

Transcript of Interview with Mr. James (Jim) E. Payne Proffit, Virginia

Date: November 25, 2000
Interviewer: Mieka Brand

JP: We had six children one time, and we don't have but three of our own. We had four boys and two girls.

MB: Together.

JP: Yeah, we kept them. All day. Like a home for the children. They could a come here from being in some foster home somewhere else, and had to be transferred, and come here and stay until they'd be replaced. But he [John Howard Jackson] came here at eight years old and stayed till he got 24.

MB: Wow! In this house?

JP: No, not this house... But we kept him and his sister. This house is about 40 years old. Our old one burned down. I let him have about 2 acres of land and he built a house up there. He and his sister were still here, but his sister passed away last year. But he's the only one that stayed close to me.

MB: Who stuck around...

JP: Yeah, he stayed over here till he got forty.

JP: But, um. some of them just stay six months or a year till they'd be replaced. But one time we carried as many as six different children. Four boys and two girls. All of them. And we got three of our own children.

MB: How did you get involved in that?

JP: My wife's doing. See, she works in a... She was a clerk at post office one time before that. Then she went in [to be a] Practical nurse. That's how she got the contacts.

MB: Oh, I see. Well, that's real nice.

JP: Yeah, we kept a lot of children.

MB: They're all running around in the house together?

JP: Yeah!

MB: With your own kids...

JP: I *told* you we had four boys and two girls at one time.

MB: All at the same time?

JP: Yeah!

MB: No *kidding*. And your three kids.

JP: The girls sleep upstairs, boys downstairs. ...

MB: But it wasn't at this house?

JP: No, indeed. This house [was] just built 40 years ago. It was a house almost this size... The living room was the same size...

MB: Where was it?

JP: In the same place.

MB: Oh, you just tore it down?

JP: Our house burn down.

MB: When was that?

JP: [thinks about it] I guess most of them *were* around in this house. Yeah, 'cause we got a full basement. Because we had some of them in the basement... It *was* in this house, where the children was.

MB: Yeah.

JP: This house is just about 30... *almost* 40 years old.

MB: Huh. And the house before that burned down?

JP: Lord, yeah. We was... my wife had been shopping for the children... And the other house didn't have no basement. But we had dug out and had a furnace under... it was a coal furnace. [pause] She had bought the stuff for Christmas, and I was mopping the floor, about three days before Christmas eve. And I told the children to go to bed – we all went to bed. And the time we went to bed I heard some crackle in the wall.

MB: Right.

JP: Just some scratching on the wall...

MB: Right

JP: And that was the fire burning down, but I didn't know. It was snow on the ground, about three-four inches deep, the wind blowing... that whole house burned down in about 45-50 minutes. Burned everything we had. That was a while ago I made a (?) if those, (?) ever work. She like went crazy.

MB: Wow.

JP: She took it so hard—we didn't have nothing left.

MB: What did you do?

JP: Stayed over next door with my cousin over on the hill until we built that little bungalow right back there. [Points at a one-room deep, long cinder-block structure next door]. See that bungalow over there?

MB: Oh, that's what you built?

JP: Yeah, we built that and stayed there until we built this house.

MB: Wow.

JP: We had a lot of people to help: a lot of friends.

MB: Did anyone get hurt?

JP: No, u-uh. I got them out! I woke, I walked out of here... I don't sleep that hard. I could hear something crackle in the wall... And it sound like a mouse or a rat eating, but it was fire burning the inside. By the time that the wind hit it—45 minutes and that house... I guess it had about five or six rooms burn up in about 45 minutes with nothing left. Well, we stayed next door and built our little house over there.

MB: It was a wood house?

JP: Yeah.

MB: I see you built a *brick* one instead.

JP: Yeah. But I got a lot of help. Thank God I had a lot of friends.

MB: Yeah! Who helped?

JP: I couldn't afford to build it now.

MB: Oh, people actually came in and helped build it!

JP: Lord, yes. Some of them didn't charge nothing—brick layers.

MB: No kidding.

JP: See, I knew everybody back in then. Four-five of the guys who came to the barbershop were brick-layers.

MB: So it was people living in Charlottesville.

JP: Yeah, some of ‘em didn’t charge me nothing! Had two jobs, and can take no money. They were real good to us.

MB: Wow.

JP: By me being a public... I knew probably everybody, see.

MB: Sure. You were cutting everybody’s hair.

JP: It paid off!

MB: Yeah!

JP: Yeah, it paid off. I told somebody the other day: I believe I know more people dead than I do living. I’ve been born that long!

MB: Yeah, I guess eventually that...

JP: I’m the oldest member of my church!

MB: Are you?

JP: Oldest member and the oldest deacon!

MB: Oh, how old are you?

JP: 87.

MB: You’re 87?? [gasp] Oh, wow.

JP: I been a deacon 30 years, honey!

MB: Have you?

JP: Been a deacon *thirty* years!

MB: My goodness.

JP: The guy told me, ‘why—why you sitting there in the corner when the guy who was serving communion?’ I say, ‘man, I’ve been in this corner long enough to sit down! I can’t stand up that long, cause sometime I (give a prayer before I) sit down when this muscle just pain in my leg like that. Stand up too long... Or sit down too long!

MB: Huh. You were born in Proffit?

JP: Yeah. [Pause] Born right here, right on this hill.

MB: On this hill?!

JP: Not this house, though.

MB: Where was it?

JP: Old house burned down. [Pause] 1913.

MB: That’s when you were born?

JP: June the 13, 1913. I don’t know what day it was, a Wednesday or Friday. I think was it on Friday, though. But I know it was the 13th. [I did check and—sure enough—it was a Friday.]

MB: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

JP: All dead, honey. I had two sisters and one brother. I was the oldest child, older than everybody.

MB: Did they stay in Proffit?

JP: My brother did but my sisters didn’t. My sisters stayed in Charlottesville mostly with their mother. My grandfather raised me mostly. I stayed here: my brother and I. My brother died in ‘45. But him and I stayed here. My sister stayed with mama in Charlottesville most of the time.

MB: You’re sister stayed where?

JP: With mama.

MB: In Charlottesville.

JP: Yeah. They did that.

MB: So your mom was living in Charlottesville?

JP: Yeah, she was living in town. I stayed out here with grandma. She [mother] used to come out here on weekends.

MB: Did you get a lot of stories from your grandmother?

JP: No, mama don't talk much. I hear a lot of people who come to *see* her. *They* used to talk a lot. Talk about *ghost* story and crazy stuff like that.

MB: Oh, really?

JP: I was scared and go in the other room.

MB: [chuckle] That's when you were a kid.

JP: Yeah.

MB: Do you remember any of those stories?

JP: [Pause] I can tell you, let me see here... [Pause]. Did I tell you about what was in Proffit? I told you about that, though.

MB: No.

JP: I didn't tell you about the stores and things in Proffit?

MB: About the store...?

JP: How many *stores* we had.

MB: I don't think so. You mean last time?

JP: I was just wondering. I don't know what... You have to tell me what I told you before.

MB: Well... I don't mind if you tell me again. [laugh]

JP: Well. Ms. Lydia Leake lived in this big house on the left, across the road.... Of course, it had changed hands a lot of times, now.

MB: Yeah.

JP: Some professor live there now, Loewenstein.

MB: Yeah, Jared.

JP: But he bought that. Cause that was Ms. Leake's house. That was about a eight or ten room... it was a big old house. And that was one of the first houses in Proffit. It had carbide lights.

MB: carbon?

JP: Carbide lights. It's a fine material, looks like coal ground up. They used it in the mine down here.

MB: Huh.

JP: You know about the mine, I told you about the mine.

MB: The sulphur¹ mine, Yeah.

JP: Well, that, that's where they got the idea for the lights. Well, Ms. Leake's house, her mother ran a store right just on the left side before you get to the bridge. That was A.W. Cox' store. That was Ms. Leake's mother. Ms. Cox was Lydia Leake's mother. Now, then down on the railroad on this side was C.D. Lewis store.

MB: That's on Proffit Station Road...

JP: That's right.

JP: C. D. Lewis General Merchandise. There was a railroad station there, too. With two rooms—one for passengers, one room for baggage, and a Western Union telegram.

MB: Huh!

JP: That was in the '20s.

MB: That's when the...

JP: Western Union.

MB: That's when the station started? In the '20s?

¹ Although the standard spelling is 'sulfur', I use the spelling that seems to be prevalent in Proffit – Sulphur.

JP: No, it was in operation then. We used to have 5 train stop here a day. 17 cents gonna get you to Charlottesville. Could ride fare 17 cents.

MB: 17 cents. Each way.

JP: That's right. 5 trains a day.

MB: That's nice.

JP: It had double tracks, they take off one of the tracks now. But we had double tracks then.

MB: Oh, its only single now.

JP: Only one track.

MB: Yeah.

JP: Yeah...

MB: Oh, it used to be double.

JP: That was the Maine-Southern!

MB: Yeah.

JP: Maine to Florida. "Southern Serves the South." That's what it was back in *them* days. Maine to Florida.

MB: Did you ever go down to Florida?

JP: No, u-uh.

MB: You ever go up to Maine?

JP: Yeah, I've been, I've been there. See but I never rode no train. I *drove* up there.

MB: Oh, you drove up there.

JP: Yeah, I drove the...

MB: That's right. You were the one with the car!

JP: Yeah, yeah...

MB: You like to drive a lot?

JP: Back then, I wouldn't now. I had drove to Georgia twice—my son went to went to service down there. That's 500 miles to Macon, Georgia.

MB: Megan?

JP: May-con, Georgia.

MB: Oh Macon, Georgia.

JP: Macon, Georgia is about 75-90 miles below Atlanta. My granddaughter lives in Atlanta. [points at one of four pictures standing over the television] That's my granddaughter.

MB: Oh the one in the picture.

JP: My granddaughter, her husband and my *great grandchildren!*

MB: ...all live in Georgia.

JP: in Atlanta, Georgia.

MB: That's your *great-grandchild?!!*

JP: Great... I have *two* great grandchildren.

MB: Wow!

JP: Both pictures are of the same person. But he got a sister now. So I got two *great grandchildren*, and two *grandchildren*.

MB: So what's the connection with Georgia?

JP: What is *she* doing?

MB: Yeah, why did she go down to Georgia?

JP: Oh, she went to school in, uh, at Hampton. Her and her husband both finished at Hampton. I don't know what they do. I think she works in a hospital or something down there. I don't

know what, I thought one of them was... I don't know, I forgot, I can't tell you 'cause I can't call it. Whatever she majored in at Hampton, I forgot what it was.

MB: Huh.

JP: But her and her husband both finished Hampton.

MB: That's your granddaughter.

JP: Yeah.

MB: So you had... two daughters... no, you had two sisters and one brother, but you said you had...

JP: Two sisters and a brother, yeah.

MB: And you had three children of your own?

JP: Yeah.

MB: Boys or girls?

JP: My girl?

MB: You had a daughter?

JP: My daughter teaches at Burley Middle School. She's been there 30 years. She majored in music, but now she's assistant principal.

MB: Oh!

JP: But she went to school in, Charlotte—Jesse Smith.

MB: OK.

JP: Charlotte, North Carolina.

MB: Jesse Smith?

JP: Yeah, Jesse Smith. It's a university now.

MB: It used to be a college?

JP: Yeah, that's in Charlotte. Charlotte, North Carolina.. And the boys went to A&T Greensboro.

MB: What does A&T stand for?

JP: I don't know... A&T. That's the sign in Charlotte, I know that.

MB: So you had two sons.

JP: Yeah. James and Ronald.

MB: James... oh, I think... no, I met your son *in law*.

JP: oh, Eddie.

MB: what's his name?

JP: Eddie Howard

MB: Eddie, yeah.

JP: That's my daughter's husband.

MB: Right. So, James and Donald are your sons...

JP: No, Ronnie.

MB: Oh, sorry, Ronnie.

JP: Yes.

MB: And your daughter?

JP: My daughter's named Marcha.

MB: Marcha. And she's married to Eddie.

