

An Interview with
Carl and Mae Shockley

at their home in
Carter County, Missouri

18 May 1998

interviewed by Will Sarvis



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PREFACE

The following material deals with the lower Current River area of Carter County, Missouri, around Van Buren, and the establishment of the Ozark National Scenic Riverways (ONSR). Perhaps one of the most remarkable things revealed in this interview is a portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Shockleys' love of work, and particularly their love of working the land. The Shockleys industriously farmed several hundred acres abutting the west side of the Current River, just south of Van Buren, until the Park Service condemned some 387 acres for inclusion in the ONSR during the late 1960s.

The Shockleys were among the original ONSR opponents, and while a significant amount of the following material deals with the ONSR itself, a great deal describes their vigorous work, which was essential for prospering as farmers in the region not exactly friendly to agriculture. Work described includes farming (putting up hay, raising livestock), firewood cutting, and timbering. Other topics of interest include Mrs. Shockley's quiltmaking, the old paddlewheel riverboat business, the work of Mr. Robert Shockley (Carl's father) -- boatbuilding, furniture building, and other woodworking -- the old open range (including a really great description of old hog earmarks), "grandmawing," and annual burning of the woods. Like many other natives of the Current River area in Carter County, the Shockleys recall an earlier type of tourist from the more polite American society of the 1940s, 1950s, and early 1960s -- which stands in stark contrast to a later and much more numerous type of visitor, from the 1970s onward. And again, like other older residents of the Van Buren area, they remember Big Spring State Park as a heavily visited locale in great contrast to recent years and present time, when Park Service restrictions have heavily limited visitors and campers.

The Shockley's present a number of physical objects throughout the session which are noted at the appropriate times. These items include old photographs, a hand-carved oar and handmade wooden stool that Mr. Robert Shockley made, as well as the latter's drawknife and a hand planer. During the interview, Mrs. Shockley often refers to her father-in-law Mr. Robert Shockley as "Dad."

There is a lot happening in this interview, which ultimately presents a complex story. Aspects include the Shockleys' original unpleasant dealings with the ONSR. The land acquisition process they describe reflects bullying tactics which local people still generally describe and discuss in the region. The Shockleys relate details of what it was actually like to be displaced from a farm -- which required movement of themselves, all their possessions, all their livestock, farm machinery -- and the disruption which relocating their lives and livelihood entailed. But this unpleasant beginning of their dealings with the ONSR was far from the end. They participated in subsequent and remarkable cooperative efforts, including the loaning of farm equipment to the actual ONSR land acquisition officer who had earlier upset them so much. They also participated (ultimately unsatisfactorily) in the ONSR's field leasing program. Mr. Robert Shockley was well known for his johnboat building, which he eventually performed as part of the ONSR's interpretative program. Understandably, the Shockleys are still bitter against local, original supporters of establishing the ONSR.

Mr. Alan Turley (editor and owner of the Van Buren newspaper, the *Current Local*) first recommended I contact the Shockleys for an interview. Almost immediately thereafter other people recommended them as well. But this was a sensitive situation, considering the Shockleys' forced relocation from their riverside farm. The beginning and end of the session reflect some of the context of my first attempted contact with the Shockleys -- discussed during the interview itself all in good humor. Our visit, in fact, extended a full two hours beyond the three hours of actual taped material, and the atmosphere during this entire visit was extremely friendly and pleasant, even though some of the recollections we explored covered disagreeable topics.

The interview was recorded on Sony type I (normal bias) audio cassettes, using a Marantz PMD-222 manual recorder (set on automatic recording level) and a Shure VP64 omnidirectional microphone attached to a floor stand. The audio quality is very good.

The following transcript represents a faithful rendering of the entire oral history interview. Minor stylistic alterations -- none of factual consequence -- have been made as part of a general transcription policy. Any use of brackets [] indicates editorial insertions not found on the original audio recordings. Parentheses () are used to indicate laughter or a spoken aside evident from the speaker's intonation. Quotation marks [“ ”] indicate speech depicting dialogue, or words highlighted for the usual special purposes (such as indicating irony). Double dashes [--] and ellipses [. . .] are also used as a stylistic method in an attempt to capture nuances of dialogue or speech patterns. Words are *italicized* when emphasized in speech. Although substantial care has been taken to render this transcript as accurately as possible, any remaining errors are the responsibility of the editor, Will Sarvis.

[Tape meter, 000. Begin side one, tape one of three. Begin interview.]

MS: Just as soon as you mentioned it [the Riverways] that was a dirty word. (Laughs)

WS: I learned a lesson from that, so it wasn't completely wasted. And it was my own fault for starting it [the telephone conversation] out like that. But I think Mr. Turley might have been teasing me a little bit to (laughing) not warn me, too. I don't know.

MS: No; he never has seen that side of me, I don't think.

WS: Okay; we're going to talk about the Current River and the history of this area and all. I thought, just to get started, maybe you all could tell me your family backgrounds and all; about how far back your families go in Carter County.

CS: My family came here in 1914, and I think hers in 1912. The Samples came from Jackson County up near Kansas City. My family came from Pulaski County, up by Waynesville.

MS: See, they did the same thing at Waynesville. When they put in Fort Leonard Wood they moved everybody off the river and out there to put in Fort Leonard.

WS: And that's what happened to your family?

MS: That's what happened to *his* family.

CS: No, they were down here long before Fort Leonard Wood.

MS: Oh, is that right? I'm sorry.

WS: Well, what brought them into this area?

CS: Oh, just change; desire to move up somewhere else?

WS: Was your dad [Robert F. Shockley] a farmer?

CS: Yes. And my granddad, a farmer. And I suppose he came down here to find a better

farm or a place that suited him better.

WS: How about your family? Were they farmers too?

MS: No. My dad -- wasn't he justice of the peace at one time, here?

CS: Yes. He was a real estate representative for this old Munger Land Company.

MS: Whenever they sold land to people from other states he brought them out with the team and the buggy and showed them the land, even out in here. My grandparents, when they came -- I don't know if this is the first place -- but over here in this field that you came down, there used to be some big oak trees over there, and they built a hotel called the Oak Lodge.

CS: It was a real big place.

MS: When my father brought people out, they would stay there overnight, the people that brought land around here and everything.

WS: Was that selling the cut over timber land, that real estate?

MS: Oh, no, the timber was never touched, was it Carl? Cut over timber land? No, back then that was all virgin timber, wasn't it?

CS: Well no, the pine had all been [cut]. That was after the Grandin lumber mill cut the pine off. Then they sold the land. I understand these Munger land company speculators bought up a large acreage of that, then they divided it up into small tracts and advertised it in most of the East. People would come in here to buy that. They'd have her dad and other people to show them that land. Of course, they had to come in on railroad, on the train. There weren't many roads then. They'd haul them out from the railroad station out

here and let them stay in this hotel and try to sell them some land.

MS: One of my dad's friends was telling me one time, over at the nursing home -- he was up there -- and he said some of the people were complaining about the big rocks on the land and everything. And he said my dad told them, "Oh, don't worry about that. When those all melt they turn into fertilizer." (Chuckles)

WS: I wonder if they (chuckling) believed that?

MS: He'd just laugh, that old man would.

CS: They set out by Hunter, Missouri. They cleared off a whole bunch of land, a big acreage of it, and set it in orchard trees; fruit trees. And if it didn't buy right away, they'd offer you a share or two in that orchard along with your little tract of land. Then they drilled an oil well southwest of Hunter, and they'd give them a share of that oil well. Just anything to get them to buy. They'd sell it [on terms, requiring] little down. Then, if the payments stopped, they'd repossess it. It was a high-pressure deal. I can remember when they still had a lot of that old land, and boundary markers, corner markers, on a lot of the tracts. It was just a "get rich quick" scheme.

WS: So both of you were born in Carter County?

[Tape meter, 050]

MS: Carl was born down on the river. I was born out here.

CS: Yes, I was born down on some of that old land that the [U.S.] Park [Service] took.

WS: Is that right. Your dad had a farm down there?

CS: Yes.

WS: Do you remember how many acres?

CS: They took 387 acres from us. We still had 300 or 400 more in the hills. We never could agree on the price that they were going to offer us for it, and they condemned it. When they condemned it, they condemned the 387 acres. In addition to that, they condemned 150 more that they didn't even want.

MS: It's only supposed to go half mile back [from the river].

CS: When they got in federal court, before the trial our lawyers got them to release that 150 acres that they didn't want. But they filed that down at the recorder's office, and they never did cancel that. We were going to trade some land with our ex-daughter-in-law (our son [Steven Carl Shockley] got killed), but they couldn't give a clear title to it because that condemnation had never been cleared. We liked to never get them to release that. And they tell me that the other land where it had happened the same way had never been released either. It's still on the record down there that the Park had it condemned. When you get tied up with the federal government, you're fighting an uphill battle.

MS: But we fought.

WS: Now you all probably remember back, I guess, in the 1950s when they were talking about damming the Current River.

MS: Yes. Our oldest son was just first born, and we went to meetings from Poplar Bluff on that.

CS: We went to every meeting that they had anywhere, wrote the letters and stuff, and finally got that knocked out. Then the so-called smart boys in town came up with the idea of

turning it into a park. They called it a monument. And they finally got that through.

WS: Now there for a while, I believe the Congress before they established the Riverways, there was a [U.S.] Forest Service bill. Do you remember anything about that? There were some people who were against the Park Service, but they were going to try to get the Forest Service to expand.

MS: The Forest Service to expand? It was always talked about, and it still is, that the Forest Service would take it from Current River all the way to the Eleven Point River.

CS: That was just a rumor. When we were fighting this and the Park was trying to get it, the Forest Service came up with a plan to console the river or “protect” it, they called it, which seemed like a better plan than the National Riverways. But something -- I don’t know who -- they overrode the Forest Service and didn’t let them have it. I went to every meeting that they ever had on the dam and the Riverways, too. To me the Forest Service plan sounded a lot better.

WS: Do you remember that organization they called the Current and Eleven Point Rivers Association?

CS: I believe I’d heard of it, but I don’t know anything about it.

WS: I think Reverend Vincent Bucher up there in Shannon County was involved with that, and he testified in front of Congress and all. But I think they were supporting the Forest Service, and they were against the Park Service.

CS: Yes.

WS: But anyway, of course, then the Park Service won out. I bet along your dad’s land, did

you all have some of those “Monument-No” signs up?

CS: Oh, yes.

WS: I’ve heard about those signs.

CS: Oh, yes. Oh, we scattered them everywhere.

MS: See, we owned almost two miles or river frontage. On one side of the farm it went right along beside the fields and the road on the other. We just fenced one side of the farm.

CS: We were fighting the national park or Riverways -- the Monument, I guess, maybe it was [at that time]; it changed so much -- Jim Allen, was our representative up at Jeff City for this county. They were going to have some people from the Park Department, Interior (I don’t know what, but anyway, for the Park). We had posters.

[Tape meter, 100]

We had boats go up the river. Me and the youngest boy went from our place up to this KOA [Kampgrounds of America] place, nailing on the logs and things, “No Riverways,” or whatever it was.

MS: Monument.

CS: And some of the guys in town -- Dwight Terry, he was a guide up there, and of course he was for the Riverways. He thought he’d get all the guiding business on the thing. He was coming down the river that day with a fishing trip, and he’d paddle over there -- the other guys told me -- after we’d nailed our signs up, he was tearing our signs down. But anyway, there was quite a bunch of opposition. We were fighting each other, and we lost.

MS: Well, now, we had the meeting at Big Spring State Park, and the representative for

somebody came down there, and all the opposition [was there.] Frick Newton had the Big Spring Lodge, and they had him up in Cabin 13 and everything, but do you know he would not come out and talk to the people?

WS: He was a little bit worried about the opposition.

CS: Oh, yes.

MS: Evidently he was. And “Cokie” [Coleman] McSpadden would fly around in a helicopter above the crowd.¹

CS: There was a meeting down there at Big Spring (I don’t know if it was this same one or not), but they were flying them up and down the river in a plane, I believe, this time. And Cokie Mac was up in the plane with them. (Laughs) He was a-kissing. He was sure that all those tourists were going to come in here and die and he’d get to bury them.²

MS: Cokie never put himself in a position where anybody could get to him. He knew where to stay. People that had been friends forever and ever and ever; old people, turned against each other. It was really sad. Close, close friends.

WS: I imagine that continues to this very day.

MS: Oh, yes.

CS: I dearly hate every one of them.

MS: There were a lot of people that got so upset in Shannon County, that it killed them before they [the Park Service] ever even *got* their land.

¹ For Mr. McSpadden’s interview, please see C3966 Missouri Environment Oral History Project, a.c. 12.

² The McSpadden family ran several undertaking businesses in Carter County, Missouri.

CS: I guess you're recording that; I don't mind telling you, that those people that were for it, they're mostly all dead now. And every one of them that died, I just have a little better feeling in my heart that they're gone. That's a heck of a way to be. But boy, there were a lot of hard feelings. Still is.

WS: Do you remember the first time you ever had to deal with the Park Service, like when they came to see you about the land?

CS: Absolutely.

MS: Do you want to know what happened?

WS: Yes, I do, if you'd like to tell it.

MS: You're going to hear it. He came down there, this guy they sent down there to buy it. He sat down at our kitchen table; me and him and Carl. And he was as tall as Carl. He got him a cigarette. Stretched out under the table and lit his cigarette and laid back in the chair and said, [*spoken arrogantly*:] "What are your plans?" I came unglued. I went across that table and I slapped my hands down on it right in his face. I *was* in his face. I said, "What the hell do you mean, 'plans'? Who can make plans for you?" And about the third time they sent him down there -- Mr. Wright,³ I believe, was the superintendent up here then -- I called him. I said, "If you send that son of a bitch down here again you'll carry him out on a slab." They took him out of land buying.

CS: That first day he was down there, he came down to negotiate buying it.

MS: It was very first words he said.

³ This was John Wright, who replaced Browne Forester in May 1967.

CS: Like she said, he crossed his leg and lit a cigarette, and we don't even smoke. But nevertheless, he did. And that's the plan. The next thing, they didn't tell us any of the details or anything.

[Tape meter, 150]

He told us that he'd give us the price, and if we failed to take it, they'd take us to federal court. Then he went on for fifteen or twenty minutes with a big long speech about how terrible federal court was, and how they would eat you. I mean, he was laying it on us. Scare tactics. I just let him talk, and when he finally ran out of breath, I said, "I was in the army three and half years in World War II, and not a single day I wasn't threatened with a court marshal. Federal court doesn't scare me one bit." (Laughing) And he kind of changed his tune a little. But I let him know right away that I wasn't afraid to go to federal court.

MS: They started out \$42,000 for everything that they took.

CS: They decided that this was one of the negotiations that they were trying to buy, or whatever you can call it. It went on for it seemed like a year or longer. But they decided they wanted us to stay down there and take a scenic easement. But they never would offer us anything except just peanuts. \$16,000 was the most they would give us for an easement.

MS: And move barns, scale pens, and everything off of the bank.

CS: For the 387 acres. And we could never cut the timber and never clear up any more land or do any changing. We had to take [away] the buildings, our barns and stuff. We had

several buildings right on the riverbank. I had a bank that didn't overflow. They kept on putting the pressure for us to take an easement. But that \$16,000 was the most that they'd offer us for an easement. And I would like to have stayed on the old place, but I couldn't see living there for the rest of my life and the boys' life for \$16,000 and them telling me what I had to do every single day. They kept on to that, and he came down there several times. Finally I told him, "Let's quit talking about peanuts and talk about money a while." Of course, we never could do any good and they finally condemned us. I'd rather go to federal court anyway. We didn't get much more, but at least we had the satisfaction of trying.

MS: The highest they ever went was \$88,000; and they [our attorneys] pulled \$125,000 out of them. The thing of it was, the place wasn't for sale to start with. And it wouldn't have been. It wouldn't have been to this day.

CS: Getting back to the first, when we were fighting it. Marlin McClintock and all of those little -- they'd say, "Oh, you'll get a good price out of your land."⁴ Well, the land wasn't for sale, or I could have sold it any day, and anybody else could, that had river land. That's what it would have taken. Back then the market wasn't high, but any of it would have sold.

[Brief telephone interruption]

We were up at a meeting one night. This same Marlin McClintock -- and he's like me, he's not very bright. But he asked me a question. My dad and I were there. We

⁴ An interview with McClintock may be found in C3966 Missouri Environment Oral History Project, a.c. 19, 20.

were partners. He asked me a stupid question, and it was so stupid that one of the other guys -- I don't know if it was Leo Anderson or somebody else that was for that -- they called him down right away and kind of scolded him for asking such a stupid question.

That was just the kind of people we had to deal with. Then the national park.

[Tape meter, 200]

MS: He had that Hawthorne Motel there he was going to get rich off of.

CS: I talked to several people that had to give up their places, and that was the general idea when they first came. They'd scare you about federal court. They scared my uncle and my aunt. He settled. He took their first offer.

MS: And they only wanted sixty acres of his land, the land next to the river and everything. He made them take all of it, for \$42,000 and something.

