

G W Y N N J O N E S

Interviewed by Louis D. Silveri

June 22, 1976

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

The University of North Carolina at Asheville

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Interview with Gwynn Jones (Mr. G.T. Jones) June 22, 1976, conducted by Dr. Louis D. Silveri.

Dr. Silveri: I don't think I know your first name.

Mr. Jones: Gwynn; It's G-w-y-n-n.

Silveri: G-w-y-n-n.

Jones: It's an English version. I'd rather they'd have called me Joe or Tom, it's Gwynn Thomas Jones.

Silveri: Gwynn Thomas Jones.

Jones: Yes; G.T.; most people call me G.T.

Silveri: But Gwynn is not a family name, right? It's not handed down?

Jones: No; it's named after a lawyer. Daddy thought so much of the lawyer he called me Gwynn. His name was Gwynn Parks, I believe.

Silveri: When were you born and where?

Jones: In 1908.

Silveri: What month and day?

Jones: June 11.

Silveri: June 11, 1908. Where?

Jones: Ashe County.

Silveri: Whereabouts in Ashe County?

Jones: Clifton, they called it then. Now, they have changed it; they've changed some of the post offices; it's Warrensville now.

Silveri: Warrensville.

Jones: But the little place near where I was raised was Clifton, the post office.

Silveri: Jefferson is the county seat of Ashe County, right?

Jones: Right.

Silveri: So how far were you from there?

Jones: About ten miles.

Silveri: What do you know about your ancestors? How long had they lived in Ashe County?

Jones: My grandfather was raised in Ashe County. He lived all of his life in Ashe County. That's my Grandfather Jones. My grandmother was a [there] Graybeal. She was born in Ashe and lived/until she died.

Silveri: That's your grandmother and grandfather on your father's side?

Jones: On my father's side. On my mother's side, her father, my Grandfather Mahaffey. He lived to be ninety-two years old.

Silveri: He was born there in Ashe County and raised?

Jones: Yes.

Dr. Silveri: Oh. You can trace back at least those two generations. Well, your generation, your father's, and his father's.

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: That will take you back to before the Civil War?

Jones: Yes. Then my great-grandfather Samuel was reared and raised in Ashe County, also, and had a tremendous lot of land. Both of my great-grandfathers had a tremendous lot of land which was not worth much at that time. I know my father told me that my great-uncle swapped or gave a rifle

Jones: (continued) for a whole farm! About a hundred acres! Now, that must have been some time 'way back, you know.

Silveri: Rifles were pretty scarce.

Jones: Right.

Silveri: I've forgotten your mother's maiden name.

Jones: Mahaffey.

Silveri: Mahaffey. Do you know your father's mother's maiden name? Grandmother's maiden name?

Jones: Oh, my gosh!

Silveri: Maybe you can remember it later on.

Jones: Yes. I will, surely.

Silveri: Did your grandfather live long enough for you to remember him?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Did he fight in the Civil War?

Jones: No. My Grandfather Jones? No. He didn't. My mother's father did.

Silveri: Did he tell you any stories about the war?

Jones: Well, some. Not too much. I mean it's been so long. But some, yes.

Silveri: He fought for the Confederates?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Was there any fighting during the Civil War through Ashe County?

Did they ever tell you about that?

Jones: Well, yes. I don't know about the fighting, but Aunt Nan (that was one

wife's
Jones: (Cont'd.) of my/great-aunts) they came through. They would take horses, you know; a lot of stealing. They would take food from their homes. She remembered that. They would come into the homes and they would just raid and take most everything; anything they wanted to take.

But about the fighting in that section; I don't think there was any fighting right in that section.

Silveri: Let's talk about your father. Do you have any idea when he was born?

Jones: Yes. He was born in 1884.

Silveri: So he would be about ninety-two if he were alive.

Jones: He would be ninety-two. He's about the same age as my mother.

Silveri: You said your mother was still alive?

Jones: Yes. She was born in 1884, June 29. She's still living.

Silveri: Let me ask you how many children in your father's family.

Jones: In my father's family there were nine boys and one girl.

Silveri: When did the girl come along the way? Was the girl first, in the middle, or last?

Jones: No, she was about sixth.

Silveri: That's interesting. How about your mother's family? How many children in that?