...

MB: Let's see. So do you remember any ghost stories – your grandma's friends used to tell you...?

JP: I can see if I can tell, think of one that my grandma used to tell all the time. Of course she said it was somebody, some old guy used to play a banjo. And said, "the old man died" and about

two days after burying him, you could hear the banjo playing the old song [laughs]. I couldn't buy that.

MB: You didn't buy it...?

JP: No, I didn't buy it. They had me scared to death. I was scared of going out... we didn't have but oil lamps then, you know. I was scared going in our room, (just don't?) tell that ghost story and all that stuff.

MB: sure.

JP: Yeah, they could *tell* some ghost stories.

MB: They used to tell ghost stories when I was a kid, too.

JP: My mama—my grandmother they warned her. You know where Earlysville is? By the airport?

MB: yeah.

JP: We'd walked from here up to Earlysville. There's a place up there called Sandy Bottom. At that time it was all, all dirt roads and all.

MB: What's it called?

JP: Sandy Bottom. There was a ghost in part of the road. There was a vacancy in there. No houses or nothing lived down there. They called it Sandy Bottom. So my grandma said, they heard a horse coming, somebody riding horseback. And she said 'get out of the way, there's a horse coming.' But they looked and they ain't see no horse... said some hot air went by them... [laughs] They tell all that old crazy stuff, I don't believe it *now*, though. That somebody riding by without a horse. They could hear him, but didn't see him.

MB: Were they just saying it to scare you, or you think they believe it?

JP: They were telling it like... They tell it like it was so! But I don't believe that any more now. Ain't nobody tell no ghost tale now. All that stuff you can't even see... They have a place in the university. There're people trying to live, and couldn't nobody live in the house there – the *chair* move around, and the *table* walk... people trying to live in there... I don't buy all that stuff... But I'll tell you what happened to me, though. I didn't want to believe in no ghost, but in 1934 [Pause] I was at CC Camp.

MB: What's that?

JP: Civilian Conservation Core... that President Roosevelt opened for poor people.

MB: Oh!

JP: It was a dollar day... Something like the army, it was run by the army, and we get 30 dollars a month. 25 come home, you get five. Which is under army supervision. We had 240 guys in camp. It was supervised by the army. Had the flag, everything! Drill... what it did was build parks, and build roads, driveways, sell trees... sell *shrubbery*, sell out a lot of trees. Of course I worked dynamite when I was in there. But anyway, we was living in a place... we was in camp Gallion in Green Bay, Virginia.

MB: A-ha.

JP: Camp Gallion in Green Bay, Virginia. 1390. 1390 was the number of the camp.

MB: Wow. You remember all that.

JP: Green Bay, Virginia. That's 18 miles south of Farmville. But we were on a side camp at the time I was talking about in Drake's Branch, Virginia. Its way down in Mecklenberg, almost in North Carolina. That's when I was staying in a old house with two stories. And we lived there right by (a whole lot of mountains?). And somebody closed the door downstairs—It's a screen door—and I never heard nobody come in here. I tell you about ghosts. That's one time I started believing in ghosts! And then, that's when that door (clamored?). I never seen

nobody coming in the house! Never heard him come up the steps. People hear a lot of stuff. You're scared because you didn't know, you had to believe *something*!

MB: Yeah.

JP: until they (talk about?) all that time.

MB: So what were you doing at the CC Camp?

JP: (Selling?) shrubbery, like a forest. Putting out forest fires, increase the forest, clear up and build the driveways...

MB: Hmm.

JP: What I did, I worked with dynamite. Blowing up trees, built private roads.

MB: So how many years were you...

JP: In camp? 13 months.

MB: Oh, 13 months.

JP: Just 13 months, yeah. You couldn't stay but 15 months. After Hoover [1929-1933] They got started by that president. They got a democratic president Roosevelt [FDR 1933-1934].

MB: Yeah.

JP: He got a job for everybody, that what it was.

MB: Oh. So, you said you'd get 30 dollars a month –

JP: Yeah.

MB: And they would keep 5?

JP: They'd give *you* five.

MB: They give *you* five??

JP: And 25 come home! That was in order to help people who didn't have jobs.

MB: You mean they sent it to your family?

JP: Yeah!

MB: Oh! So that way they made sure you didn't spend it all...

JP: I didn't get but five. And twenty five came home.

MB: So who did it get sent to – were you married by then?

JP: No, indeed! u-uh. I went to CC Camp in 1933, honey!

MB: 1933.

JP: I was a young man, then.

MB: Oh yeah! You were... 20.

JP: Something like that. I got married in '41. I can tell you when I got married – September. I was married in 1941 in September. And my wife died in '86.

MB: What was her name?

JP: Catherine. We were married 45 years.

MB: Wow. That's nice.

JP: A-ha.

MB: Was she from Proffit?

JP: No. She lived up at where that big dam was. You know where that big water dam is?

MB: Uh... Hydraulic Reservoir?

JP: No, that's the second one.

MB: A big dam...

JP: We got three.

MB: Uh...

JP: Sugar Hollow, honey.

MB: Oh, Sugar Hollow..?

JP: That's what it is.

MB: Is that next to Crozet?

JP: No. Sugar Hollow is north-west of Crozet, probably six miles. Sugar Hollow's out by White Hall.

MB: oh, by White Hall...

JP: A-ha. That's where my wife's from—White Hall.

MB: How'd you meet her?

JP: At a school dance. 1936.

MB: School dance.

JP: At a dance. A junior/senior prom dance.

MB: A-ha.

JP: I was invited to the dance. That's how I met her.

MB: Which school? UVa?

JP: No, indeed, Lord... Albemarle Training School. That's torn down now.

MB: Oh! Albemarle Training School.

JP: Yeah, used to be on the other side of the road.

MB: Yeah. On Rio Road, right?

JP: That's right.

MB: Yeah.

JP: That's where she was going to school.

MB: So she went with Ms. Tinsley and Ms. Martin.

JP: Huh?

MB: She knew Ms. Tinsley and Ms. Martin

JP: Oh, yeah yeah! She worked with Mary [Tinsley]! I told you mama worked on South 3, and Mary worked on North 3.

MB: She worked on what?

JP: South 3 and North 3.

MB: What's that?

JP: University hospital. The wards.

MB: Oh, South 3 and North 3 wards. Oh, yeah yeah yeah. Oh, so they knew each other for a *long* time.

JP: On the same floor – yeah! Just one north, one south.

MB: Right.

JP: Both of them practical nurses. And both of them work at night.

MB: So were your grandparents born in Proffit? Your grandparents who raised you – they're from Proffit?

JP: Yeah, the Paynes were from Proffit. Paynes and Browns, too.

MB: What were your grandparents' names?

JP: My granddaddy on my mother's side named Albert Brown

MB: Oh, Albert! That's how you fit into the Brown family.

JP: Yeah, that was my mama's daddy. Grandpa Albert.

MB: And who was he married to?

JP: Huh?

MB: Who was, uh, your grandmother?

JP: Kerry. Kirrie. I used to call her Kirrie.

MB: Kirrie?

JP: Kirrie, yeah.

MB: And what was her maiden name—you know?

JP: Cosby, I think. Cosby... I think it was.

MB: Cosby.

JP: You almost gone back to far on that.

MB: Well, I can imagine it is. It's a long way back. You know how old your grandpa was, or when he was born or anything?

JP: Them old people won't tell you nothing. I asked my grandpa one time – said: 'shut up, boy. None of your business.' [laughs] They won't tell you nothing...

MB: [laughs] So that's on your mother's side.

JP: Yeah.

MB: So... What was your mother's name?

JP: My mother's name Carrie.

MB: Oh, also Kerry?

JP: C-A-R-R-I-E

MB: C-A-R-R-I-E.

JP: Yeah.

MB: Did they have any other kids?

JP: Yeah, I got two sisters. But they went by Howard, my stepfather. She was married to Howard. Was a Howard the second time. But we went by Payne, cause my grandfather (?)

MB: So...

JP: My brother and I went by Payne, but my two sisters went by Howard.

MB: OK, wai- wai- wait.

JP: Albert...

MB: So Albert and Kerry Brown had *your* mother. And they had any other children?

JP: Oh, yes, Lord! But, I thought you were talking about *my* side. The children I'm talking about now was my sisters and brothers.

MB: Oh! Not your aunt and uncles.

JP: Yeah...

MB: OK. So, your mother had you, she had your brother – what was his name?

JP: Roscoe. We go by Payne, but my two sisters went by Howard. Well, they were half sisters.

MB: they were your half sisters.

JP: Yeah

MB: On your mother's side or on your father's side?

JP: On mother's side.

MB: So they were all your mother's children.

JP: Yeah, that's right.

MB: But you went by Payne, and your brother went by Payne.

JP: That's right. Now you're right.

MB: And... What's your brother's name?

JP: Roscoe.

MB: Oh, Roscoe.

JP: He died in '45.

MB: He was younger than you.

JP: I was the oldest of all.

MB: Right.

JP: Roscoe was two years, and four months younger than I am.

MB: So who was *your* father?

JP: I go by Payne.

MB: And what was his first name?

JP: Jackson

MB: Oh, Jackson Payne – that's why its called Jackson Payne Road. And then who was your sisters' father?

JP: Willie Howard.

MB: Alright. And then your sister's names are?

JP: Their first name?

MB: Yeah.

JP: Nancy and Carrie-Lee. The older sister's named Nancy.

MB: Alright. I think I got that part down. So then, you were the oldest, then came Roscoe, and then Nancy and Carrie-Lee were younger than the two of you?

JP: yeah.

MB: You remember when they were born?

JP: No I don't. That's one thing. You got me on that... I don't remember what their age. My brother, I remember *his* age. I don't remember my sister's age! My mother either, because she wouldn't tell me.

MB: Yeah, I guess you didn't used to tell that kind of thing back in the day.

JP: None of them wouldn't tell you.

MB: And your dad was from Proffit, too?

JP: Yeah, they're all from Proffit.

MB: All of them were. And so your dad only ever had you and Roscoe. Alright. So then your grandparents also had—you had other aunts and uncles, right?

JP: Oh, yeah. You mean my mother's, my mother's brothers and sisters?

MB: Yeah.

JP: Oh, Lord, yeah.

MB: You remember them?

JP: My mother, let me see. My mother had a brother in (Pittsburgh?), Lewis Brown, and one in Charlottesville name Austin Brown. And had a sister named Ella Kaufman. She was married.

((pause)) That's all I remember.

MB: And none of them stayed in Proffit.

JP: (I think my) mother had another sister... No, they didn't stay in Proffit, no. Of course, my granddaddy on mama's side stayed here. My mother had one brother in Charlottesville... Uncle Lewis lived in Pittsburgh. And uncle Austin lived in Charlottesville. There's one (?) Bernard. He lived in Maryland, I think. Bernard Brown.

MB: And Ella Kaufman, she stayed in...

JP: Yeah, that was my aunt, too. She lived in New York.

MB: In *New York*? Wow. They sure moved around.

JP: They scattered about, alright.

MB: Yeah. How'd they get to all these places?

JP: They didn't come all the time, honey.

MB: They didn't?

JP: [laughs] Maybe on Christmas. They didn't do much visiting. They got around to all them long distance places. I guess they're lucky to get home *once* a year.

MB: How'd your uncle get to Pittsburgh?

JP: I don't remember now, it's been so long... Now, he had children, too, but I don't know how old they are. He had two children, I don't remember what his children were like... Uncle Lewis had a boy and a girl, I'm pretty sure. But I don't know what happened to them.

MB: Hm.

JP: Yeah, he died in Pittsburgh... And you know the strange thing about it? I said I was going to Pittsburgh to see uncle Lewis for about *twenty* years and I never went to Pittsburgh until after uncle Lewis died. I caught a chartered bus, went to a football game. He was dead then.

MB: Oh...

JP: He lived in Pittsburgh around 30 years. 1609 Webster Avenue. And I never did get to see him. I went to Pittsburgh after her died. We rode a chartered bus to a football game, I went up there. My brother-in-law and I. Three River Stadium—that's a beautiful place.

