

R I C H A R D J A R R E T T

Interviewed June 18, 1976

By Dr. Louis D. Silveri

S O U T H E R N H I G H L A N D S R E S E A R C H C E N T E R

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Interview with Richard Jarrett on June 18, 1976. Interviewed by Dr. Louis D. Silveri.

Side 1, Tape 1

Richard Jarrett: I was born in Madison County, down there at Marshall at the mouth of Ivy in 1908.

Dr. Louis Silveri: 1908.

Jarrett: July, 28, 1908.

Silveri: How far back can you trace your ancestors?

Jarrett: Oh, I don't know how ^{far} back. You can trace some of them. Some of them might not want to find out too much about it. They went back ^{for years} down there in Madison County. My grandmother, they said, was German-Irish, I believe it was. She was redheaded. Dutch-Irish, I believe it was.

Anyway, they used to have an old Bible that was in Dutch, but I don't know whatever become of it.

Silveri: What was your mother's maiden name?

Jarrett: She was a Rector. Cora Rector.

Silveri: That's a pretty common name in Madison County?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: Jarrett is pretty common in Madison County.

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: Did any of your ancestors fight in the Civil War?

Jarrett: Oh, yes. Yes.

Silveri: What stories have you heard about that?

Jarrett: I've heard not too many stories about that. My daddy used to tell me some about his grandpa and some of them.

Silveri: What side did they fight on?

Jarrett: Oh, the South! I've heard them tell about that, when they went off, and then the renegades was around (the deserters that didn't fight on either side). He used to tell some about how (i guess his grandfather told him or his father) they used to come down /rob the people when there wasn't anybody but the women and children left at home.

Silveri: They called them bushwhackers, too?

Jarrett: Yes. Bushwhackers and renegades.

Silveri: Can you remember your grandfather and grandmothers?

Yes.

Jarrett: I can remember my grandfather on the Rector side. I can remember he had a big, long beard, and my grandmother on the Rector's side. My grandfather on my father's side, I don't remember him, but I remember my grandmother.

Silveri: Did the grandparents engage in farming?

Jarrett: Yes. They farmed altogether.

Silveri: How many children were in your father's family?

Jarrett: Let's see. There were seven, I think, on my father's side. There was six on my side.

Silveri: In your family.

Jarrett: Yes. There was five boys and one girl.

Silveri: How about your mother's family? Do you remember?

Jarrett: I don't remember how many there was. There must have been six or seven of them. They were all big families.

Silveri: When you were born, you were born on a farm down at the mouth of Ivy where Ivy Creek comes into the French Broad?

Jarrett: That's right. There in an old log house that used to be ^{down} where that bridge goes across now, but the old house upon the hill that's still about to fall down, that's the one my daddy built. After this one, we got the flood. (that that was 1916) washed us out down there, and he built this one up there. That two-story house up there, him and old man John Kuykendall built that house.

Silveri: Were you the youngest or the oldest in the family?

Jarrett: No. There was one older than me.

Silveri: So, you're the second born?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: What do you remember early in life about--

Jarrett: Oh, I remember--

Silveri: Going to school, the chores you had to do around the house?

Jarrett: Oh, yes. I remember my old dog Boozer. Then I remember the way we used to have to walk to school, four miles to go to Grandview. We didn't get but one pair of shoes a year. We'd have to save them. A lot of times, frosty mornings, we'd wait 'til the frost got off before Mother would send us to school, so we had to go barefooted. They had a one-room school. That was

Jarrett: (continued) at Grandview, but that old school's not there now. There's a big house built up there. Some farmer bought that old school, and it's down below there on Panhandle. There's a branch that goes down there called Panhandle. The fellow bought it, and brought it down there and uses it as a tobacco barn now.

Silveri: What was your father doing for a living when you were born?

Jarrett: He was farming then. Then later there he put up that store at the mouth of Ivy.

Silveri: Put up a store on his own land?

Jarrett: Yes. On his own land there.

Silveri: Did he continue to farm when he had that store?

Jarrett: Yes. He did. He farmed.

Silveri: About how many acres did he have?

Jarrett: Oh, there he had about sixty acres. He had some on both sides of the river. He had an old ferry boat that would go across it. Take a wagon and team in it and go across on the other side to the bottom land over there.

Silveri: His own ferry boat?

Jarrett: Yes. His own ferry boat.

Silveri: Did he take other people across the river?

Jarrett: Oh yes! Anybody that wanted to go, but there wasn't no road over there. They couldn't leave from over there. It just went over to his land, but a lot of people didn't want to walk the trestle, and he would set them

Jarrett: (continued) across the river. But he usually used his little boat then. He had a little boat for that.

Silveri: Did you ever swim in the French Broad?

Jarrett: Oh, Lord, yes! And in Ivy Creek. That's where I learned to swim.

Silveri: Is the current kind of rough in the French Broad?

Jarrett: Oh, yes. It is, but some places it's not as bad as others.

Silveri: What did your father raise for crops?

Jarrett: He raised tobacco. He had new grounds. He would tear up new grounds and raise tobacco, corn, potatoes, and had garden stuff. He had hogs and chickens. He had a team, always had a team of mules.

I remember one time. It's kind of funny. I used to like to go to Marshall with him. He'd go to Marshall and get something in the team. I remember one time. I had just got to going with him then. I hadn't been out much. We were coming back up from Marshall, up through this one street there, and up by the depot. The train come down the river. Dad got out to hold the mules. They were wanting to buck; they were trying to run away. He was out holding the mules, (I was setting up in Jarrett, the wagon) and Mr. Keys come by. He said, "Mr. / you want me to help there you hold them mules?" He said, "No. Get up in the wagon and hold that boy! This is the first time he ever saw the train, too!"

I can remember that.

Silveri: How old were you when you first saw the train?

Jarrett: I don't remember.

Silveri: That train must have come not too far from the farm?

Jarrett: Yes. It did, but that's the first time I was ever that close to one. That's the first time I can remember seeing it. I probably did.

Silveri: Did the people in that area ever get much fish out of the rivers?

Jarrett: Oh, yes. Yes.

Silveri: To eat?

Jarrett: Yes. Daddy used to put trout lines in.

Silveri: You had fish quite often in the summer?

Jarrett: Oh yes. In the summertime, and sometimes he would put in fish-traps there in the creek.

Silveri: How would your mother cook the fish?

Jarrett: I don't remember: baked them, fried them, and different ways as well as I remember. I can't remember too much about how she done it.

Silveri: What did the house look like, say about when you first started to school? The house you lived in?

Jarrett: Oh, it was a big old house, log house, and it had a loft. It had two big rooms and a little kitchen off to the side with a fireplace in it.

That was all. Then when I was up ten years old, me and my brother, Sherman, slept upstairs in the loft. Then they had one big room where company come and stayed. Then this other big room where the fireplace was at, that's where Dad and Mother slept.

Silveri: Did your mother cook over the fireplace, or did she have a ^{wood}cook-

Silveri: (continued) stove?

Jarrett: She had a wood cookstove then. Well, she did some cooking on the fireplace. I can remember when she cooked some in the fireplace. It's something that a boy could remember about when they would kill hogs, how she would bake them hog feet on the fire. She would wrap them in a wet cloth, and then put them into the ashes, and put ashes all over them. Bake them like that.

Silveri: Good?

Jarrett: Oh yes. It was good. It come all apart then.

Silveri: How many hogs would your father butcher?

Jarrett: Oh, he would have about two or three big ones in the fall to kill.

Silveri: Did it last you through the--

Jarrett: The winter. Yes.

Silveri: What kind of out other buildings did you have on the property?

What kind of barns?

Jarrett: We had one or two tobacco barns, and then the stock barn was about two stalls for the mules, three for the cows. It was made, so you could walk through or drive a wagon through. They was on that side. Then on this side, maybe the cows and calves. Up above, they put hay up there.