CS: He forced them to take about 250 acres for \$50 an acre. The same land right now would bring \$500 an acre. Of course my old farm or any of the farms would bring ten times more than what it did then. Of course, land is higher.

MS: We had a beautiful place down there.

CS: They were saying, "You'll get a good price out of your farm." I could have gotten a good price out of it then. I could have gotten a lot more than they gave for it. But I couldn't see taking an easement. I would be glad to have stayed there, but I couldn't see, for \$16,000, me go ahead and pay the taxes on it and live under their rules. I just couldn't go that way.

WS: Now, this home, this was where you were born.

MS: No. It was farther back. It was on another farm, where he was born. This one, where we lived at, they moved there in '46, just up the river from where they were.

CS: My dad, the place where they had always lived, they took the lower end of it. We really had three old farms together.

MS: That joined.

CS: My dad's old farm, and a man's farm by the name of Huggins that lived in Topeka, Kansas, and then the farm where we lived that we bought in '46 or '7. It was all joined right up and down the river bank.

MS: There's a lady that works for the Park Service that lives down there in our house. Have you been down below Big Spring on Z Highway?

WS: No, ma'am.

MS: Because the house and the barn are still standing there.

WS: Oh, they are?

MS: Oh! And beautiful. Let me get you a picture of the barn. *[Mrs. Shockley gets up and leaves the room to find the photograph]*

CS: Roger Grant, his wife works as a biologist. They live in our old house down there.

MS: It's a beautiful place.

WS: How did your dad, Mr. Robert Shockley, learn how to build johnboats?

CS: Trial and error.

WS: Is that right?

CS: (laughing) Yes. They always had those old boats on the river, and there was always

somebody in the neighborhood that could make boats. He'd make them for everybody.

They'd go out and cut these native pine, these big pine, and get that long lumber and build them.

MS: *[Returning with the photograph of the barn]* One of the park rangers that lived next to us took a picture of that.

CS: So after the boat builders all died or moved away, my dad and my uncle, I remember well their first one. They decided to build them a boat, and did. They chopped and hammered. No electric saws or anything then. And built this (laughing) boat. It was kind of a crude thing, but they built it. Then he just kept on until he got pretty good.

MS: Well, Dad worked for the Park Service with Alex Outlaw, at Big Spring, building boats.⁵ He built them by hand. Also the boat paddles and things like that. I'll show you a hand-hewn boat paddle he made. *[Mrs. Shockley leaves the room to retrieve the boat paddle]*

[Tape meter, 250]

CS: There was always somebody who could build those boats. There was always someone in the neighborhood. Every boat builder had a little bit different style, and I could tell Dad's boats from anybody else's. And Andrew McDowell used to make them, and I could tell Andrew's boat from just looking at them.⁶

MS: *[Mrs. Shockley returns with the boat paddle]* His hand.

5 For Mr. Outlaw's interview, please see C3966 Missouri Environment Oral History Project, a.c. 17, 18. Mr. Robert Shockley had an exhibit for the National Park Service on how to build Current River johnboats.

6 An interview with Mr. McDowell, conducted in 1963, may be found in C3966 Missouri Environment Oral History Project, a.c. 32.

WS: That's amazing. I would have guessed that was machine made.

MS: No, no. My father-in-law did that.

CS: That's handmade. That's, I believe, made out of sassafras.

MS: I have three of them. I gave each one of the boys one. I had a little one, the first one. I told him, I said, "Now, Dad, I want that." It was a shorter paddle. So he bought it from him and gave it to me.

WS: Wow. Now, you could work with that all day long.

CS: Yes.

MS: Cokie McSpadden had some. He did this cane bottom chair.

CS: He [Robert Shockley] was pretty handy with hand tools.

MS: He'd take the hickory bark off of the young hickory trees in the spring of the year. He did that weaving on those old cane bottom chairs.

CS: Hickory bark. Alex would have him doing that a lot. Dad knew it takes a special kind of hickory. Down on our old place there was a little grove of them up on the side of the field. Alex would drive him down there. They'd chop down the tree and Dad would peel the bark and go back up there and weave those chair bottoms and the backs.

WS: Your dad must have just enjoyed making things.

MS: Oh, he did! He loved it.

CS: After he retired -- well, he didn't retire; he just got too old to work -- he went to making things. He'd make them and give them to people. He started making rocking chairs.

MS: Yes. Walnut rocking chairs.

CS: He'd give everybody in the country a rocking chair. "Here, take one of those stools."

[Here the Shockleys are referring to a short, hand made stool about sixteen inches high, consisting of a small piece of slab wood with wooden legs]

MS: That's just a little old slab from the sawmill.

CS: I had an old sawmill I worked at in the wintertime down there, especially after I saw I was going to lose the farm. That's a slab out of the sawmill. The bark on it. He got that and drilled those holes in it and whittled those legs out, and made that stool.

MS: I've had that thing for years. Practically everybody in Carter County has got one.

(Laughs)

CS: Down there I had a lot of walnut and wild cherry trees on that, and had this little old sawmill down there. But I cut several of those logs and sawed them up there, that cherry and walnut lumber, and stacked it up there and air dried it. I took it and had it dressed. By that time he wasn't working the fields or even helping to feed the cattle or anything. He was just working out with his (laughing) woodwork and things. He had an outdoor shop.

MS: He kept up the fences.

CS: He made rocking chairs and regular chairs and baby rocking chairs. The oldest boy still has his.

MS: He made that cedar chest of drawers in there, wild cherry.

CS: He made five or six rocking chairs. One lady took one back to New Orleans. He gave it to her.

MS: I forgot about her. I was sitting here counting them.

CS: Once he started, he would just keep making them, and then tried to give them away. He didn't sell a thing.

MS: He didn't sell. He gave them to them, because he loved doing it.

[Tape meter, 300]

CS: Over in here there's a place where you can get real shiny rocks. They'd go up in the woods and pick those up. He made a concrete form and pour a flower box, and stick those little pieces of shiny rock of all different sizes on the side of that. Then he'd tried to give those flower boxes away.

MS: He did.

CS: There's one around here somewhere.

MS: That's mine. I made it. I had two of them I made.

CS: Whatever he got started making, he'd just keep making it.

MS: I've got some great big rocks like that. They're beautiful.

CS: And his boats, he worked out in the back yard. There was a good shade tree there, and walnut trees. He'd build a boat and work himself to death to get it finished so he could (laughing) start another one. Back then he'd sell them for about \$65 a piece. He'd just swap a dollar. He wasn't making a penny out of it, but he'd worked himself to death at it. He liked it.

MS: He loved it.

WS: Were you able to save his tools?

CS: Some of them, yes. His old drawknife. The oldest boy had his old hammer. He had a regular old carpenter. He painted everything green. He was messy with the paint, and that old hammer had green paint all over the handle and the head. The boy had it, and some of the kids misplaced it or something. Robert was about to have a fit because he couldn't find grandpa's old hammer.

MS: He found it.

CS: But I have his old hand planes and his drawknife. He used a hatchet. He filed them. He'd keep them real sharp.

MS: Our last boat that we had that he made -- you took it apart last summer; him and Doyle Martin, in town, built another boat just exactly like it. That's all we use.

CS: I have a boat out here in the shed now that a friend of ours in town -- he's a carpenter -- he helped me saw it out. I knew how to build it, but I can run a skill saw or anything. This guy said, "Well, I'll saw it out for you." It built just like Dad; a little bit different. But you can tell it's a riverboat.

WS: What kind of tools would he use to build an oar like this?

MS: He used an old drawknife on most of them, didn't he?

CS: Yes, a drawknife on that. And a sanding block. He'd just get him a block of wood that fit his hand comfortably. He'd nail rough sandpaper on it with carpet tacks and sand that down. To finish it he'd change paper to a finer grit and just keeping at it by hand to get that polish on it.

[Tape meter, 350]

WS: I wonder what kind of finish this is on it?

MS: I don't know whether it's shellac, or what it is.

CS: He was making boats up at Big Spring. Alex was a historian up there then. They weren't allowed to use power tools. They had to do it by hand. That didn't slow Dad down a bit. Of course, he was used to making them by hand.

WS: I imagine they started with sawed planks, though, didn't they?

MS: Yes, the boards were already sawed. Rough sawed from the sawmills.

CS: They were planed, but the sawing and the drilling and everything was done by hand. If he needed to drill a hole, he had an old brace and bit. I still have it out here.

WS: Were the joints pegged together with wood?

CS: Nails.

WS: Did they use the old cut nails?

CS: No, just the regular store bought nails. No, the cut nails were obsolete, when I first remember.

WS: Now, you say you ran a sawmill for a while.

CS: We had a lot of good timber on our old farm down there, and the hill land too. In the wintertime there wasn't much to do; just feed the cattle or repair a little fence. We bought a little old sawmill to just cut our own timber. We just worked it in the wintertime. Then after the Park took the farm, I sawmilled about year around, then. Me and the boys sawmilled about ten years out here.

[Tape meter, 381. End of side one, tape one of three.]

[Tape meter, 000. Begin side two, tape one of three.]

WS: When you were cutting timber, did you cut that off of private land, or were you able to get any Forest Service contracts?

CS: Private or Forest Service. When we first bought our sawmill, we bought it down there to cut our own timber. The neighbors all had timber they wanted cut. Most of the time we'd cut the neighbors' timber instead of ours. Then, after the Park [was designated], I hadn't cut my timber. They came in and appraised everything, supposedly, before they established the price. The appraiser that appraised the house and the farm and stuff, he was from Fort Scott, Kansas, and knew about as much about these hills as I know about Kansas. Then they had some people come in to appraise the timber. Yes, they wrote it up, and they did kind of give me a hint of what they found. They said I had 15,000 [board] foot of pine.

MS: (laughs derisively)

CS: (laughing) I had ten times that much, and I knew it. But anyway, they put a price on the timber and added that up with the total price of what they would give for the farm. I saw right away we weren't going to agree on anything. I got a friend of mine (he's dead now, but), he'd sawmilled all his life. He was a few years older than I am. I told him, "If you'll go in partners with me, we'll cut my timber." And we did. We went to cutting that. The sawmill was right beside the road. The Park could see it going (laughing) up and down the road. We were logging right and left, working fast trying to get all the timber off.

Dorsey Adams, that buyer that was there trying to scare me about the national park, he had an appointment with us one day to come down there one afternoon. At that time we were logging up in a woods patch we had, about forty acres fenced, behind the house. We were working up in there. He said, "I understand you're cutting your timber." And I said, "That's right," and just as he was saying that, (laughing) my partner came off of the hill with his old log truck loaded down with logs. He drove around the yard fence, and old Dorsey could look out the window and see him. And down the road he went to the sawmill. I said, "You're right. I'm cutting it."

MS: That timber there, especially the pine, you saved to send the boys to college on that.

CS: Yes. But those darned appraisers, those timber cruisers, said I had 15,000 feet of pine. I had 100,000 if I had a tree. But anyway, [W.J.] "Dub" Crutcher and [Noel] "Nellie" Burrows (you've run across his name), they were appraisers here for our lawyers.⁷ They got, I think, about \$40,000 more than the Park last offered. I got all what I got out of the timber in addition to that. So it helped a little.

MS: They said, "Oh, if you cut your timber it'll cut the price of the land." And it scared his uncle to death, that sold out down below us. He never cut a tree or anything else, and of course those trees are still standing there. His son wasn't any smarter than he was.

CS: I wasn't afraid of them a bit, because they hadn't condemned it yet. That was still mine. They definitely didn't have me scared. They still got my farm, but I had the pleasure of

⁷ An interview with Mr. W.J. "Dub" Crutcher may be found in C3966 Missouri Environment Oral History Project, a.c. 26, 27.

fighting them to the last notch.

WS: Right. Now, had they condemned much property before they got to your property, or

were you one of the first?

MS: They'd been condemning a place across the river from us, but most people just let them go. There were only three that I remember went to federal court.

CS: Harrison Keathley, I believe, did; but he didn't have a farm. He just had a cabin. Yes. They had that scare story out, I guess, to everybody. A neighbor right across the river from us -- they took her place and condemned it. The story got out what a terrible thing federal court was. The judge at that time (he was also our judge) was Judge James Meredith. He got word of that, and he said, "I'll show how rough federal court is." And the first trial, Mrs. Boyer's, was the first condemnation suit that they had.

MS: And they held it here in Carter County.

CS: He came up here and had the trial in Van Buren Courthouse so people could see how rough federal court was.

WS: Meaning it wasn't that rough. (Laughs)

CS: No! It wasn't that rough!

MS: We had to go to Cape Girardeau. We took our youngest son out. He was in high school, and we took him along with us so he could see.

CS: That was the only one they held here. But he did that to show the national park people that their scare stories weren't correct.

WS: Yes. From what Mr. Crutcher was telling me, he said Judge Harper was kind of rough on landowners.

CS: Yes.

WS: But he said that Judge Meredith had a whole lot more sympathy for the landowners.

CS: Yes, he did.

MS: Right. Yes, he was good.

[Tape meter, 050]

CS: And this Dub Crutcher -- the reason I thought he was dead, we have some people that come up here from Dexter and Malden deer hunting. They camp out here. They have for twenty years or twenty-five. And one of them is from Dexter. I think Dub was living at Dudley or Essex then. I guess he told me he had heart trouble, but I had it that he was dead.

WS: He's all right.

CS: But anyway, that was the timber deal. We got \$40,000 more than their last offer, including the timber. So what little I made out of the timber was in addition to what I got from the Park Service. If they hadn't have condemned it, I would have been cutting yet.

MS: He got it.

CS: What they did, they condemned land and didn't have the money. Congress hadn't appropriated the money to pay for it. Even the land that they were buying, I don't guess they could pay for it. But they went ahead buying and condemning, and *knew* that they didn't have the money. After the judge ruled on it, I think we were a year and a half or two years waiting for the money.

MS: It was two years.

CS: And then after they paid us, they gave us thirty days to move; thirty, or it might have been

ninety.

MS: Well, we *made* it ninety.

CS: Was it? We waited two years for our money.

MS: We went to court one year in November, and we didn't get it till August. It would have been two years, that November.

CS: Way over a year and a half, I believe. They told us that we couldn't use the land after the judge ruled on it. We could live in the house and have a garden, but we couldn't use the land at all.

MS: We'd have to move all the cattle.

CS: We didn't know how long it'd be, and you didn't know if you could farm or not, or anything. So I sold the cattle, or sold a lot of them, and bought this place here and moved the cattle off of it, so we could draw the interest. But I'd been better off, if I'd known it was going to be two years, to have kept my cattle.

MS: They said we could leave the cattle, move them, or we could draw interest on the money. Well, we didn't know, and we'd saved a hundred head of herd cattle. We had calves. We had over 300 head.

CS: The only way we could draw the interest was get the cattle off of it and not farm it. We didn't know how long it was going to be. It wound up that we lost money there. The cattle would have made me a lot more money than the interest.

MS: When we started moving our horses, we had a park ranger for a neighbor. He told us, "Mae, you can leave those horses there." If it was all right to leave the horses there, why

wasn't it all right to leave 200 head of cattle there? Because they were watering down at the river, too. And that river is not near as clean as it was with those cattle standing in it, as it is now with these canoers and tube floaters.

WS: You're maybe the fourth or fifth person that's told me that.

CS: Around their campgrounds!

MS: Our boys were born and raised on the river. What they'll [the tubers] do, two of them (or however many), they'll rent an extra tube and put their icebox of beer and everything in one tube. Then they tie themselves together across that river. Do you think our two boys run up on the riverbank to miss them? The canoers are the same way.

CS: Around where they camp or stop and picnic a lot of them use the same place, and you've got to watch where you step.

MS: They don't even get out of the area to use the bathroom.

CS: Dang piles all over the dang place.

MS: Filthiest campers I believe I've ever seen.

CS: The "tourists," they call them, are filthier than animals. They'll go to the bathroom right in their camp -- right beside their tent! I've seen their sign.

MS: Yes, right where they're eating or anything else. And the Park Service doesn't do anything. It's on their property, down there along the river, where they're camping and everything. And they've got the houses up through there for them to go. Right where they're eating, cooking, and everything.

CS: This is after the Park and everything, but they moved a park ranger in down there, they

decided they were going to let all these fields revert back to nature. That was their plan. Then they decided they wanted to keep those fields open. Well, it'd been five or six or longer years, and those fields were grown up in brush and stuff. But they wanted me and these other people up and down the river to cut hay off of them and clean them up.

[Tape meter, 100]

Well, that was fine with some of the fields had been mowed recently. But some of them were a jungle. He was buttering me up. I guess, actually, they did want me to stay there [on the old home place] because they knew that I would work, and I had the machinery and the know-how (I thought) to do it.

I went up there to some of those old fields, and one in particular. I had to bushhog it. They wanted it plowed up. It was a jungle. I had to bushhog it before I could even plow it, there was so much growth on there. And I plowed it and worked it down. I sowed it and seeded it. I'm sure I furnished my own fuel, and I guess the seed; I don't remember now, it's been so long. Well, then I cut hay off of it for three years. I had a contract on those fields for a three-year term, I believe.