Jones: Oh, golly. They've all gone now but Mother, I believe. About ten.

Silveri: When your father was growing up, what opportunities for his education were there in Ashe County?

Jones: Not too much. Very little, I would say.

Silveri: He didn't have much opportunity for an education?

Jones: No. Now, some of my uncles taught school. Of course, they would go far enough so they could teach. They didn't have Master's degrees like they do now, but Daddy had a fair education. They just had country schools, one-room schools. In fact I went in a one-room school in the grades. Then in Jefferson, they had Jefferson High School.

Silveri: They didn't have a high school when your father was growing up?

Jones: No. No. high school.

Silveri: So he got whatever education there existed there. Maybe four years?

Jones: Well, yes. I would say something like that.

Silveri: Your father was born in 1884. For young boys growing up then, they stayed and helped on the farm, right?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: There was very little opportunity to move out.

Jones: That's right.

Silveri: When your father and mother married, your father was farming, right?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Was he given a part of his grandfather's farm ?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Now, Grandfather had ten children. How big a farm did he have?

Jones: Well, he had something like twelve hundred acres.

Silveri: Twelve hundred acres? Oh, there was no problem in dividing it up.

Jones: No. No. There was plenty of land.

Silveri: Incidentally, I want to ask you again about your grandfather. Did he own any slaves?

Jones: No, he didn't.

Silveri: Did you hear any talk about the years before the Civil War when there was slavery?

Jones: Yes. Mary's grandfather, Joe Johnson, had a slave. She had a paper on that. As far as in the Jones family, they didn't have any slaves.

Silveri: When were they married?

Jones: Roughly?

Silveri: Yes, roughly.

Jones: About nineteen hundred, I guess, or near that.

Silveri: They must have lived close by.

Jones: We lived within sight of my Grandfather Jones.

Silveri: So your father was given a part of the family farm?

Jones: Yes. When he married he was given a spot to put the home on. Then later when Granddaddy died, the land was divided up then, and they got their equal shares of land.

Silveri: Who built the house? The whole family got together and built his house when he married?

Jones: Well, they had a carpenter that was a pretty good carpenter, I guess, as carpenters would go at that time. His name was Will Sharp. They would pitch in. Daddy and his brothers and all would help, but this Will Sharp was the carpenter as far back as I can remember. Will Sharp had built many a house.

Silveri: He made sure they did it right?

Jones: Yes. Yes.

Silveri: Was that the house you were born in? The one you just described as being built?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: You were born in that house in 1908?

Jones: Right.

Silveri: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Jones: I had one brother and six sisters.

Silveri: Eight children in the family. Which one were you?

Jones: I was next to the oldest one. My brother Austin was the oldest one.

Silveri: Then after you came all girls.

Jones: Right.

Silveri: Did your father farm all of his life?

Jones: No. He farmed and still had a farm when he died. My father, later on, was with the Federal Government; Alcohol, Tax and Tobacco Unit, I believe they call it. Well, they call them Revenue Officers from way back, you know, but they changed that. You know what I mean.

Silveri: How long did he work for that?

Jones: Something like eight years, I imagine.

Silveri: That's pretty much like a sheriff's job or deputy-sheriff's job?

Jones: Well, yes. Somewhat like it. Some more to it than the deputy sheriff. You have to go through examinations and all like that.

Silveri: Did he spend most of his time chasing moonshiners?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Do you remember about when he started this job? About what time?

Was it before the First World War?

Jones: It was around in the thirties. Around 1935.

That would be about correct.

Silveri: I wanted to ask you about growing up as a boy in Ashe County. I wonder first, if you could describe how the farm lay. Did it have some bottom land?

Jones: It had some what we call bottom land. That was the precious-good land, you know, our bottoms. Mostly it was on the hills. I mean it was steep, but not too rough. It was pretty steep. It was pretty good farming land. It was not rocky. It was nice, good land, good soil.

Silveri: It's beautiful country there, too?

Jones: Oh yes. Very scenic.

Silveri: Very scenic. But you growing up in the middle of it, I suppose you took it for granted all the time?

Jones: Oh yes.

Silveri: What kind of crop was grown on the farm?