MB: Yeah?

JP: Three River Stadium. That's a football place, yeah. (? : names two rivers), and uh... Pennsylvania its where three rivers, that's why they named it. Three River Stadium.

MB: Who played there?

JP: Pittsburgh Steelers against Kansas City.

MB: Who won?

JP: Kansas City did, I think. Pittsburgh got a heck of a team back in then, though.

JP: Called the Iron Curtain. It was tough in *them* days. Kansas City had a good team, too. But the reason we went on the chartered bus was because there was a boy who was playing wide receiver from Kansas City—named Charles White or something like that—who lived down below Keswick. Well, that's who we went to see. He got on the bus, talked to all the guys. His aunt and two sisters, they're the one's who chartered the bus.

MB: Wow.

JP: Yeah, they chartered the bus go to Pittsburgh.

MB: Did they fill the bus up?

JP: Yes, indeed! We went to Cincinnati like that one time.

MB: To where?

JP: From Charlottesville to Cincinnati.

MB: To Cincinnati!

JP: I'd never do that no more.

MB: [laughs] Why not?

JP: On a chartered bus going to football?! We left Charlottesville at 11:30 Saturday night; They changed drivers in West Virginia; We got in Cincinnati at 11:30 the next *day*.

MB: 12 hours.

JP: All riding. At Riverfront Stadium². That's another beautiful stadium.

MB: Wow...

JP: But its too much riding for one day.

MB: Yeah.

JP: It'll break you down! By the time the game is over come its time to get right back on it to in order to get back home

MB: Sure. A whole weekend you spend on a bus.

JP: Yeah, its too much riding. Riding all night long!

² According to cbs.sportsline.com, this stadium is now known as Cinergy Field and is the home of the Cincinnati Reds (baseball team).

MB: yeah.

JP: Its alright if you're going to stay a day or two. I would never do it now.

MB: So you just went and saw the game and came right back.

JP: Yeah!

MB: Wow.

JP: Just leave and come on back on the bus. You go and grab a place to *eat*. After the game, and come on back.

MB: Wow.

JP: Too much riding for me. I'm glad I went when I was young.

MB: Yeah, sounds like a thing you can do when you're young. Alright. So now let's see if we can... So, on your father's side, that was the Payne family.

JP: Oh yeah...

MB: Who were the people who were raising you? That was your mother's parents or your father's parents?

JP: My father.

MB: Your *father's* parents.

JP: Yeah, 'cause they raised... I think they raised my mother, too! Cause I know it was something about the way I heard it. I think that who I called 'grandamma', that I stayed with, she raised my mother.

MB: So she was your father's mother, but she also raised...

JP: Yeah. That's what happened.

MB: Huh.

JP: Back in them days—in the teens and the '20s—almost everything around here—the Paynes, the Browns, Flannagans, Thomases, and Johnsons. But Flannagans was more, more thicker populated round here. Because I know right up at the church, now, Old Man Joe Flannagan and his wife had nine children. And Wash Flannagan and his wife had nine children. Walter Thomas down the railroad track and his wife had nine children

MB: [laughs]

JP: The place was thickly populated.

MB: Yeah... sounds like it.

JP: Flannagans, Browns and Tinsleys was all the population...

MB: Thomases. I haven't heard of them yet.

JP: Walter Thomas, a bunch of them. He had about nine children, too. He live down on the side of the railroad track, south. You can't see it—the house burned down now. You go down where you got Polo Ground Field, that's where it was. Go down back where the underpass.

MB: Where that big field is now?

JP: No, its on the other side of that. Its on the other side of the railroad where the house was, but you can't see it from the road. They got a big subdivision over there now—down on Bentivar farms? It's a big subdivision back over there, too. Right out by Polo Ground Road. As you come out the railroad, you been in that way?

MB: I didn't come on the railroad, but I've been down Polo Grounds Road.

JP: Oh. You been down the Polo Field? You went to a picnic over there.

MB: Yeah, I went to the picnic, but that's where that ambassador lives. Ambassador Powell.

JP: Did you go down far there?

MB: I went all the way down to 29 North. So on the left-hand side there's a big field *after* the underpass.

JP: But before you went under the railroad, did you see the sign of that subdivision?
MB: Bentivar?
JP: Bentivar, yeah.
MB: Yeah.
JP: You've been out to Bentivar farms?
MB: I drove around there a little bit.
JP: That's where they got (best?) houses down there?
MB: Yeah.
JP: That's what I was going to tell you a little while ago. Now, in 1926 I went to work down there.
MB: In Bentivar.
JP: Bentivar farm.
MB: That wasn't a development back *then*.
JP: No! it was a farm there we had about 300 sheep. Won't nothing down there but *work*.
MB: What kind of work?
JP: Seeding corn, chopping corn... 10 cent an hour. Something to do. [chuckles]
MB: 10 cents an hour!
JP: Dollar a day and board. 1926. I was 14 years old. That's the same year they built this rock store. Did you see the rock store down here across the bridge? J. H. Clark. That store was built in '26.
MB: Which one is that?
JP: J. H. Clark Store.
MB: That's the one that was on Proffit Road?
JP: Yeah right there across...
MB: oh, yeah. That stone house
JP: That was a big rock store. He was the man who built it, was on that farm at that time. J. H. Clark had a 700-acre farm down there. They were Canadian people.
MB: They were Canadian?

JP: Seven-hundred-acres.
MB: Wow.
JP: Seven hundred acres, honey. Sheep and cattle
MB: [whistles]
JP: That's when I went to work down there, 1926.
MB: Did they inherit that land?
JP: I don't know, they came down from Canada.
MB: From Canada?
JP: Yeah, they're Canadians.
MB: Oh.
JP: I don't know.
MB: So was that your first job?
JP: Let me see... no, uh-uh. I said '36, it was '26.
MB: '26.
JP: Oh, yeah – I guess that *was* my first job. I guess it was.
MB: What were you doing until then?
JP: Doing nothing!

MB: [laugh]

JP: Yeah, I used to work on whatever, help the guys load pulpwood on Saturday. But that wasn't no job, that's getting what you can do it. Then on Saturday we gotta have a little pulpwood.

MB: what kind of wood?

JP: pulpwood.

MB: oh, *pulpwood*.

JP: you know, you know pulpwood – you make paper.

MB: ohhh... yeah.

JP: Pinewood.

MB: Where were they growing that?

JP: Huh?

MB: Where were they growing that? They were growing that over here?

JP: We would load it on cars.

MB: Where were they getting it from?

JP: People bring it down to the station, the railroad station.

MB: Oh, you'd load it on *train* cars.

JP: Trains, Back in the side car. We go down and load it on the train.

MB: *I* see.

JP: Cause we don't have no school on Saturday.

MB: So you did that on Saturdays.

JP: Yeah, we'd go down work on Saturday, try to make something.

MB: And they'd pay you for that?

JP: Pay about 10 cent an hour, won't making that much.

MB: Yeah.

JP: That good money, that 10 cent an hour

MB: Sure. Did you go to the store with that?

JP: Ginger snap was 5 for a penny, you'd get a whole lot of cakes!

MB: Sure!

JP: So hard to figure how I'm gonna bring them all... You know, ginger snaps used to come to the store in a barrel?

MB: What did?

JP: Ginger snaps!

MB: Oohh, ginger snaps

JP: It would come in a barrel like that. Come in a barrel, they were so hard.

MB: [chuckle] it came from the train also?

JP: No, it comes from, like, a small barrel and they take them out and sell them in bags.

MB: So people would make them themselves?

JP: No, no, no – they were shipped to us. Somebody bought them that he bought them from. Some wholesale house. Wholesale out in Charlottesville.

MB: Oh, I see... So, you said you were going to school befor...

JP: Yeah, a little while. Didn't have school here much. Where our school at about 2-3 years.

MB: 2-3 years?

JP: Then after that, we just, we didn't have a *teachers*. Didn't have enough black children to teach. We walked to school three years. Up where the airport at.

MB: *Wait!* I thought there was a school right next to the church!

JP: Yeah, I *said* we went there a couple of years! After that they didn't have no teachers

MB: Oh, so they sent you by the airport

JP: we had to walk!

MB: You walked to the *airport*?

JP: We walked six miles a day.

MB: [gasp] Each way.

JP: Three mile) each way. Right up the hill, where the airport is, Pleasant Grove. They said there wasn't enough black children for to bring us a teacher.

MB: How many children were at *that* school?

JP: I don't know... but they, the board said there wasn't enough of *us*, for to bring a teacher.

MB: but there must have been enough, cause there nine kids for the Browns, and nine kids for the Flannagans...

JP: The school board didn't think so. We walked to Pleasant Grove three years. Till it got that the weather was bad and *couldn't* walk.

MB: So who was the teacher for the first—you said it was two, three years in Proffit?

JP: Oh, I don't know, who taught down here? Uuhhh... Ms. Minor, I believe.

MB: Oohh, Ms. Minor.

JP: Ms. Minor and ... [Pause] uh. I know, but I can't remember what her name was. [Pause] but I know at Pleasant Grove, who taught over up that road. [Pause] Ms. Minor taught up there, and, Mrs. Alice Carr, too.

MB: Alice Carr?

JP: Alice Carr.

MB: Yeah.

JP: She used to go to Pleasant Grove.

MB: That's where she went to church?

JP: hm?

MB: Pleasant Grove church?

JP: no, Pleasant Grove *School*.

MB: oohh.

JP: That was the elementary school. It's a two-room school.

MB: That's the one that's where the airport is now?

JP: That's the one with the airp... yeah.

MB: Alright.

JP: Its been torn down now. Its right where the south... the south end of the runway is. It was a nice school for a two, two-room school.

MB: How many... You don't know how many kids went there?

JP: No, I don't. 'Cause the children came down from Earlysville, too. But I don't remember how many there were.

MB: Did they, uh, organize you by age?

JP: huh?

MB: How'd they divide the classroom? Did they divide you by age?

JP: I don't remember now. There's so many in a room together. Was nothing but two rooms. That was a long time ago.

MB: So Ms. Alice Carr taught at Pleasant Grove school.

JP: Yeah, her and her husband (Mo?). Reverend Carr did, too.

MB: mm

JP: And also, Rosa Lott.

MB: Rosa... oh!

JP: Rosa Lott, she was a teacher. Also down here, that's what I was trying to think of a while ago.

MB: Oh, OK.

JP: She taught down here, too.

MB: So she taught at both?

JP: (?) Pleasant Groved...

MB: Was she white?

JP: White?

MB: Yeah.

JP: No, u-uh!

MB: oh, OK. She was...

JP: they didn't have that – back then, back in the '20s. That was in the 20s. She taught down here, well she *lived* down here. When they moved us to Pleasant Grove, because they said they didn't have enough black children for to teach.

MB: Right.

JP: School board wouldn't do it.

MB: Was she one of the Lott – the Lott family that started up Proffit?

JP: She was, yeah. The one that Sheldon Lott (?)

MB: Sheldon Lott?

JP: Sheldon Lott Yeah, she was connected to them.

MB: yeah.

JP: She used to lived a little right down the road, before you get to the river. Rosa Lott.

MB: Rosa Lott

JP: Yeah, she taught there for a long time. She never got married, I don't think.

MB: You remember what you used to learn? You remember any of your classes?

JP: I don't know much about classes. I don't remember that—I think of a lot of the books and things I used to have—it all got burned in the other house.

MB: Oh. All the...

JP: We had books, and then you had, these small statues or sculptures of Booker T. Washington, Paul Lawrence Dunbar... and different things, they all got burned with the house. [Pause] Even my stuff I had in all the CC Camp – I had an old metal plate. What the heck they call those things that's sold in these, uh...

MB: The plate that they what?

JP: You eat out of them, you carry food in them. Its like metal, but its look like aluminum.

MB: Stainless steel?

JP: No, its aluminum, but I think, I'm trying to think what they call it. What do the soldiers call it, now – Kit...

MB: Kitbag?