When it came time to renew them, they called us up there to the office (they had the office there in town before they had the permanent office they have now) to renew those contracts. So two of the fields, yes. They went ahead. I said, "What about the Wilson farm? They didn't mention that." He kind of hung his head and shuffled his papers. He said, "Well, there have been some other arrangements." That was the field I had to bushhog and plow, work it down and sow it. There was another guy, Bob Kelley --

I'll call his name -- he was one of their butt boys. He bought a little old garden spot adjoining. Well, he wanted that for hay and pasture -- well, hay; they wouldn't allow pasture. So they cut me out and turned it over to this Bob Kelley, and he hadn't done an ounce of work and hadn't spent a dollar on it. And now they're letting him pasture the darn thing.

MS: Well, he traded his cabin across the river over there at Chilton *for* that property. He owns it.

CS: Yes. He had a little old cabin spot over there, up on the steep bluff; just a little shack, about like our (laughing) house trailer here. He traded that to them for some of that land, with an easement on it or something. But anyway, he's cutting hay off of it and pasturing it now. But I was the one that worked and spent my money; my tractor, and cleaned it up, and got it back to where you could do something with it.

MS: Before you did that, though, we took David Essex that lived down there by us in the Scout, and we drove across those fields.

CS: Yes. But this Essex guy, he was over that then, the ranger down there. He lived on top of Cataract Hill, right up the hill from us. But he was really pushing, trying to get me to take an easement and take care of some of those old fields down there.

MS: Well, he could see what you were doing.

CS: At that time I had 120 whole cows, plus the calves and replacement heifers and stuff.

MS: You'd saved a hundred head of heifers that year.

CS: I had five or six, I think seven old tractors. When people started moving out or (laughing)

selling out, they'd have sales. Those old tractors weren't bringing much, and I bought them. I had two or three of my own. At one time I think I had seven of those old tractors. I could do the work. I needed the hay, even though I didn't need all of it. But I was glad to get the hay.

MS: We put it up for three years after we moved out here.

CS: You had to lime it once every three years and fertilize it every year, and I was doing that. But what really tee-ed me off, after I'd cleaned that one (laughing) thorn patch up and got it back in grass, they turned around to that butt licker and gave it to him, and not even notifying me. He said, "There's been some changes." Bob Bell was his name [the Park Service employee in charge of the fields program.]

MS: Yes. He didn't stay here very long.

CS: When I complained to some of the Park officials or something about that, of course it was too late then, though they said, "Well, that sounds like Bob Bell." I hadn't kissed anybody's hind end, but Bob Kelley had and he got the land, and I had done the work.

I kept two other fields. I bid in one, my uncles old field, one time. They had an open bid on it just for that hay. I bid that. When it came time to renew the contracts on two other fields, they had to have a meeting up on the farm. They couldn't have it, just to come down to my house or me go up to the office.

[Tape meter, 150]

We had to meet down there on the farm. We never did go out in the field. But they told me what all I had to do. They'd come up with a bunch more stuff; little piddly stuff they

said I had to do. They just kept adding more things and more things.

They had a young guy. He wasn't over it [the field program], but he was the kind that would go around and check on all those that farmed, the people that were cutting hay. I believe his name was Terry. Jack Peters was the ranger then, over the fields. He laid all those restrictions on it. I said, "Well, I can't take it. It's too much expense and too many restrictions." They wouldn't let me cut it until it was dead ripe.

MS: The 16th of June.

CS: They moved the cutting date up. I said, "I can't go along with that." He said, "Well, we're primarily interested in raising food for wildlife."

MS: God.

CS: I said, "Well, I like wildlife real well myself, but I'm primarily interested in raising food for cattle. And if I can't do it where I can come out on it, I'll have to let you have it." And this old, big (laughing) Terry guy -- he was a big guy, and a pretty nice guy for a Park Service guy --

MS: He was a nice guy.

CS: -- he told old Jack Peters, he said, "I hate to see Carl let that go. He's the only man we've got on any of these farms that will work at it, has got the machinery to do it, and has the money to spend or *will* spend the money to get the fertilizer and stuff done." But that didn't change old Peters. He said you had to put out some food plots, and I don't know --

MS: Oh! That really...

CS: And the guys that (laughing) took it, they sprinkled a few seeds around. Well, out on that

hard ground it didn't amount to a thing. There wasn't an ounce of wildlife food raised on it.

MS: That river bottom will raise more food than wildlife needs.

CS: But anyway, it's just a heck of a mess.

MS: It's a sorry looking place, I'll tell you for sure.

CS: I never will be happy, after I moved away from that old place, and I never will like anybody that was for it. I don't care to tell you, and I'll tell them too.

MS: Well, they know. They don't get in your way.

CS: It's a bad way for me to feel. When one of them gets sick and dies, I don't mourn a bit. They didn't cry when they took my place.

WS: How did your dad feel about all this?

CS: He didn't like it. Of course, he was at the age that he wasn't going to live much longer anyway. But, no, he wanted to keep it.

MS: Dad was pretty old. He had turned everything over to Carl. But then, as much as he hated them and cussed them and everything, (laughing) he turned right around in '74 and went to work for them down there building boats and making the paddles and things. But now, when the tourists and people came around asking questions -- which, they could ask some stupid questions -- this kid that worked with Dad, Dad would just move off and ignore them. He wouldn't pay any attention to them. They didn't put plywood bottoms on the boats. They built them just exactly like they did in the old days, with the pine bottoms and everything.

This guy lives here in the community. He told Donny, when they got it built, with of course the cracks that wide [indicates about an inch] in it, he said, “Well, let’s take it to the river and put it in the river.” He [Donny] said, “Boy, that’ll never float.” So they took it, and naturally it lays on the bottom. A week later, why, Dad told him, “Let’s go get that boat out of the water.” And that kid just couldn’t hardly believe that that boat would float (laughing) once they got it out of there.

[Tape meter, 200]

CS: The wood would swell up.

MS: And close all those cracks and things up.

CS: Back when I had those hay fields, I was the only one down in our area that had them. They had them on up the river, but I was the only one down in there. The contract said that you had to move your hay and the equipment out immediately after finishing the field. Well I did. Of course, I was baling with a small, square baler. Then I *had* to move it out in case of rain. But I was moving. I’d finish, and the just the day that I finished, why, the hay would be gone and I’d pull my tractor and hay baler out. But up at the old Partney farm I ruined a tire on one of the tractors. I had to go get a new tire, but I was working in the field every day, in the hay, and didn’t have time to go get a tire to put on that one tractor. So I had to leave it. The hay was gone and the rest of the machinery was gone. Well, they locked the gate. (They kept it locked, but I had a key; I don’t know if I turned the key in). But I told them. They knew that tractor was there. But they locked the gate and I couldn’t get in to get my tractor after I got a tire. So I went up to town up

to the office. In the meantime they had gotten another ranger in there that acted like he had a little sense. His name was Jerry Hobbs. I told him what had happened, and boy! He came unglued. He got on the phone and gave them orders to get down there and get that gate open. My wife was with me, and I guess I had the tire in the truck. So we go down through Big Spring and down Z Highway to put the tire on to get the tractor out of the field, and those old dumbheads, the Park employees, were up there to the old Refuges Fieldgate, we called it; a little old field that wasn't even a farm, with the gate. They were going to open that gate, and there wasn't any tractor up there, no field, (laughing) or nothing. So I thought, "Well, the dumb son of a guns," and I just drove on home. (Laughing) So I called Jerry here. We got him word again, and I guess he rimmed them out again.

(Laughing) But the story I was finally going to get around to tell (I'm so long-winded) -- after that tractor deal -- well, now they leave their machinery in the fields for years at time. Down there in our old field, Wayne Gibbs and his boy works for the Park Service. They have that hay permit, and they have an old combine down there.

MS: It sat there for the last three years.

CS: A self-propelled combine that sat there for three years. It's still sitting there. But mine, I had to take it out the night that I finished.

MS: We had to move the hay off, and Wayne never did move the hay off. Our oldest son was out at the Forest Service station downtown there when Wayne had them. Robert said something about the fields overflowing. Because he'll leave his hay lay there in the field,

maybe sometimes a year, before he ever moves it. But he gave Robert to understand that those fields didn't overflow. And Robert was born and raised there.

CS: Been out in that field in a boat many a time.

MS: You could go from the back of our barn, when the river is up down there, and just down below the barn you could cut out into the road, and you could go from the house all the way down to his uncle's farm and up to his back door in the boat.

CS: We *did* do it. Every time the river was up me and the boys.

MS: They were little. He'd take them.

CS: It's awful swift when the fields overflowed, but just as it starts dropping, it gets just as calm as a bathtub.

[Tape meter, 250]

And boy, when it started dropping we'd get in a boat and go down through fields and everywhere else. When it's coming up, the only time you get out there -- a lot of time your cattle gets stranded in a field and you had to go down there in a boat. That was the only way to get them out, drive them out. There isn't an old field from Big Spring down to Hutcherson's that I haven't been out in with a boat.

WS: I'll bet when you were a boy, living right there on the river, you used to see some of these people come down on like the johnboat tour. They were fishing and all?

CS: Oh, yes.

WS: Did your dad ever give those tours or anything?

MS: No.

WS: Like the Bales Boat Company?

MS: No.

CS: When I can first remember, they called them “guides.” Well, that’s what they were.

People came in and spent pretty good money to hire guides with boats to paddle them and take them fishing, and camp, or whatever they wanted to do. There from town there were two or three guys, that’s all they did in the summer is take fishermen out. It was pretty good money. They paid well. They’d always give you a good tip. And now everybody brings their own boat and does their own guiding.

WS: When did this type of tourist change? Like, you’re talking about the old johnboats.

MS: When the Park Service took it.

CS: When the Park Service came. Now, the boat thing changed. These old johnboats were so heavy. The first ones were made out of pine. They had to leave them in water or they would dry out and leak. And they were so heavy. Companies got to making aluminum boats, and of course anybody can handle one of those, or move them. The aluminum boat was so much more convenient. That’s the reason everybody went to them.

MS: Well, the Park Service, after they took over you weren’t allowed to leave your boat in the water.

CS: The type of tourist changed when the national park took over. Where we lived down on the old farm, we came up Z Highway, right through Big Spring State Park (it was a state park, then.) All summer long that was full of tourists -- families. On weekends and holidays you couldn’t hardly drive up the road, there were so many people there.

Primarily, or the majority of them, were from Illinois. About two-thirds of the license plates would be from Illinois. Families would come and camp there, and they let them camp anywhere they wanted to. Well, nobody camped right at (laughing) the spring where it boiled out. When the Park [ONSR] came in, well, they moved the campground way up in the woods, right out in the hot sun; in the woods, and out in an old field, too.

MS: Away from the spring. Yes.

CS: And stopped them from camping around there down near the spring. There are no families that come there anymore at all. Nothing but dopeheads.

MS: Trash.

CS: You can tell just from looking at them. It's a different type of people altogether. No families. You don't see families with two or three kids. They're just not there anymore. And you can go up there on a Saturday now, even on a holiday, and there won't be two dozen cars up there.

[Tape meter, 300]

And always before that national park that over, when it was a state park, they weren't ruining the park. Well, they were; I mean, it was crowded, but it's not now.

MS: And it was clean. They were allowed to camp anywhere that they wanted to. Then the Park Service, they go way up the river there, sit out in the bright sunshine. They make these pads for the campers and everything, and electricity to them and water to them and everything. They spent money, and it's not even open. It's closed. For the last ten years it has been closed.

CS: When that was a state park, on a Saturday night these old country people, they all liked beer, liked to go out square dancing or dancing whatever around honkytonks or wherever it's at. They always had to close at twelve o'clock. In the summertime, especially, after the taverns closed, the dance halls, or whatever, a lot of the people would congregate down at Big Spring. They'd sit there and shoot the breeze, or somebody would have a guitar or radio. Sit there and just have a heck of a good time, drink beer if they wanted to. I've seen more people down there after midnight on a Saturday night than the Riverways has on a holiday now. Isn't that right, Mae?

MS: Yes, that's right.

CS: We'd go down there about every Saturday night. Dad and Mother would take care of the boys.

MS: Daylight might see us come home. (Laughs) I didn't drink. The girl, her husband, and Carl did. We'd sit there on the car hood and serenade everybody (laughing) all night long, singing. We did have beautiful voices.

CS: Yes. I've seen more people on Saturday night after midnight there than you'll see on weekends in the daytime since the Riverways took it over.

WS: The Big Spring Park.

CS: The Big Spring, when it was Big Spring State Park.

MS: And back, like you were talking about those Bales brothers. When they had those fishing floating trips and everything -- I wouldn't say that they were high class people. They were *nice* people. They were people with money and everything. And they would come

down here all the time. But after the Park Service took over and those guides and everything had to go out of business, you don't have the nice people here anymore. And this [Carter County] court on Mondays and Wednesdays, all it is is people from Kentucky and Illinois and southeast Missouri and Tennessee and everywhere. They come up here and they get them with marijuana and everything. It's every week in the paper.

CS: I was looking for a [picture of] a boat. [Mr. Shockley produces another photograph, this one of himself while in the military:] There's me when I was threatened with a court marshal. I was telling Dorsey Adams I wasn't afraid of that. Way out in the Mojave Desert there. I was looking for an old paddlewheel boat. Have you seen a picture of the old grub paddlewheel boat?

[Tape meter, 358. End of side two, tape one of three.]

[Tape meter, 000. Begin side one, tape two of three. Recording resumes while still looking at photographs, historic and more recent; some incidental conversation omitted]

CS: That's Mr. W.W. That's my granddad.

WS: Oh, okay. Now he was the one that moved the family here?

MS: Yes.

CS: Yes, from Waynesville. I thought I could find you a picture of that old boat up at Big Spring. It was an old sternwheeler. I don't know; I guess I won't find it.

WS: You still get out on the river some.

CS: Oh, yes. We went gigging the last week of gigging season.

MS: Seven nights.

CS: And cooked them on the riverbank seven nights in a row, the last week of gigging season.
I thought I could find a picture of that old paddlewheel, when I was about three years old.

MS: There it is. There's the little boy right there in front. That's right up in at Big Spring.

CS: Yes, that's right where the water boiled out of the surface.

MS: This is Carl's dad over here, and his nephews. And this is his aunt, and this is his grandpa. This is his uncle and his wife. This is Carl right there. I think that's his sister right there.

WS: I wonder what year that would be?

CS: That was about the mid-'20s. I don't know.

MS: Carl was born in '21, so it doesn't look like he's over four years old there.

CS: So it must have been around '25 or '26.

WS: Now, did you ever hear your granddad or dad talk about this area before you could remember it?

CS: Oh, yes! They were always telling stories. Yes.

WS: What kind of stories?

CS: Oh, just hunting stories, or the fishing stories. They'd go gigging and float down in an old johnboat. They'd float down the river with a big pine fire on the boat and gigging. My granddad, I don't remember him going gigging, but he'd always tell them to kill a redhorse. They'd eat the head. That wrinkle on the redhorse's nose, he called that its snooter. He said, "Kill a redhorse. I want that snooter." (Laughs) But they'd gig, and my dad would always hunt; squirrel hunt in the summertime, and in the wintertime he'd hunt

fur. There weren't many coons. But he'd night hunt his dogs of a night and catch whatever fur that the dog would tree. And trap, too; he'd trap along the river.

WS: What animal did they catch trapping?

CS: Muskrat and coon and...

MS: Mink.

CS: Mink. There wasn't a lot of coon then, but they'd catch a few raccoon with dogs and the trapping also. But primarily mink and muskrats. There wasn't any beaver on the river then.

WS: How about otter?

CS: No, there wasn't any otter then. But they've stocked them. There are now.

WS: That's what I was wondering. I've heard they've stocked them, and I guess that maybe a long time ago they used to be around here, but I don't know.

CS: Yes. They all disappeared, but they've restocked them, and now the fishermen are claiming the otter are eating all the fish. (Chuckles) You can't please everybody all the time.

WS: Well, I guess you all have seen five or six superintendents come and go.

CS: Oh, God yes.

WS: Now, have you had some, I guess, that have worked better with the community than others.

CS: Oh, yes.

MS: I think Art Sullivan was our worst.⁸

CS: Now one -- now this was back before the Park first went in, and you couldn't find out what they were going to do or anything. Like these land buyers. Dorsey Adams came down and tried to buy our place. You couldn't get a direct answer from him at all.

WS: He's the one that came down and lit the cigarette and all.

MS: Oh, yes. He was the land buyer.

CS: Yes. Like, if they get you to try to take an easement, you couldn't get a direct answer of what the terms were. He said, "Oh, you can go ahead with farming as long as you farm under good practices." And I said, "Now who's going to be the *judge* of those good practices? Is it going to be you or is it going to be me."

[Tape meter, 050]

And he wouldn't answer that. Couldn't. They had the [land] office up at Eminence then.

And we went up there one day to see the superintendent to try to get an answer.

MS: I don't even remember his name.

CS: And he wasn't there, but there was another old man; an older like guy that evidently had worked for the Park Service for years. I don't even remember his name.

MS: He's the only one that told the truth.

CS: He said, "I'll tell you something. Whatever you do, before you sign anything, make sure you get what you think you can live with. Because every superintendent that comes in will have a different plan."