Jones: Corn and wheat. Now, when I was a young lad, we would grow most of all the things we used. We would grow wheat and corn. Of course, there was no market for beans and tobacco. They didn't have a market then. They didn't grow tobacco at that time, but they did grow beans and had large gardens. We had hogs and cattle; we had our own beef. We would have our own wheat, and we would take it to the mill in a wagon. They would give us so much flour. They would take the wheat and exchange it for flour and bran. The bran we would stir up, bring it back and put it in a barrel and mix it with water and feed it to the hogs.

Silveri: Oh, I see. That's the thing that they mill out of the wheat now. We don't get the bran at all.

Jones: Right.

Silveri: It's quite nutritious.

Jones: By the way, we raised buck wheat, and made delicious hotcakes. Buckwheat cakes.

Silveri: That wasn't too different from ordinary wheat, was it?

Jones: No.

Silveri: Did have a different flavor?

Jones: The buckwheat?

Silveri: Yes.

Jones: Yes. It's different. There's an old saying, "How did buckwheat come across the ocean? Three-cornered." It has three corners, the

Jones: (continued) shape of it. It's different from regular wheat that flour comes from. It's delicious.

Silveri: Mainly used for hotcakes.

Jones: Hotcakes. Yes. Well, you can buy it in the stores now. It's put up in packages by the millers.

Silveri: About how many acres of wheat did you raise?

Jones: Well, not too much. Enough to keep us going. I'd say maybe ten acres of wheat.

Silveri: Ten acres.

Jones: Small acreage, yes.

Silveri: Did you mill it all at once?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Did you store it in barrels?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Corn was the major crop, wasn't it?

Jones: Corn was the major crop. You had to have corn for the cattle and for the horses. We had to have horses. We had no other means for the plowing and the harvesting being used on the land. There were no tractors.

Silveri: I suppose there's vivid memories of hoeing corn for you?

Jones: Hoeing corn. I've hoed corn many a day. Yes.

Silveri: And hated it all the time?

Jones: Oh golly! Yes!

Silveri: How many times during a season would you hoe corn before it was

Silveri: (Cont'd.) ready to be harvested?

Jones: I would say as many as six or eight times.

Silveri: Did the girls help hoe corn too?

Jones: Yes, some, but mostly the men. Everyone was wanting a chance to hoe corn. There would be a big farmer, and he would sit on a swing and have the checks written out, you know. You would go out there and hoe corn all day for a dollar! Well, maybe a dollar. Fifty cents most likely at that time.

Silveri: You mean you would go out and hoe corn for somebody else to earn some money?

Jones: Well, we had a neighbor that didn't have any boys; they were girls. Being good neighbors, we would help him; he would pay us, but they were nearby. That's the only place. We would hoe his corn out. Golly, you'd have maybe forty at once hoeing corn! They would just take a whole ten or twelve acres and go through there. It would look so pretty and clean.

Then we would eat. They would have our lunch prepared: country ham floating in red-eye gravy and all kinds of good eats. It was kind of a treat, they were such good cooks and such good eats. They had so many things they had put up from the farm. It was kind of a pleasure. We kind of enjoyed that.

Silveri: It was more entertainment than anything else?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: About how many acres of corn did your father raise?

Jones: I'd say twelve or fifteen acres.

Silveri: What else did he raise? A vegetable garden?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Did your mother take care of that?

Jones: Yes. We would help in the garden, too. We would help Mother in the garden. Mother mostly was in the house cooking and taking care of children, and washing and so on.

Silveri: How about fruit orchards?

Jones: Yes. We had quite a large orchard, like apples. We had all kinds of apples, apples that I don't know of now by name. Good apples. Virginia Beauty apples, Rome Beauties. We didn't have the Stark apple then. I don't know whether they were developed at that time or not, but Stark, now, is the famous apple. But we had a little apple we called Bye-Bye apple. It was a sweet --Cotton Sweets and Rusty Coats. Rusty Coats, they were a delicious sweet apple. Wolf Rivers, that's an apple that's good to cook and make applesauce and hot apples. They would can apples, too, and peaches. We had some peaches, not too many peaches, but we had peaches enough to can and preserve.

Silveri: Who had planted these trees?

Jones: I don't know. The people that came before. Now that I can't answer truthfully.

Silveri: Before your grandfather?

