew what was going on in the city all the time?

Oh, yeah, he had it all under control.

Okay. He was chief for like, how many years do you say?

Mmmh, let's see. I think he was out once about four years, and then he was back in. I think he . . . he was up to about 1919. [inaudible] way down there. I think when that spoil system he might have been out once as a policeman. He started in as a policeman. You know.

[inaudible-tape slowing down] Wasn't he [inaudible] first ward, second ward, third ward? (Yeah) And the first occurrence of his name in the records he was assigned in one of the wards?

Yeah. I'll tell you what it was now. When, along about that time [inaudible] First Street to Guyandotte was Huntington. And uh, then Guyandotte was separate. Then First Street was called Central City.

Below First Street?

Below First Street, down to uh, the bridge, Four Pole bridge, you know where Four Pole bridge is, down there at Wayne County.

Oh, yes.

That was called Central City. It's first name was St. Cloud.

Right. St. Cloud was the fire station, then. . . .

Fire station, and St. Cloud's Commons was named after it, too.

So. . .

Then when Guyandotte went [inaudible-tape slowing down] Now this is the Fourth Ward in Huntington. You're sitting right in the middle of the Fourth Ward. And above here is the Fifth Ward and Sixth Ward and all of them.

I read some old newspaper clippings [inaudible] Third Ward was always the most active, had the most [inaudible], but always had more drinking, a lot more. . .

[inaudible] Oh, yeah, the Third Ward come up to 10th Street, and that's where all those saloons were over there.

You say that was them most active?

Oh, the courthouse, where the courthouse was.

Oh, that was the Third Ward?

That was the Third Ward. That's where the businesses was. [inaudible] and everything else down there. Them politicians would shoot each other.

The politicians would shoot each other?

Yeah [chuckling] shooting each other, yeah.

How did Chief Davis react to this? Did he hate to see election times come, or did he just . . . ?

No, that was [inaudible] that was a lot of excitement. He liked that.

[inaudible] politicians shot at each other, if someone happened to be in the wrong or someone in the right, how would Sam Davis handle it? I mean, would he arrest the politician?

Yeah, he'd have to arrest somebody. [chuckling]

[inaudible-tape slowing down]

No, he'd make sure [inaudible]. . . I don't know what he'd do.

The wrong guy was arrested?

*No, he'd make sure the right guy was arrested. I don't know what he'd do. [inaudible]
He was good.*

Would you say he would always try to make sure justice was served?

He wanted to be right. That was it.

Wanted to be right?

Mmm-hmm.

Would you call him a man with a lot of principles or . . . ?

*Yeah. He was pretty good. There wasn't nothing dirty about him. But I didn't know.
He kept a pretty good secret.*

Did he go. . .was he a regular church goer?

[inaudible] I think he went to church once. . . at one time. [chuckling]

[inaudible] Chief Wiley was in. . .

*Yeah, Chief Wiley. He was chief of police once, yeah. But now when he was chief of
police, it was one of those times that it was the spoil system and he threwed 'em all out.*

[inaudible-tape slowing down-cannot understand]

[inaudible] southwest corner of 6th Street.

The policeman of the First Ward, Sam Davis was appointed [inaudible]?

Yeah.

**And then Second Ward, where would that have been? The First Ward. . .this was
Third Ward.**

Well, the First Ward was below 10th Street.

Below 10th Street.

Was he in the First Ward? Sam Davis?

Yes, the First Ward.

That was the rough ward, see.

He was appointed the rough ward?

Yeah. [inaudible]

He had been appointed earlier. I don't know which ward he had.

Well, anyhow, [inaudible] down there everybody was carrying guns but Sam, and he was a policeman. [chuckling] [inaudible] an old gun with one bullet in it and stuck upside down in his pocket. He was [inaudible] Just like you'd take a pencil and stick it upside down in your pocket.

So he was assigned to the roughest ward, then?

Oh, yeah. [inaudible] courthouse was, you know, down to Third Street.

[inaudible] Hill, were they rough characters?

Oh, Mr. Hill, he was real old when I remember him. He was a policeman, too. And uh, he had a son was a lieutenant later. [inaudible] He was, before the picture was taken, [inaudible]

[remainder of tape bad--will not play (side 1)]

[side 2 bad also-unable to transcribe]

Oct. 31, 1983 interview

Continuation of taped interview with George Fredrick "Peck" Moran, October 15th, 1983. Tape 3 of 3.

This [inaudible] had lived where?

They lived between 13th and 14th, between 3rd.