⁸ For an interview with Mr. Sullivan, please see C3966 Missouri Environment Oral History Project, a.c. 46-48.

MS: And they do.

CS: That's the only man of the whole that we dealt with that gave us a direct answer and told us the truth. I appreciate him telling that. The rest of them, I never did get a direct answer out of any of them.

WS: He was with the land office. I'm trying to think of some of the names. The first superintendent was named Ted Davenport. Remember him?

MS: Yes.

CS: Yes.

WS: And then Vernon Hennesay was the chief ranger, and he became superintendent when they moved Mr. Davenport out of here.

CS: Yes. And they had an Adams -- no . . .

MS: [John] Wright.

WS: Then there was a Browne Forester. He was in the land office in the beginning, but he quit pretty soon or got transferred, or something.

MS: After Dorsey Adams kept having run-ins with us, they took him out of land buying and put him into something -- timber cruising, or something. And then they completely got rid of him, and he went into the Corps of Engineers. And if you tracked his record, he'd be from the Corps of Engineers to the National Park Service, from the National Park Service back to the Corps. He just really wasn't the type of person that could meet the public and get along with people.

CS: Getting back to those superintendents. When they took the land where we got it released,

the land that the Park finally wound up taking, the old place where we lived there was forty acres they left out. The lawyers got them to release it. There was a field on it, ten or twelve acres; a little valley field. A pretty good little field. Well, they took the lower end of it. It belonged to another old farmer. We took out the cross fence and was farming it all as one field. In order to pasture the land that they left me, well, I had to fence that off. I had to keep the cattle off of the Park. I knew where the line was. The old fence had been on the line, and I could have found it back. But I wanted to get an agreement for them to mark the line, or something, so that I wouldn't have to change the fence. If their line wasn't suited with mine, I didn't want to build a fence and then have to move it.

So I called the superintendent. I don't know who he was, up here then. I told him my problem, that I wanted to build a fence between my land and theirs. I said I wanted to know where the line is. At that time he gave a long explanation; they didn't have the lines surveyed and crew-ready, or something. He said, "You can build your fence and you can always change it." I said, "I don't believe you understand. It's not much (laughing) fun to build a fence, then have to tear it down and change it." Of course, I never did get an answer from them. And if you build a fence, if you don't keep it sprayed, it'll grow up in brush and briar and stuff. So I said, "I'll take care of that problem." I built it over on them about thirty feet.

(Laughter)

I'm a little hard headed. But I went over on them. I knew where the fence was, but me farming that and cutting hay, I knew I'd keep that fence row clean.

MS: He also knew where the line was.

CS: So I built a fence over on them, and it's still there. They don't know where the line is yet.

(Laughs) I thought, "I'll just put that over there to where if I ever do have to build a permanent fence I'll have a clean right of way to build her in."

(Laughter)

CS: I'm hard headed.

MS: Oh, yes.

CS: But I wasn't about to build a fence, and then in a couple of years have to tear it down.

[Tape meter, 100]

[Some incidental conversation omitted pertaining to identity of Park Service land office employee, mentioned above.]

CS: There's been so many of them.

MS: But he did tell us. He said, "Well, I'm going to tell you something right now." And he's the only one that ever told the truth. He said, "*Every* superintendent that is moved in here will have a different idea."

CS: Yes. And he's the only one that told us what to expect. And, of course, I'd already figured that out, that they'd change. I would have considered an easement if they'd offered a little more money, but I wanted to know ahead of time, before I signed that up, who's going to be the judge if I'm doing a good job of farming or not. I wanted to know if it was them or me or a third party, or something. And I never did find that out.

MS: What was that superintendent's name that was here, while we still had the fields down

there? His son became an eagle scout while he was here.

CS: I don't know, there have been so many.

MS: I don't remember. *Very* nice man. They belonged to the Methodist church.

WS: Dave Thompson?⁹

MS: Yes!

CS: There was a Thompson.

MS: Yes, that was him. He was real nice. You'd cut the hay. We had cut it there on the Henson place. And it had rained. We had it all up except this one strip. It had rained on the hay and we had to let it dry. Well, you weren't supposed to move out until you finished that up. So while that was drying down there, Carl wanted to move to the Partney field and cut the hay up there, then go back and get the hay that was drying. Well, I called. He came in and told me to call. And whoever answered the phone, now he gave me the riot act. That gate was not going to be opened. Well, I had just come in from church myself, so I waited until the superintendent got home. I called him and apologized for calling him on Sunday, and told him what our problem was. This guy was real hateful and snotty, and he gave me to understand that there was no way that that gate was going to be unlocked. And I told the superintendent the exact words that he had used to me. And he said, "You go down there. You get your tractors and things. That gate will be unlocked when you get there." It was.

CS: Oh, they had some hateful sons of guns. And another thing, this Dorsey Adams, the land

⁹ An interview with Mr. Thompson may be found in C3966 Missouri Environment Oral History Project, a.c. 49, 50.

buyer, after they got the land all bought or, anyway, took him out and put him over -- I don't know; caretaker, or something. I don't know what his deal was. And he turned out, if you didn't have to deal with him trying to buy land, he wasn't half bad. He was a dumb (laughing) son of a gun. But they were doing some seeding, spreading fertilizer, or getting ready to seed something up around the spring, I guess. I had a fertilizer distributor you pulled behind the tractor. Just fill it full of fertilizer then set it. I'd used it up there on those fields I'd cleared up. He wanted to know if he could borrow it. I said, "Sure, you can borrow it." They came down there; him and the (laughing) Park guys came down there and got it and used it, brought it back and unhooked it right where it was when they got it. I didn't look at the thing. I thought anybody knew to wash that up and oil it to keep it from rusting. That fertilizer is pretty strong acid. It went on about a month or so and I raised the lid to that, and there was a little bit of fertilizer in there, and she'd all froze up and locked. They hadn't dusted it out. I'd always hosed it out with the hose and brushed oil on it. It was frozen up, and I never could use it after that.

WS: Oh, no.

CS: I should have looked and checked it, but I thought they were of age. Anybody could have figured that out.

MS: If they ask to use a piece of machinery they should know how to take care of it afterwards.

WS: Right.

CS: Yes, I tried to get along with them.

[Tape meter, 150]

MS: When he came down there after that, that was after I'd told Wright for him not to darken our gateway again. And you and Dad were out back building on a boat, and I was standing there in the living room. The doors were closed. I had the door closed. I was ironing and he eased up in the yard. I opened the door and went to the porch. He didn't get very far. He cracked his window down about that much [an inch or so]. He wanted to know if Carl was there. I said, "Yes, he's in the back yard." (Laughs)

CS: They had some duds, I'll tell you.

WS: Did he ever pay you for damaging that equipment?

CS: No!

MS: Carl never did even mention it to him.

CS: No, that would have been a lost cause.

MS: He'd been cussed so many times anyway.

CS: I just wrote it off as my ignorance.

MS: I was surprised he even had the nerve to come back.

CS: I was always raised up, around the neighbors if somebody wanted to borrow something, you loaned it to them. I never thought but what they would clean it up, but I guess they were just so stupid they didn't even know.

MS: Now, the three rangers that they did have living down there, when we lived there, before they sold and tore down all those other homes along the river -- they were nice people. Andy Hobbs. He was real nice.

CS: Yes, they had a few people. But the majority of them, most of them were foreigners.

MS: Essex. Oh, I'm telling you, we told him so many stories. We gigged out of season anytime we wanted to. We had guys that came out from Hunter. Well, that E Highway from Hunter comes right in across the river from our farm.

WS: Oh, where Mr. and Mrs. [Don] Yantis live.

MS: Yes! We owned that land.

WS: They were telling me that.¹⁰ Yes.

MS: So these guys were from Ellsinore. They did the clearing, the dozing out here, and cleared this all up for us. They'd come at least once a week and sometimes twice a week and go gigging, out of season. Well, they'd go down the river, and then I'd take the truck down and pick them out. Carl would leave the boat and everything down there. Of course, these guys were drinking all the time. Man, they had these beer cans from one farm where I picked them up at, all the way back to the house. And old Essex said to me one (laughing) time (he was from the east); he said, "Mae? He's doing all that drinking going up and down the road?" I said, "I don't have any idea." Because he knew that (laughing) I didn't [drink]. We were fishing illegally and having a fish fry there every night. (Laughs) In fact, we even took him gigging. He always swore he could out-drink anybody, and old Carl looked for a certain malt beer one time. (Laughing) And I mean to tell you, he was still sitting there at daylight. He hadn't passed out, but he didn't know what he was doing or saying. We had a lot of fun with him.

¹⁰ Referring to the interview contained in C3966 Missouri Environment Oral History Project, a.c. 13, 14.

WS: When a new superintendent comes in, does it really tend to change things?

MS: It does.

CS: Yes. I don't know that much about them, anymore.

MS: The worst one, I think, that we had has been this Art Sullivan. I mean, he's been against *everything* and *everybody*. He was lucky to get out when he did, especially over those wild horses. And Emerson signed the bill to leave those horses. Those horses weren't bothering anything. Those horses and cows don't do as much damage to your riverbanks and the fields and things as the human beings with these canoes and tubes.

CS: I'd rather walk around where horses have been than those tourists, right out on the gravel bars, all their droppings.

MS: We had pictures of it, at one time, on a private person's place. He took a scenic easement. Carl took the pictures and showed them to him. He had me go down there. They had walked from the river as far as from here to that house over there [about 125 yards], and sat on that hay rake and crapped, went to the bathroom, and left all the mess around there.

[Tape meter, 200]

WS: Somebody told me in the summertime it's like the world's biggest outhouse out along the river.

MS: It is, it is.

CS: We have this old boat, and we go fishing quite a bit.

MS: We don't go on Saturdays and Sundays.

CS: We don't go out at all on weekends or holidays.

MS: This couple over here, their son is in the Air Force at Scott Air Base. Him and his friends would come down on the weekends. I went with them last summer. He liked to tell me he was trying to keep his mother off his back about drinking or anything, so he comes over and gets me to ride along with them so (laughing) she won't say anything to him in front of me. And I went with them out to KOA to dump them off in their tubes. They were floating from there to Big Spring.

We got out there about ten o'clock, and I've *never* -- that river was black with people and tubes and little kids. They'll take babies. They'll tie that icebox for their beer and stuff down in this tube, and they'll take a baby and lay on top of that and float down the river like that. We've had people from Kentucky and places like that killed in floating trips. But I'm surprised there's not more than that.

CS: There's no comparison in the river now than it was before the Park took over. Of course, they have got a lot more tourists, but the tourists they have, the quality --

MS: It's trash. It really is.

CS: -- it's nothing but, well, I don't know; undesirable people, as far as I'm concerned. Of course, that's their right to come here and float the river if they want to.

MS: And they come up here every weekend. They'll start a fight with the local boys on the river, going upriver, and just get, well, practically killed. They get the hell knocked out of them, is what they get.

CS: Before the Park took over that old Big Spring State Park, from the first warm days in

spring till the cold weather, that was full of family tourists. Well, all kinds. People would come and stay several days or overnight, or maybe just on Sunday, but bring their family and kids. You don't see that now. We know because we lived down there, and to go to town we went through the Park every night, back and forth to town.

MS: Yes. We just followed the river to town.

CS: You can tell the difference now. There's just so much difference in the number of tourists down at the Park now as there is daylight and dark, and also the quality of them.

WS: Well, another thing they tell me, the tourists these days, a lot of time in the summertime they'll take their clothes off and go floating down the river.

MS: Yes! Oh, yes.

CS: Oh, yes.

MS: They have no respect for anybody, not even themselves.

CS: They go to the bathroom if they need to go to the bathroom. If they're on the bank they go right there in the crowd. If they're in the river they don't (laughing) bother, they just go in the water.

MS: It's women and children, it doesn't make any difference. They have no respect for you.

WS: That's amazing.

MS: It'd be worth your time just to come down and make a trip just to see how they act and do. Don't bring anybody along that it would embarrass them, you know.

CS: They had a fight up the river last summer. A guy and his wife came down the river in his boat, and then there was a bunch of those tubers out there and they were bad-mouthing

him, and cussing at the guy and telling him what they were going to do to his wife. So he didn't say anything. Of course, he was outnumbered. He went down to the landing, and a bunch of his friends were down there.

MS: Well, his brothers in law.

CS: He told him what it was. They just all stayed there until those tubers came in. They had a big fight, and I guess put one or two of those tubers in the hospital.

[Tape meter, 250]

Hit one with a boat paddle. The sharp edge of the paddle right across the top of his head just peeled his forehead down. It fell down over his eyes. It broke those guys from harassing the natives.

MS: It was Greg. Scare old Will out here. It was his brothers-in-law he went down there and got. They all got in the boat and they went back up there where they were at. Now, I mean, they laid them out. They called the ambulance. Of course, the guys got in the boat and they were gone, because nobody knew who had done and everything. But that happens every weekend.

CS: That's the kind. You don't have people that come down to enjoy -- well, I guess they enjoy it; they claim they do -- but they're not pleasant people. When they meet somebody they've always got vulgar talk and bad language of every kind.

MS: No respect for people.

CS: Before, you'd meet somebody on the river or pass them or something, see a fisherman or some people out swimming -- they'd always wave or stop and talk or something. But it's

not that kind of people anymore.

MS: That river is just exactly like the highways: there's a right way and a wrong way to go up and down that river. If you're coming up river, you stay on the right. If you're coming down you stay on the right. They don't *know*. No respect. And if people are sitting fishing and we go by, as we go by we slow our boat down till it won't bother them fishing, till we get on past them for several yards. But most of them, with those big motors, they just zoom.

CS: A couple of years ago, man, I was down on the river in a boat, and we'd started up over what they call Gun Shoal down there. It's real swift, and a curve in it. There was a boat coming down the river, and he had his trolling motor trying to guide that boat; an aluminum boat, of course. Two guys in it. I've got a motor with a prop on it, old fashioned. I got right over to the right against a weed bed.

MS: We were as far as we could get.

CS: Plenty of room for them to stay in the channel. And that (laughing) guy with his trolling motor, he didn't know what he was doing, and maybe he got scared. I don't know. But he was sure pulling some stupid tricks. And I saw he was going to run into me, so I put my motor in reverse. Here he just kept coming right at me. I hollered, "You better get your paddle!" I backed down as far as from here to the neighbor's house over there [about 125 yards], back downstream, trying to keep him from hitting me. Finally he did.

MS: He still ran his boat right up into our boat.

CS: They landed up over there on the east side. It was an island. So I put the boat in the river

and I ran up by him. I said, “The next time I meet you I’m going to run over you!” and gave him a mean look; well, to just look natural it would look mean.

MS: You gave him a cussing.

CS: Did I give him a cussing?

MS: Yes, you did!

CS: I was in one of these old wooden boats, and a motor with a prop you can just leave them in gear and idle them down, and then just hold it against the current. And I was right against the weeds. The channel was open.

MS: He was on the right hand side.

[Tape meter, 300]

CS: He just kept coming right at me, going to run into me; and me, you might think, parked there. So back down the river I go (laughing) again in reverse. Actually it wasn’t about as far down the river in reverse as that neighbor’s house over there.

MS: We had to keep him from hitting me.

CS: Yes, to keep him from hitting us.

MS: He still hit us.

CS: And that’s when I told him, when I went by there, the next time I met him on the river that I was running over him.

MS: You told him, “You better make *damn* sure you’ve got a boat paddle with you, the next time,” is what you said.

CS: (laughs) Yes; I likely did; I don’t know.

WS: Well, you mentioned in the old days, at Big Spring, most of the people -- maybe two thirds of them -- came from Illinois?

CS: The majority of them, yes.

MS: We had a lot of people from Illinois.

CS: You could look at the license plates. And, of course, we'd follow the cars in going back and forth to town.

MS: They weren't used to the hills.

CS: I'd say three-fourths of them were Illinois license plates. Of course, there were others too.

MS: Most of them now is Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

WS: A good bit of them are still out of state, then, that come up here.

MS: Yes. But, every one of them is picked up on marijuana charges or throwing their beer cans in the river. Every week they're in court. Every week up here that's all it consists of. The judges and the game wardens are making money for Carter County, because he lays it to them, and they'll turn around and come right back and get them a second dose of it.

CS: The thing that's noticeable, you don't see families coming here anymore. It's all young people and the kind that likes to party, apparently. They like their beer. Of course, I do too. I have nothing against drinking beer.

MS: Beer, drugs, and that river don't go together.

CS: It's the type of people they are, the language they use. They don't know how to say a

kind word.

MS: They act like they own it. But they find out that they *don't* own it. They let their mouth overload them.

CS: I'm surprised there hasn't been some of them hurt out there on those tubes or their canoes or whatever. They make no effort to stay on their side of their river, or right of way. The downstream boat always has the right of way. But they make no effort to share it with anybody. You've got to do all the giving. Even coming down and passing them, they'll stay right in the channel, and you needing that channel with your boat. They won't give an inch.

[Tape meter, 350]

WS: They probably don't know what part of the river is the channel and what isn't.

CS: It's just because they're hardheaded and stupid.