JP: You got a metal cup, and a thing to eat out of.

MB: Oh. Where it all goes together?

JP: Yeah.

MB: Yeah, I don't know what those things *are* called.

JP: I'm trying to think what the heck they call them. We had one at CC Camp. [pause] Mess kit.

MB: meskit?

JP: Mess kit, I *believe* they called it. It folded up and the cup hooks on to it.

MB: Yeah, I remember! It all kind of snaps together

JP: That's right. That's a mess kit, I think it what they called it. We had all that stuff when I was in CC Camp. Cause we were under army regulation!

[Pause]

MB: so you were in school until you were 14 years old?

JP: Yeah. That's when I quit. I quit school and went to work in '26.

MB: You guys learned a lot about Booker T. Washington?

JP: I forgot if I did. We had one of his sculptures, too. That little thing made of mortar or something.

MB: Mortar

JP: You know, that you can set on a mantle piece

MB: Yeah.

JP: Yeah, [we lost] all those things when the old house had burned down.

MB: Hm.

MB: But the mortar // even the mortar burned?

JP: Hm?

MB: i // what were the // sculptures made out of?

JP: I don't know what it was – mortar or clay.

MB: Oh.

JP: I think it was made out of clay. ((Pause)) I'm pretty sure they were clay.

MB: Hm.

JP: I think they made it out of clay and then baked it. I think – I don't know how they...

MB: [yeah.

JP: They heat it.

MB: [so...

MB: *eat* it??

JP: [they *heat* it, don't they?

MB: Yeah, I think so.

JP: You don't go to that place down there near Williamsburg?

MB: James Town...?

JP: Off... no, it's a part of, uh. Where they make all that stuff at.

MB: I don't know!

JP: You know, all those statues and things. [Pause] See, like that thing out there on the porch? On that deck out there? [points at a pot sitting on the deck railing].

MB: A-ha.

JP: They make all those things down there.

MB: Oh. That's where they make it? by Williamsburg?

JP: Yeah, but that's what I think... what you call it there? I've been down there three times. I can't think of it now. They call it the pottery plant? A lot of women go down there and buy statues and things.

MB: Statues.

JP: They made out of mud. Some of them made out of mud.

MB: Mmm.

JP: What do they call it, the pot... they don't call it the Pottery Plant... You go 64 east and take 17 going to Williamsburg, I think that is where it is.

MB: Mm-hm.

JP: They call it the Pottery Plant. But they make all that out of clay. But I carried people down there a lot of times. But I know some of the times they're made out of (?) – they make them down in the summer when I go now. And one of them makes quilts down there. They make a lot of statues and things out of sponge and things.

MB: Its like an arts and crafts kind of place?

JP: Yeah, that's right.

JP: They got a set of quilts now, made by hand. I bet they want a fortune for *that*!

MB: Oh, I'm sure they do.

JP: Got everybody's name on them...

MB: Yeah. Did your grandma make any quilts?

JP: Huh?

MB: Did your grandma make quilts?

JP: Mm-mm [no]. My grandma did nothing but smoke that old pipe. That was...

MB: [laughs] she smoked a pipe...?

JP: Yeah! Smoke that pipe... until (she couldn't take her) breath. That's what started me smoking—lighting her pipe...

MB: You smoke a pipe?

JP: Not now, don't smoke nothing! I *did*. I used to smoke cigarettes, too! Until my grandmother died with a cancer, I'd rather put them down.

MB: oh, yeah.

JP: I lost my nerve. [Pause] I'm glad I quit *now*! When I stopped smoking cigarettes it was 20 cent a pack, now they're three dollars.

MB: I think its more than *that* now.

JP: three dollars a pack.

MB: three dollars?

JP: that would stop me from smoking.

MB: yeah.

JP: My son smoke about a pack a day, too high I ain't buying them! I'm so glad I had enough willpower to stop!

MB: that *is* amazing. How long ago did you stop?

JP: Yeah, it was getting my throat sore.

MB: How long ago was that?

JP: How long I stopped? About eight or ten years ago.

MB: Eight or ten years ago?! Oh, that's a while back!

JP: I smoke about 40 years, though.

MB: 40 years! I smoked for *ten* years.

JP: You did?

MB: Yeah... but I quit

JP: I smoke *forty* years.

MB: Wow... that's a long time. Well, it's a good thing you quit. Let's see if there's anything... so, let's see. So in 1926 you start working at Bentivar farm.

JP: Yeah, I worked there for a while.

MB: You remember how long?

JP: I don't remember now. I was started working on the store. The man said, I was too light to work on the store.

MB: Too light?

JP: light in weight—didn't weigh enough. I pushed the concrete. They would push the concrete up on the (gang plank?) like that. [demonstrates]. Go up on top the store. It pushing mud up like a (?) brick-layer...

MB: *what* for...?

JP: That store is made out of *rocks*. Rocks. The *brick-layer* was building that store.

MB: Oh, to *build* the... actually *build* the store.

JP: To build the store, yeah. That's where I went to work at! But the man, the carpenter there, said I was too light.

MB: You were a light weight!

JP: Yeah. That old man, Clark, said 'take him out to the farm, then.' Sent me down to Bentivar.

MB: I see.

JP: two miles down Bentivar farm.

MB: A lot of people used to work there at Bentivar farm?

JP: no, uh-uh. About three or four people. Out there thinning corn. He had a bunch of sheep and a bunch of cattle.

MB: Yeah, you said, what, 300 – you said?

JP: 300, yeah. Then the sheep (I reckon). That's a nasty job, sheering sheep, though.

MB: Sheering?

JP: Yeah. Cut the wool off.

MB: Yeah.

JP: Its so greasy.

MB: oh, is it?

JP: that is greasy. Yeah! That wool—you'd be surprised how much grease in that wool.

MB: I *am* surprised. What did he do with the wool?

JP: He sent it away.

MB: On the train?

JP: I don't know *who* picked it up. I know it was cold out at—I remember it was so cold out you could walk cross the (branch?) and the ice hold you up. 4 below zero, I *never* forget *that*.

MB: 4 below zero?

JP: 4 below zero, I'll never forget *that* day down at Bentivar.

MB: When was that?

JP: That was in the '20s.

MB: That's when you were still working in, uh, Bentivar farm?

JP: Uh-huh. Stay around trying to duck that wind. That's where the two rivers go together. South Rivanna and North Rivanna.

MB: Right.

JP: We chopped corn down the rows, cut a row of corn one mile long! I chopped two rows of corn a day. You never heard of no corn rows *one mile* long.

MB: I don't think I have.

JP: That 5,280 feet, isn't it?

MB: Something like that, yeah.

JP: That's a mile. That's how long. It was right beside the river. I'll never forget one day I was down there plowing. That wasn't down there, that was another farm where I worked. I was plowing new ground. I was working at Greenhough farm then. I had a work at H. W. Greenhough farm—that's another farm work after being down that way. This is up in '31.

Over at Greenhough farm plowing up new ground... I'll tell you. You don't know what new ground is -- You ain't no farmer! [laughs]

MB: [laughs] No, I'm not!

JP: New ground is ground that's never been used. You can plow up anything.

MB: OK

JP: You just cut it over around the field. And I plowed up a black snake about five feet long.

MB: What??

JP: I plowed him up, but that dog took care of him!

MB: [gasps]

JP: By the time that snake was (?), that dog grabbed and shake him.

MB: What kind of snake was it??

JP: Black snake!

MB: [gasps]

JP: The dog chewed him to death! That dog followed me all around there, all around ground. I was plowing three mules. They were treacherous, too. You walk behind one of them, he would of kick you to death you don't be careful! Mules are bad. They don't play with you.

MB: Yeah.

JP: They're very sensitive. Take a horse, you can drive a horse into the Atlantic Ocean. You don't get a mule go by a hole in the ground. You see him doing that [demonstrates] He put his breaks on, you're gone! [laughs]

[MB laughs]

JP: I know a boy who plowed up a bumble bee, and they stung him to death.

MB: What's that?

JP: Bumble bees! They have them (?) ground, too! Bumblebees *and* yellow jackets They'll sting you. They'll kill a *horse* (?) if they hit in the right place... Yeah, bumblebees are terrible. Bumblebees are the hardest, cause they got more power, they move faster. But yellow jackets carry a lot of poison. I tell you that. [Pause] Yeah, I skipped some rope that day I plowed that snake out, though.

MB: What does that mean?

JP: Jumped up on my leg ducking that snake!

MB: [laughs] oh... skipped rope...

JP: I wasn't thinking about no snake in the wintertime – almost as cold as it is now!! You don't see no snake that time of year!

MB: Yeah...

JP: I'm just glad that dog who was following me.

MB: Well, he wasn't expecting to see *you*, I guess.

JP: Mm-mm. [no]

MB: So that dog just bit it?

JP: The dog killed him. [Pause] I used to be so cold when we worked down in Greenhough farm. We cut ice off the ice pond, and put it in the icehouse. They had icehouses, they didn't have no refrigerators.

MB: Yeah. Where was the icehouse?

JP: Up at the house, about 30 feet deep.

MB: Every house had a ice house?

JP: No, no, no... People who had money had them. Cheaper to buy at the store and put it in there. We cut ice off the pond, the pond was down by the river. In order for ice to grow in a pond

you have to have a cold spell that lasts about two-three weeks. For the ice to get thick enough to cut. It has to keep freezing over and over. You have a cold spell, it gets down to about zero...

//Side 1 cuts off//

JP: we walked. We didn't ride no wagon [laughs]. And you just see nobody in that wagon body. Not a *bit* of ice melts—it gets that cold.

MB: wow.

JP: It gets that cold old day!

MB: Sure.

JP: You walk everywhere, you didn't want to ride a wagon. I've been feeding horses and (take that barn) and walk.

MB: So you put the ice and the wagon, then you walk next to the wagon?

JP: Yeah! Walk and drive.

MB: Huh.

JP: Too cold to be riding a wagon! And the wind blowing, too. But when the temperature is about ten above zero, you don't *want* to ride.

MB: Sure. So when were you doing *that*? When were you cutting ice?

JP: '31. We had to haul ice from the ice pond to the house.

MB: which house?

JP: To Ms. Greenhough's house.

MB: Greenhorn?

JP: Greenhough. H. W. Greenhough. That was on Stony Point Road. That was another farm I worked. That was in '31. ... She owned land on both sides of the river. At that time. Had three barns in that place.

MB: that she owned.

JP: Yeah! She owned land on both *sides* of North Rivanna river! She had Black Angus cattle.

MB: How many people *she* had working on *her* farm?

JP: Oh, she had a lot of people.

MB: Must of had.

JP: Yeah... four-five all the time.

MB: Hm.

JP: a lot of guys did a lot of farming.

MB: So you were working there in 1931. So you did that in the winter.

...

JP: I worked CC Camp '33 and came out in '35. 10 or 15 months, I think.

MB: Yeah.

JP: That's how long I could stay at the time. Some other poor boy gets to get a break ((smiles)). That was a job for poor people.

MB: Yeah.

JP: Just like—something like welfare.

MB: Yeah, it sounds like the WPA.

JP: Yeah, that's what it was! It worked, my mother worked WPA! I remember seeing her up at Washington Park with a rake, raking leaves. My mother worked at WPA. I remember seeing her out there! A lot of poor people in Charlottesville worked WPA.

MB: So why was your mother living in Charlottesville?

JP: My mother lived on 6th street, Southeast. I don't know: 406 or 604. I know it was 6th Street, Southeast. That's all built up now, honey. Down on where its called China Town.

MB: *China* town?

JP: You know where Garret street is?

MB: Sort of. Garret street.

JP: Like you're going up Ridge street.

MB: oh, yeah, yeah – I know where that is.

JP: That was China town.

MB: *China* town?

JP: That's what they used to call it.

MB: Why did you call it that?

JP: All the *thugs* lived down there. [laughs]

MB: All the thugs?

JP: Thugs. Outlaws.

MB: So they called it China town?

JP: China town – that's what it was. I'd go down all the time to see mama.

MB: Why was she living over there and not in Proffit?