Between 13th and 14th-, is the house still standing, do you know?

No, the Burger Chef's sitting there now.

Oh, they tore it. . . (Tore it down). . .they didn't build over it, they just tore it down?

They tore it all out. It's the Burger Chef that sits there. There's Rufus Switzer [referring to photograph].

There's a building on 5th Avenue, next to the employment and City Hall, between them. It says Switzer on the building. Is it named for him?

It might have been, yeah.

Big gold lettering that says "Switzer".

Ah, could have been. Might have been named after Rufus. Here's Floyd Chapman, he was mayor. He was mayor a couple of times, wasn't he?

[inaudible] in other papers. Well, it's not in this. But I looked in my notes, I know I have mayors through 1930s. And he was mayor twice I guess.

He was mayor two or three times, I think. I know he was mayor twice.

That must be in my notes somewhere. But this, I noticed when J.W. Ensign became Mayor . . .

Yeah, he changed, he had...

. . . as . . . John J. Dawson as chief of police. But then he appointed J.M. Ross as chief during that same tenure as mayor.

He probably did.

But did you know anything about that? Because he had Lieutenant Hud Vernatte, Chief Dawson as lieutenant.

Yeah, I remember Hud.

He replaced Dawson with J.M. Ross, and also replaced the lieutenant with L.P. Carter. Do you know who L.P. Carter was?

Yeah, Lindon Carter. (Who?) Lindon Carter. He was on the police force a long time.

Do you know why he replaced the chief and the lieutenant?

Huh-uhn. I wasn't up on the inside on that.

Mmh. Lindon Carter. I noticed when the chief, Benjamin Robinson became chief for that year or so. . . .

Uh-huh. And Sam Davis followed him, didn't he?

Right, he became lieutenant. Mmh.

[inaudible] . . . Floyd Chapman. Then they went into the commission form of government. That was a good way to run a city. You know how it's set up, don't you? The commission. . .

Oh, the bi-partisan

Yeah, two democrats and two republicans and the one that gets the most votes is automatically the mayor.

Is that relieve any of the heat? (Yeah) Well, I noticed

I've seen Huntington prosper more when they had the commission form of government than they did any time.

Well ,I noticed that right after . . .

Well, they had the commission form of government when they built the City Hall down here, the one that's down here now. (I didn't know that) Yeah. On the corner, yeah. It was Chapman, a fellow named Floyd Chapman, Tim Scanlon, Lester Pauley and Herb Wells.

Who was mayor at that time? Do you know? When it was first commissioned to be built.

I believe Chapman was.

Chapman. Mmh. Scanlon, was he the same T.S. Scanlon who had been secretary-, I mean, treasurer and stuff like that?

Yeah, Tim Scanlon, yeah, he was an oil man. Lived out on Fifth Avenue. About sixty.

Well, he was around before.

Oh, yeah, he was an old timer.

You must have known Eli Ensign and

He knew all them old men, yeah. He smoked a corn-cob pipe.

Did he, do you happen to know if he knew Collis P. Huntington personally or. . . ?

Oh, I don't know if he knew Collis P. Huntington or not.

Ever noticed when Mayor Ensign resigned his term just a few months before election time? The council records showed he gave his reason for moving, his reason for resigning was moving west for several months.

Who was that?

John Ensign. Do you know anything about-, and account of when [inaudible] died, resigned at the same time. Do you know anything about that, why he resigned?

Now Emmons is, you know this old Emmons-Hawkins Hardware Store over here? (Oh, yeah) He owned that.

This is Emerson, E. Emerson. Was there any connection?

I think it was Emmons, wasn't it?

The council records showed E. Emerson, E. Emerson.

I know I don't know him. I know Emmons.

You ever heard anyone, you know anything about why the mayor and councilman Emerson resigned (Uh-huh) and why a year later the commission form came in?

I don't know. I don't know about that.

Because J.B. Stevenson was elected to fill out the rest of his term. And J.B. Stevenson apparently was the one who instigated or implemented the commission?

Yeah, they got that in some way, commission form of government. It was good.

Was J.B. Stevenson, was he an active-, was he a strong leader?

No, he was a pretty good mayor, pretty good man. [inaudible] Stevenson. Now uh, let's see, you're gonna get some place there where his partner, uh, old man Sehon, Sehon, he was mayor of Huntington, too, somewhere around 1916, some place along in there.

Do you know what party J. B. Stevenson was? (Mmm-huh) Ensign was democrat, I found out. But you don't know what Stevenson was?