Silveri: Incidentally, is there a farm on that property today?

Jarrett: No. I don't think they farm there any now. There is a big store down there and a ^{filling} / station. The bridge goes across through there.

Silveri: Where you're talking about is up above Alexander, isn't it?

Jarrett: Oh, no. It's down right this side of Marshall. Four miles this side of Marshall. Right this side of Hayes Run. Then you just turn up the creek there, and then Long Branch turned off to the left.

Silveri: O. K. Your father's cash crop was tobacco then?

Jarrett: Yes. Tobacco .

Silveri: That's where he got his money.

Jarrett: They would hand that up, and then they put it in these wagons in these big tobacco tiers and hauled it to Asheville.

Silveri: That's where you sold it? In Asheville?

Jarrett: Yes. Or Newport, Tennessee. I don't know whether there was
I know
a tobacco barn or sales place in Asheville then or not, but there was in
Newport. I guess Newport.

Silveri: And you had to haul it in a wagon?

Jarrett: Yes. You put two or three tiers up on it. They laid down front to front, and the tobacco was all handed-up. Had to hand it up when it was in case

Silveri: Do you remember going in to sell it with your father?

Jarrett: No. I never did. I wasn't old enough. My older brother went with him sometime, but they wouldn't let me go then. I had to stay at home with Mama.

Silveri: How about orchards? Were there any fruit orchards around?

Jarrett: Oh yes. We had a few apple trees and grapevines. Then we

Jarrett: (continued) gathered a lot of blackberries, strawberries, and all of that. My mother canned up a lot of that.

Silveri: Did you have a spring house to keep the milk and other things?

Jarrett: Oh yes. Had a spring house. Then later on my Daddy fixed, up on the mountain, a spring up there with a tank and run a water line down. Had a spigot in the yard. That something modern them days then when you had water like that!

Silveri: Did you ever get water out of the rivers to drink?

Jarrett: No. No, had plenty.

Silveri: The springs never ran dry?

Jarrett: No. Had plenty of springs! We didn't have too much, but we had plenty to eat, ever what it was. Then you didn't have to have all of this stuff. We didn't know anything about this. At night we would usually have cornbread and milk, if the cows was doing good we'd have butter. In the morning, we would have gravy and sausage. Boy, my Mama used to put up some of the finest sausage ever was with sage and all of that in it! Then take it and put it in fruit jars, pack it down there in balls, and then she would pour grease on top of it. She would turn it over, and that would seal it in there. Boy, that was fine! We raised the sage out in the garden.

Silveri: You raised just about everything^{that} you needed?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: What would you buy?

Jarrett: They'd buy salt and pepper, coffee. We bought it in grains then.

Jarrett: (continued) You had a coffee grinder to grind it with.

Silveri: Did kids start drinking coffee, ^{early,} at an early age?

Jarrett: I don't remember when I started. No. I don't think I drank any coffee back in them days.

Silveri: You mentioned you had cows. You always had a supply of milk?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: There was always a fresh cow?

Jarrett: Yes. It was always arranged to have two, so you'd always have a fresh cow.

Silveri: From that you got your milk, your cream, and your butter.

Jarrett: Yes. She churned it.

Silveri: Did she make cheese also?

Jarrett: No. We never did make no cheese. She made plenty of butter.

In prints, printed out.

Silveri: What about church? Were you members of a church?

Jarrett: Oh, yes. We went to church. We always had to go to church, but I don't remember. It was just a Protestant church. I don't remember what--

Silveri: Baptist?

Jarrett: Baptist or Methodist or what they were, but I know we always went to church.

Silveri: Did the minister ever come over to the house to eat?

Jarrett: Oh yes. Yes.

Silveri: Was it every Sunday you went to church?

Jarrett: Yes. Just about every Sunday, unless it was too bad of weather, or we didn't have good shoes, or something. Mother made all of our clothes, might near everything.

Silveri: Did she weave, too?

Jarrett: No. She didn't weave. Her grandmother weaved, though.

Silveri: Did you have any sheep on the place?

Jarrett: Well, we used to have a few, but not many. He finally done away with the sheep. They were a lot of trouble. We didn't med them, except what he sold. But Grandmother and Grandfather, all, used to have sheep. I can remember their sheep.

Silveri: Did your father ever make any corn whiskey?

Jarrett: No. He never did. He was a teetotaler; he never did drink any. He didn't even smoke, but in his last few years, he got to smoking a cigar once-in-awhile.

Silveri: Why did he open a store?

Jarrett: I don't know. He just seemed to like that or something. He opened a store, and I can remember he had just about everything. He used to sell shoes, cloth on them big bolts. You would roll it out on the counter and measure it and cut it off for the women.

Silveri: About what year did he start the store?

Jarrett: It must have been about 1904 or somewhere around there.

Jarrett: (Cont'd.) The first thing I can remember is he had a store. When I can first remember that, he had a store.

Silveri: Once he got the store going, would you say he made most of his livelihood from the store rather than the farm?

Jarrett: Yes. He'd close it up. Somebody would come and he would go open the store, if he was in the field. Then usually on Saturday he stayed open. My mother was there.

Silveri: Did he build a special building for it?

Jarrett: Yes. He got lumber at the lumber mill and built the store.

Silveri: About how big was it?

Jarrett: Oh, it must have been about twenty by twenty, or something like that.

Silveri: Pretty small store.

Jarrett: And a porch on the front.

Silveri: How far away was the nearest other store, I mean, the closest store to that one?

Jarrett: Well, Marshall, I guess.

Silveri: How far was that?

Jarrett: About four miles.

Silveri: Four miles. It was really a neighborhood store. Was this right on the road that is now Route #70 that goes through?

Jarrett: Yes. Right on that road there. Right in that corner, they call it Ivy River now, but we used to call it Creek. Looking up the creek, it is on the leffhandside there.

Silveri: The building isn't there now?

Jarrett: Oh, no. Not there. Not even the old house where I was born is there any more. There used to be a bridge run across there, and then you went up the dirt road to Jupiter. But that bridge was an iron bridge with a wooden floor.

Silveri: So, he had the store opened about 1904 ?

Jarrett: I guess that's about when he opened it up.

Silveri: Did you ever tend the store yourself?

Jarrett: Oh, no.

Silveri: Too young.

Jarrett: Yes. I was too young.

Silveri: But you did write a newspaper about Christmastime? That's the fondest memory you had about the store?

Jarrett: Yes. I can remember that, when they would go to Asheville.

Dad would hire those Keys boys with their teams. He had a lot of fruits, and herbs, [^]hides, and he would load up and hire them fellows to take their wagon and go to Asheville. It would take them one day to go, and then he would trade one day, and then they would come back the next day. Then some fellows would just go along for the ride and help load. They liked to go for the ride.

Silveri: Did your father have a post office in the store, too?

Jarrett: No. Back then, I think I've heard him talk about that they had barrooms in Asheville then. When he got ready to go, he would have to go to the barrooms and round them up when they were ready to go back. Then one or two of them got left, and they come back the next day on a freight train. I've heard him tell about that. I don't remember nothing about it, but I can remember how they used to camp down there at the baru the night before, snow on the ground and everything, how they used to heat them big rocks ^{to put} /in front of the wagon to put their feet on, and then they would cover their laps with quilts. Some of them would put a lighted kerosene lantern under there and cover it up, and be warm.

Silveri: That was quite a trip into Asheville, wasn't it?

Jarrett: That was a trip. I never did get to go, but my brother got to go a time or two. He was older. He was four years older than me, and he got to go.

Silveri: What about school? Going to school?

Jarrett: Well, I can remember going to school down there. We didn't go too much. It was a one-room school. They had all the grades in there. I don't remember how many grades there were, but I was small then. They had wooden benches, just long wooden benches. Most of the time I think all the girls sat on one side, and the boys sat on the other.