Jones: Yes. Well, Grandfather, I guess planted--Grandfather probably great-planted some of them, but maybe my/grandfather. But they were there.

Silveri: You harvested a pretty good crop of apples without spraying?

You didn't spray them, did you?

Jones: Didn't have any spray at all.

Silveri: I can't understand why everybody is spraying apples and things today.

Jones: We didn't have those bugs then. Everything would be pretty and green. Our beans would be beautiful, and no spray, but now you can't have anything. You spray it, and you can't have it now!

Silveri: How about wild nuts? There must have been a lot of wild nuts around?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Walnuts.

Jones: Walnuts, Hickory nuts, and wild grapes. You know, they would make the best jelly. Mother would send me out to get wild grapes. They were wild. I believe they called them Fox Grapes.

Silveri: Fox Grapes. Very tasty?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Were those the kind you could smell from quite a distance?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Someone was telling me the other day that he would go out and get them, too. The kind he would get would be muscadines. Did you ever hear of that?

Jone s: Yes. Yes.

Silveri: Of course, wild berries all the time.

Jones: Yes. Oh, yes. Blackberries and strawberries. Strawberries grew almost as large as what we call "tame" strawberries now. In the rich hillsides, you just go up and you just get a bucketful of beautiful strawberries in no time.

Silveri: Let's get back to the nuts you found in the region. How about chestnuts?

Jones: Oh yes. Chestnuts. We had just a tremendous lot of chestnuts. Back when I was a lad, chestnut trees were everywhere. It was a good money crop. We would shake them. We would pick them up. They would fall, but if a tree was really loaded, we would get the chestnuts. We just climb up in there and shake the limb. We would pick up bushels and bushels of chestnuts, and we got a pretty good price at that time for them. They were delicious. We would bake chestnuts. We would cut them open and bake them. We would boil them. They were good boiled. We would boil them in water. I wish we had chestnuts like that now, but they are all gone. The blight took them away from here.

Silveri: Were you still down there on the farm when the blight came through?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: It just came through fast, all of a sudden?

Jones: Yes. Well, over a period of time it started. Pretty fast. Yes.

Silveri: I don't know if there's anymore chestnut trees around.

Jones: None. That I know of. The real chestnut, you know.

Silveri: How about black walnut trees?

Jones: Black walnut. We had quite a few black walnut trees; they still have in Ashe County.

Silveri: Still have?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: That's a beautiful wood, and people often cut it down for the wood.

Jones: Oh, yes.

Silveri: What about the stock? You mentioned before you had hogs.

Jones: Yes, we had cattle; we raised some beef cattle. We had our milk cows that were Jersey cattle, I believe, mostly Jersey cattle, a few there for milk cows where we milked by hand. Other cattle, we had the short-horns for beef.

Silveri: About how many beef cattle did you raise at one time?

Jones: I'd say along then, about thirty or forty.

Silveri: Oh, that much? You sold most of it?

Jones: Yes, sold them; we didn't get much for them then. Then the price was low.

Silveri: You didn't have to do much, you just had them in the pasture, and they ate grass.

Jones: Right, they ate grass, and we put up hay we had in our bottom land that we talked about. That's where we did have mowing machines, and we used horses to pull the mowing machines. On the hillsides it was pretty steep; we would have to take a scythe and get around the fence rows where it was so steep that we couldn't get [up to it with] the mowing machines. The horses couldn't go on some of the higher places.

Jones: (continued) We would have two or three, we would call it trimming with the scythe.

Silveri: Yes. It was hard work!

Jones: Oh, golly. Yes.

Silveri: You had to put up a lot of hay for the winter.

Jones: Put up hay. Yes. At that time the hay was stacked. What we called a haystack. Today they bale it, and they put it in the barns. It's all baled neatly.

Silveri: So, you had a series of haystacks around?

Jones: Oh, yes. Yes.

Silveri: They would stay out all the time?

Jones: Yes. Right.

Silveri: The rain and the snow wouldn't bother it?

Jones: No. No. It kept very well in the stack, and oats, we raised oats for the horses. Daddy always liked to have some oats for the horses.

Silveri: Did you have a barn?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Not for the animals, was it? Was it for the cows?

Jones: Yes. In the wintertime we had the barn, and we would keep the cows and horses in the barn.