I believe-, I don't know what Stevenson was. I think [inaudible] was a democrat.

Chapman, do you know what. . . ?

He was Republican.

Republican. So Switzer was voted out by Chapman, Democrats were voted out by Republicans? (Yeah) I noticed when they changed administrations, Robinson and Switzer, when Chapman and the Republicans came in, Sam Davis became chief. Whatever happened to [inaudible] Robinson, do you know?

No. He uh, he was, I think he was kind of a building contractor was his business.

Building contractor? Was he an engineer or just a contractor?

I think he was a contractor.

Did he have a local firm, do you know?

Yeah, I think he took on building-, building buildings, you know, and stuff like that.

Do you happen to know any of the buildings he built?

Uh-huh, I don't know anything about that.

I've heard there was an old time architect, a James Stewart. Do you know anything about him? Was he. . . ?

Heard my mother speak of him.

He apparently worked with a Sidney L. Day and a Dave [inaudible]

Yeah, Sidney Day and . . . Sidney Day and I believe Sidney, Jr. They lived down on-, Dave's got a house down on uh--I believe they're all dead now--on Jefferson Avenue, right believe 5th Street west. I knew that young Day.

Who usually built the buildings that were built around in there? The building boom of Huntington? Who usually. . . just a few families build buildings, or a corporation?

Oh, I think they hired contractors, maybe from out of town. That City Hall was built by some company from North Carolina. (North Carolina?) Uh-huh.

What. . . do you know why they did not decide not to choose a local firm?

I think maybe they got a better bid. They put all that stuff out on bid, you know.

Oh. Less expensive?

Uh-huh. They still do that.

In the early days would you say the city administration, they always tried to cut budgets? Were they always economical?

I'd say they did. I imagine that all went on all the time. They've got to save money. Cut the price.

There was no, in the early days, extravagant spending? Always economical with their money.

Mmm-hmm, not like it is now. Now people get into politics now you know to help theirselves. [laughing]

It wasn't like that then?

It didn't seem like that then. It seemed like to be the city fathers were all uh, the first bunch of commissioners I remember was real reliable business men that was already established, see. They didn't, their object was to run the city right.

And they were part of the people who actually built the city.

Oh, yeah.

So did they have a goal in mind when they bought the city? Or. . . ?

Well, I imagine they did.

The leadership, did they have a goal?

[inaudible] Oh, yeah, under that commission form of government. They paved all that south side out there.

Asphalt or brick?

They paved the streets up through 11th and 12th, 10th and 11th Avenue.

You mean paved in asphalt?

No, bricks. Paved with bricks. They never heard of asphalt then, I don't think. They just covered the brick with asphalt.

Who paved . . . did they have a special department? *[inaudible]* or hire special contractors?

Well, they uh, there used to be several street builders. I remember a fellow by the name of Amos Trainor, he laid a lot of bricks, you know, his company. They done brick paving all over the town here. And then there was another company called W.O. James--he was a colored fellow. He done a lot of concrete work. I think he was on city council one time way back there.

James? (*Mmm-hmm*) He had a local company then?

*Mmm-hmm. I still see the, some of the, some place. . . where did I see. . . the concrete he'd put down, the street. Yeah, it had a star like-, a star like this, you know. Like a trowel, what you fix mortar with? (**Oh, yeah**) It had W.O. James on it.*

Did he work with his men?

*Oh, yeah. Some of his relations are still doing concrete work around here. Colored fellows. Let's see, the *[inaudible names]* they all do concrete work.*

And to get these building contracts, the street paving contracts. . . .

It was bids, too, I think.

. . . .you had to bid.

*Mmm-hmm. Well, they were put out on a *[inaudible]*.*

Uh, as far as, if they got bids to build, did they have to be bonded? Or just kind of do the job and. . . .

I don't, I didn't know much about that, the mechanics of it or what happened.

That's kind of interesting to think of apparently Did they work around the clock to pave streets or do you know? Were they ordered to complete it in a certain time by city council or anything? When they finished or. . .

No, I think they just took it by the avenue and paved it.

Each avenue was contracted out by a builder?

I think. Or street or something, you know.

Do you know. . . did they do this because that's how much money they had on hand or did they raise bonds or did they . . . how did. . .

I imagine they raised bonds. Mmm-hmm.

Did you ever hear your mom or anyone, Sam Davis ever hear 'em talking about how they financed the city? I mean, to build streets and build buildings?

I just know they were building them. [chuckles]

When you were growing up, was it, did it seem like a lot of building always going on?