JP: A cheep place to live, honey.

MB: She didn't have a place to live in Proffit?

JP: oh, no! She left and went to town. She stayed there (until?) she married.

MB: Mmm! That's when she had the other two girls.

JP: Yeah, that's right. I know it was on 6th street, southeast. That's all built up down there now, though.

MB: Yeah, is that near Hardy?

JP: Huh?

MB: Hardy Road? Is that near where the Barber shop is?

JP: No, honey, the barbershop was on Commerce Street.

MB: Commerce, yeah.

JP: 406 Commerce. That's *Northwest*, where the barbershop is.

MB: Oh. So Southeast would be the opposite.

JP: Barbershop was Northwest, where my mama lived was Southeast.

MB: I see. [Pause] So after CC Camp...

JP: You know where that... down about where I was talking about was China Town, they had a abattoir down there, and an ice plant, all of that down there.

MB: they had a what?

JP: Abattoir! They used to kill *cattle* down there. Hogs and cows...

MB: No kidding.

JP: Lord, yeah. Go out and get a roll of Baloney that long [demonstrates with hands]

MB: Baloney?

JP: Baloney. That's where they made it!

MB: About a foot long.

JP: Longer than that! Before they cut it.

MB: Wow. So that was all in China town?

JP: On Garret street.

MB: on Garret.

JP: That's where it is. 5th and Garret, 4th and Garret. Had an ice plant...

MB: Ice plant?

JP: That's what it is, an ice plant there, right by the abattoir.

MB: What's the name of it, albatory?

JP: Abattoir, yeah. That's where they kill cattle. Hogs and Cows.

MB: [pause] Alright. So, you were in CC Camp up until 1935.

JP: Yeah, I came out in '35. Came home in 1935. January 11th. I'll never forget that because I bought me a car—You could see that car shining from here to Ivy, almost!

MB: What kind of car?

JP: A Oldsmobile

MB: Alright!

JP: Got it and couldn't get to the house.

MB: How come?

JP: The ruts were so deep down there! [indicates to the point where Payne Jackson Drive meets Proffit Road] Had to leave it down the road. Couldn't even get my car up here to the house... It *stayed* down the road! I remember that road was so bad when it old man John Morris—the first man that carried mail—had a car. A Model "A", I believe.

MB: What's that?

JP: John Morris. He was the first man that had a car that carried mail.

MB: Oh, that carried mail!

JP: Yeah, I know they had a horse and buggy carrying mail. You had to go to the post office to get your mail, but the ruts were so deep that he had chains on all four wheels. Had to put chains on the front wheels in order to cut out of the rut.

MB: wow.

JP: He had a Model 'A' Ford, or a '28 Chevrolet. But I know it had chains on the front wheels. You never get out of that rut – that's why I couldn't get my car to the house! It was nothing but ruts down here.

MB: So where did you drive with the car?

JP: I didn't go nowhere far.

MB: You drove into the city?

JP: Guess what a driver's license was in 35. Make a guess how much them driver's license cost...

MB: How much it cost for a driver's license?

JP: Yeah. Make a guess.

MB: Oh, geez.... Ten dollars?

JP: Pshh... Its ten dollars *now*. Fifty cents.

MB: Fifty?

JP: Fifty cents, honey!

MB: Fifty cents??

JP: That's right!

MB: No kidding! To get a driver's license.

JP: That's what you got – 50 cents.

MB: Where'd you go to driving school?

JP: Huh?

MB: You go to driving school?

JP: no.

MB: How'd you learn how to drive?

JP: Somebody would teach you. You'd better know what the man teach you, you had a learn it yourself, didn't have nobody, then – you had to learn yourself how to drive.

MB: You watched other people do it?

JP: The man checked you out, though.

MB: Yeah.

JP: Somebody would be around to teach you.

MB: yeah.

JP: They didn't have it in school then, though.

MB: Right.

JP: They got guys in school right now that don't do nothing *but* that!

MB: Yeah. So who did you learn from?

JP: Some of these thugs around here who I used to go around with... [smiles]

MB: Oh, yeah?

JP: Some of the outlaws.

MB: [laughs] In Charlottesville or in Proffit?

JP: In Proffit, (?)

MB: Oh.

JP: I didn't hang out in Charlottesville. Not even when I went to *work* in Charlottesville. I went to work in Charlottesville in 1938. But I came home, then, I didn't stay in town. I'd stay with my mother's, then I came home to grandma.

MB: Yeah.

JP: I'd stayed out here all the time.

MB: you liked it better here.

JP: See, I looked out for them over here. Because they had raised me all that time.

MB: Yeah.

JP: I called my grandmother 'mama', and called my mama 'nanna'. I called my granddaddy...

You know, I asked my granddaddy one day—my mother's father, Grandpa Albert: I never did know how grandpa was feeling. When you asked him 'how you're feeling this morning?'

Guess what he said? [Pause] 'Tolerable, thank you, boy. How are you?' [laughs].

MB: [laughing] 'Tolerable, thank you – how about you?'

JP: I told them, I said in church not long ago: I ain't never know how grandpa felt: 'How you feeling, Gramp?' 'Tolerable, thank you, boy. How are you?' That's all I ever got out of him.

[laughs] He was a man of very few words. That was my mama's daddy.

MB: Yeah. What did he do?

JP: Nothing. Farm. Cut wood for people. People would burn either wood or kerosene then.

Nobody knew what electric was. I remember one time, one year we got electricity around here.

[pause]

MB: What did your mother's mother do?

JP: House keep. [pause] Them old people didn't work nowhere, they didn't have nothing to do outside. Stayed at home and raised children. My grandma, mama didn't have no hen-house.

Had chicken coops all over the yard out there. They set hens with eggs—put the eggs, let them sit on the eggs until they hatched chickens. But didn't have no hen-house. Built a little house in the yard, like a...

MB: You built a house?

JP: Yeah, *they* did! They sat here and would breed chickens like that. I would go out and buy chickens and have somebody *else* raise them. Because the chicken got to (free in that mesh?)

MB: She had a lot of chickens?

JP: After I got older, yeah. But I didn't raise them like that. I *bought* chickens.

MB: yeah.

JP: My boys and I, we used to go to Gordonsville to buy chickens.

MB: Live chickens?

JP: *Live* chickens, yeah! Buy them by the hundred.

MB: Live?

JP: Yeah! *Baby* chickens, honey! They ain't no more than 2 or 3 days old. We'd go down there and get 200 hundred chickens

MB: Two hundred?

JP: They were very small, yeah. We'd raise them to get fry size. See where they hold that trailer right there, where my daughter in law—that's my, my son's first wife—right there, where the *trailer* is over there?

MB: Yeah.

JP: That was a hog lot one time.

MB: Oh, really?

JP: I had 25 head of hogs there.

MB: *Hogs*? You raised them?

JP: Sure, I did! Raised a hog (?)

MB: When was that?

JP: That was in the... '40s-'50s.

MB: So, you were working at the barber shop by this time?

JP: Yeah, yeah...

MB: When did you start working at the barbershop?

JP: 1938.

MB: 1938. Oh, OK. So that's what you did when you came back from CC Camp.

JP: that's when I told you haircuts cost 35 cents

MB: 35 cents

JP: A shave was 15 cents. Guys don't believe it, I told him that the other day!

MB: Shave 15 cents.

JP: Shave 15 cents, and a haircut 35 cents.

MB: That's a pretty good deal. So you'd come out of the barbershop with only 50 cents damage.

JP: Yeah, we didn't have much (?). No guys, they don't look at you. Got a haircut, 10-12 dollars, I was at the barbershop yesterday. My son works there, the youngest boy. But here works there part time.

MB: Where?

JP: Ronnie works there part time.

MB: at...

JP: At the Joker's Barbershop

MB: He works there now?

JP: Yeah, he works there part time!

MB: Oh, really!

JP: (?) still a guy that works there regular. We had six chairs in there. All the guys dead, honey. All the guys I worked with, everyone of them I know is dead.

MB: Hm. How many people used to work there?
JP: Six. We have six chairs. We have six chairs at the barbershop.
MB: Did you open that place?
JP: Who?
MB: You.
JP: No, I didn't open shop. I worked *under* a guy then. See, when I went to the shop, you either worked 75/25 or 60/40. That's what barbers worked.
MB: What do you mean...
JP: You don't work on a Saturday. You were self-employed.
MB: OK.
JP: If you don't make it, you don't get it.
MB: So you keep 75 percent and give 25 percent?
JP: You give *him* 25, and you keep 75.
MB: That's the *owner*.
JP: That was the time, yeah.
MB: I see
JP: Dr. Jackson, he's the one who owned the barbershop.
MB: Dr. Jackson.
JP: Dr. Jackson owned at the time I went there. But all them people are dead now, honey. It had changed hands (?) to some, some doctor—some *white* doctor at Martha Jefferson. (Pause)) Dr. *Smith*, I believe. Some white guy down at Martha Jefferson Hospital
MB: He's the one who owned it?
JP: Dr. Smith, I think, *now*.
MB: Oh, *now*.
JP: Now, now. Yeah, it changed hands two-three times.
MB: And Dr. Jackson, he was a real doctor?
JP: Yeah, a dentist. But the doctor who owns it now is a real doctor, Dr. Smith. Dr. Jackson was a dentist.
MB: Yeah.
JP: The one that owned it.
MB: yeah.
JP: He died in '53 or '54. He was the one that owned the building.
MB: And so you gave him 25 percent—or 40 percent?
JP: Well we'd give it to the manager. Hank Jones, he was running the show. Hank Jones or Zick Jones, one of those brothers were there. There were two brothers working here, Zick Jones and Hank Jones—James Jones and Frizell Jones. They're the two brothers that rent the shop.
MB: James Jones...
JP: And Frizell Jones. And both of them dead, too. They were the ones that rented the barbershop from Dr. Jackson. Dr. Jackson owned the *building*.
MB: I see. So who would get the percentage?
JP: The *Jones*. One of the Jones guys.
MB: and they would give it to Dr. Jackson?
JP: They'd give it to Dr. Jackson, yeah.
MB: I see.
JP: See, they paid the same thing *we* did.
MB: Right. They were barbers too?

JP: Yeah, they were barbers, both of them. They worked there part time, too, but they worked somewhere near the university. Where they worked the tables. Worked at a hotel up there a motel or something. But Zick Jones and... James Jones, Frizell Jones, John Daniels, Thomas Martin, I can tell you all of them that worked there. And Russell Arnett.

MB: Thomas Martin...

JP: Thomas Martin worked first shift.

MB: Is he related to Marion Martin?

JP: Nope. No, we was lived in Charlottesville.

MB: Hm. Did anyone else from Proffit work over there?

JP: No.

MB: How'd you get started there?

JP: Well, the two Jones that lived in Charlottesville—Frizell Jones and James Jones lived in Charlottesville; Thomas Martin lived in Charlottesville; John Daniels lived in Charlottesville—Oh right, he's from Lynchburg, but he lived in Charlottesville—and also Russell Arnett. I think all of them lived in Charlottesville.

MB: who was that last person you just said?

JP: Russell Arnett.

MB: Russell?

JP: Arnett. He worked there part time, he was an insurance man.

MB: Insurance man...

JP: You got 6 down there, honey, including me?

MB: Hank, Zick, John, Thomas, Russell and you. That's six.

JP: You got six?

MB: Yeah.

JP: That's right. We had six chairs.

MB: So how long were you all working together?

JP: Oh... I guess John Daniels and I worked together... longer than anybody. About 25-30 years.

MB: Wow.... [Pause] And you'd drive down there with your Oldsmobile?

JP: Drive where?

MB: To the barbershop.

JP: Yeah, I'd drive all the time. I stayed out here, I didn't stay in town. I'd stayed down with my mama maybe one day a week sometimes. [Pause] Yes, that's what haunted me all the time. My brother and I, both. That's why we were divided, I guess. My brother and I stayed here with the grandparents, sisters stayed in town.

MB: Yeah.

JP: I felt more at home (out here?), cause they raised me.