Silveri: The cattle stayed out all winter?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: You mentioned about horses. Were there any mules around then?

Jones: A few mules. Not too many mules.

Silveri: They used mostly horses.

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: I imagine some oxen?

Jones: Oxen. Yes.

Silveri: I'm surprised they didn't use more mules. Mules are supposed to be better.

Jones: Better on the high places. Yes. There were some mules, but not too many.

Silveri: There wasn't much you had to buy from the store, was there?

Jones: No. No. That's true. In fact, they didn't have anything in the stores when I was a young lad. My mother would send me to the store with a bucket of eggs. We would swap eggs, we would swap chickens and butter for what they had in the store at that time: coffee, sugar. They had very little in the store. They had country stores, but they had chewing tobacco, horseshoes, and horseshoe nails to put on the horses, sugar (white sugar and brown sugar) and cheese. They had these great-big hoop cheese. You could always see a big cheese in the countrystore.

Silveri: You never made your own cheese at home?

Jones: No. We didn't. Well, now some people did, but as far as I know, I never knew of Mother making cheese at home. But they had a cheese factory right close, believe it or not, in Ashe County right near us, within a mile.

Silveri: Did you often go over and watch them make cheese?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Could you explain how they did it?

Jones: Not too well. No, it's too far back.

Silveri: It was a small operation?

Jones: It was a small operation. Yes. I wish I had known more about it, but then being so young I didn't think too much about it, I guess.

Silveri: You got to sell some of your milk to that factory?

Jones: Yes. We did.

Silveri: Was it a cooperative thing? Was it owned by the farmers?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: When did you start school? What age?

Jones: Oh. When I was about six.

Silveri: Six years old. How far away from the house was the school?

Jones: At that time about a half a mile.

Silveri: That's not bad, is it?

Jones: No.

Silveri: That was an easy walk.

Jones: Yes. Yes.

Silveri: How many years at that school?

Jones: I went until I made the seventh grade.

Silveri: Seventh reader?

Jones: Yes. Reading, writing and arithmetic.

Silveri: Who were your teachers? Do you remember?

Jones: My teacher was Uncle Wesley Jones. He was my uncle.

Silveri: When you first went to school, about how many children were in that school?

Jones: I'd say twenty.

Silveri: About twenty.

Jones: In one room.

Silveri: In one room. Probably as much as seven classes?

Jones: Yes. One teacher. Uncle Wesley taught fifty-two schools before he retired!

Silveri: How long was the school year when you started?

Jones: About four months, the best I remember it.

Silveri: You started in September, did it?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Went on til early spring or late winter

Jones: Yes. Because everyone had to do something in the spring, you know. It's different from now. We would go to school, and we would come back from school. Mother would have a snack. We were always hungry. Of course, we carried our lunch. It was close, but we would take our lunch. We would swap things. The children would swap. Mother would bake what they call this egg custard pie. They were delicious. There was a young girl, and she said, "Oh, that looks so good! I'll swap you a piece of my blackberry pie for that custard." We would exchange.

Dr. Silveri: What kind of ^a snack would your mother have when you came home?

Jones: She would have cake or a pie and milk. We had plenty of milk. Of course, being on a farm, we had plenty of milk. We kept the milk down at the springhouse.

Silveri: It kept nice and fresh there.

Jones: Yes. It's running water from a nice-cool spring. We kept the milk, butter, and things like that in the springhouse.

Silveri: The water came right up out of the ground?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: All year around that happened? Right?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Did you eat during the day like the typical farm family that had the good substantial breakfast and lunch and a small supper?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Is that the way you ate?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: I see. That makes sense, too. Most people should do that.

Jones: Yes. Right.

Silveri: Eat when you are going to need it for the energy for working on the farm?

Jones: Right.

Silveri: What was your favorite food while you were growing up?

Jones: In the dessert line, Mother's egg custard pie was my favorite pie. Beef, we had beef most of the time because we had our own cattle, and we

Jones: (continued) could have beef in the meatline. ^{And pork-} /we would kill our own hogs.

Silveri: How did you cure the meat?