Mmm-hmm. Yes, it was something going on all the time. Up til about 1930.

Oh, wait a minute. After the stock market fell?

Mmm-hmm, it began to fall a little bit.

What do you mean fall? It didn't drastically stop all at once? It kept on building even into the Depression?

Mmm-hmm. Yeah, building houses, you know, and things like that. Let's see, I don't know of any big buildings that was put up after that. Except right recently, you know, like the Civic Center and all that. What grade you in at Marshall, what year?

Uh, graduate student. You said your mother graduated?

Yeah. I believe it was maybe one year or two year course. She told me they took English and spelling and like I guess it was just like a junior high or something like that. And the school was called Marshall Academy.

And that's the same one that's Marshall University today?

Yeah, she went to Old Main.

Do you know roughly what time period this was?

Mmmh, way back in the 80s.

1880s?

Oh, yeah.

Uh. Well, did they have a, was it a degree type program?

I don't think they did. I think when I went over there they called it a state normal or something. It was. . . it was a teachers college when I went there.

State normal school?

Yeah, it was a state normal. It came along about 1923, '24 they started called it a college. As I remember right.

The local media around Huntington, the future mayors and councilmen and all this, if they went for higher education, did they usually go to Marshall or elsewhere or. . . ?

Oh, yeah. Unless they had their education and moved to Huntington or something like that.

Well, did that happen often?

I don't know. [chuckling]

You said all the police officers they were local men, huh?

Oh, yeah, they had to be. They were all right here in town.

Did they, most of them have grade school education, high school education or ...?

I think eighth grade. Yeah, used to be when you had eighth grade man, you was, you was right among 'em.

And how many of the police officers had an eighth grade education?

I think all of 'em had eighth grade.

You know was that a requirement or did Chief Davis want it to be that way?

I think, I don't know whether it was a requirement or not. They were all pretty intelligent men.

What about before Sam Davis became chief?

Oh, I don't remember that.

Or after he retired, did they have the same criteria?

I think now they have to have high school.

When the civil service came in in 1909, whatever, did they. . .do you recall was there a lot of reaction generally by this or. . . ?

Uh-huh. No, seemed like all the policeman and fireman were happy about it. They knew their job was good as long as they behaved and done their duty.

Mmmh. So everyone was glad to see city civil service come in?

Mmm-hmm.

Was it a pretty good program or? Why was it replaced by state civil service in the 1930s?

Mmh, I don't know.

Just more money or bigger funding?

No, about the same thing. Uh, the state civil service, yeah, they put that in with-, did the state civil service come in about that time?

1934 or '37.

Oh, yeah, well, that took care of all these hospital workers and all these people that worked out of these hospitals. But then, didn't they have a six months trial period?

I don't know. They. . . .

[inaudible]

What, the city civil service had a trial period?

Yeah. For all state civil service. For government civil service you had six months trial period.

And if they didn't measure up

They worked six months, and if they didn't measure up, they'd let 'em go.

Did Chief Davis ever let anyone go?

I don't think he had that. I don't remember him ever letting anyone go. Oh, he let some guys that he couldn't straighten out, he let them go.

Did he ever have any problems other than a few officers had drinking problems. But were there any other type of thing?

I don't think so. I never heard of it. They never let it out over there. You wouldn't read about-, stuff like that never got in the paper. When he told a reporter not to report anything, they didn't report it.

Did he get interviews by reporters very much?

Oh, one used to hang around police headquarters all the time. They was always one over there.

A regular reporter? (Yeah) Do you happen to recall which uh, publishing outfit it was?

They had the Herald Dispatch and the Huntington Advertiser were two different papers.

Did they each have a reporter there?

Yeah, they had reporters there. They'd come down. They had a police court reporter.

How did the police officers and Sam Davis, how'd they react to having?

They didn't mind. He come down there, this police court reporter. I know they . . . he'd come down there and they'd let him look at the books who got in jail and everything. He didn't mind. [chuckling] And I know one time, one time there was a little argument down there one time. I think one of the, one of the. . . somebody down there had a

story and held out on somebody. And he give it to another reporter. He called it a scoop. There was real trouble about that. They was complaining, the papers were, about it. But that's about all. You know what a scoop is, don't you?

Yeah. Sam Davis caught a lot of fire from that?

No, he, he straightened it out, I guess.

He was pretty good at straightening out messes or. . . ?

Yeah. He was real good!

You say he was really intelligent or very intelligent?