MB: With your grandparents.

JP: Yeah. My mama [mother] was good to me. I just got in the habit of staying out here with mama [grandmother], though.

MB: Sure. It was your home.

JP: I'd get by with something over here. [laughs] I used to go out with the old guys all the time, though. I'd just hang with the old men.

MB: And go fishing?

JP: No, I don't like it.

MB: Hm.

JP: Now ask me about hunting.

MB: Do you go hunting?

JP: Yeah! Every thanksgiving!

MB: Oh, really?

JP: I told my children all day – yeah, I'd take all my children: my daughter and my two boys, we'd go hunting. Hunted every thanksgiving.

MB: For wild turkey?

JP: No, we didn't find but rabbit and squirrels. See, we couldn't go but so far, honey, because a whole lot of this land is posted.

MB: Right.

JP: Its posted. Of course they don't fine much, but you can go *somewhere*, and probably get shot no matter where you're out there. When you hunt in the woods you've got to know where you're going.

MB: yeah.

JP: Because, see, at that time I had 17 acres of land here.

MB: *You* had 17 acres.

JP: 17

MB: No kidding.

JP: I got 13 now!

MB: You have 13 now?

JP: Yeah, I got 13 acres of land.

MB: No kidding

JP: All the way back to Powell's Creek.

MB: Really! What's on it?

JP: Powell's Creek.

MB: Anything there?

JP: Nothing but woods. Maybe a couple of deer down there. But you get to hunting in some place, you got to be so careful because there's *somebody* out there so trigger-happy. And, see, you're not supposed to use these high-powered rifles east of the Blue Ridge. A lady got killed in Scottsville (?) last year, I believe. Nobody had ever found out who shot her.

MB: Huh.

JP: Somebody hunting with a high-powered rifle.

MB: Huh.

JP: You take a .30/06, it'll kill you a half a mile or a mile away. .30/06 or .45/70 (?) a bullet like that. See here? [Demonstrates length with fingers] Comes something like that.

MB: That's the size of the cartridge.

JP: The length, yeah!

MB: three inches.

JP: .30/06 or .45/70. You're not supposed to use those guns *east* of the Blue Ridge.

MB: Hm.

JP: But it don't push that law.

MB: Hm.

JP: You can shoot them on the other side of the Blue Ridge, (something's going now?) and nobody likes to get hurt.

MB: Hm. Anyone ever get hurt around here?

JP: Not lately, no. They're lucky, they get most of them in Fluvanna and other counties.

MB: Hm.

JP: Albemarle got lucky.

MB: hm.

JP: I'll tell you the truth, there's a whole lot of subdivisions in Albemarle County now that there isn't much room for to hunt. Go right down in that bottom, down there.

MB: mm-hm.

JP: I've seen about four, five, six deers.

MB: Really?

JP: Now you see one or two.

MB: Oh, yeah.

JP: Right back here, too. There's a mulberry tree—deers back over here.

MB: Did you ever hunt for deer?

JP: Hm-mm [no] I don't like them. I was raised on wild meat. I don't see it, no I don't.

MB: were you?

JP: Rabbit, squirrels, muskrats, groundhogs...

MB: Yeah.

JP: ...opossum

MB: That's good?

JP: I don't want—what?

MB: You like that stuff?

JP: I don't eat it because I don't *like* it!

MB: Oh! [laughs] Because you don't like it...

JP: I don't like none of it. No. Heck, no.

MB: Rabbit's supposed to be good!

JP: Well, if anybody likes it, its good. I didn't like it. [laughing] My grandma would push it down my throat and make me eat it.

MB: Oh.

JP: Rabbits and squirrels and gravy. You've never eaten no rabbit, have you?

MB: Uhh... I think I may have had it. I recently had *squirrel*.

JP: Oh, yeah?

MB: Yeah, I had a, umm...

JP: Its got a bushy tail.

MB: [laughs] Yeah, it does. [laughing] But I didn't have the tail...

JP: I don't want none of that. Groundhog, muskrat, opossum... my grandma cooked everything.
[pause] You don't eat no chitlins, have you?

MB: Chicken?

JP: Chitlins!

MB: Chitlins? No, I only *heard* of them [laughs]

JP: Hog chitlins.

MB: I don't think I've ever tasted it.

JP: I like chitlins.

MB: Yeah. So you used to have *those*. You had hog

JP: Yeah. I used to sell pigs. I used to get garbage at a couple of schools.

MB: You used to do what?

JP: Pick up garbage – at school, for to feed the hogs.

MB: Oh!

JP: See, I couldn't afford to raise hogs, you know.

MB: Oh! But that's what they eat anyway.

JP: Yeah! But you got to feed them.

MB: Yeah.

JP: For the 28 hogs, you know, that's a whole lot of hogs

MB: Sure

JP: I had three (brew sows?) I sold a piece, see. I killed 4-5 hogs a year. But I didn't eat all that meat, I raised them to sell.

MB: Right. Where did you sell them?

JP: Different people

MB: In Proffit?

JP: I sold them (when they were pigs?) when they were 8 weeks old.

MB: Oh, the babies.

JP: Yeah, after they get 8-weeks old you can sell them.

MB: But you sold them inside of Proffit?

JP: No, people come and get them.

MB: How would they know?

JP: They would call you. They knew we were selling hog. People in the hog business tell each other, honey.

MB: Huh.

JP: Get on the phone, tell you who got pigs.

MB: When did you get a phone over here?

JP: Hm?

MB: When did the phones come over here?

JP: Telephone?

MB: Yeah.

JP: I don't know. You got me now. I don't know if it was in the '50s?

[Pause]

JP: I'm glad you said something, because I'm going to find out—I have to find out. [pause] I could find out, but I don't know *what* year we got phones.

MB: Hm. What'd you do before that?

JP: [pause] Go somewhere and use somebody's phone, or go to the *store* and use the phone.

MB: Mmm. The store had a phone.

JP: Yeah. Of course, we used go to the store and get our *mail*, we didn't have no mailbox.

MB: When was that?

JP: They must have started carrying the mail in the '20s.

MB: That was with the horse and buggy.

JP: Yeah. (?) horse and buggy. Maybe a while to use them (?). Yeah, I remember the guy who used to carry me to the ho... he had a buggy... you know what a stage-coach looks like don't you?

MB: Mm-hm.

JP: Well he had a one-horse wagon that looked like a little stagecoach [laughs]. The man who worked on it was named Asa Hall. He carried mail in that coach.

MB: Who was that?

JP: Asa Hall.

MB: Hall?

JP: Hall – H-A-L-L. He’s the first mailman that would carry mail. We used to go to the post office to get our mail then.

MB: Mmm.

JP: People lived down at the store.

MB: yeah. The rock store.

JP: Mmm-hm. The post office had two-three places, they changed it all around. But down at the bottom one time it was a railroad station. I told you the railroad station had a Western Union?

MB: Yeah, there w...

JP: (?) the Western Union

MB: But that’s the same...

JP: Morse Code.

MB: Yeah. Morse code. Yeah.

JP: He had a post office down in (the basement down in his place?) one time. They change the post office two-three different times. They moved it different places, the store buildings.

MB: So it used to be where the train station was?

JP: Yeah, down next to the station. Post office used to be right behind the station. The station was a pretty good size place, because the station had two waiting rooms, had a baggage room, and an office. It had a pretty good (loan?)

MB: And where was that – that was on Proffit Station Road?

JP: No, right here, do you know when you go down here across the railroad, going down the side track? That’s where the store was.

MB: *That’s* where the station was?

JP: Yeah, it’s an old building back out there now. That old two-story building back there.

MB: Right.

JP: That’s where the store was. That was the store.

MB: And that’s where the train stopped.

JP: That’s where the train used to stop. That’s where the station was. Five stops a day!

MB: Yeah!

JP: Had two going south, three going north. 17-cents ride to Charlottesville.

MB: 17 cents...

JP: That’s right.

MB: Um. Let’s see... How are you feeling? You getting tired?

JP: No, I’m (ready enough?) sitting down

MB: [laughs] Alright.

JP: I don’t feel like getting up and starting to walk or nothing...

MB: OK. [Pause] So were you friends with other people in the neighborhood?

JP: Oh, yeah! Only as far as I know. [Pause] I don’t know *who* my enemies are, though. [laughs]

MB: I don’t know if that’s good or bad.

JP: No. I don’t know *who* are my enemies.

MB: Who were friends with each other? Did it go by family? Who did you become friends with? Were there families who were close friends, or did the kids just play with whoever they wanted?

JP: You mean who I go around with?

MB: Yeah.

JP: Well, one guy I used to go around with was the Arnett boy, he lived in Charlottesville. [Pause] Russell Arnett used to work in the barbershop. He was an insurance agent, too.

MB: Russell Arnett?

JP: Russell Arnett, yeah. Him and I were good friends. He passed on too. He lived in Charlottesville. But I didn't have too many friends. I mean, that I ran around with.

MB: yeah.

JP: Because my grandparents always told me, 'don't you go to jail!' So I was *always* careful who I'd run around with, because the guys that I *used* to go around with—I know one of them was kind of 'light handed'.

MB: Oh...

JP: Stuff sticks to his hands. I stopped going around there. That boy, I don't know why we used to go with that boy... and we had to go anywhere we wanted together, two of us go to town or something together, watch him – cause he's going to steel something sure enough, but *why* he did it I don't know.

MB: Mmm.

JP: That's what made me so cautious of going with guys.

MB: That was Russell Arnett?

JP: *No*, that was—*no* that was a boy that lived out here. That was somebody in the family. Russell Arnett and I were good friends.

MB: Oh, OK.

JP: He works at the barbershop with me.

MB: Right.

JP: He was an insurance agent, too.

MB: So he did barbershop part time?

JP: Yeah. He did. He worked the barbershop part time and agent – North Carolina Mutual.

MB: What's that?

JP: The insurance company.

MB: North Carolina...

JP: Mutual. See, when I went to work, honey, it was four insurance companies on *that street*, I believe!

MB: What's that?

JP: Four *insurance* companies. *Four*.

MB: In Charlottesville.

JP: On that *street*!

MB: On the same street?! On main street!

JP: About three in the building I'm on. In that barbershop building.

MB: The same building?

JP: Up over the barbershop was a Southern Aid Insurance; On the first floor, North Carolina Mutual insurance. [Pause] And on the other side was... [Pause] Its two more there, I can't think of it. Universal is one of them. That's around 5th street.

MB: On 5th street...

JP: Universal – Reverend Brown was... but there was another one in that *building*. [Pause] I can't think of what it was. But *three* insurance companies in the building I work at.

MB: Mm-hm.

JP: That was Dr. Jackson – (all of them were doctors at the time?) And all three were different companies.

MB: huh.

JP: You ever go there down on 5th street behind the school? But I can't think of the other one.

[Pause] But you know down over there where most of the auto insurances? They got rid of them small offices?

MB: Mmm.

JP: Save money for the agents, I reckon.

MB: Yeah.

JP: Before I paid them agents—you've got to mail the money there now. They don't have all of them little offices they used to have in Charlottesville for different insurance companies.

MB: [Pause] hm.

[Pause]

MB: Did you ever work at the sulphur mines?

JP: uh-uh [no]. I didn't have enough mileage, I was nothing but a child. That was way back in the *teens*..

MB: Oh, that's when it was open?

JP: Yeah – it went *out* in the '20s.

MB: Oh, is that right.

JP: Lord, yeah – papa did carry me down on his back. Sit up there and *look* at it.

MB: Your father used to work there?

JP: My granddaddy.

MB: Your *granddaddy* used to work there?

JP: Yeah. [Pause] No, he didn't work down there, *heck* no!

MB: Oh.

JP: He called himself a preacher.

MB: He was a preacher?

JP: [laughs] *called* himself. Preacher man or *something*... no, he used to carry me down there and sat on the bank. Our sulphur mines went broke in the '20s.

MB: The sulphur mine did.

JP: Yes, they went broke. They tore down all that stuff. I could tell you what was down there, though. They worked 3 eight-hour shifts a day.