MS: They didn't do our two boys like that, because they took their boats. It scared me, because neither one of the boys would slow their boat down. If they [the visitors] were bound and determined to tie those canoes together and hog the river, why, they [the Shockley boys] were just that much bound and determined that they were going to have their right part of it. They [the visitors] got out of the way.

CS: Yes, there have been several arguments on the river, and as time goes on there will be a lot more.

[Tape meter, 363. End of side one, tape two of three.]

[Tape meter, 000. Begin side two, tape two of three.]

- CS: We aren't giving you any (laughing) information that you can use.
- MS: He's giving you all these fighting stories.
- WS: Well, to tell you the truth, there was an article I read by a lady named Erika Brady. I guess lives in western Kentucky. She came up here. And a lot of what you all have told me is similar to what she wrote. It's been some years since she wrote it, but about the behavior. Now, another thing she was writing about was this lawsuit the trappers filed against the Park Service. You remember anything about that? That was 1988, I believe.
- CS: I don't know any of the details, but I know they filed against it. I think they've got the right to trap.
- MS: Two of the local boys in town, the Terrys, they do trap. Jim Terry's boy. Over on [Highway] 103 one of them owns a liquor store there now. And then his mom and dad owns Terry's Variety Store. But his oldest son and his youngest son trap every winter. That's all that one does in the wintertime, is trap.
- CS: Yes. I think he works construction work in the summertime, and the wintertime he traps.
- WS: Well, one of the things she said in this article I thought was interesting, was the group of trappers is actually a small group of people, but the support they got was very big.
- CS: Yes.
- MS: Yes.
- WS: She interpreted that as kind of like the locals against the Park Service sort of thing.
- CS: Yes.
- MS: Yes. Because when we were first married in '48, he trapped. And I'd go with him all the

time. You were still trapping even after the boys were in school and everything. And then our youngest son, he trapped. He'd get up of a morning and run his traps his senior year of school. Then he'd go to school.

CS: Whatever he caught he'd bring it in, and the old man had to skin it and take care of the fur. (Laughing) Then he'd go to school. If he didn't get to run his traps of a morning, he would of a night with a light.

WS: So you knew how to tan hides and everything?

CS: No. Back then, when we lived down there, we had to dry them; stretch them and dry them. Then we'd usually send them to St. Louis to the market or something.

MS: You always took them up there.

CS: Now they prefer them to be green. You just put them in a freezer and keep them frozen down till you take them and sell them.

MS: I wonder why that is? We always to dry them. We sent them to F.C. Taylor.

CS: Back then they'd want them dry. But now you just skin them and freeze them down until you get ready to go to the market.

WS: I'm kind of surprised to learn of all the visitors from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Illinois, because it would seem like a lot of St. Louis people would come down.

CS: There were. We couldn't tell that, see. We were going by the license plates. We couldn't tell by the Missouri license plate where they were from.

MS: But anytime that there is anything brought in to court up here (your paper will be full of it every week) that's where it's from. It's Illinois, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

CS: There's other states. You see a lot of different states' license tags up here, but the ones we noticed, I believe, more of is Illinois. There are more Illinois than any other one state, I'd say. Or at least that was when we were driving that road all the time. Of course, they'd be going back and forth to Big Spring. The majority of the out of state license plates would be Illinois.

MS: You've got a lot of people now from Kentucky up here.

CS: Yes.

MS: They drive up here for the weekend. In fact, was it last year? Just not too many years ago, they were from Kentucky and they were floating down the river, and this guy -- there's a place up above town called Bass Rock. I never have really been to it. But they'll stop and they'll climb up that bluff and jump off of this rock.

CS: He broke a neck or something.

MS: He broke his legs and his arms, or something. The ambulance crew had to go up that hill after him. They couldn't get him by river. There's been a lot of that. I know there was one girl from Kentucky, I believe it was, that drowned. The canoe turned over. The current takes them in under the tree limbs. This river is a dangerous river. It might look calm, but the farther down you get the bigger it gets and the wider it gets. And that current is swift. I *know* of two drownings. They saved one girl, but there were two more, and I believe one of them was from Kentucky.

[Tape meter, 050]

CS: Just to watch them, living here all my life and knowing how the people used to act on the

river, and the way they do now, you're surprised that they don't all drown. But they're lucky. It's not as dangerous as it looks, but they don't use any judgment at all.

WS: Do you think any good has come to this area for the Park Service moving in?

MS: I don't think so. As far as I'm concerned, no. And this one place there in town that's called Brown's Flea Market? He's a very nice person. He was always over these Paramount Cap Companies until he retired. He's from Winona. I mean, quilts and things like that. You had your tourists in here that came looking for that kind of stuff, and for antiques and everything. He brought a bunch of baby quilts he had me to make for him to sell. He said, "We just don't have that type of tourist anymore. The only ones that come now, come strictly to float the river and the canoes. They buy nothing in town." No, Van Buren is strictly a tourist town.

CS: They've got their prices all jacked up with tourist prices. They never lower it in the wintertime.

MS: In order to buy material for a quilt, a washcloth, a towel, and a sheet, you have to drive to Mountain View or you have to drive to Poplar Bluff.

CS: In Van Buren you can't even buy a towel or a washcloth.

MS: A spool of thread.

CS: Nor a sheet or a pillow case.

MS: No. It's just not there. And if it was, they'd price it so high that you can't afford to buy it. I can drive to Mountain View cheaper than I can buy what they had here.

WS: I'll be darned.

MS: I sell a lot of quilts, just my quilts hanging there.

WS: How long have you been making quilts? All your life?

MS: (laughing) Ever since I was sixteen years old.

CS: You used to hand quilt them.

MS: I didn't really get into it all this deep when we were on the farm, because I didn't have to.

I went out there, just me and him one year, and we put up two farms besides ours. Our boys weren't even in school yet. His dad would take care of the boys, and I'd do my canning early of a morning while the hay fields were drying. Then I would go rake the hay and he'd bale it. I'd drive the truck while he loaded it. And then I'd unload it. I was pretty strong (laughing) then. Off the back of the truck onto the elevator, and he would stack it in the barn. We did our neighbor's hay, our farm, and another farm like that. Sometimes it would be nine o'clock at night when we got home. His dad would always have corn cleaned and potatoes peeled and everything for me, everything ready to cook. He wouldn't cook it, but he'd have it fixed so it would be there for me. I didn't have to do that whenever I came in.

CS: My dad never did drive a car or a tractor or anything. He was afraid of them.

MS: No, he didn't even know how to turn the switch on.

CS: He always farmed with mules. After I got out of the army they began to make tractors; well, they were making them before, but anyway, I guess we had enough money to borrow enough. But he never would drive anything mechanical. He finally did get to where he could run an outboard motor, barely. And maybe the lawnmower. But that was

the extent.

MS: He was dangerous with any kind of equipment.

CS: He'd jump out of a car.

MS: Yes, he would, if he thought you were going to have a wreck. You really had to watch him. He'd jump out. He was scared.

CS: I used to try to get him to drive or something. No, he wouldn't even try. Afraid of the darn things.

MS: He told me he was.

There was a farm every three or four miles apart. That's all it was down there along the river. But Carl was the only one that had any machinery to do anything with. We had a hay baler, hay rake, silage cutter, combine. So he went from farm to farm putting up people's hay. Then the women would go and help the next one out. There was nothing to cook for fifteen men.

CS: We swapped work.

[Tape meter, 100]

MS: The day I went to the hospital with my last son, I cooked dinner for thirteen men before I went down there. So I got tired of cooking and I went to the hay field, because I loved the outdoors.

CS: I'd say we had the best farm down there on our side of the river. There were two across on the other side, one above us and one below us that were probably bigger, but I'd say we were moving as many hogs and cattle and stuff as any of the other farms, from Big

Spring down.

MS: The only time, then, that you had time to quilt would be wintertime, when everything was taken care of -- for *any* farm wife, as far as that goes. Then you'd do your quilting in the wintertime. You did it then to have covers (laughs) to keep warm with. I was always used to being outside. We moved out here. We lived over here where these people live. We used to own all that over there. There wasn't a building of any kind out here. We moved into a mobile home. I had a sliding glass door put in it. There was nothing to do but sit there and look out that door and stare. (Laughs) I got tired of that and went to the nursing home and went to work. I didn't *have* to, but I did, because there wasn't anything to do.

WS: It must be awfully different to live in country like this compared to being down on the river.

MS: Yes!

CS: Oh, yes. When we lived down on the river, we could sit there in the house or out on the front, screened-in porch, and see the river and see down the river for half a mile. And now you can't even see the river or the barn, either, from the house. You go up the river and the old barn is twenty-five or so feet tall.

MS: And you just barely can see the top of that.

CS: You can't even see the top of that barn for the locust thorns that have grown up around it, and it's not as far from here to your pickup [about sixty yards] from the riverbank.

MS: From the back of that barn there was nothing but open fields. He grew maize, alfalfa,

everything, in those fields. And you can't even walk across it. From the back of that barn it's nothing but locust trees all the way down, from the road to the river. You can't even see the river. They wanted it to revert to nature.

CS: 'Til the Park took over, we saw they were going to, we'd raise corn, wheat, barley, milo, and stuff like that; hay. We had cattle and hogs, both. We fed all of our grain to the hogs.

MS: You had the hammer mill. You did your own grinding.

CS: About every two to three weeks I'd take a truckload to Poplar Bluff. They had a buying station down there. They'd pay a dollar within the St. Louis market. We'd raise feeder pigs and buy feeder pigs and fed all of our own grain.

MS: It wasn't nothing every thirty days to sell \$500 in hogs.

CS: The best I remember, I'd get around twenty-six head of hogs in the truck at a time, and about every two to three weeks I'd take a load to Poplar Bluff. And then cattle. We thought we primarily liked cattle. We thought we were cattlemen. But at the end of the year when we figured up taxes, we'd make a lot more money off the hogs than we were the cattle. But the hogs were secondary. We were cattlemen. (Laughs) We thought.

MS: Cattle is once a year.

CS: But anyway, we were happy. That was the main thing. We're not happy now.

MS: We raised our own meat. We had our own chickens.

CS: We kept our boats tied in the [river]. Of course they would have stayed on then, and nobody bothered them. Usually Dad had two boats. We kept them tied right down about

as close as from here to your truck, from the barn. And the motor on them, gigs and everything, fishing tackle in them. Anytime we wanted to go down there, just untie the boat and go. In the summertime, about every two or three times a month on Sunday afternoon we'd run up to Big Spring in the boat, and run right up the spring branch. The boat dock sat right where the bridge crossed the spring branch.

MS: The Park Service got that.

CS: They had four docks there, and they were running two passenger boats. The other two boat slips, the public was free to land there.

[Tape meter, 150]

You were welcome to run up the spring branch and land there on those unused docks.

MS: When they moved that dock and that concession stand and put it down there where the dining hall is, there was no more boat riding. People just didn't do it.

CS: In the Big Spring State Park days, that passenger boat thing was a big deal. Because people would ride that boat, pay to ride it. But they [the ONSR] moved that. The state park didn't know anything and built it in the wrong place, according to the Park [the ONSR]. They moved it down under the bluff there. You can't even see it.

MS: They took all the buildings and the concession stands.

CS: You can't see the boats. But before then, there would always be a boat landed up to discharge one load, and there'd be another one ready to load in. They kept two boats running all the time in the summertime, especially on weekends or holidays. The last man that was there, he didn't have enough business to even pay his fuel bill.

MS: If he hadn't been drawing social security he couldn't have lived.

WS: You're talking about like this boat in the picture you were showing me?

CS: That old paddlewheeler?

WS: Yes.

CS: No, that was back when the river was a lot bigger. See, the river has filled in with gravel now, and it's not as deep as it was. You couldn't run that old type now. But back when that picture was made he was running regular weekly runs from Doniphan.

MS: He bought everybody's groceries and brought them back in that paddlewheeler.

CS: He'd haul groceries.

WS: Between Doniphan and Van Buren?

CS: No, Doniphan to around down in here around Grubb Hollow (is what they call it), down F Highway. I remember riding the old boat a couple of times, I believe, at least, up to Big Spring. My granddad had one picture. I asked my aunt about that.¹¹ Stell [Estella Burrows] was another aunt. She was here from Oklahoma. It was summertime, of course. Grandpa hired Harry Grubbs to take care of the whole community up at Big Spring for a big picnic.

MS: That was a large community down there, then. They had a church and school.

CS: Yes, neighbors and everybody, the women had baskets, and we all a big dinner up there. Now I asked my dad about a fellow named Harry Grubbs. I said, "What did Harry charge to take that old boat and load to Big Springs?" Of course, that was back in '20s. A \$5

¹¹ Possibly referring to Mamie Burrows.

bill, I guess, was a pretty good size. He said, "Oh, he'd go up there for \$5." He had a one-cylinder inboard gasoline engine in it, and a chain to run that old paddle. But I guess gas was only 8¢ or 10¢ a gallon. But I can remember going. Boy, there'd be a crowd.

The women would try to cook their best, to see who could make the best cake or the best fried chicken or something.

WS: So that was just like his private company, this man, Mr. Grubbs?

MS: Yes. I guess it was nothing for him to take that boat to Doniphan every week. Everybody raised produce, and he'd take that produce to Doniphan and sell it.

CS: I think he had more or less a schedule. I don't ever remember riding it to Doniphan. But there up and down the river the people would know the day that he was coming, and they'd meet him on the river. He'd stop and take their order and buy whatever they wanted and then deliver it back that afternoon or the next day or whenever it was. I don't know if he stayed all night, or

the same day.

MS: There where our place is, and a place not very far up above the barn there, on the river, where that road comes out from Hunter, there was a ferry. They had a ferry boat there. People would take their teams and wagons across the river and go to Hunter to buy their groceries and stuff. In fact, Carl ran his boat from this side of the river when he was going to high school, and walked to Hunter.

[Tape meter, 200]

I guess there was a bus or somebody would come for them there.

CS: The first year I went to high school I stayed down at Grandin with a great aunt. And the second and third year I walked from home, up through the fields, and cross the river in a boat and caught the school bus. It would come out to the river there from Hunter out at E Highway (now), and ride to the Ellsinore school. The last year I went to Van Buren.

WS: So when you went to Van Buren you just stayed on that side of the river.

CS: Yes. We stayed at home down there and had a '31 Chevrolet car, and drove it out here and caught the school bus here and rode into town.

WS: But when you went to school in Ellsinore was when you crossed the river.

CS: Yes, crossed the river two years. I'd go up through the field. Of course, the grass would be that tall [about two feet] and there'd be dew on it. Of course my feet would be wet. When I'd get to Ellsinore they'd make fun of me. "Did you wade the river this morning?" (Laughing) My wet feet from wading through that tall grass with dew on it. They made fun of us country kids.

MS: The one that was making fun of you -- I mean he was *really* making fun of you -- they kind of thought they were high society anyway. Well, after Carl graduated and everything, he had a good, high paying job and everything, we could have bought and sold him twice.

CS: Kids in Ellsinore, they have a lot of room to talk (laughing) about a country kid.

MS: Town kids.

CS: Of course, their feet was dry when they got to school and mine wasn't. I didn't let it bother me.

MS: Van Buren was the same way. The town kids always give the country kids [a hard time] -- *tried* to -- they didn't get very far with me.

CS: I didn't let it bother me a bit. (Laughs)

MS: I didn't either. I grew up with seven boys, so I didn't learn how to pull hair. You either stood up and fought or you ran like the Devil.

CS: But I never did like high school. I went ahead and finished, but I hated the inside of a schoolhouse worse than anything. While I was in the service two or three different times they sent me to a training class, and boy, that was the most boring thing I ever put in, sitting and listening to somebody talk, or be on the inside.

MS: Well, they sent you to the University of Kentucky. Did you hate that? Surveying school.

WS: Is that right?

MS: Yes. The army did. Sent him to surveying school. He was in engineering.

WS: So you learned how to survey.

CS: Well, yes; not land surveying, but road building survey. Road cuts and things like that.

WS: But you still use the transit and everything.

CS: Yes. And back then you had to peep through it, and had a rod man and stuff. Now they've got a laser thing. You had to give the reading through the transit. You had a recorder to record it. Then you had to figure that out later. But now they've got the machine that I wouldn't even know how to look through. I'd look through the wrong end, probably.

But yes, we learned leveling and plane table, contour, and knew -- what did they have? A "lade," I believe they called it, to look through to make a contour map. At first they had four classes. I had two classes in drafting and one in geodetic computing and one in surveying. They put me (laughing) in geodetic computing.

[Tape meter, 250]

I'd never had the advanced math or anything, and in there with (laughing) college graduates and everything. I had to do a little thinking, but I could do it. But boy -- that was boring. Sitting in that dang classroom all day. I'd just gotten out basic training, and that's miserable. I sat there, and many a time I was wishing I was back in basic training just to get out of that dang classroom.

(Laughing) So I asked if I could transfer out of that into surveying, and they said, "Sure." In surveying you'd have about an hour's classroom of a morning. The instructor would tell you what you were going to do, and go out on the university farm and practice the rest of the day. And boy, that just suited me to get outside. That staying in a

classroom; boy, I just couldn't take it.