Silveri: Do you remember the name of the teacher?

Jarrett: No. I don't remember the name of that teacher now. Seems like it

Jarrett: (continued) was Miss Sprinkles or something like that.

Silveri: How many years did you go to that school?

Jarrett: I don't remember that either.

Silveri: Do you remember the name of the school?

Jarrett: Yes. That was Grandview. They had a church up there that had the same name, Grandview Church.

Silveri: Was it the same building?

Jarrett: No. It wasn't the same building. It was off a little ways from the school building.

Silveri: Did you like going to school?

Jarrett: Oh, yes. I liked going to school. We had a lot of games we played. Then they had outhouses, one on this side of the hill and one on this side, the girls and the boys. They had a 'lazy gal' there that they'd draw water up to the school. Then the bigger boys would crank up the water.

Silveri: How long was the school year back then?

Jarrett: I don't remember that, but I can remember before they would get out the weather would get cool.

Silveri: Usually they went after the crops were in, or when the crops were laid by.

Jarrett: I can remember some of the bigger boys would have to drop out and help.

Silveri: It was no more than six months of the year, right?

Jarrett: No. I don't think it was.

Silveri: Probably something like three or four?

Jarrett: I don't remember. I just can't tell you that.

Silveri: What books do you remember in the house that your parents had?

Jarrett: Well, I remember the Bible very well. Then I remember an old magazine that my uncle used to take over there. It was called Hunter, Trader, and Trapper. We used to get that. I would borrow that from him and have him to read it to me. I liked that. Then the old Home Comfort Magazine, we used to get that.

Silveri: How about a Madison County newspaper?

Jarrett: They used to have a little paper down there at Marshall, but I don't remember when it come out. I don't think it come out on the route, the rural route, there.

Silveri: No other newspapers?

Jarrett: No. I don't remember any other newspapers down there. Everybody that would come by would tell some news or something.

Now, you remember in that store we used to sell all kinds: Bruton Snuff, Railroad Mills, Arbuckle coffee, apple tobacco, and Samson Twist. I can remember a lot of that. I know my aunt dipped snuff. Well, Mother did, too. Sweet Railroad Mills, that's the kind they used to dip.

Silveri: What was snuff? Just ground-up tobacco?

Jarrett: Yes. They would just put it in their lip.

Silveri: Is it kind of like chewing tobacco?

Jarrett: Just hold it in there.

Silveri: Hold it in there. Well, you mentioned before that you left Madison County in 1910?

Jarrett: 1918.

Silveri: Oh, 1918. Oh, you left it at ten years of age?

Jarrett: Yes. I was about that age then. I don't remember exactly.

Silveri: Why did your father move?

Jarrett: Well, he wanted to get up here where he thought it wouldn't be so far for us to go to school to better schools. This was the three-room school down here.

Silveri: So, he just sold the farm and bought another one here?

Jarrett: Yes. Then he come here and bought it, and we moved up here in wagons.

Silveri: What time of year would that have been? The summer?

Jarrett: It was spring, I believe it was. Or was it in the fall? I have forgotten now. But anyway, he came up here then, and hunted around and bought it. He sold the place down there to old man Candler in Marshall.

Silveri: Do you remember how much he sold it for?

Jarrett: Three thousand dollars.

Silveri: For the farm and the store?

Jarrett: Yes. Everything.

Silveri: Everything in the store?

Jarrett: Everything for three thousand dollars, and he came up here and bought this place for four thousand dollars. Then he was a long time paying

Jarrett: (continued) this off.

Silveri: Forty-five acres?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: What kind of buildings were on here?

Jarrett: That old house right down there.

Silveri: Those old log cabins?

Jarrett: No. The one right down, the white house. That's where my sister and brother-in-law lives now.

Silveri: Moved here in about 1918. The war was on then, the First World War?

Jarrett: It was just over.
just

Silveri: It was ^{over} when you came.

Jarrett: Yes. For my daddy didn't have to go, but he was in a home guard down there. I can remember when he had to go to Marshall and drill. They had somebody down there drilling them.

Silveri: When you moved here in 1918, what was this area known as? What was the name of it?

Jarrett: It was Bent Creek.

Silveri: Bent Creek area. In Buncombe County?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: Did your father also want to move as close as he could to Asheville?

Jarrett: Yes. He wanted to get not too far away, but he didn't want in the city.

Silveri: Was this a working farm that he had?

Jarrett: Yes. He worked there. He sold off and got a little black mule named Coally and a one-horse wagon, and he farmed this place. We raised some tobacco here and corn, and molasses. We used to make molasses right over there. They had an old boiler type, not the evaporator type that they have now, and bring it right down that hollow there. This was all fields back in here then. People who lived close around would haul their cane here, and they used to make their sorghum here. They would skim molasses and boil all night there sometimes.

Silveri: And put it up in big jars?

Jarrett: Yes. Or cans, five gallon cans.

Silveri: What did you use it for?

Jarrett: Oh, you eat it! Fine eating.

Silveri: On biscuits ?

Jarrett: On biscuits or cornbread, either one. You could put it in your plate, take some butter and mix it all up. Boy, that was fine eating.

They had barn-cured tobacco. They had to cure it by heat. There were furnaces in the barn, hanging all up in there. They used to have a bed made in there, and they would stay all night. They had to keep the fire going to cure the tobacco.

Silveri: Tobacco was hard work, wasn't it? Raising it?

Jarrett: Oh, that was hard work. I can remember when I used to do it, as old as I was. We used to have to work tobacco and hoe tobacco, and set out tobacco.

Jarrett: (continued) Then we used to have to hoe corn, me and my brother. We'd hoe that corn. I'd look up moisted, there would be a rain come. Sometimes he would plow, and then me and my brother would hoe. Then sometimes he'd tie that mule up to the end and come back and see how we'd been a'hoeing. If it wasn't right, he was liable to go to the end of the field and get him a brush and see that it was right!

Silveri: You had to go between the corn rows and also between the corn that was growing to get the weeds out?

Jarrett: Oh, yes. Use a hoe and cut them all out, and rake the dirt up around the corn.

Silveri: Why do you rake the dirt up?

Jarrett: It's got more fresh dirt to it.

Silveri: How often did you have the hoe the corn?

Jarrett: The third time is 'laying by' time.

Silveri: So, three times. Couldn't he just go through with the plow?

Jarrett: But that couldn't get all the weeds out in between, but he plowed close. Then you had to go by and kind of rake up the dirt and cut the weeds out.

Silveri: Did he plant in the corn, too, besides--

Jarrett: Oh, yes. We had fieldcorn beans. Never had no bugs in it. It would go plumb to the top.

Silveri: You climb right up the cornstalk?

Jarrett: Yes. That oldtime cornfield beans, we called it. They looked like a big tick with spots all over it. Then we would gather them beans. There never was no beetles or nothing them days. We didn't know nothing about that.

Silveri: How about pumpkins?

Jarrett: Oh, yes. Raised pumpkins and tomatoes and tobacco. We'd set out tobacco.

Silveri: Pulling fodder. What does pulling fodder mean?

Jarrett: That means topping and pulling fodder. Right above the ear, you take a knife and cut that off. Then you stack that. That was tops. The blades on there, you pull all the blades off and tie them and hang them there where you cut that off.

Silveri: That's for the stock to eat?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: This was before you picked the corn, right?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: Well, isn't the corn still growing? Doesn't it need--

Jarrett: No. That's after it had matured as big as it's going to get. Then leave it to dry out some.

Silveri: Oh, I see.