Oh, very intelligent. He was smart. Good artist--he could draw. He could draw pictures, every piece of charcoal and make a charcoal painting and anything like that. Make good letters, too. He made pretty letters.

And he was chief of police. He was really artisitically talented?

Yeah, he was a talented man, yeah.

And also he was rough and tumble. And also he was cagey and also he was real intelligent.

He was all around-, he had it. [chuckling]

He was a very versitle man?

Oh, yeah. I'd say he was.

He must have been-, to have survived the political upheavels and the politicing, was he. . . .

Oh, yeah, he was a pretty good politician, too. I imagine he was. He stayed in there a long time, didn't he?

An adjective . . . like what type of politician would you call him? Cagey, smooth, intelligent. . . how would you. . . categorize him?

Oh, I'd say shrewd. (Shrewd?) Uh-huh.

He had to have been to have survived so long.

Yeah, he was good.

You said he passed away at uh. . .

About 1938. About 1937, I think. Along about the time we had that big flood he died. I was a pallbearer at his funeral.

Mmh. Oh. [tape off/on] You said this picture was made on a what now?

On a camera, but they called it a panorama. It's was a sweep camera. You set it right here and it just moves right around. Make a picture about 3 foot wide.

What kind of paper is this on, do you know?

Uh, some kind of Kodak paper. (Kodak?) Uh-huh. They made a negative, you know, then took a, [inaudible] it in. You've had photography, haven't you? You ever take any photography?

Not that type.

Yeah. You can. . . that's what I taught at East, is printing and photography.

Well, this one, did they take it with a flash?

No, that was out in the street. This one. No, it was down there in the street in the afternoon in front of that carnival, where the carnival was. And they uh, I don't. . . he just set his camera up like this and pointed it at the one man and turned it loose. And it just went right around and took the whole picture. It's called a panorama.

Do you have any idea when that process was in existence, how long it ran?

It might be in existence now, if it'd take a wide sweep. I don't know. I haven't seen it for a long time.

Well, this photograph was 1915. Was it a well-established print school then or. . . do you know?

I imagine it was, yeah.

Huh. [tape recorder off/on]

Anyhow, when I was a baby, I'd go to sleep, next door, they lived next door, I'd go to sleep at home and wake up the next morning in between him and his wife. They'd

come over and get me.

Huh. He was really fond of you then wasn't he?

Oh, yeah, he was a good friend of mine.

Did he like your brothers and sisters?

Oh, he liked all of them, but he liked me the best because I was the baby. I was-, seven boys of us, seven sons.

You're the seventh son?

I'm the seventh son of the seventh daughter, straight in line.

Really?

Yeah, my mother had two sisters younger than her. There was nine girls in the family. And she had seven boys.

And Sam Davis used to like to carry you around all the time or . . . ?

Oh, yeah, he used to carry me around all the time. I don't know why. [tape off/on]

Chief Davis was

He was chief then, when they put that law in. I don't know what they really put in.

The law was called the

Johnson Pistol Toting Law.

That was a state law?

State law. And six months in jail if they caught you with a pistol.

Did they give you any first chance or second chance?

No, I don't guess they did.

If they caught you with a pistol. . . .

If they caught you with a pistol just uh, six months in jail.

Was that any type of pistol?

Yeah, any firearms.

Even rifles?

I don't know about. . . it said pistols. Now I imagine if they'd catch a guy going hunting with a shotgun they wouldn't do nothing to him.

And that was across the entire state.

Mmm-hmm, it was passed by the legislature.

Is that the. . . do you think that same law still carries on the books?

I imagine it does, I don't know. I don't hear nothing about it. [inaudible] doing that six months.

Before this law came into effect, though, did everyone, did they carry a pistol?

Yeah, a lot of people carried pistols. I guess they did.

You say a lot, a great deal or just a lot of people or. . . ?

I imagine a lot of people carry 'em because they. . . maybe to protect theirself. "If this guy's got a pistol, I'm going to carry one, too."

Mmmh. Well, that'd make it kind of rough for the police officer, wouldn't it? I mean, if everyone was trying to protect themselves, putting them between a rock and a hard place.

Oh, yeah. See, they always Big Sandy lumber jacks and Guyan River lumber jacks, and all them guys carried-, all carried pistols, I imagine.

And Sam Davis could take these men on, right? Did he take 'em . . .

Yeah, he could arrest them. I don't think he arrested too many though. When that law went in they, they didn't want to do the six months. They got out of there.

Mmh.

END OF INTERVIEWS