Yes, I liked that surveying. I got as good as the rest of them; good enough to pass the course. After I left there I never looked through a transit after that. (Laughing) By that time the army had changed and was going mostly to aerial photographs. They got to using aerial photographs and very little surveying, although we had a couple of surveying parties. But they had them working just to keep them in practice. So I transferred to motor pool. It was a pretty good thing. I knew a little bit about driving, and could drive a truck.

MS: Yes, but let me tell you what they did to him there, too. They put him in a classroom trying to teach other ones how (laughing) to drive.

CS: It wasn't a classroom. We were doing this outside.

MS: (Laughing) He didn't like that either.

CS: I got stuck in that, too. For about three or four months they had me teaching drivers. They didn't have enough drivers. Boy, some of those guys were thick-headed and didn't want to learn anyway. It didn't take me long to get the feel of that. I stuck with it. We were in the 64th Battalion; about 600 men. Just two or three of us could drive or handle a big truck or a wrecker or anything. Anything besides a jeep the rest of them couldn't drive. They could drive a two-and-a-half ton, but we had some four tons and a big wrecker. They didn't know doodly-poo about anything that made a truck run or anything. I've driven a trailer all the time, shuffling a full trailer.

WS: I'll bet when you were in the Mojave Desert out there you missed this country back here,

didn't you? (Laughs)

CS: Oh, yes! We were lucky we were there in the wintertime, but it would get hot in the daytime and at night you'd freeze to death. Oh, it gets cold. Have you ever been out around Indio, California?

[Tape meter, 300]

WS: I don't believe so.

CS: That was right on Highway 60, then; I think it's Interstate 10 now.

WS: I've been down to Needles, and then across.

CS: We were about halfway between Desert Center and Indio, California. It was right out in the Mojave. We'd go all the way to Los Angeles and San Bernardino is on the way; Needles and Yuma, Arizona.

WS: That's some rough country out there.

CS: Oh! Dust! They sent a bunch of us, and got some other companies; trucks. They had a railroad battalion up there in the desert right out west of Needles. Those guys were trying to learn how to build railroads and operate trains. They sent, it must have been thirty or forty trucks down to San Bernardino, and loaded them with ties. They came back up past our camp, and took them up out in the desert out west of Needles and unloaded those darn ties, then back home at night. It was the middle of the night, and one of the old trucks tore up with no lights or anything. Me and one or two other drivers just knew a little something about it. We got under that truck and drove another old truck where the headlights would shine on it, and we disconnected one of the drive shafts and the pillar

ball bearing off of that handle. The bearing burnt out on one. We had to take the drive shaft off of it, and then off of the tag axle too; back of the drive axle, out there in that dang sand, wallering around at midnight. No tools. Each truck had a little old tool kit: a (laughing) monkey wrench and a screw driver and a pair of pliers. Anyway, we got it done.

WS: Well, when I've looked through some of the old records on the river here, it looks like you had quite a few landowners from St. Louis along the river.

CS: Right around us they'd buy spots on the river and build them a cabin or home.

WS: It seems like there's been a lot of St. Louis from quite a ways back.

MS: St. Louis and Kansas City.

WS: A lot of people came from Kansas City too, huh?

MS: His uncle ran it for years -- there was a clubhouse. It was between Chilton . . .

CS: Kansas City Clubhouse, they called it.

MS: Yes. Kansas City Clubhouse. And it was owned by rich people. They had their own fishermen clubs and everything.

[Tape meter, 350]

Carl's uncle ran it until the Park Service bought it out and everything.

Carl guided for them. They'd come down. I don't know how many boats that John had out as guides.

CS: They had about three or four boats of their own, and then if they had a big party, they'd hire two or three guys with their own boats and motors.

MS: Then, our oldest son --

CS: Several times he'd help them out when they have a big [gathering]. That landowner, did it show the Carter County Farms, or something, on your list there?

WS: I don't remember that name.

CS: Well, Carter County Fishing and Hunting Club, or Kansas City Hunting Club. It went by two or three different names. But the Park took it also. The originally called it the Kansas City Clubhouse. But later most of the people were from St. Louis.

MS: They were rich people.

CS: There was a Lee Stocker in there. He might have been the president at one time. And Simmons, and I don't know. A guy that used to come down there, his family owned Greer Springs over there, Lou Dennig. I've paddled a boat for him, fishing.

WS: Yes, I've come across that Dennig name.

[Tape meter, 375. End of side two, tape two of three.]

[Tape meter, 000. Begin side one, tape three of three.]

WS: ...curious about, in those older days. You're talking about these people coming in now that cause trouble with the locals. Well, back then, like when you had these rich people from Kansas City coming in, did they get along with the locals?

CS: Oh, God, yes! Yes! You couldn't ask for nicer people.

MS: Very nice people. They brought food and stuff to Carl's uncle and aunt, and Christmas times and things like that, they'd send whole pecans and everything. Oh, yes. These were high class people.

CS: They were the nicest people. When we lived on the old farm, any number of people would drive down there looking for a place to go to the river. We let everybody that asked go through our barn gate, the gate there by that barn, and go down to the gravel bar down there. We'd let them go down to our field and camp or swim. They were always glad to get to the river, and we were always glad to accommodate them.

MS: They were always nice, clean families, too. We never had anybody with any trouble. There were seven or eight of them, sergeants or things, from Fort Leonard Wood. They would come down there two or three times a year and camp on that gravel bar. The army. Never any trouble.

CS: The people that came to the river then never had an argument with the natives or vice versa.

MS: No trouble whatsoever.

CS: They were just a different type of people. And generally older people. The people that come now are usually people your age [thirty-eight] or younger.

MS: And all they want to do is cause trouble.

CS: You don't see anybody my age [in their seventies] coming to Van Buren to the river anymore at all. They might drive down and look at Big Spring, but they won't come to camp.

MS: Used to, years ago, they did.

CS: Oh, yes. Old grandpas and grandmas, and babies. The whole family.

MS: Tents set up everywhere, and no problems. Clean.

CS: People that used to come down from Kansas City or St. Louis to the river, you couldn't ask for nicer people.

MS: It seems like now all they come is to drink and party and cause trouble. And they get it.

CS: If you even charged them for use of your boat or whatever you did for them, they'd always probably give you twice that much. Everybody kind of looked forward to them coming down.

MS: Well, it was a little extra cash.

CS: You'd get a few extra dollars. No, it's just as much difference as daylight and dark in the type of people.

WS: I hear over on Black River in, I guess, Reynolds County, they've had the same kind of trouble. Maybe worse.

MS: Yes.

CS: Yes. And on the upper Black River they trouble with the four-wheelers running in the water up there.

MS: Oh, tearing everything up. They have no respect for landowners or anything, anybody, anymore.

CS: Or the rivers or anything.

MS: If you don't set your foot down -- and you *do* have to set your foot down, and sometimes you have to make a believer out of them -- they don't take "no" for an answer. You just practically have to take a gun and almost pull the trigger to get their attention. They will run over you. I don't care if you do own the property, that doesn't mean anything to

them.

CS: No, there's no comparison whatsoever in the type of people that come to the river now.

MS: And I don't understand people that want to get on the four-wheelers and come out. They could go out and enjoy themselves. But get on other people's property and destroy it. Do you think they would allow you to come to the city into their yards and everything and destroy something of theirs?

CS: Yes, they'll get out and turn circles and everything.

MS: Tear the fields up.

CS: Tear the ground up. They think they're having fun. I guess they are; I don't know. But it leaves the ground in sad condition.

WS: This upper Black River, would that be near Ellington, or is that further upriver?

MS: It's from Ellington on up, I guess.

CS: Yes, one of the prongs of Black River goes through Ellington. I think where they were having most [trouble] was a little farther north and east of there, over in . . .

WS: Maybe Wayne County?

CS: It's still in Reynolds County. Reynolds is a big long county. It might be partly in Wayne County; I don't know.

WS: It's a different branch, then.

CS: Yes. There's three forks of Black River. One at Ellington, one at Centerville, and one at Lesterville. They called them the East Fork, Center Fork, and West Fork. No -- it's not Ellington. It's Logan Creek at Ellington.

MS: Logan Creek at Ellington.

CS: Centerville is the West Fork of Black River, then the Center Fork of Black River before you get to Lesterville, and the East Fork is at Lesterville. Then they all run together further south and form the Black River.

WS: Were they in the West, Central, or East forks?

CS: I don't know where they were at.

[Tape meter, 050]

MS: I remember reading about it in the paper and everything.

CS: They might have been down in the main river after all three of the forks got together, would be my opinion; I don't know.

WS: What can you all tell me about open range?

MS: He can tell you plenty about open range. He grew up with it.

CS: They had it. Yes. Everybody used it; my dad and, well, everybody. They'd have a little patch of ground and try to raise enough feed for their horse or something and let the cattle and hogs run outside; well, their horse, too, in the summertime if they weren't working him or riding him. That was a big thing.

MS: Carl's ridden the horse from the farm down there all the way out into here. Big Spring Park's corner is right over here at the back of this field. But he's ridden the horse to round up the cattle to bring them back home many a times when he was a little boy; him and his sister, his oldest sister.

WS: Did you have them branded? Is that how you recognized them?

CS: Yes, I had them branded.

MS: The hogs were ear-marked.

CS: A lot of people had ear marks. My dad branded his and put his name and address in their ear; ear tagged them. Some of them earmarked them. He earmarked his hogs.

WS: You say these were registered. Was that registered like with the county court?

CS: Yes. It'd be down at the county.

MS: Yes. Everybody would register their own mark.

CS: His hog mark was a crop and an underbit in each ear. His brand was a Bar-X.

WS: What's a crop and underbit?

CS: (laughs) Cut the tip point off a hog's ear -- that's a crop. And an underbit, cut right down underneath -- just cut a notch out. And an overbit would be up on this top part -- just cut a notch out. And a "swaller fork" -- instead of cutting the whole tip off like you're going to crop it, just cut half of it off and leave that. You couldn't make a "V," but the swaller fork is a V. And the "upper half crop," you cut (laughing) half of the inside of his ear off, then leave the rest. The crop was a square across, and the swaller fork was like that [a cut angling down to a V]. The underbit was like that [a notch angling up], and then an overbit, sometimes they would make a V up there. Everybody had a different mark.

WS: You could come up with a lot of different marks with all those cuts.

CS: Oh yes, there were a lot of them. And they could be changed, like the old rustler days, the Texas stories about them changing their brands.

WS: Did they change the cuts pretty often to steal the hogs?

- CS: Oh, no, they didn't worry about the mark, they'd just steal the hog and usually eat it.
- MS: That didn't bother them. Yes, they stole them to eat them, the ones that *didn't* raise any. You still had a few of those around.
- CS: Yes, the fall of the year there's a lot of food in the woods for them, the hogs would get pretty fat and they'd butcher them and eat them.
- WS: I read somewhere if the hogs have been running loose in the woods eating acorns, you'd bring them in and feed them corn for a couple of weeks before you slaughtered them. Is that right?
- CS: Yes. Acorns, they said the meat was soft; real flabby, the meat was. They'd feed them corn for a while, and the meat with the bacon and stuff would firm up.
- MS: You do the same thing to beeves. You corn feed them before. If you just take a beef off of grass and butcher it, it is so flabby and no taste to it or anything.
- CS: And tough.
- MS: That you can't even cut it. It's just like leather. If you corn feed that steer (or whatever it is that you're going to butcher) it's just like meat that you buy in the store. We raised all our own meat; hogs, cattle, chickens. I had two deep freezers, and both of them were full.
- CS: In the open range they burned the woods then, too. That was an every spring affair, burn the woods off so you could get rid of the leaves and kill out the undesirable brush and stuff. And they would get good grass, just like regular prairie grass.
- WS: Did you burn your own land like that?
- CS: Yes. Just set her afire and let her go. If you had a rail fence, you'd fire around it or you'd

burn your wooden fence.

MS: They burned the woods just like that too. They'd go out and set the woods on fire, because the woods then was nothing but big trees. There was none of this underbrush or anything. And you could see for miles. Now the Park Service, the last two years, are having these controlled burns. And they really think it's neat. Well, it *is*.

CS: The Forest Service too. They're realizing now that burning was the thing, but they call it now "controlled" burns. It was controlled then. Just as soon as it got dry in the spring of the year, burn it. My dad, if he was busy working in the fields or something, and I was just a big kid, not big enough to drive a team of mules, he'd tell me to go burn the woods.

[Tape meter, 100]

It'd be a warm, windy day. And he'd tell me where to go and take a pocketful of kitchen matches. I'd head up around the pond and over the hog pens standing over the big flat lick log. Set her afire. I'd just make a circle setting fire. People out in here would do the same thing everywhere. But there'd be good grass. The old cattle would get fat.

WS: Was that a fun? That must have been fun for a boy.

MS: Ten, twelve years old, yes.

CS: Yes. I didn't mind it a bit. But then they tried to stop the burning, and did. And the Forest Service, when they took over -- well, the Missouri Conservation Commission -- at that time they didn't want a fire of any kind. They had regular crews to fight it and put it out. Well, the brush took over and there wasn't any grass in the woods anymore. Eventually there wasn't any food in the woods for cattle. It would be for hogs, if they ate

acorns. But for cattle there wasn't any grass out there, and the cattle would just run up and down the road all the time. That's the only grass. Grass has to have opening and sunlight. And that's the only patch there was for cattle. They'd be on the highways and county roads -- any place that was open -- that's the only place they'd go. And then, boy, on Highway 60 down here they were killing cattle and horses right and left. And people got turned against the open range. Well, we did too, and we'd used it all the time up until after World War II.

MS: Even after it was closed there were still a few people that thought they were going to push their way through, and still leave their animals outside. Of course, if you hit one of them, they didn't own it. If somebody got their car torn up that wasn't their livestock.

CS: You couldn't find the owner of it at all. (Laughs)

MS: You couldn't find anybody for a lawsuit. You couldn't find an owner. You still can't.

WS: They told me when open range was legal, if a car hit livestock the driver of the car was liable. So that must have gotten turned around.

CS: Yes. In open range, they kind of had a loophole then. But after they closed the range, if your hog got out and got killed, you were liable for the damage.

MS: You were liable for the damage. You still are.

WS: Well, how did the range get closed?

CS: They voted it in, I guess. I guess the state legislature passed the law. I don't know.

MS: I think it was voted in. They didn't give it a public vote though, did they? I don't remember.

CS: It wasn't a public vote. I believe it was a state-passed law up at Jeff City. But back when they kept it burned, and before they got control of all the fires, it was a good thing. But when there wasn't any grass in the woods, that put all the cattle -- and there were a lot of horses and mules that ran outside -- that put them all on the road, on the highway; any road. There were a lot of accidents. When they had the open range, you had to fence against them. It was your place to keep them out. They'd be up and down the road. If you had a good open field there, they'd be over in your field to try to get some grass. It wasn't the cattle's fault. That was the only place they could grass, there. If you had a fence they couldn't jump over, they'd have their head run through it, riding it down.

MS: You built a brand new fence up and down that part, and the neighbors ran over it, until you took the shotgun to it.

CS: Oh, yes, it was a mess. If the cattle and hogs in the woods had stayed there, I'd had never been for closing the range. But there wasn't any grass other than just along the roads.

MS: You built a brand new fence from [a valley field named] Lick Log all the way to the house, and Brooks' cattle would sail that just like it was . . .

CS: You had to work yourself to death to build a fence, and then they'd tear it down and get in your field. And you didn't get any profit out of the old cow when you sold it. Whoever owned it did, and you had to do all the work. And the cattle that ran outside were pretty scrubby. They weren't well bred cattle; or most of them weren't.

[Tape meter, 150]

Some of them turned out good stuff. But it got to be a heck of a problem trying to keep

other people's cattle out of your field.

MS: You didn't have any more trouble after you took that shotgun down there to them.

(Laughs) Gave them a burn. They went back over it.

CS: (laughing) No. We built a new fence right alongside the road; thirty-nine inch barb with barb wire on top of it, and a post every eight feet. I didn't have it up two hours and the cattle were jumping over it or riding it down.

MS: They went over it. They weren't even touching it.

WS: I guess that's where those wild horses came from, were the open range days.

MS: Yes. No telling how many years those horses had been there.

CS: Yes. Just nobody wanted them, and they left an old mare and a stallion out, or something, and they just kept increasing.

MS: They just all started from that. They've probably been there for the last hundred years.

CS: I guess they've been there for the last fifty years; a lot longer than the National Park has been there.

MS: Oh, yes.

WS: Was that a common topic of conversation or something before it became an issue here in this last few years?

CS: No, I didn't even know about it.

MS: I didn't even know about it until the Park Service was going to take them out. That's when Art was a fart.

CS: That's where they ran into the trouble. Up there, they're in Shannon County, I suppose,

all of them.

MS: You don't push those people up there.

CS: Nobody knew about it except people in Shannon County, but when the Park started to take them out, well, from all over the state and all over they country they were writing in protesting the Park removing the horses.

MS: Other states.

CS: So there was a lot of outside support for the old horses to stay there.

MS: And Shannon County, those people that were for the horses, they hired a lawyer. Emerson was the one that signed it to leave the horses.