Jones: We would hang it up. We would grind up, make sausage and put sage and red pepper in it, and work it all up. We would can quite a bit of that. Now, the beef, we would let it cure. We would hang it up and put a cover of cloth over it, like cheese cloth. I know Mother would rub that with something to preserve it. I have forgotten what it was. Salt and pepper, or something like that. It was delicious, you know.

Silveri: But you had more pork than you did beef, right?

Jones: Yes. I guess we would have. We did have. We would sugar-cure the hams, sugar-cured country hams. They would keep the hams and cure them. You know what I mean? They would let them age, and they would hang them up. They would become country hams.

Silveri: Delicious?

Jones: Oh, yes!

Silveri: I think your wife said she never got used to eating country ham, but ~~that~~ you love it very much!

Jones: Oh, yes!

Silveri: Very expensive to buy!

Jones: Yes! Other things we have down at the springhouse I talked about, Mother always made a kraut out of the cabbage (we had a lot of cabbage). She would chop this. Had a kraut cutter, they called it, and chopped all

Jones: (Cont'd.) this cabbage up and made kraut. They would put it in a large container and keep it down at the spring house. That was delicious. We had kraut all through the winter. She would pickle cucumbers and pickle beans. That was the green beans, and they would pickle them in a large container.

Silveri: Did she put much up in jars?

Jones: Quite a bit; yes.

Silveri: That's one thing you had to buy, then.

Jones: Had to buy the jars; yes.

Silveri: Were they quart jars or bigger ones?

Jones: They were quarts and half-gallons. Half-gallon, that was two quarts. They were plentiful.

Silveri: Where did you store those?

Jones: We had, in our house, shelves in a pantry where we would keep all the cans, jellies, and preserves. They made many, many things. We had all kinds of eats.

Silveri: How did your mother cook? Did she have a cookstove?

Jones: Yes; she had a large range. It used wood.

Silveri: That's something that the boys had to make sure was full of wood?

Jones: Oh, yes. We had to saw. We would cut down trees. We always kept a lot of wood for the fireplaces. They used wood.

Silveri: Oh, you had fireplaces?

Jones: The only heat we had was from fireplaces, and the large wood

Jones: (continued) range that Mother cooked on. Had a reservoir to have hot water on the side.

Silveri: Wood cutting for the stoves was done always in the wintertime for the following?

Jones: Mostly, yes, late fall/^{we'd} start getting up the wood for the winter.

Silveri: There had to be an awful lot of it?

Jones: Oh, golly! Yes! You couldn't believe it would take that much wood. You would see wood from here, well, say a hundred feet long. You would think, well, golly, that's a lot of wood! But it didn't take long to get rid of that much wood in the winter. The winters were rough and^{it} was cold back then.

Silveri: Was there any special wood that you preferred?

Jones: Oak; oak was our better wood.

Silveri: There were plenty of oak trees around?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: You did all of the cutting on your own land?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: You must have had a good stand of timber, then?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Never feared about running out of wood?

Jones: No! No. We had plenty of wood and plenty of water.

Silveri: Plenty of wood and water. That's great. You had the cookstove in

Silveri: (continued) the kitchen. In the other rooms, you had fireplaces.

Was it a one-story home?

Jones: No. We had a two-story home.

Silveri: Would you describe what it looked like inside? How many rooms and where they were?

Jones: Let's see. We had one large bedroom, Daddy and Mother's bedroom, downstairs. We had a large kitchen, a large livingroom, and they called the other room, at that time, a parlor. Do you know what I mean? A parlor? That was for guests or visitors. There was the parlor. When the preacher came, he goes in the parlor.

Silveri: Then?

Jones: Then, upstairs we had four bedrooms.

Silveri: Four bedrooms. What rooms had fireplaces?

Jones: Two rooms downstairs on either side. We had a fireplace on the south side and one across on the north side. across the hall, and we had a large hall. We had a large hall that came through with some closets and then the upstairs.

Silveri: No heat upstairs?

Jones: No. No. But the heat would come up from the fireplaces. I mean, the heat goes up.

Silveri: It was colder upstairs, but not--

Jones: It was colder, but we used featherbeds. You would sleep on a feather-bed. One time Mother came up, it was real cold in the winter, and put a feather-

Jones: (continued) bed over us for the cover over top. Golly, you would just perspire!

Silveri: Even though it's terribly cold?