Jarrett: Then we raised wheat. My daddy used to cradle wheat, what we called a cradle. He would cut that and rake that up, drop it in bundles along in the row, and then he would go back and tie it in bundles. Then me and my

Jarrett: (continued) brother would come by and stack it up like that, but we didn't know how to break them bundles and put across the top. He would have to come back by and break the bundles and put on top to shed the water good. Then until time for the thrashers to come through, we would take it to where the thrashers were coming and stack it. Then the thrashers come, and then usually several of the neighbors would haul all of their corn to one place where the thrashers would come. At that time they used the tumbling rod and horses. ^{They} / just went around and around and step over that tumbling rod. That tumbling rod ran to the thrashing machine and thrashed. Me and my brother used to have to keep straw back out of the way.

Silveri: Well, he didn't raise too much wheat, did he?

Jarrett: Oh, no. Just for our own use.

Silveri: Your own use, which was about how much? An acre?

Jarrett: Oh, no. More than that. Sometimes three or four acres. New grounds and use that cradle around the stumps and everything else. He could use that thing. I've seen him wet with sweat, and then he would cradle out to the end, stand his cradle up on the handle, and take out that stone and r-rip, r-rip-p, rip, rip, sharpening it, you know.

Silveri: Corn was the main crop, though. That was ^{for} human consumption and for the animals, too?

Jarrett: Yes. But the straw, a lot of the straw, we saved that and made straw ticks out of it for the beds and slept on them. We had two or three

Jarrett: (continued) featherbeds, feather ticks. We usually kept that in the other room for company to sleep on, but me and my brother slept on a straw tick.

Silveri: After you picked the corn, did you also cut the stalks for the animals to eat?

Jarrett: No. We usually just cut them down. Take a hoe and go through there and cut them down before the next year, pile them up and burn them.

Silveri: Didn't the stock eat them?

Jarrett: No, not the stalk. Just the top and blades.

Silveri: When you picked the corn, what did you do after you picked the ear of corn?

Jarrett: You come through with the sled, and you pulled the corn off and threwed
A them in the sled. Then you would take and haul the sled, and sometimes off of them high hills, you had to rough lock the sleds. It would run against the mules or something. Tie a chain around under the runner and that made it rough. I've seen my daddy rough lock the sled a lot of times. Sometimes he would have to rough lock both sledrunners.

Silveri: O. K. Then you let the corn dry out?

Jarrett: Took it and piled it up in a big pile, and then had a cornshucking.
they
A shucked the corn all out.

Silveri: O. K. Then what did you do after that?

Jarrett: Then they took it and put it in the crib.

Silveri: And let it dry out?

Jarrett: Yes. Dry it out good. Then when you wanted to use some, you would shell it and take it to mill.

Silveri: How did you shell it?

Jarrett: By hand or use a thing like is laying right there. This thing here, put it on your finger and run it through your finger, and then that would--

Silveri: It's a piece of leather tied to a piece of--

Jarrett: Good oak wood or something like that with a sharp point. Then you break the shuck with it. You have to break the shuck so you can get your hand on it good.

Silveri: Then you pull this blade down across the corn?

Jarrett: No. You stick it in the end there and break the shuck out. Then you get a hold of it with your hand. It's a cornshucker.

Silveri: Oh, this is a cornshucker. O. K. Now, I'm talking when you get the kernels off of the cob. How do you do that?

Jarrett: Oh. Just use your hand like that, or use a cob. Hold a cob in your hand, if your hand gets sore. I've had my hand to get sore, and I'd have to use it.

Silveri: Does it come off pretty easily?

Jarrett: Yes. When it's dry and ready to go to the mill. It's dry.

Silveri: Is that the way you fed it to the stock, too? When it was dry like that?

Jarrett: No, you just throw it in ears into the stock. Just throw the ears in the trough.

Silveri: I see. Did the corncob ever get caught in their throats?

would

Jarrett: No. No. They bit it off. Then sometimes you take some to the mill, the nubbings. Take a load of nubbings to the mill, and they crushed it. They crushed cob and all, and you fed that to the stock, but that was just the nubbings. It wasn't good corn. It wasn't the best corn. The best corn, they used that for bread.

Silveri: Where was the mill around here?

Jarrett: Well, the mill here was up at Mills River, but when we were down there in Madison County, it was up on top of the hill up there at the Keys place. The Keys boys run that mill, but there's a big, fine home on top of that hill now.

Silveri: Did you take corn to be milled only when you needed it?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: At the beginning of the season, you wouldn't take it all up--

Jarrett: Oh, no. It was liable to get mildewy, or weevils would get in it or something.

Silveri: So, about how often would you get it milled?

Jarrett: Oh, about every ten days or two weeks. They had a big box in the kitchen with a lid on it. Mother would raise up one side of it. One side of it had
A flour in it, and one side had meal in it.

Silveri: What did the miller take for his pay?

Jarrett: I don't remember, but he had his toll, little toll, about a peck or something for so much. I forget now.

Silveri: Toll box? Is that what they called it?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: He took a peck out of a bushel?

Jarrett: I think that's about what it was. I don't remember now. It wasn't a water wheel there. He had a one-cylinder, old gasoline engine, and "put-put-put-put." It had a big belt on it that run back to his mill. He'd pour it up in that hopper, and then he would let it go. It had a thing to stick in there to just let so much go at a time, so it wouldn't choke the mill up.

Silveri: All mountain people liked to hunt. I suppose your family liked to hunt, also.

Jarrett: Oh yes. I did. We all liked to hunt.

Silveri: You went out to hunt for food?

Jarrett: No. We didn't do that much. Me and Brother would trap a little and catch some 'possums and skunks; skin them and sell the hides.

Silveri: Who would buy the hides?

Jarrett: Oh, Daddy bought hides! He bought all kinds of hides, any kind of hides you wanted in the store.

Silveri: What did people use skunk hides for?

Jarrett: They sent them off and made coats, ladies' coats, and everything out of them. We used to bring them to Asheville. We had that building at the back of the store, about like this one, where he kept all of his hides and all of them roots and herbs. Just like I said in that story, I can remember the smell of all them roots and herbs and them hides and things

Jarrett: (continued) in that place 'til today.

Silveri: What kind of roots and herbs did you go out to get?

Jarrett: Down there they got Lady Slipper, Ginseng, Poke Root, and Balm of Gilead buds. I don't remember how many different kinds, but there were several different kinds that he would buy. He had a list there of what he was buying and what he was paying for it a pound.

Silveri: Did he also buy nuts, too: chestnuts and chinquapins?

Jarrett: I don't remember if he ever bought any of them, but they used to be plentiful then.

Silveri: Hickory nuts, also, and black walnuts.

Jarrett: Yes. Oh yes, black walnuts. But I don't remember him ever buying chestnuts. There used to be a lot of chinquapins. We used to play hully-gull with them chinquapins, us kids did.

Silveri: Did your father^{ever} get involved in politics?

Jarrett: Not too much. He did after he got up here some. They would go around at Avery's Creek up here where there's a voting place. They used to go up there and stay all day on voting day, and have a big fire built out there. They would stay there all day.

Silveri: Was he a Democrat or a Republican?

Jarrett: He was a Democrat. Well, I think he used to vote some Republican, too. I don't remember. I think he did.

Silveri: Well, you came here about 1918. You were about ten years old, and you went to the Bent Creek School?

Jarrett: No. I went down here to Venable then, not where it's at now, but on down the road there where they had the three-room school.

Silveri: Three-room school. How many years did you go there?

Jarrett: I went there 'til they built the other school, and then I went up there some, and I went to about the eighth grade.

Silveri: About the eighth grade.

Jarrett: My daddy was the superintendent of the school here, Venable School, for twenty-five year . . . I believe it was.

Silveri: Superintendent of the school?

Jarrett: Not superintendent, but on the school board committee.

Silveri: When did you finish your schooling? How old were you?

Jarrett: Let's see. I don't know how ^{old} I was. About 1920, I guess. Something like that.

Silveri: You finished about 1927 or '28.

Jarrett: Yes. It was in the '20's sometime in there.