CS: (laughs) Yes, the Park has run into several snags. But they're still the boss. They're still the big boys.

MS: I do believe Sullivan was the worst and the nastiest one we had around here. Of course, by the time he was here we had nothing to do with any of the fields or anything down there. We didn't have any trouble with any of the others when we lived there and when we were still putting the hay up on them. Because you put hay up down there three years after you moved out here. Yes, he took care of them. Like he said, that one guy -- he told this guy, "He's the only one that's got the machinery and knows how to take care of those fields. I don't know why you don't leave him alone." But he just kept putting more restrictions you couldn't live under.

CS: At that time, the guy they had taking care of the fields, oh, they weren't farmers.

MS: They still aren't.

CS: They had an old tractor or something. They'd get those fields and didn't halfway take care of the crop or halfway bale it right or anything. And mess it around, make more of a mess than they would anything. It was all right to raise grain in there, and they'd get in there and try to plow a little and scratch around and not get any of the loose dirt. They'd raise a row crop and make a heck of a mess.

MS: We got finished with those fields down there. When we pulled out equipment out of those fields they looked just like this yard does.

CS: They got a lot of static then from some of the rabbit hunters and bird hunters. They "didn't leave enough cover on it."

MS: That's what started it.

CS: That's what I told him about that raising food. He said, "Primarily interested in raising food for wildlife." Well, wildlife is fine, but if I want to do all that work and put out that money for fertilizer and lime, and money to put up that hay, I want food for cattle.

[Tape meter, 200]

So there were two different sides there, and I was the one that had to give. I gave up the damn land.

MS: It's a damn poor farmer who can't raise enough food for his livestock and wildlife, too.

CS: Yes. A lot of guys will shoot coons and squirrels that eat a little corn.

MS: We had a neighbor that did that.

CS: A coon or squirrel would get in his corn crib. (We used to pick ear corn all the time; that was before they got to combining it). People would shoot them or set traps for them. My

uncle and cousin was bad at it, and a neighbor across the river. I'd tell them, "It's a damn poor farmer that can't raise enough for himself and a coon or two." A lot of people that way. Of course, an old coon or a squirrel either, they'll come to the corn crib or your hog feeder every night. But if you can't feed that coon too, why, you'd better do something else.

WS: Now, your uncle was your dad's brother; that you're talking about all this time?

MS: Yes.

WS: And he lived on the river also?

MS: Yes. Al, he didn't have any river land. His home was close to the river.

CS: He was a valley farmer. He did have one little forty acres -- the forty included part of an old slough. But he didn't have any land that you would call river land.

MS: He wasn't a worker and a pusher like your dad was, either. Al was the baby, and lazy.

CS: They were different, my uncle and my dad. My dad worked all the time. If he wasn't in the field working, he'd be at the barn pecking and hammering and repairing his harnesses, plow, or something. If my uncle wasn't working in the fields, he'd be sitting in the house in a rocking chair (laughing) talking to his wife. Never go fishing or hunting, my uncle wouldn't. And my dad, if he had time, he'd go fishing or hunting; if he had all of his other work kind of caught up. Or maybe he'd let it go and go hunting anyway.

MS: If Carl was busy, there was no use asking him to go for a boat ride or fishing. I don't care if it was Sunday. If there was corn to be plowed or hay to be cut, it was just another day of the week. And if you did take off you'd be miserable.

CS: (laughs) We tried to raise some wheat and barley every year and combine it. We had our own combine. I'd put out a field of barley, not ten or fifteen acres. It would come off early so I'd have some early hog feed. I would get it combined before the wheat would be ready. But I'd go down there of a morning, real early while the dew was on, and cultivate corn until the dew dried off the barley. Then I'd combine the rest of the day. Then the next day I'd cultivate corn like the Devil until it was dry enough to combine.

MS: It was nothing for him to raise 3,500 bushels of corn a year, plus the barley, and the wheat, then the hay, to take care of all the livestock. We were never short.

CS: Several years I have raised 5,000 or 6,000 bushels of corn, plus quite a few bushels of wheat. I never did keep track of it.

MS: I know, because I've scooped many a bushel of wheat.

CS: And grain sorghum.

MS: I did. That last year that we were on the farm before we had to give it up and move out here, he'd combine and I'd take the pickup down there and he'd get that thing full. He'd fill the bed of that pickup up, and I'd take it up there and park it at the granary. Our youngest son would come down there. The oldest one had asthma. We would scoop that up, run down the riverbank, jump in the river, clothes and all.

[Tape meter, 250]

(Laughs) He'd go back to the house and I'd go back to the field. By the time I got back to the field, he'd have another load for me. The Life of Riley.

CS: We had our own grinder; well, it was just a hammer mill. I had a power take-off hammer

mill that would hook up to the tractor and run from the power take-off. We ground all of our small grains and milo and feed it to the hogs, and sometimes fed out cattle. By supplement -- my dad, he was young enough then, he'd scoop that grain into the hopper. I'd have me a bunch of buckets there with meat scraps and soybean oil meal. I had two sacks he'd load in there. I was sacking that, and every once in a while, I'd scoop some of that supplement in that and mix it as it ran through the hammer mill, then sacking it and then dumping it in the feeders. It pretty well mixed it. We made our own complete hog feed right there on our own place. We'd buy the hundred pound bags of meat scraps or tankage and soybean meal at the store. We'd mix it up as we ground it. Oh, we thought we were doing it right. The hogs did pretty good.

MS: Oh, yes. Those people selling out down there, he was buying tractors. We had a tractor for every piece of equipment we had. We went to the hay field; you never had to unhook a tractor from the mowing machine to hook it up to anything else. We had one for the mowing machine, one for the baler, one for the hay rake, one to run the hay elevator at home.

CS: And one for the conditioner.

MS: Yes. One for the mower conditioner.

CS: Didn't have a mower machine then. We had to go over it with another tractor with a conditioner that broke the stems. We had a tractor hooked to every piece of equipment and the elevator, and had one spare. We had a spare if something went wrong.

WS: That's some equipment.

CS: (laughs)

MS: Everybody thought we were crazy. Well, we were getting them for a song. If you're going to work, you've got to have something to work with.

CS: Of course, had the bushhogs, and I don't know.

MS: We had everything.

CS: Silage choppers and chop a row crop of corn for silage.

MS: In 1953 he put up all of our corn for the trench silos. You came out here with it. He was the only one in the country that had one.

CS: Yes. My uncle and Noble White and this place and down at Joe Keoster's.

MS: This place and up towards Fremont he went, and out M Highway up above the river there he went.

CS: Yes. Do you know where the Daisy Ranch is, up above town?

WS: No.

CS: It's up north of town about seven or eight miles, I believe. I was up there. The neighbor, he wanted me to chop his corn. It was a dry year and the corn burned up. I took that chopper up there and the tractor and my truck. He had a truck. We chopped it and loaded it in that truck. They'd take it and dump it. When I got done that afternoon I loaded the chopper. My uncle, I had him driving my truck, hauling the silage. I loaded that chopper on the truck. I still have the old tractor out here in the barn.

(Laughing) I drove that old tractor to Van Buren. A tavern was open, and I thought, "Boy, this tractor would drive a lot better if I had a couple of cold beers."

[Tape meter, 300]

I got me two or three cold beers, then drove the tractor on home, which was a total (I guess) of between twenty and twenty-five miles. I drove that old tractor home. After I got that beer, boy, that old tractor ran smooth. (Laughs)

MS: Porter lived down the river from us. He had a big farm over towards Grandin. He even took the baler . . .

CS: The rake and tractor over there and baled his trough.

MS: That was in '53 and '54.

WS: It sounds like you inherited your dad's work ethic.

CS: (laughing) Yes.

MS: He still does it. He's seventy-seven years old, and I bet he cut 500 ranks of wood last summer, right out July and August.

CS: I didn't cut 500. Now, the year before last, my boy got to where he couldn't work. He cut logs all the time. But he got to where he couldn't do a hard day's work. We cut wood. He sold it; we let him have the money, but I helped him. We cut over 500 rank of wood and hauled it and delivered it that winter.

MS: You did a lot.

CS: Last winter he was worse; he has arthritis so bad, and I cut by myself. And I know I cut 130 ranks of wood; just stove wood. I know I kept track of 130 ranks that I cut myself, and delivered.

WS: How big is a rank compared to a cord?

CS: The same size, only a cord is four feet long. A cord is four by four by eight, and a rank is four by eight by the stove length, and what you use is sixteen, eighteen inches. Just regular firewood. They call firewood a rank, which is four by eight. And a cord is the four feet long by four by eight.

WS: I've heard that called a "face cord" sometimes.

CS: Yes, a face cord. That's a four by eight size of it, and regardless of the length. That's kind of the way they go by wood rank.

WS: Okay.

CS: I cut wood last summer. It was pretty hot in July and August, and I'd cut wood every day.

MS: This superintendent at the National Park Service now, you and Robert cut wood for him.

CS: Yes. What's his name? Clary? Year before last me and my boy took him two or three ranks of wood.

MS: He called Robert and he ordered a cord; left a message or something. Anyway, Robert called him back, (laughs), and he said, "Do you know what you're talking about? You want a cord?" "Yes." And then Robert explained to him the difference between a cord and a rank.

CS: Rank of firewood.

MS: He said, "Hell, I just want firewood. (Laughing) I don't know what I'm talking about!"

CS: (laughs) We kind of knew the place where he lived, and Robert said, "You'll have a hard time getting four foot lengths into your fireplace." (Laughs)

[Tape meter, 350]

What he actually meant was a rank, which is four by eight by whatever length of stove wood you cut. Yes, I've been turning down wood orders already, and I did all last winter.

MS: His pickup's in the hospital.

CS: In fact, we could have sold 500 or 600 if I'd had time to cut it last winter myself. I wasn't pushing it too hard; just out there myself.

WS: Are you able to get permits to cut off of Forest Service land?

CS: I had a Forest Service permit, but the timber they have is so scroungy.

MS: And it's supposed to be for your own use.

CS: Last year I cut off of private land. There'd been a wind storm, a tornado, go through and blew down a lot of good trees. They weren't going to salvage them; foreign owners. I went through and cut those down trees. I didn't cut a green tree of any kind. I did cut a few dead trees.

MS: You cut a tree on the Forest Service now, if they catch you they'll fine you \$500.

CS: Yes, they'll write you a ticket.

MS: This David Clark that we were telling you was burnt out in Shannon County? Well, he was a ranger down here for a long time with the Park Service, but he went into the Forest Service as a law [enforcer]. And he keeps the road hot from Van Buren and Doniphan (of course, the main office I guess he works out of is Doniphan) -- just driving out here and *trying* to catch somebody.

CS: You can get Forest Service permits, if it's been logged, like cutting the saw timber out there, and go through a cut the tops. It's pretty good cutting. But there wasn't any of that

here. There were some dead trees over around the tower, and I got a permit to cut those.

But they were so scroungy; rotten, and stuff, that I just cut two or three and didn't cut any more.

[Tape meter, 385. End of side one, tape three of three.]

[Tape meter, 000. Begin side two, tape three of three.]

WS: They tell me they used to do this thing they called "grandmawing."

CS: Oh, yes!

MS: Oh, yes! Yes.

WS: So you know what that is.

CS: Yes! That was the thing.

MS: They'd take these little mills back and set them out here in the woods. Off down here between here and Big Spring. They grandmawed on the Park and everything.

CS: Yes. They'd go out and cut it, and if anybody said, "Where are you working?" "Oh, I'm working on grandma's timber."

WS: They would put a portable mill out on the land, then.

CS: Usually they'd buy a little tract of timber; ten or twenty [acres] or something, and set it [the mill] on that, and then haul the logs from wherever they could find them.

MS: That was an excuse. It was pretty easy to find, then.

WS: They'd ever do that on your land there by the river?

CS: No, they kind of stopped that before.

MS: There was a lot of it out here.

CS: But I've helped my dad, and we'd go out and cut a load of logs once in a while on grandma, when I was a kid, before I went in the army. About the time I was in high school was the last we cut. He always stayed pretty busy farming with his old mules. He sharecropped a little in addition to his little old farm. He rented a neighbor's land from the land lady. He was about one of the bigger mule farmers in the area.

WS: Did he breed his own mules?

CS: Yes. He'd have an old mare or two and raised a colt. He'd buy a mule or a horse. He was a little bit bad to trade. He'd get one that I really like. If I wasn't careful, he'd trade it off. But about every spring he'd raise a colt or two.

WS: I guess that's almost a lost art. They've told how they would breed mules depending on what they wanted to use them for. Like a logging mule would be a bigger mule, but a cotton farming mule --

CS: A cotton mule would be small.

MS: Over where Mr. Outlaw lives [in Wilderness, Missouri] I've heard Carl's dad speak of him quite often. I guess that's all he did was raise mules and things and sell them to other people. A guy by the name of Oesch. One of his sons still lives here. I guess one or two of them is over there at the Wilderness, yet, on the old farm. They had a very good name.

CS: Yes, about every farmer, they'd raise a colt about every spring. I was telling Mae a day or two ago, back when we were farming with mules, we didn't have electricity down there then. It was all kerosene lights. No running water. (Laughs) Somebody had brought down some "tourist" (we called them); some guy from St. Louis, I guess. He had brought

down a gallon jug of wine. The gallon jug was kind of shaped like a house. It had a brick design on that. My cousin was taking care of a cabin down there that people came down to. So I asked that guy (I forget his name, now) that had the wine, "Can I have that jug after you're finished?" "Well, yes, Carl, you can have it." And after he drank the wine -- he stayed down there three or four days -- he gave me that empty jug.

A lot of times we had a water keg to take to the field, for drinking water. We wrapped burlap sacks around that about three or four layers, and sewed it on there with a sack needle; sewed the sack tight where it would keep the water cool, and put a rope handle in the jug. We had that dug well, and real good and cold water. We'd fill it up at morning and night. When we filled it up -- drew the water out of the well and fill it up -- we'd wet that sack, and it'd keep the water cool about all the rest of the day.

We had that one dang colt, a horse colt. He raised a horse colt and a mule colt that spring. And we played with that dang horse colt and had him mean as the Devil. He'd be a working and he'd come by and pick your cap or something off your head. I set the jug down in the shade. There was a persimmon tree and a white oak tree right in front of the bar. We had the jug filled with water. We set it down there. We went in the barn to catch our team. Dad would catch his team and I'd catch mine. We came back out. That horse colt had picked that jug up with that rope handle. He got it in his teeth. He just raised his head up the normal height then spit that jug out, and down it went, CRASH! In a thousand pieces. (Laughs) So we had to round up another jug to take to the field with us that afternoon.

Dad, he was bad to tease those colts and play with them. I would too. We had that one particular colt so dang mean (laughing) you couldn't live with.

[Tape meter, 050]

WS: I guess you remember old Mr. Burrows, Nellie Burrows?

CS: Nellie Burrows? Yes.

WS: They said he pretty much had this county kind of memorized, in terms of land and all?

CS: Yes. He did quite a bit of appraising for the people around here on that Riverways deal. Yes, old Nellie. He was the kind of guy that you couldn't hurry about anything. He had the abstract office up here at town. And if you tried to rush him or wanted to get it done right away, he'd be that much slower. You'd be better just take it to him and not mention you needed it right away. He'd do it deliberately just to slow you down. Yes, Nellie, he was a fourth or fifth distant cousin of mine. His mother and my mother, I guess, were first or second cousins.

WS: So was he from a long ancestry in this area?

CS: Yes. The Burrows side. My mother was [Lula] Rongey, and they were kind of old families in here. I don't know where the Burrows originated from, or the Rongey's either. I think maybe the Rongey's were from France. But the Burrows family had been here for several years. I don't know how long.

WS: Do you ever remember that guy Thad Snow, who came up from the Bootheel?

CS: Thad Snow? Yes.

WS: To stay in the Rose Cliff. Did you ever meet him?

CS: Yes. Old Thad Snow.

WS: He was pretty tall and had a white head of hair, I guess; the picture I saw of him.

CS: Yes.

WS: It's a shame the Rose Cliff burned.

CS: Yes, it is. That insurance policy got too hot on that, I think. (Laughs) That's my opinion. I know the insurance policy sets a lot of buildings afire.

WS: Well, they tell me at the Rose Cliff a lot of people used to gather and talk about how they were going to treat the land and all; talking about forestry and that kind of thing.

CS: Yes. That was a fancy thing.

MS: Yes, it was.

CS: My sister and (I hate to call him) my brother-in-law, they had that for a while.

MS: He didn't stay.

CS: Yes, my brother-in-law, it was his big idea. My sister didn't want to work. And he was never around there. At least at that time they were living together, so I'd (laughing) have to call him my brother-in-law.

MS: He's still your brother-in-law.

CS: But I never did like him.

MS: No, nobody else does either.

WS: Well, to tell you the truth, I've pretty much gotten through all the questions I had for you, Mr. Shockley.

CS: (laughing) Yes.

MS: You probably got some that you didn't ask for.

CS: I don't think we made any sense about anything.

WS: No, it's wonderful to get all this information. Because I wasn't here, and I wouldn't have known any of that.