MB: 3 eight-hour shifts. That's 24 hours.

JP: That's right. 3 eight-hour shifts.

MB: So it was *open* 24 hours.

JP: I knew three guys that worked down there. They wore – rubber suits, and a hat, and carbide lights on their head.

MB: Hm. Was it people from Charlottesville that worked there?

JP: They were rural, I don't think anybody from Charlottesville. Tony Flannagan.

MB: Who Flannagan?

JP: Tony Flannagan. And... Alonzo Coles. [Pause] There's another guy, I can't think of the other guy's name.

MB: Mmm.

JP: Somebody Vogle, his name was Vogle – the last name. I can't think of his first name.

MB: Hm.

JP: I can tell you another thing: the shaft was 318 feet down.

MB: Wow.

JP: And two tunnels, a quarter mile, I believe.

MB: What's that?

JP: Two tunnels. Quarter-mile tunnels

MB: Geez.

JP: But 318 feet straight down.

MB: Scary stuff. Have you ever gone down?

JP: No, I ain't never... [laughing] no, no thank you.

MB: Scary.

JP: Yes, it *is*. Go that far in the ground? No, God. By cable-car, too! [Pause] They had a building down there, four stories. The refinery was down there, out from where the shaft is?

MB: Mm-hm.

JP: A four-story building where did the grinding and stuff, and its about as far from the shaft as from here to that house over there, almost.

MB: Hm.

JP: Was a trestle—three (passes?), four (passes?) high—that it goes across with the cart back to the shaft. But to carry the stuff over to the refinery.

MB: I see.

JP: There was a four-story building down there. They've got sulphur and graphite in that mine, I think!

MB: Sulphur and graphite?

JP: A-ha. Sulphur and graphite.

MB: And how many people *worked* there?

JP: I don't know, because they worked different shifts.

MB: Mm. A lot of them, though.

JP: Yeah. They did.

MB: So where did they all come from?

JP: Local people, county people far as I know.

MB: County people.

JP: Yeah, no (?). Now, I don't know where people came for working in the mill. Because the trains used to back into there to get something they can carry away from there. The train backed all the way from the main line (?).

MB: But that wasn't the same one – the Maine to Florida one, was it?

JP: Oh, no! But it was the same line. The same line connects with it, yeah. That's all I ever rode: the Southern line. They got the railroad where Ms. Tinsley lives at. That's where they used the shifting track.

MB: Yeah, she showed us.

JP: (It?) would go all the way back there with a small engine. Didn't ride no big engines back there. But they had a regular shifting engine.

MB: A regular what?

JP: Shifting engine, its supposed to go back, carry it back to the mine. Its back down there. Would carry one car back there.

MB: Oh, just one car.

JP: The smaller engines would do the shifting. You got the big engine on the main line?

MB: I see.

JP: that was a small engine.

MB: Oh, OK.

JP: other than that, (the deck and things?) wouldn't be supported with that big engine going back there—about a *mile* back behind where it would go. Had to through a trestle, too! Trestle's been torn down now, though.

MB: What's a trestle?

JP: Something you build on to go across, like a bridge.

MB: Oh... Oh, so that ridge thing that's near Ms. Tinsley's house?

JP: Yeah, go over the top of it.

MB: I see.

JP: There's (three decks?) high.

MB: So that was closed in the '20s.

JP: Yeah, that was closed when the mine went broke, and the sulphur mines started to sell everything to some guy – some joker out in Staunton. Bought all of that iron ore and stuff (?). My granddaddy got a whole lot of promises, ain't got nothing. 'You gonna get all kinds of money, let you all do (get out of that?) mine.

MB: Promise from who?

JP: They would get promises... they (were hiring?) Sulphur Mine people. Promise my people, but they ain't got to give them nothing.

MB: Hm. So who owns it now?

JP: What, me!

MB: *You* own the sulphur mine?

JP: Its on the line. Its on the line. That shaft is right on the line.

MB: You going to do anything with it?

JP: Nope. Can't do a thing with it, just put it out as (mineral?) property.

MB: Yeah.

JP: Its no record for agriculture, nothing like that.

MB: Right.

JP: You had to (come on the Mineral rights?).

MB: Not to mention, how big is the shaft?

JP: About... 10 by 10, 12 by 12, something like that. Its mostly all caved in now, though.

MB: Oh, wow.

JP: You couldn't get – you go down there you could – you wouldn't fall down cause you'd see, uh, see shrubbery around there before you'd get to it.

MB: well, it would be scary.

JP: on my property right over here, next door. Marky – Marky came from Tennessee, I believe.

MB: Marky?

JP: Marky, yeah. He owns it now. My cousin used to own that land, the Browns

MB: which land is this?

JP: right here, next door.

MB: oh, ok. So he's family, Marky?

JP: huh?

MB: Marky is family of yours?

JP: no, no! I said my uncle used to own it, next man down—not where the browns are now, but down below where this man... these – *Polish* people got this land right now. Somebody else got that land I was talking about. But Marky is the next piece of land over, or two people owning land over. Marky and somebody else. But my land runs all the way back to Powell's creek, but it's on a narrow plate. So its about 200-300 feet wide, but it goes back about a mile.

MB: wow. You could put some corn rows over there...

JP: huh?

MB: you could put some rows of corn over there...

JP: its all timberland, honey. Nothing but rocks and sticks—you can't hardly walk back there in some places. Fallen timber. I had some trees cut off down where the mine is, the man cut some poplar trees that I bet was about 75 or 100 feet tall.

MB: wow...

JP: cut them down with his machine. Pulpwood, got fire wood off it. (ain't nothing down there now that's good, though?). those were the tallest poplar trees I've ever seen in my life.

MB: they got sold?

JP: huh?

MB: you sold the wood?

JP: yeah, (?) saw mill. Made a (bundle?) of that. Yeah, they got machines, they can take two or three down, a hundred feet tall, and go back and cut it up. Cut it up in 10 feet, 12, 14... whatever... that's all made in (?).

MB: so there were white people and black people living in Proffit, weren't there.

JP: yeah, still do.

MB: yeah. Was that ever a problem?

JP: Not to me. Been on (each side of the hill) all my life.

MB: on each side of the hill?

JP: on each side, (they've been white?) all my life. No the Roberts are over there now, that's about the third or fourth family.

MB: where.

JP: right here.

MB: oh. That's a white family.

JP: yeah, Roberts came from the Eastern Shore. That's about the third or fourth family that have lived there. And Marky, he's the one that lives on the west side of me.

MB: mm-hm.

JP: but tell these other people, this man that got a place now, he's Polish, I don't know what his name is, but he's white too. No, we don't have no troubles here.

MB: but it was separate.

JP: oh yeah, yeah. You always got along, but everything was separated. But now we have meetings together, because the Watch—what do you call it—the Proffit... not the Watch Care, what do they call this thing?

MB: the neighborhood association?

JP: neighborhood, yeah. They all meet at our church! All the white people in *our* church.

MB: oh, they do? They go to church there, too, or they just meet there?

JP: some of them. We got some that joined church down there.

MB: oh yeah?

JP: we've got some whites joining church.

MB: but that must be recent.

JP: the last two-three years.

MB: yeah.

JP: yeah.

MB: before that?

JP: we had a couple of people joining—we had white people joining church since I've been there. And I've been there ever since 19... when was I baptized... '26.

MB: hm.

JP: (?) but we got a young pastor now. the pastor we got now, he's about – he's almost (?) I reckon. He got a church full of young people.

MB: that's what I heard.

JP: And a whole lot of white people. So we had about 10-15 white people at one time.

MB: huh. How many black people?

JP: huh?

MB: how many people all together?

JP: I don't know. I don't know, I don't think they (?) they've got a new deacon thing on the board, I don't do nothing but pray sometimes. I can't do all that standing up... I've been doing it for 30 years, I'm worn out. I can't stand up and talk all day. I'll be (like the fellow on the floor)

MB: you sit in the pulpit?

JP: I sit in the deacon's corner. We got a regular corner down there. We got *five* of us in there.

MB: five deacons.

JP: five deacons, yeah.

MB: that's a nice size. I think Ms. Tinsley was saying there used to be a baseball team when she was young. There was a Proffit baseball team.

JP: I don't know if Proffit had a baseball team. They played with other people, but I ain't never known that we had no team. We just played ball, but most of the time we were playing with somebody else. I don't think we ever had no (?) team (a house?).

MB: mm. You just played.

JP: just mixed up and played with somebody else, as far as I know. We used to have a baseball diamond thirty years ago when Mama and I had all the children. You'd see about 30 children down there playing ball

MB: where? Just down the street over here?

JP: yeah, but they were all children that stayed here.

MB: all the children that stayed with your grandma?

JP: yeah (all the neighbors?) everybody had children around here. People so thickly populated. See, most all of the people down here now are young people that come from other places, other (states?). I bet you 75% of the people in our church is people from other parts of this country.

MB: 75%.

JP: yeah!

MB: that's a lot!

JP: it is.

MB: you mean, people who don't even live in Proffit right now?

JP: they don't, no. a lot of them live in subdivisions. A lot of them came here from Greenwood, Crozet...

MB: so they come here all the way from Crozet on Sundays to go to church?

JP: most of them live in subdivisions—the live on [Route] 29, something like that.

MB: and they don't have a church over there?

JP: some of them do and some don't. Some *join* church down here. Some came from Crozet, some came from Greenwood, Yancey's Mill, even Waynesboro we got people joining church

and coming here. We got a young preacher join the church – he’s a preacher, he’s from Esmont and he joined our church.

MB: he’s what?

JP: he’s from Esmont.

MB: oh, from Esmont!

JP: from over in Esmont, yeah. Young guy.

MB: What’s his name?

JP: Rush.

MB: Rush?

JP: his last name is Rush. I don’t remember the first name is. Reverend Rush. We had one white guy join the church, a preacher.

MB: a preacher?

JP: he’s been back – I don’t think he’s been back but once or twice. Yeah, he’s a preacher. Oh, he comes down here—from near Scottsville, I believe. Oh, we got several white guys come here—white girls getting married to black guys.

MB: oh, yeah?

JP: we got two-three of them, yeah.

MB: are they from Proffit.

JP: no, uh-uh. I don’t know where them people’re from. In fact, I didn’t know them until they came (around?). They come regular (?). But I don’t know where they’re from.

MB: they married guys from Proffit?

JP: I don’t know. I don’t know where they’re from!

MB: oh, the husband *or* the wife, you don’t know where they’re from.

JP: no, I don’t know *where* they’re from. They’re here—they come regular. They got a boy about eight or ten years old.

MB: that’s how old their son is.

JP: hm. That’s what he looks to be.

MB: hm. So who used to be the people—if you had to sort of say in general who are the people who used to live in Proffit back when you were growing up?

JP: look at what?

MB: who are the people who used to live in Proffit? what kind of people used to live here?

JP: used to *live* here?

MB: mm-hm.

JP: [pause] well, the only difference about that is—years ago, when you would go to somebody’s house, the first time you’re over there they say ‘have you had anything to eat?’

MB: [laughs]

JP: they’re gonna feed you.

MB: before you say hello.

JP: yeah. They will feed you. But now you don’t get that kind of welcome. People don’t have time to visit no more, that’s one thing changed. You don’t see no people, like I know children that’s going to school—of course I wasn’t going to school because I’d done quit school—the children that going to school stayed (a weekend in the house?) and all that stuff.

MB: sure.

JP: they don’t do that now.

MB: mm.

JP: so everything's moving up. Things moving so fast—I don't know what happened. That's one thing changed. People don't raise gardens no more. people sitting on the porch, garden growing nothing but weeds. That's changed.

MB: so people used to raise a lot of gardens back in the day.

JP: yeah, they don't do it. but not only *that* changed: the doggone temperature—weather! You know, I don't know—I just raise gardens... Lord, Mama died in '86. You know, it looks like the land—the temperature's changed so, and if you raise a garden now, by the time that stuff gets about that high off the ground you've got to start spraying it, see?

MB: spraying.