Silveri: What did you do for your first full time work after school?

Jarrett: During school time, we used (us boys) to cut corn over here for siloing on the Biltmore Estate, ten cents an hour. We'd get enough money, fifteen dollars; that would buy your clothes for the winter nearly. You worked ten hours, you got a dollar.

Silveri: What would a dollar buy?

Jarrett: Oh yes. It used to buy me a sheepskin coat and a pair of boots for fifteen dollars then! Boots, pants, and a sheeplined coat for fifteen

Jarrett: (continued) dollars! Then we used to cut cordwood over there for a dollar and a quarter a cord, and we had to split it and rake it up. We got a dollar and a quarter a cord.

Silveri: On the Vanderbilt Estate?

Jarrett: Yes. On the Vanderbilt Estate.

Silveri: What you said about cutting the corn, you worked ten hours a day : ten cents an hour .

Jarrett: Yes. That is siloing.

Silveri: Siloing? What is it? Cutting the corn and putting it in the silo?

Jarrett: Yes. You cut it off at the ground and piled it in piles along there. Then the loaders come along, and they had the wagons with flat-beds on them. They would hand it up to the man on the wagon, and he would lay it up there on the wagon, and then take it to the silo. They had a machine running there, and a man feeding it into the machine, and it went up into the silo.

Silveri: That was before they had the machines that just went right through the corn and cut everything up?

Jarrett: Oh yes. Oh, Lord, yes! But we used to have a lot of fun. The fellow on the wagon would have to be the biggest man, and then some of them boys would try to ^{pitch up} / him/the biggest load and pull him off of the wagon! If he got pulled off the wagon, somebody had to take his place then!

Silveri: O. K. Cutting firewood there, and so so, how long did you do that kind of work?

Jarrett: We'd just do that in the summertime, or on Saturdays, maybe when school was going on in the wintertime, cut cordwood for the Redmon boys over there that run the dairy on the Biltmore Estate.

Silveri: Did you start into some full time farming after you finished school?

Jarrett: After I got out of school--before that, I tried to get out and go do something. I wanted to do something all the time. I even went over and sold papers on the streets in Asheville. Walk back and forth, I'd walk back plumb --

Silveri: You'd walk it to Asheville?

Jarrett: Walk in there and walk back.

Silveri: How many miles?

Jarrett: Eight miles one way, and eight miles back.

{End of Side I}

{Side II}

Jarrett: (continued) Then we made two cents on each paper. Then I got a job, making, three dollars a week at Whiteside Printing Office over there as a 'Printer's Devil.' I delivered packages and washed type.

Silveri: For two dollars a week?

Jarrett: Three dollars a week!

Silveri: How many hours did you work?

Jarrett: The old man Whiteside was a pretty-good old fellow. He would let me off at three o'clock in the afternoon to go sell papers. He was a

Jarrett: (continued) pretty-good old man. He's been dead years, though.

Silveri: Was it around that time that you began to make any good corn whiskey?

Jarrett: Oh, no. That was later, after that. I got to messing around here with these fellows. They made it right up here where this big development sits back up there. I've seen them make it up there, and I've been up there. They used to have up there at Rice Pinnacle; under Rice Pinnacle . . . a fellow--I ain't going to mention no names. Some of them are still living, and some of them's got family or children still living. But I've seen them make it up there with a big copper outfit. They made these big barrels. They would make them up to put the mash in theirselves. They'd take hickory limbs and wrap around it for bands around that thing and fill that full of corn mash, work it off, and cook it off and make it.

There used to be a lot of moonshine made back up in here and all around them days. Well, they didn't bother you too much then, unless somebody complained to the sheriff. When somebody would start complaining, then he'd maybe cut them down and wouldn't damage them too bad 'til they could get them put back up pretty soon. As long as they didn't bother too nobody much.

Silveri: How much would they sell the liquor for?

Jarrett: Well, they used to sell it for a dollar a jar. That used to be a half a gallon.

Silveri: Half a gallon?

Jarrett: Yes. Two dollars a gallon. Then it got higher all along.

Silveri: It was easy to sell, right?

Jarrett: Oh, yes!

Silveri: There was always somebody who wanted some?

Jarrett: There was always! You would be surprised who wanted ^{it} too! I've
come out here,
seen a lot of them fellows, them doctors, lawyers, judges, and everything
and get it. Then they used to come out here; they had cabins up in the
mountains. They'd come out here from all down the eastern part of the
state and everywhere to hunt. They'd just play poker and drink moonshine,
and have me and one or two more friends go out and kill them a deer. I've
the
seen a men rub blood all over their coats and tie them up on their auto-
mobiles and go back with them. They didn't do nothing but play poker and
drink corn! They was doctors, judges, lawyers, and all that, but I wouldn't
mention no names. You can't. I never did believe in telling nothing on no-
body!

Silveri: Were you ever around when the still was raided?

Jarrett: Yes. You get away from there! You get away from there!

Silveri: Pardon?

Jarrett: You get away from there then! But you usually have some standbys,
You let around
fellows watching. a them get their guns and stand out a over the ridges and
watch, and they shoot a signal and give you time to get out.

Silveri: But you lost everything, though?

Jarrett: Sometimes, and sometimes they wouldn't do nothing but turn the barrels over. Sometimes they would have a steamer outfit, and sometimes we would use a pure copper boiler. Steamer, that's two boilers, and you could make more whiskey; turn it off faster than you could with the copper still. You know, the big copper still.

Silveri: All of this stuff was homemade?

Jarrett: Yes! Yes. You usually had sixty-gallon barrels, and you would put a bushel or two bushel of mash in there, whatever you wanted, and then whatever amount of sugar you wanted to put in it and fill it full of water; then cap it off with rye meal ^{or} / put in some yeast to make it work faster; cover it up with sacks or something to keep anything from getting in it, and let it work off. When it commenced boiling (well, not boiling), but it would "poop," "poop" up, you know. It was getting ready to work off, and ^{then} you would ^{it} it in these big boilers and heat it, and put / in the still and start working it off. Then you had to know how to boil it; not get it too hot. If you did, it would puke through your still. Your mash would come through, and it would be milky. You had to know how to fire it, and not fire it too hot, or it would come right on through your condenser or coil. Then it would ^{come} usually ⁱⁿ out of the condenser, and it would come out ^{chain links} when it was running good. Then you would usually have to proof it some-times. You have to proof it, and you usually used warm water to proof it with. If you put too much cold water, it would kill your bead on it.

Silveri: Did you distill it more than once? Did it go through a second time?

Jarrett: No.

Silveri: When you were operating it? Just once?

Jarrett: In the evaporator, you know, that's two boilers.

Silveri: Oh, I see.

Jarrett: I remember one time I was down there at Dark Corners, South Carolina. I went down there with a bunch. I used to know a girl down there. I ain't going to mention her name. She's married and got a gang of younguns now, a grandmother now. But we used to go down there. Her uncle lived down there, and he made liquor a lot. We'd go down there, and they would have big dances when we'd go.

I would go out to his still where ^{he made} / whiskey a lot of times, but a funny thing happened one time when I was down there. That morning we went over to where he was making whiskey. He had two great-big old boys. He put them out on the ridges with shotguns to shoot signals if anything come around. We went into this place, and his partner was already there. He was a great-big old, g-r-e-a-t big fellow with a big hook nose. He introduced me to him, and told him ^I / was a friend of his niece from up in Asheville, and ^I was down visiting. He didn't even say nothing to me! He just looked at me!

I felt sort of uneasy around there, but I knowed what to do. So, I got down there and chunked -up the fire and moved up some wood; make yourself guilty. Then directly he got up, and was standing up there on the bank where I was at. I would look up at him a little bit, and he was looking right

Jarrett: (continued) down at me. He was a rough-looking character.