CS: That night you called and she answered the phone, and just the mention of the national park around here and we explode. (Laughs)

MS: I know what I said. (Laughs)

CS: You can't imagine.

MS: There's a place in Springfield, and they've been told and told and told not to call. It's Eagle Siding wanting to sell us aluminum siding. Well, anymore I just slam the phone down just as soon as they say, "Hello, this is Eagle." I just hang it up. And of course when you said, "National Riverways," I was cooking supper; I said, "I don't want to talk about that shit."

WS: (laughing) Right.

MS: (laughing) That's just exactly what I said! You didn't get the chance to say anything else.

WS: (laughing) No.

CS: When they were pushing for that park and they were telling us, "Oh, you can get a good price out of your farm --" Of course, all the land is doubled or tripled or more in price now. But imagine what 387 acres of river frontage would be worth now?

WS: Or in the future. I'll bet it's just going up.

CS: Yes.

MS: Nobody has cussed Cokie McSpadden like I've cussed him, and to his face. (Laughs)
And he'd stand there and deny every bit of it.

CS: That old thing, "You'll get a good price," and anybody that was wanting to sell could have sold it then. There was a market then, just like there is now. Of course the price was cheaper.

MS: It wasn't for sale.

CS: But anybody that had wanted to get rid of their property, they didn't have to have a national park to come and buy it from them. They didn't have any good arguments at all, but they got what they wanted.

[Tape meter, 100]

MS: They got what they wanted. Johnson was the one that signed the bill, but it wouldn't have made any difference.

CS: The presidents that sign that, they don't know anything about the local conditions or anything.

MS: No.

CS: That [Walter T.] "Dunie" Bollinger, [Jr.] -- you'd had to have been there -- and he was a little, runty guy anyway. But he was up there. I remember his pumping his fist. "I'll oppose anything that --"

MS: "Has the power of eminent domain."

CS: "-- power of eminent domain." And the next week he went up there and (laughing) voted

for it.

WS: Then he was defeated by [James S.] “Jim” Allen, I guess; over that issue, I believe, is how that race turned out.

MS: Yes. Jim Allen, as far back as I can remember -- and we lived at (they call it) Chilton’s Creek, down under the hill here, right next to the Park. He used to be school . . .

CS: County superintendent of schools. They had a lot of rural schools then.

MS: And I can just barely remember him walking down there one day, and I remember him giving us a sucker, when he was running to be the county superintendent. And he *was* the county superintendent for years and years and years. He was a very smart person.

CS: Yes, he used to teach rural schools. We called him “Windy Jim.” He was a heck of a talker. That year I was staying down at Grandin I heard him talk about him teaching school way down at Beaver Dam, down in Ripley County; about walking down there in the snow. He’d been home over the weekend and walking, I don’t know, five or six miles down there to the place where he stayed. That dang snow. He wasn’t lazy. He was pretty intelligent.

WS: He was against closing the range, wasn’t he?

CS: Oh, yes.

MS: But actually, whenever that came along, it was time for closed range. It was.

CS: Yes, as many wrecks as they were having on the highways -- well, not only highways, down on these rural roads like this they’d run them out. The road would be full of cattle.

MS: There was getting to be more people, more automobiles. You’d come around all those

curves, some blind curve.

CS: That was the only place they had for any grass. Of course, the cows, that's all they knew; just go find the grass. And there wasn't any grass for them to eat at all in the woods.

And of course there got to be more traffic all the time on 60 Highway, and the cars faster, people driving faster. There were an awful lot of wrecks.

MS: They were black-topping the county roads, too. It's like everything else. It's time for a change.

CS: That old barn picture there -- she was talking about rolling the hay off on the elevator -- we had a thirty-two foot (I believe it was) elevator that would handle baled hay or shovel corn or anything. When we were doing all of our (laughing) own work, why, I'd get up in the barn and stack that hay and she would roll it off of the flatbed truck onto that elevator. I would walk to the top of that, right up in the cone of that barn. I always had more hay than I had barn room, and I had to store it in every little crack. I blocked the top of that right up in the top of that peak of that barn many a time.

She had me up there one time. Her and the youngest boy rolled [hay bales] right off on the elevator. It was the last load. Boy, I had to work like the Devil to place it up there. It was just a little spot to work in, and hot. If it'd been out where I had room to work I could have kept it still wavering. So I had to make my way to the door at the top of the barn there to holler down for them to slow down. (Laughs)

MS: Well, he'd been making his brags, "Nobody could cover him up." I had to be as strong as a man, then, because when he made a bale of hay -- I couldn't do it now -- those things

weighed seventy to eighty pounds.

CS: Always made a good, tight bale. (Laughs)

MS: Just one bale. And it wasn't any effort for me then. I was young enough to put them off.

[Tape meter, 150]

I said to Steve, "He's up there. Let's cover his ass up." And it was hot. (Laughs) We started putting those up. By the time I'd get a bale on there he'd be over there ready with a bale, and we put those bales down that chute and up that elevator -- I mean, it was just one right after the other.

CS: You never did make me holler, only when that barn was (laughing) topping it out.
(Laughs)

MS: And then there was one time. I guess it was after we moved out here. He knows how something is supposed to be done, and it has to be done his way. It's a wonder I haven't killed him, because I really didn't know then that there was anything wrong with him. It's the *only* time I ever saw him get off of a truck. He was on the back of the truck, and we had a loader that pulled alongside the truck and threw the hay up onto him. He was stacking. He was always bitching I wasn't going fast enough. And I thought, "Damn you." And it was hot. And humid. I mean to (laughing) tell you, I went up through that field picking those things up as fast -- I guess if he hadn't called "Halt," it probably would have killed him. Because he had to get off, and that's the only time I ever saw Carl have to stop for anything. (Laughs)

CS: You thought you'd taken advantage of me. (Laughs)

MS: (Laughs) You'd have been six feet under if I'd had kept it up.

CS: I always worked outside, like in farming or anything; or sawmilling, later. But I always sweat an awful lot with my face and my bald head. I sweated more off of my face than I did the rest of my body. Boy, my face would just be wringing wet, water pouring off it, streaming. People would see me, "Oh! You're getting to hot! You're burning up. Get over there in the shade." And I said, "No, I'm all right." So I had an old saying, "When it gets too hot for the rest of them, it's just right for me." But this past summer or two I'm beginning to modify that a little. (Laughs) When it's too hot for the rest of them, it might not be just right for me anymore.

MS: You can't tell him anything.

CS: But the heat never did bother me. Hundred degree day out there, I would stop and rest, but I didn't have to. It didn't bother me a bit. But it does now. Of course, I'm a day or two older. But I never could take the cold. That ten degrees above is about as cold as I can take.

MS: Yes, he was in the back end of this barn. He was right up the cone.

WS: Did your grandfather build that barn?

CS: No, a fellow from over at Ellington built it; a fellow by the name of...

MS: Hal Horne.

CS: Hal Horne built that.

MS: The Woods brothers owned this place then. He always threatened him and the boys to

take this down whenever we left there; get up there and saw that off.¹²

CS: He built that with hand tools.

MS: This is all hand.

CS: There wasn't any electricity down there. Made out of rough, sawmill lumber. The framework's pine. But boy, every board fits, and square, and everything.

MS: When he put something together he put it together.

WS: I was going to say -- that is some real nice workmanship.

MS: Yes. You ought to see that barn. It's still standing down there, and the house is still there. In fact, this lady that works for the Park Service, they live down there. Her husband graduated with our boys. He was born and raised around here. Was Roger telling you? They were telling it somewhere, they're building them a place somewhere on some property that they bought, and whenever they move out, that the Park Service is just going to let that go. And they put close to \$100,000 in that house.

CS: They completely redid it two or three different times.

MS: That house -- where he got it at, I don't know -- but it's about that wide; about an inch or inch and a half wide, of hardwood flooring. Upstairs, downstairs.

CS: They build it right amidst World War II. Their other house burned, and they built a new one.

[Tape meter, 200]

My dad helped them, swapping work with them or something. But Dad said he didn't

¹² Referring to the extended portion of the upper barn, designed so the hay fork would be directly over the

know how he got enough stuff together in war time to build a house, but he did. And he got that hardwood floor. There's not a defect in it. It's all FAS [fancy and select: the best grade of wood] flooring, every board in it.

MS: It's got a full basement under it. Very first class. I kept linoleum on the kitchen, and in the wintertime in the living room, because I had the wood stove up. But I shellacked and waxed those hardwood floors every year, upstairs and down. But the year the president signed the bill for the National Park Service -- I was asking him for a sander, or something, because I had such a build up of the shellac and everything, it was cracking over around the side. And I sat in that living room and I scratched that off with an old knife. I scratched that whole thing off, just as smooth. "Oh, you don't need a sander. You wouldn't know how to use it." Or, "You'd get it high and low." And blah, blah, blah. And I thought, "Ah shit, I'll take that off there for you." (Laughs) And did.

But, the day it was signed and I knew we were going to lose it, I never touched it.

I never did re-shellac it. I painted every year, because it was all wallboard.

CS: And I never did any more bushhogging. I didn't try to keep the fields open or nothing.

MS: No, didn't do anything.

CS: Because you knew you were going lose it anyway. It took all the wind out of you. Boy, you didn't have the desire to do anything.

MS: I mean, that was your whole life.

CS: And then old Dorsey Adams had the nerve, "What are your plans?"

wagonload of hay.

MS: You can't imagine how that guy [*Mrs. Shockley gets up and walks to the kitchen table to demonstrate:*] -- like, I was sitting here and Carl was sitting here. And he opens his briefcase and stuff as he sits down. He opens it all up, lays it all out there. Reaches in his pocket. Lights a cigarette. And he stretches out like this [*demonstrates leaning back in the chair, feet fully extended, in a relaxed and arrogant manner*]. And the cigarette under your nose. And he said, [*spoken in an arrogant tone*] "What are your plans?"

That table was wider than this one, but I want to tell you, I was nose to nose with him. I guess it wasn't a very nice thing to do.

In fact, he was down there one day -- my nieces were here from California and we were getting ready to go to town. When he came in -- I think it was on a Saturday, wasn't it? It might have been one day of the week. But anyway, we got up from the table and walked off and left him. We told him, "We're going to town," and just left him sitting there.

CS: There wasn't any reason to come down, because we'd already told him that we couldn't take his offer.

MS: They just *kept* sending him down.

CS: Well, it was mostly primarily trying to push that easement thing; "scenic easement," they called it.

MS: That last time I chased him off -- and I *did* chase him off; I don't remember now what he'd even done, it's been so long ago -- that's when I called Superintendent Wright. He was superintendent here then. I said, "You send that son of a bitch back down here and

you might as well send Cokie McSpadden along, because you're going to carry him out on a slab." They took him out [of the land division]. His girl had been in a bad accident, and he was getting ready to go to the hospital, because she was near death. But Dorsey Adams, he went out of land buying real fast-like.

I've ripped that Park Service open a many a times. Right after they took Big Spring Park, they had a guy down there -- *oh*, he was overbearing. I mean he thought he controlled everything. And you drove through there at *his* speed limit, or anything else. So, after the state let them have it, he went to work for the Park Service.

[Tape meter, 250]

We still lived down there, and I was coming up Z Highway, and I was going to Poplar Bluff. I caught up with him. Well, he was stopped. He was going up a hill, and he was stopped. I saw the deer cross the road. He had, like a Suburban, driving it. He just sat there. And I could see him, like from here to the neighbors. I know he saw me, but the closer I got to him, he started letting that roll back down the hill until I got just practically to his bumper. Then he drove on. But he drove no faster than thirty miles an hour, and he held the road on me 'til you couldn't go around him or anything. You couldn't pass him.

Well, by the time we got to 103 Highway, I was boiling. When he pulled out on 103 there at the Spring, why, he held his side of the road. Well, when he did, I mean to tell you I went around him. That's a forty-five mile per hour speed limit. I left him sitting high and dry, and he hammered that thing down. He chased me all the way to Van

Buren trying to catch me. When I got to the end of the bridge, there wasn't anything coming on old 60 there -- why, I swung out. When I did, he swung out too, because he was going to keep me from crossing that bridge. I went across that bridge. By the time I got there, I was boiling.

Well, the ranger lived there by us, that David Essex. I went in that building and I didn't say "Boo" to the secretary that was sitting out front or anything else. I went right on through to Dave Essex's office. Him and Andy Anderson had their desks together and face to face with something, and I told him just exactly what had happened. By the time I got my story told, Leo came through the back door, and David said, "Sit down, Leo." I said, "I'm going to Poplar Bluff to the doctor. When I come back you can arrest me and put me in jail, whatever you want to do. But you better not ever let that son of a bitch get in *my* way again."

So he called me that night, and said, "His story didn't jive with yours." And I said, "Well, that's just too damn bad, because mine was right." But he did nothing but cause some trouble, and they shipped him out of here to Round Spring. And then they kept having trouble with him up there -- and I know, when David told me this story; I didn't contradict his word -- but they placed the billfold on him.

CS: They found some stolen property.

MS: Like he'd stolen it from somebody else's camper? And they found it on his living room table. They framed him. They set him up.

CS: Well, we don't know that.

MS: I know David Essex, and I know what he did.

CS: In taking over the state park (the national park taking that over) the “taking over clause” or something, the men that were working for the state park automatically got to go to work for the national park. And this guy was the park superintendent down here at the state park, and he was an overbearing rascal right. So, (laughing) they got rid of him.

MS: Carl came through there with the stock truck, shifting gears right there by that museum, and boy he started blowing his whistle at Carl and motioning for him!

[Tape meter, 300]

CS: Don't...

MS: I'm not going to say what you said. (Laughs)

CS: I just backed up and said, “What do you want?” He was out there trying to direct traffic. I was on the state highway. I had the right of way. He said, “Slow that thing down, bud.” And I said, “Slow (so and so.)” It was a new truck and had plenty of pep. It was a two-ton truck. I put that thing in forward gear, and up over the hill I went. And boy, he went to blowing that whistle and waving his arms, and I never looked back.

MS: He had a whistle like a referee.

CS: Yes, he'd wear a whistle. You get out there of a evening and try to play cop.

MS: He stopped our oldest one, too; or tried to.

CS: And I said, “Oh, horse manure.” And I kept watching in the rearview mirror. I thought he'd try to chase me down, but he didn't. I floored it -- it sounded like I was going pretty fast, but I wasn't going over the speed limit. The engine and the muffler sounded like I

was going a hundred. (Laughs)

MS: I wasn't going over the speed limit when I went around him there on 103. But I was mad. I'd driven three miles behind him, him holding the road on me. He never once tried to pull over or anything else, and it was legal to go the speed limit on that road. I didn't go around him in a smart way. I just went around him. And boy! When I did, I mean, he laid the coal. And I laid the pedal to the metal and I was gone. I knew that he was going to try to head me off at the end of that bridge, but he didn't get the opportunity. When he was going to swing in I swung right out in front of him and across that bridge I went.
(Laughs)

CS: I think they got rid of him in a month.

MS: Oh, yes. They set him up. They framed him. Because David was telling me about it.

CS: Well, I think they did. They supposedly found some stolen property on him.

MS: It was somebody's billfold. He was supposed to have gone into somebody's tent and stole this guy's billfold. They set him up.

CS: Well, I don't know.

MS: Shit!

CS: (laughing) Better not swear that they did.

MS: I could tell you, if David Essex was here today and I sat here and told him, "David, you're the one that set him up, weren't you?" He'd admit it.

CS: (laughing) Yes.

MS: I didn't tell it to him then because I really didn't give a crap. But old David always

walked on eggshells when he was around us. He *had* to, because they hadn't dealt with us yet. We hadn't gone to court with them yet. (Laughs) Their house was up on top of Cataract Hill. They sat looking right down at the river. And old Carl and the boys, we giggered out of season or anytime. We could go kill five or seven yellow suckers and bring them back home and fry them, and go right up under their windows and everything else, and they never did bother us. He had the right to. But when they'd go back east in the summer on their vacation (they were both from the east; Massachusetts, I think), they'd hire me to take care of their house; watch their house and feed their cats and dogs.

[Tape meter, 350]

He had a bird dog. I took care of it. And then she had Siamese cats. I had a key to the house.

The rangers that they had down there, we had no problems with them whatsoever. They were real nice. That Andy Hobbs, I really did like him. He'd come down there to the house in the afternoons. Dad would be sitting out in the yard working on a boat and everything. I was on the back porch canning tomatoes. He'd come in there and help me can tomatoes, filled the jars, and everything.

CS: They were just working for their own people. (Laughs)

MS: Yes. They *were* real nice people; them, and Outlaw and Essex. They were nice. Alex Outlaw, you couldn't find anybody that was any nicer than him and his wife. They're just wonderful people, I think -- even though he *did* work for the (laughing) Park Service. But she taught school up here, and all of our grandkids just loved her. Then, in the

summertime, she would teach swimming for the Red Cross and everything. They both did a lot of community work.

CS: You were mentioning Dad's old hand tools. I've got two or three. I'll bring them in to show you. *[leaving the room:]* I think I can find a plane.

[Tape meter, 376. End side two, tape three of three. End of interview.]