Jones: Yes. My brother and I would open a window. When it would be zero, we would crack a window. We always liked a little fresh air. We were used to it. We didn't know about all of these new-modern things then. It's what you were used to, I imagine.

Silveri: You said that the winters were very rough, then. A lot of snow?

Jones: A lot of snow. Yes.

Silveri: What could you do, then, when there was a lot of snow? You were snowed in, really, weren't you?

Jones: There's nowhere to go, but you could get on a horse and go to the store, the country store, which was something like a mile away, if you had to. But you could get along fine. We would get our big fireplaces going. Had apples. Now, we would eat apples. We would always have a basket of apples in the livingroom. We'd all eat apples. Maybe before bedtime have an apple; peel an apple and have some apple.

Silveri: How did you water the stock in the wintertime? Did you have water coming into the barn?

Jones: No. No. We turned them out. In the morning we would let the cattle go out. We had a creek that came right through, all the way through, the bottomland of our farm. A beautiful creek, and that's where the cattle and horses would drink from. We would just/^{go}down to the barn and open the doors,

Jones: (Cont'd.) and turn them out.

Silveri: How many times a day did you do that?

Jones: We would let them stay out until later in the evening. Then we would bring them in.

Silveri: What if it was a real bad day?

[End of Side I]

[Side II]

Jones: On a real bad day, we wouldn't turn them out until away up in the day, and then we would bring them in. We would let them go get water. No, we had no facility for water in the barns.

Silveri: What did the kids do for play, say, in the winter time when they had more leisure?

Jones: The children didn't have many things to do, but they would get together and have candy pullings in the winter, and games, different kinds of games. The ladies would get together in the winter time and make quilts; they'd have quiltings; they had the frames that had the spikes in them. They'd make some beautiful quilts.

Silveri: But the boys just had to find something to entertain themselves? During the winter time?

Jones: Yes. They didn't have too much a-going. When the New River would freeze over we would go skating. We would skate on top of ice. It would stay frozen over for maybe two months!

Silveri: How far away was the New River?

Jones: Oh, it was almost in sight of where we lived. It was about one-fourth

Jones: (Continued) of a mile to New River.

Silveri: Does it begin up in Ashe County?

Jones: It does. It starts up in Ashe County ; they call it the head of the river. You can step over it two feet there. Today you could go there. The north fork of New River starts in Ashe County. It sure does.

Silveri: Did you used to go fishing in that river, too?

Jones: Oh yes. Quite a lot.

Silveri: What kind of fish did you get out of it?

Jones: We'd get bass and trout.

Silveri: And take it home to eat?

Jones: Oh yes. Yes. We would catch quite a few fish, quite a few. There's still a nice trout stream in there now. They stock it now with trout.

Silveri: You mentioned about going to school, and your uncle was teaching you. You went to that school about seven years.

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: It was only about half a mile away. By the time you were there in
already
your last year, that school was full of your sisters. Your brother had gone
on, I guess.

Jones: Yes. My brother had gone on to high school in Jefferson.

Silveri: How about holidays? Christmastime? Was that a special time?

Jones: Oh yes.

Silveri: What kind of preparations went on at Christmastime?

What did the family do?

Jones: They would get ready for Christmas. Mother would have something special, cook up something special for Christmas, like cakes. We always had cake. For Christmas you didn't get much. There wasn't much. One little country store close by. There were more in the county, but they had nothing for children. We would get some oranges (they had oranges for Christmas) and some candy. I know stick candy. They had these boxes of stick candy, different flavors. But we thought it was great, whatever we got! We didn't know about these other things like they have nowadays.

Silveri: Oranges were something special, right? You didn't see them very often.

That's right.

Jones: /Of course, we had apples. You know, apples, oranges, candy. We had plenty to eat, and we would get something to wear for Christmas , like a new shirt or a new pair of pants or a new pair of shoes. One neighbor made us (his name was John Eller), made my brother and me a little mill, and it had a crank on it. You would turn it by hand. You would take it down along the creek, and we would run sand through it and have a lot of fun with that. We would use sand. It was like a little gristmill, or like you were grinding some kind of grain. We thought that was wonderful. We had no toys, however, there were dolls. As I remember they did have little dolls for the girls. My father and mother would get the girls a little doll.