JP: spraying it! Insect gets on just that quick.

MB: sure. So about ten inches.

JP: years ago you didn't have that. Years ago you didn't have that many insects because we had more cold weather and it killed more of them in the winter.

MB: so its warmer now.

JP: yes, its warmer. You don't have the cold weather we used to have. We haven't had a bad winter now any time! I remember when I was a boy I've seen the snow in November—you didn't see the ground more than March. It snowed every week. You don't get that no more.

MB: well, I'm thankful for that. [laughs]

JP: I am too! I agree with you there, I am too! When we was a kid, we didn't have no money, no nothing—but guess what we would put on our shoes? Take burlap bags—

MB: burlap bags!

JP: and tie your show with string or chord or something—twine string.

MB: and that was your shoes??

JP: that's how we walked in snow! As long as the snow was dry you walked in it

MB: with just burlap on your feet.

JP: yes—you had to cut it loose, turn it around and make a boot out of it.

MB: you put it on *top* of your shoes, or you put it on top of your feet?

JP: Yeah. One for each shoe. Yeah—then tie it around your leg with burlap string. That's what he had for goulashes. We didn't have no boots. I've seen snow right there—see that rail fence? I've seen snow back in '48 on top of that fence almost.

MB: it snow...

JP: 1948.

MB: in 1948—

JP: that rail fence right there.

MB: —that rail was covered.

JP: tall! Snow was that deep in some places. The drift was that deep.

MB: what's that, about four feet?

JP: that's right. That was in '48

MB: wow.

JP: we don't have that kind of winters no more. I'm glad we don't. That's where your fuel goes.

That's what stopped me from raising gardens. Lord, you'd plant all this stuff and work it, and by the time it grows up, the insects would get it. You go there, you don't work like a dog, and you see all your string-beans—the leaves got little holes in them

MB: oh, from the bugs.

JP: insects.

MB: yeah.

JP: that's what gets you. It don't rain in a couple of weeks, it will turn right brown. That's what put me (off?) from raising gardens. I used to have all that back there a garden, but I used a tiller.

MB: what'd you grow?

JP: I had four different kinds of squash

MB: really.

JP: I used to raise a heck of a garden. (?) raise (?) can (?). if the insects don't get it.

MB: what else did you grow? Beans?

JP: huh?

MB: what'd did you grow—squash, beans...?

JP: beans, yeah. Squash and beans, turnip greens, mustard greens, tomatoes... I raised most of everything—corn... see that big field down there, down the road?

MB: mm-hm.

JP: I had all that in corn one year.

MB: where?

JP: up here in the whole field.

MB: that whole field was filled with corn. Wow.

JP: corn was taller than I am!

MB: how tall are you?

JP: 6'4"

MB: 6'4"

JP: that corn down there on the bottom was 7 and 8 feet tall.

MB: wow. It was all for your own use, or you used to sell it?

JP: hm?

MB: was it all for your own use?

JP: yeah! I raised hog then.

MB: oh, you used to feed the—corn to the hogs?

JP: uh-huh. They'll eat it while its green. You've got to give them green to put on fat. You can't make a firm hog out of garbage. You have to feed them green—some kind of green before you kill them. If you don't, the meet will get flabby like rubber.

MB: the hog meat. Huh.

JP: its got to be hard, you got to put some green in it. Sure can't do it with garbage.

MB: hm.

JP: you can't get garbage now nohow, they'll make you cook it now. The health department (?) now.

MB: yeah, they get mad. [pause] let's see... do you know where they started the train station? When the train started stopping over here?

JP: when it stopped?

MB: when it started.

JP: no I don't, uh-uh [no].

MB: that was before your day.

JP: yeah. You got me that time.

MB: yeah. I think it might have been...

JP: that's a long time ago

MB: yeah. I'm not sure when. You ever hear any stories about Proffit? so you're grandpa must have been the son of Old Man Ben Brown.

JP: could have been. Could have been.

MB: was he Ned Brown's brother?

JP: Ned... we had a whole lot of Browns. Albert Brown, my mother's father, he was the oldest of all the Browns.

MB: did he have a brother, Ned?

JP: oh, Lord yeah. Let's see. Grandpa Albert—Albert Brown—he was the oldest. Ned Brown, Jim Brown, George Brown, and Ben Brown.

MB: oh, Junior.

JP: all of them were brothers.

MB: all brothers. No sisters?

JP: yeah, there was a sister named Lottie.

MB: Lottie?

JP: Lottie. I don't remember but one sister. Might have had one, but I remember one sister. See, did I name all of them? Let's see. All of them are my uncles, so you *know* I know'em!

MB: yeah.

JP: great uncles.

MB: yeah.

JP: Grandpa Albert, Albert Brown, Ned Brown, George Brown, Jim Brown, and Ben Brown. Bernard! One more.

MB: and Bernard.

JP: yeah, there was a whole lot of Browns.

MB: you spend a lot of time with them?

JP: not much, uh-uh [no]. They're all a bunch of—like (?) down the road there [chuckles]

MB: [chuckles]

JP: three of them lived in houses—I guess the house looked like it was almost (bunched right?) together. Uncle Ned, and Uncle George, and Uncle Ben. I bet you ain't five acres in all three houses together. They all used to live right down there before you get to the church.

MB: five...

JP: all jammed up together.

MB: all jammed up together [chuckles]

JP: just walk over a piece of land and say 'you may have that piece of land.' But you ain't got no record of it. People got messed up with more land like I don't know. Any time a place never been surveyed or recorded—you ain't got nothing in the court house! That's what messed up a lot of black people. They didn't know their land had to be surveyed and recorded.

MB: mm.

JP: they walked out and stepped on a piece of land—'Yeah, boy. You can have that land over there.' You ain't got nothing!

MB: is that what happened to them?

JP: that's what happened to a lot of them, yeah. Just didn't understand... If I don't know, I ask somebody. But they wouldn't do it. I think a lot of people are ashamed to ask people. They don't know and are ashamed to ask.

MB: yeah.

JP: I'll ask in a minute!

MB: so what happened? They lost it?

JP: Some of them did. My aunt did. My mama's sister, aunt Ella. She lost her grandpa's (?), I think, that way. She was paying taxes, but still didn't get no receipt.

MB: huh.

JP: she was living in New York or somewhere before she came back. Come back and done lost everything. Its just never been surveyed, honey.

MB: so where was the land, in Proffit?

JP: back down the hill, yeah. Back of me. Back down below me. It wasn't much, but she lost it.

MB: sure.

JP: wasn't nothing but a couple of acres. But see, in Albemarle County, you've got to have two acres of land to build a house, or a trailer.

MB: you *have* to have two acres?

JP: you have to have two acres. In order for a cesspool. Gotta have that much for, before you can put a trailer and a cesspool. (just here?) this Polish guy, he had bought this land from the boy I sold it to, and then he bought the land and built a house—he couldn't permission because he couldn't get that rock over there. He needed 100 feet for a drain pool. Couldn't get a drain field for the well. Rock! (?) 100 square feet of land before it can pass and be approved. See, 200 feet of drain field, to put it in that piece of land I let him have, he had to put in 4 50-foot ditches.

MB: to drain it.

JP: yeah. (?) four 50-foot ditches made 200 feet. That's what they would have to have for the cesspool. And he couldn't get it approved! Had all that dug, his well, then he couldn't get no drain pool. That whole hill ain't nothing but rock.

MB: which hill is that?

JP: this hill right here in the corner. You can't see unless you get up and go there. Some people, the Polish people, they bought it next to Marky. Marky is next (hill?).

MB: hm. So they couldn't build a house there.

JP: they had already put the... had dug the well and couldn't get it approved! Cause they couldn't dig in the rock, a sheet of rock. A shell rock, in that whole hill over there. In fact,

//Side 2 cuts off//

MB: what kind of rock is that? Limestone?

JP: no, its shell rock—its soft, but it gets sheets.

MB: I see.

JP: under the ground.

MB: right.

JP: sheets underground.

MB: how far down?

JP: yeah.

MB: hm.

JP: so far, I can't get a root deep enough to plant potatoes.

MB: huh.

JP: all I can raise is small stuff like beans and things, but you've got to have land deep enough for potatoes to grow, stretch out.

MB: you used to grow potatoes, too?

JP: huh?

MB: you used to grow potatoes?

JP: yeah.

MB: you used to grow all kinds of things...

JP: oh yeah. I grew some of everything.

MB: you ever go to the store to buy vegetables?

JP: sometimes. I'll go to McDonalds now...

MB: [laughs] sounds good.

JP: I used to like to cook when my wife was there, but I hate to cook now. I used to cook roasts in the oven, cook greens—mustard greens... I could cook!

MB: you used to make those?

JP: yeah, I could cook! But I can't cook now. I lost my touch. I did. I try to fry a chicken, I'll burn it up.

MB: hm.

JP: cook it too fast, I reckon.

MB: oh.

JP: don't taste like somebody else cooked it—I'll let somebody else cook it.

MB: yeah.

JP: I went to my daughter's Thanksgiving. I got to cook Thanksgiving.

MB: is that where you went for Thanksgiving?

JP: yeah! I (?) doggie bag. She lives right up the road, she don't live far from here.

MB: that's Marcha, right?

JP: uh-huh [yes].

MB: mm. She made turkey?

JP: she cooked—yeah, she cooked turkey. I don't care about no turkey, though.

MB: mm.

JP: I like the dressing. I don't care about no turkey [laughs], I like the dressing.

MB: yeah [laughs]. You have some sweet potatoes?

JP: oh, yeah. I love *that*, now. sweet potato pie, too. I *bought* a sweet potato pie.

MB: oh, yeah?

JP: I bought a sweet potato pie.

MB: hm.

JP: I carried my card with the dollar discounts. That little shopping card—Food Lion!

MB: you could— They sell— Oh, at Food Lion.

JP: yeah.

MB: oh, that's where you got the pie.

JP: yeah. You've never been to Food Lion?

MB: yeah, I've been there. The one up on Harris Road.

JP: that's right.

MB: there used to be one closer to here.

JP: there'd be what?

MB: there used to be a Food Lion right next to K-Mart.

JP: they moved that one, didn't they?

MB: yeah.

JP: one up on Pantops, too.

MB: oh, that's right, there is one. Yeah, yeah.

JP: [pulls out Food Lion discount card] here it is.

MB: oh yeah.

JP: they got one on Pantops.

MB: everyone started using those cards now.

JP: they got a bunch of food—they got some nice stuff in there, though.

MB: at Food Lion.

JP: I like the way they put stuff on display. You can find everything.

MB: yeah.

JP: that's what I like about it.

MB: yeah

JP: some stores you go, you can't find what you're looking for.

MB: um... well, I think what I might do is just call it a day for now... and then, maybe come back another time.

JP: mm-hm.

MB: does that sound alright?

JP: yeah!

MB: alright...

JP: let me know when you're coming, I'll be here every day except Tuesdays and Thursdays.

MB: ok. Well, it'll either be... well, maybe a Wednesday.

JP: that's alright.

MB: alright. Alright, let me put this on hold...

//tape cuts off//

Index

Bentivar Farm, 13, 14, 19, 20
Brown Family, 9, 10, 11, 33, 41, 42
Charlottesville, 2, 3, 5, 11, 12, 15, 22, 23, 25,
28, 32, 33, 34
Civilian Conservation Camp (CC Camp), 7,
8, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 26
Coles Family, 34
Cox Family, 4
Cutting Ice, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
Evergreen Baptist Church, 3, 13, 15, 16, 25,
37, 38, 39, 42
Family, 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 23, 25, 28, 42

Farming, 25, 26, 30, 31, 41, 44
Flannagan Family, 13, 34
Gingersnaps, 15
Greenhough Farm, 20, 21, 22
Hunting, 28, 29
Joker's Barbershop, 26
Leake Family, 4
Payne Family, 1, 10, 11, 13, 24
Stores, 4, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 31, 32,
44
Tinsley Family, 9, 35, 36, 38
Train, 5, 15, 20, 32, 35, 40, 41