Directly, he reached down and got ahold of my coat. I had a leather jacket on. He said, "What do you have to pay for a coat like that up in Asheville?"

I felt like pulling it off and giving it to him!

But he was all right. He was suspicious. While we was there, we heard this gun fire up on the ridge. They had some niggers there helping them make it. They began to give orders to get them barrels that was all ready, them ten gallon barrels that was full, and them niggers to move them and run with them. They told me, and I was wanting to run. I was wanting to get out of there. I didn't want to go down in South Carolina to get in jail. I wouldn't mind it so bad up here, but down there in South Carolina, I didn't want to get in jail down there.

"Naw," he says, "don't worry! The boys will hold them off 'til we can get out of here!" They commenced pulling that fire, and pulling the plug out of that boiler. Steam went up plumb to the top of them pines! He said, "Oh, no." I started to run, and he had ahold on to me. Them niggers got them ten-gallon barrels of whiskey run off, and went on across the hill with them. We went on up there, and he whistled like a bob-white. One of them boys answered him, and they come down there where we was at. They said, "What's the trouble?" One of the boys said, "No. It wasn't us. I think it's some bird hunters back over yonder." He said, "Go over and tell them bird hunters to hunt somewhere else, and not come over here! We're making liquor over here!"

Jarrett: (continued) I was wanting to get out of there!

Silveri: Well, did you ever get caught making that stuff with those people?

Jarrett: No. I don't like to talk about stuff like that, but I'll tell you about one time coming out of Habersham, Georgia. I had, I believe it was, a '30 V-8 Ford. Me and Slim, and we took Jack to trail for us to get a load. We come up back, out of there about twelve o'clock that night. I had a fast Ford. It was fast! I didn't mind to run it, and I could run it on those mountain roads, too, then.

through

We come back ^A from Habersham and out of Lake Burton, and got over into this side coming into Franklin and got on to #63. Jack was trailing behind us, and his wife was with him. I was kind of uneasy about that. I was afraid him and his wife would get into a fight, and trailing, too, for us. I got over there, and I told Slim, "Boy, I'm feeling good tonight! I wouldn't mind for a good chase!" In a little bit after that, Slim said, "By God, you got your wish! Jack's back there going like that all over the road!"

He was blocking for us; the sheriff was behind him trying to catch us. He didn't have no whiskey with him, and they couldn't have got him for nothing but just--

Silveri: That weaving back and forth.

Jarrett: Yes. So they couldn't get by. It give me a chance to get away. Boy, I showered down on that thing. I said, "That will be all right if they don't shoot his tires down!" I showered down on that thing, and we come up

Jarrett: (continued) Shooting Creek and across Chunky Gal Mountain. We hadn't gone ten miles when we heard some shooting. Slim said, "By God, Rich! They've shot Jack's tires down! You've got your wish! You'd better shower down on this thing now!"

Man, I was giving it everything it would take! We were loaded, too! He was gaining on us. I said, "Slim, you'd better open that smoke screen!" We had a tank of old cylinder oil there on the side, and you'd open a valve, and it would pour down the manifold, the exhaust. It would go back. It would smoke like everything, you know!

He opened that thing up, and she boiled out the back. I said, "I guess that'll fix him!" That gallon of oil ran out after a while, and we thought we had done left him. Directly, we heard that thing coming again! I said, "God A'mighty, what's that sheriff got? He ain't never had nothing like that before over here!" Slim said, "I don't what it is, but he's gaining on us!"

I said, "I guess we'd better give him them tacks!" We carried tarpaper tacks to throw out behind. That damn Slim reached in that paper bag to get a handful of them tacks and started up to throw them out, and hit his hand over the door. Some of them tacks went right back down under that righthand back tire, and it blowed out! Boy, I mean I went into the ditch! I couldn't stop it! We went into the ditch and into the bank and come to a stop into a cloud of dust!

I looked over there at Slim, and Slim's nose was bleeding! That was when that V-8 Ford first come out.

Silveri: Was that after the Second World War?

Jarrett: No. That was before.

Silveri: Oh. Before?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: During the '30's?

Jarrett: Yes. It must have been around--when was it that V-8 Ford come out? I got one. I had a '30 and a '31 Roadster. Then I got, when the V-8 come out--when was that? '34? I believe it was '34. Souped that thing up, boy, I mean that would move!

Silveri: I'm going to continue to ask you some questions. If you don't want to answer them, you just say, "No." O. K.?

Jarrett: Yes.

Silveri: Did you make much of living off of making whiskey?

Jarrett: Well, we made pretty good then, not too good, though. You got a big kick out of that.

Silveri: There's a lot of excitement in making it?

Jarrett: Oh, yes!

Silveri: Half the interest was getting away with it, right?

Jarrett: That's it! Yes. That used to be--

Silveri: Out-foxing the sheriff and his deputies?

Jarrett: Yes. When you're young, them things. I don't care anything about them no more, and some of things that happened.

one time.

We was making up there on the mountain, I ain't going to tell you

Jarrett: (continued) where it was at now, but people knows. But this old man found this place up there where it was a good place to make. He said he was up there deer hunting one time, and the snow was on the ground. Said he seen where the water had come up and melted the snow and run down about a hundred feet, and went back in the ground. He said that 'd be a good place to make whiskey. That didn't have no hollow. The rev- enuers and sheriffs would go to them branches, and follow them branches up and find it, but where this water came out of the ground and went back in the ground, he wouldn't have nothing to follow up.

This old fellow had put-up up there. He had carried his barrels and everything up there, and his still and put-up up there. He was making up there one time and ran it out a time or two. He had an old dog that he kept up there all the time, that just laid there; an old hound dog, but he could hear anything in the leaves or anything that come around. He 'd raise up and start barking or something, and that was kind of a warning for him.

One time we heard something up there in the leaves, and that old dog just raised up and looked around a little and went back to sleep. He said, "What in the hell is the matter with him? That sounds like somebody walking in them leaves up there!" It was on the side of a mountain in this level place there where he had the still. Directly an old terrapin rolled off down that hill. We throwed him on down the hill. Then in a little bit another one come rolling down right in there. Them two old terrapins

Jarrett: (continued) was up there courting, and that dog didn't pay no
'tention to it.

Silveri: How big were they?

Jarrett: What's that?

Silveri: The terrapins.

Jarrett: Oh, they were just about that big

Silveri: Oh. O. K.

Jarrett: Just ground terrapins.

Silveri: How bad were things during the Depression years?

Jarrett: Oh, they was bad! My daddy worked on the WPA. We didn't have
much then, I'm ^{telling} / you. Things was tough around here then.

Silveri: Even though most people were farmers and raised their own food?
... [inaudible]

Jarrett: That's just about what they had to eat. Eat what we could raise.
In them times, it was getting then sort of where you needed more things
during the Depression.

Silveri: What did you do during those years?

Jarrett: During that time, I went up here and got in the CCC camp.

Silveri: Where?

Jarrett: Up here on Bent Creek. They had two or three camps up there.
Then I worked up here at the experiment station and worked for Dr. Hursh.
He was at the experiment station; he was part time in the CCC's. He was an
etymologist, something about trees and runoffs and all that.

Silveri: How old were you when you went to the CCC camp?

Jarrett: I don't know how old I was then. What year was that? I've forgotten now.

Silveri: You lived there at the camp, right?

Jarrett: Yes, I stayed up there at the camp. I didn't stay there long, though. I had that V-8 roadster, and then people got suspicious of me. Then they got to wanting me to go up and watch for hunters and things, and I left them.

Silveri: What kind of work did they do?

Jarrett: Oh, they worked all around and built roads around in the woods, and all of these roads up on Bent Creek. You know, the hard times roads, and all of them back up in there. They built them roads and cleared out fire lines.

Silveri: You stayed only a few weeks with them?

Jarrett: Yes; I didn't stay long.

Silveri: You mentioned your father worked for the WPA. Do you recall about how long he worked for them?

Jarrett: No, I don't know how long. About a year, I guess. He was a foreman; and they built roads, too, in different places.

Silveri: So, everybody that needed work went to the. . .

Jarrett: Yes, that's right. Times was tough then, and got tougher. When old Roosevelt got in there things got to moving. It wasn't long after that things got. . . we got something to do.

Silveri: Did you vote for him?

Jarrett: I didn't. I don't remember whether I was old enough then. I may have been, but Daddy did. I know.

Silveri: O.K., following through the '30's, did you know anybody who lost their farms or homes or anything through--

Jarrett: Oh, yes. Some people up here on Avery's Creek, around in this part of the part of country, and up on Hominy; where they was paying on them, they couldn't pay on them.

Silveri: Did you help keep the farm going?

Jarrett: Yes. I paid and bought groceries and things when I worked up there. I'd usually have a little money. I'd wheel and deal a little bit.

Silveri: Wasn't Biltmore, sic, hiring people to work on his property?

Jarrett: Oh, yes. He used to have to run the farm. He had farmhands and everything on the Biltmore Estate. They had the dairies over here that they leased out, and then them people hired two or three people to help them with the dairy, milking cattle.

Silveri: I wanted to ask you. During the Depression, because things were so tough, do you think more people were making whiskey than before?

Jarrett: I don't know whether they were or not. They made it all during that time, I know that. But I don't know whether they were making more or not, for you couldn't sell it then like you could, I don't think.

Silveri: When did you get married?

Jarrett: Oh, I never got married until after World War II!

Silveri: You were in the Navy?

Jarrett: I was thirty-six years old. Yes, I was in the Navy Sea-bees.

Silveri: Did you volunteer?

Jarrett: Yes, we all volunteered. See, my younger brother was in the reserves, and he had to go. Then my daddy put the pressure on us boys to get on over there.

Silveri: Why?

Jarrett: He believed that other boy was gone, and the rest of us had to go. He was running a little store down there then. I joined the Sea-bees; I didn't know what the Sea-bees was. See, I made an electrician and went to Enka and worked a while. I got to be an electrician. I studied like everything; the most studying I ever done in my life. Then I passed the examination and I got to be a construction electrician. I was working with the TVA. I went in the Navy and my one brother went in the Marines, and one brother went in the Coast Guard. He was in the North Atlantic, and my brother in the Marines, he was in the first Marines and he got all bombed up at Tarawa and he finally died. He got his head all smashed up. My other brother in the Army was in Bougainville and all in there, but I went from Guadalcanal all the way. I was on Okinawa when it was over.

Silveri: When did you volunteer, in 1942?

Jarrett: Yes. March, 1942.

Silveri: You were in until the end of the war?

Jarrett: Yes, I was on Okinawa when they dropped the Atomic Bomb.

Jarrett: (continued) We was going into maneuvers then to jump on the main-land of Japan. I guess I would have been dead by now. They would have probably killed me or something. I got bombed up a little bit, but I believed in dishing out. I always thought I was coming back.

Silveri: You were in the Sea- / ^{bees.} Did you do construction work over there?

Jarrett: Yes. We did construction work, and then we had to go in. We went in a lot of times right on the second wave with the Marines and the Army and everything. I was a good shot. I always was a good shot. Do you want me to tell you when I first went in and how I went in?

Silveri: Yes.

Jarrett: This is kind of funny. I used to get around pretty well around girls and everything, too, back them days. I was working for the TVA and waiting for them to call me. They wouldn't call me, and so, I had a little ole Ford. I just took off from the TVA. That was about Christmastime. No, it was after Christmas. It was February, I believe it was. I went down to Miami and stayed down there awhile, and then I come back to Asheville. before I went back to the TVA. I went into the draft board over there (my daddy was putting pressure on me) to see where I stood on the draftboard. They told me to get back down there to work on the TVA that they needed that alumi-num. They give me hell about that, so I said well I'll go back down there then. They said we'll let you know when we need you. I come down out of the courthouse. I looked down the street there. Here come an ole gal that

Jarrett: (continued) I used to know. She said, "Where have you been, Rich? I ain't seen you in a coon's age!" I said, "I've been messing around! What are you doing?" She said, "I got married since I seen you last!" I said, "You have?" She said, "Yes." I said, "Let's ride up on the mountain!" She got in the car, and we rode upon the mountain. I had a bottle of Canadian Club in the back of my car I had been saving. We had a drink or two of it, and I said, "What about going down to Tennessee with me?" She said, "O. K. I believe I will!" I said, "You can come back on the bus in a few days." She said, "All right." That's where I was working down there at the TVA.

She said, "I'd like to go over to the post office and write my sister a card, and tell her to call my husband and tell ^{him} that I'll be back here, and I'm going to stay with her a few days." I said, "All right." I parked there in front, and she went in. I said, "In the meantime while you are in there, I'll believe I'll go in here and see what the Navy wants, what they've got."

I went in there, and I'd never heard nothing about Sea-bees. He asked me a few questions and found out I was an electrician. He said, "We need you! We need you!" He just commenced pushing on back in there where the doctor was at. I said, "Oh, wait a minute man! I'm parked out here in a five-minute zone!" He said, "That's all right! That's Uncle Sam's property anyway!"

Jarrett: (continued) They shoved me back in there with that doctor, and he examined me a little bit, and shoved me on back out there. He said, "He's in fine shape! He's in good shape. He even smells like a sailor!"

That evening at three o'clock I was on the train going to Charlotte down here, and then on to Norfolk. That's how I got in there. I never seen that old gal for three years after that. I said, "Boy, you sure got me in a mess over there!" She said, "You don't know what a mess you got me in too!"

There were some funny things that happened in the service. I went to Norfolk, and that's Camp Allen there where I was taking basic. I didn't know nothing about that military stuff. I was a good shot then. They took us in there, and after we got all of our shots and haircut and everything, and had these little Winchester bolt-action rifles, twenty-twos. They were letting everybody shoot at the target about as far as it is from this house. It was as big as that saucer. You got five shots. You laid down there on that thing, and you got five shots, or ten shots. I've forgotten now.

Then this man up here on the stand, blowing the whistle, and telling you when to shoot. When it was time for me to shoot, he said, "Commence firing!" Everybody commenced firing. Boy, I was just shooting mine off, just like that. He blowed that whistle, and stopped everybody, and called for the man on Target 12 to stand up. I got up, and oh, I didn't know what I had done. Boy, he give a lecture about learning how to fire a rifle. I just stood there. Then he says, "Corporal, let's give him another chance! Pull his

Jarrett: (continued) target in and give him another target!"

He pulled it in. That Corporal said, "Sir, they're all in the bull!" Boy, that son-of-a-gun cussed me out and just raised hell. He said I was a smart aleck! I was scared to death! You know what that son-of-a-gun made me do? I had to go outside there in the hot sunshine and stand at attention! I stood there a long time, and one of my officers come up and asked me, "Jarrett, what's the matter?" I told him, and he dismissed me and told me to go back to the barracks.

Silveri: You mentioned you were working for TVA before you went into the service. What were you doing?

Jarrett: Yes. I was an electrician down on the Appalachian Dam out of Copperhill, Tennessee.

Silveri: Copperhill, Tennessee. That was one of the first dams they built?

Jarrett: Yes, Hiwassee and Chatuge ; Hiwassee, I guess, was the first one.

Silveri: The dam you were working on was the Appalachian Dam?

Jarrett: Yes. Appalachian. That's just out of Turtletown there.

Silveri: How did you happen to get that job?

Jarrett: When I passed the examination for electrician here in Asheville, then I wanted to move around from job to job. They told me you had to get in the union to do that, so I joined up with the union. Then I would get to go
right
different places, not just stay here in Asheville. They sent me to them

Jarrett: (continued) places.

Silveri: What river were they building that dam on?

Jarrett: That was on--that went through Appalachia, went through Murphy.

What was the name of that river?

Silveri: Was it the Little Tennessee?

Jarrett: No. Little Tennessee runs into Fontana. What is that river?

Maybe that's Hiwassee River. Hiwassee River!

Silveri: Hiwassee. O. K. What was your job at the TVA?

Jarrett: Construction electrician.

Silveri: Did they build homes for the workers there, too?

Jarrett: They had barracks.

Silveri: Barracks there. What kind of pay were you getting in those days?

Do you remember?

Jarrett: When I was down there, I got a dollar and a quarter an hour.

Silveri: This was 1940, right? 1941?

Jarrett: I think it was 1935 when I left there. That's pretty good wages.

Silveri: That was good money then.

Jarrett: Yes. Then another thing happened one day. They had me on guards at Camp Allen. at the brig, down at the gate at the brig. All of these boys, prisoners, were walking around out there, and I was at the gate; had the billy to stand and the key to open the gate. I had duty there. They was all around there. The PX was right above there, and it opened up every morning at ten o'clock. You could buy beer up there. One of them fellows said, "Rich, let's go up

Jarrett: (Cont'd.) there and get some beer." I said, "O.K., by gosh, let's do." I opened the gate and made them all fall in line. We went up there. We went up there for three days, and they caught me. Damn, I didn't know. Hell, there were fences all around this place. I didn't know a guard . . .

Silveri: You were marching the prisoners out the gate to get beer?

Jarrett: Yes. We would all go in and sit down and have a beer. They just thought I had a work detail out. We would go up there and get beer every morning. It was hot up there.

Silveri: Where was this? In Alabama?

Jarrett: This is up in Allen, Virginia, out of Norfolk there. Then they had me up for charges, and we moved out of there before they put charges on me there; had the trial. Then we moved down to Braddock. Then we moved out of there. Three months from the time I went in the service, I was under fire over there at Guadalcanal, just south of Guadalcanal.

Silveri: They gave you three months' training, and that was it?

Jarrett: Yes, that was all. We was gone.

Silveri: Well, you got out in 1945 or '46?

Jarrett: Yes, 1945.

Silveri: You came back here?

Jarrett: September, 1945, yes. Came back here and got married then.

Silveri: What was the story back here? Your father still had his farm here and the store and everything?

Jarrett: Yes. He had the store. He had just about quit farming. He was old then, and he was just running the little store down there .

Silveri: You got married soon after you got back? That's when you lived in the little log cabin down there?

Jarrett: No. That was 'way before that, before the war, when I lived in the little log cabin.

Silveri: Oh, I see. What did you do when you came back from the war then?

Jarrett: I went back to electrical work, but in the meantime, that Forest Superintendent come and wanted me to go back in the research experimental station. I didn't want to go back in that. That wasn't enough traveling around or enough excitement or nothing for me. He was a good friend of mine. He come out of college, and we worked out at Otto in that forest out there, when he first come out of college.

I told him I didn't believe I wanted to go back in it. I wanted to follow construction, but I had two brothers that would like to go. Now, they went to school more. They didn't fool around like I did. He said, "You tell them to get in contact with me when they get out." He put them to work. One made a forest superintendent, and the other one made research up here at this experiment station, and stayed there until they retired. They are both retired now. But they was not like me. They hustled at everything they did.

Silveri: Well, you worked for a construction firm then?

Jarrett: I worked for all kinds, every kind.

Silveri: Every kind, as a subcontractor?

Jarrett: No. Just a general contractor. Whoever had the contract. Then I worked in the steel mills in Pittsburgh.

Silveri: You did!

Jarrett: I worked in Washington, D.C., for contractors there after the war. Philadelphia. I traveled a lot. I liked to travel. I like to go places.

Silveri: Then you came back here to retire?

Jarrett: Well, when we come back here, we built this house. Then we traveled so much, we never did stay in it much. Then we come back here, and I worked for DuPont up here. I run their fabrication shop up there for five or six years.

Silveri: Where was that?

Jarrett: Up on the mountain above Brevard.

Silveri: Oh. What do they do there?

Jarrett: That's when they first started making silicone up there. I worked up there in the fabrication shop. I run that shop. I had about five or six crews, general foreman. Then I had my back to commence giving me
that
trouble in that hip I got kicked around a little bit in the war, getting rheumatism set up in me. We went down to Florida at Pine Island at St. James City out of Fort Myers. I built a little house down there. We stayed down there six winters. Thought it would make me feel better, but I got worse.

Jarrett: (continued) I lived right on the water. The humidity would be eighty-five when the temperature was eighty-five. That doctor finally told me I'd have to get out of there and get back up here where I could be close to Otten. I have to go up there every now and then. I've got to go back up there the twenty-second.

Silveri: You have a government disability?

Jarrett: Yes. I have a little disability.

Yes. We all got out all right except that one brother. One night him and two more boys was on patrol, and the shell hit close to them and killed them two boys and mashed his helmet up on his head. There was about a day or so before they got it off of him. They had to put a big plate in his head. He was on an island in the hospital where I was at, and I didn't know it then. Then he got out, and they had to replace that. It went on several years, and it finally got worse. He went into a coma and never did come out of it.

Silveri: Do you play any musical instruments?

Jarrett: No.

Silveri: Anybody in the family?

Jarrett: No. Now, on the Rector side, I've got old Pender Rector. He's a famous old fiddle player.

Silveri: You have?

Jarrett: Yes. I've got a bunch. I go and see him every once in awhile. He's

Jarrett: (continued) a cousin of mine.

Silveri: He's pretty old now, isn't he?

Jarrett: Yes. He's eighty-three. About eighty-three now.

Silveri: Is he still playing?

Jarrett: Aw, he plays and saws a little, but he can't make that bow bounce like he used to.

Silveri: Is he living up in Madison County?

Jarrett: No. He lives over here in Asheville. I go over there, and he makes-- I take my tape recorder over there, and he records me some once in awhile. He's an old character. He used to be--boy, he was good, though. They took him to New York and all around to play that music, a time or two, him and his band.

Silveri: Yes. I've read a lot about him. What are your comments about race relations in the South, the black and white race. There weren't very many blacks up there in Madison County, were they?

Jarrett: No, Well, I don't like to go into that too much. It's changed so much. In fact it used to be with me and everybody, everybody had a place. We wasn't too much about that. My Grandfather Rector raised a colored fellow. He come there to his house down in Madison County when he was seventeen years old. Grandpa took him in, and he lived with him there on the farm and worked for him. Then when Grandfather died, he had him a place built on all the land that he give to his daughters and son.

Jarrett: (continued) Old George could live at either one of them places he wanted to. Then he took care of the church up there where Grandfather had, and the cemetery. He give them land for it. Old George was a good old nigger. He'd sit in the back, but everybody treated him just like he was one of them, nearly. Old George, we called him. He went to the Spanish American War. He's buried down there in our cemetery now. When he got old and wasn't able to take care of himself much, they decided that they was going to have to do something about George.

My uncle, Uncle Wiley Rector, he used to be a lawyer at Hendersonville. He was the mayor up there one time. Him and my aunt got an old nigger woman up there, a good old nigger woman, about half his age. ^{They} _A made some kind of settlement on her, and they brought her down to Madison County. They had Preacher Ponder to marry them. She lived there with him and took care of him until he died. Then, of course, they made some kind of settlement with her. Then she got his pension. But she took care of him good until he died.

Silveri: Well, I've covered quite a lot of ground.

Jarrett: Yes. We have.

Silveri: You've got a pretty sharp memory of those early years around. You've got some very interesting stories to tell! Thank you very much.

Jarrett: Oh, you're quite welcome! Come back anytime!

{The End}