Silveri: You mentioned in the winter you would be skating. How about sleds?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: In the summertime you went out fishing. How about hunting? Did the boys do any hunting?

Jones: Yes. We did quite a lot of hunting.

Silveri: What kind of guns did your father have?

Jones: He had shotguns, they call them, like a sixteen gauge and twelve gauge, shotguns for rabbits. We had a lot of rabbits and mountain grouse.

Silveri: Are they good to eat?

Jones: Oh, delicious! Yes. They are called a mountain grouse, but some people call them a pheasant. You know, the different colored pheasant that you see; they are Chinese or something like that. And quail.

Silveri: All of those were good eating?

Jones: Oh, yes. At that time we had so many because we raised all of this grain: wheat, oats, rye. The quail would gather around this grain. There were just gobs of them. There were just "oodlins" of them.

Silveri: Well, did you eat everything you shot: quail, mountain grouse, and all of that? Did you eat them all?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Boy, game was very plentiful!

Jones: Oh, yes. Some people would kill squirrels. We had a lot of squirrels in the woods, but I never did care too much about killing a squirrel; it was always too pretty, I thought. I juat can't shoot a squirrel.

Silveri: They say that squirrel eating is good. Squirrels taste good.

Jones: Yes, yes.

Silveri: How about deer? Were they all gone by then when you were growing up?

Jones: No deer. Not close by.

Silveri: No bear, of course. Bears were all gone.

Jones: No. No, bear.

Silveri: How about snakes?

Jones: Plenty of snakes! Yes.

Silveri: You must have killed a few when you were growing up?

Jones: Oh yes. Yes, quite a few.

Silveri: If you ever saw a rattlesnake or copperhead, you always tried to kill it, right?

Jones: Oh yes.

Silveri: Did you ever hear of anybody getting bitten by a snake?

Jones: No. No. We didn't have any poisonous snakes right in our vicinity, they were but higher up in the mountains. But I knew they were in the mountains, rattlesnakes and copperheads, and I don't think we ever had any coral snakes; they're farther South. The coral snake is the most poisonous snake in America.

Silveri: Did your father read any newspapers?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Do you remember what they were?

Jones: Yes. We got a paper out of Atlanta, the Atlanta Constitution.

Silveri: Do you know why?

Jones: I don't know why. I know I was a little-young lad, and I can remember seeing those big headlines on a paper.

Silveri: The Atlanta Constitution. Any local newspapers?

Jones: Yes. We had a little paper in Ashe County, locally owned. It just came out once a week.

Silveri: Once a week. Do you remember the name of it?

Jones: Star.

Silveri: The Ashe County Star or Jefferson Star?

Jones: The Jefferson Star. I believe that is true.

Silveri: Once a week. How about books in the house?

Jones: We had some books.

Silveri: Mainly the Bible?

Jones: Yes. Mainly the Bible. A few books, not too many books. Mostly old school books and all the Webster blue back spelling books, you know.

Silveri: What did you use to write with when you went into the first grade?

Jones: Pencil.

Silveri: You had pencils?

Jones: Yes. We had pencils, and they called them tablets. You know what I mean, tablets?

Silveri: Writing tablets?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Those had come in then; some students in the further reaches of the mountains would use the slates.

Jones: Yes. We had slates. Now, in the schools, we had a blackboard, of course, that's being used now, I suppose, in different places. The teacher

Jones: (continued) would use the blackboard and chalk, but we had pencils, a little brown pencil with a rubber in the end of it. They were two for a penny, believe it or not!

Silveri: Did you have to buy your own books when you went to school? Your own school books, so you would have them?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Did you enjoy going to school?

Jones: Yes, I did. Yes. I enjoyed it.

Silveri: I want to ask you about church. How important was church in your family?

Jones: It was pretty important. We went to church regularly.

Silveri: What church was it?

Jones: It was a Methodist. We belonged to the Methodist church. That was Clifton Methodist Church.

Silveri: Did the church have its own regular pastor?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: In other words, he stayed there all the time? Wasn't a circuit rider?

Jones: Oh, I see what you mean. He stayed in the same place, had a parsonage where he lived, but he had about six churches to attend.

Silveri: So, that meant he only came around to your church every six weeks?

Jones: Yes. That's about right. We had Sunday schools. We'd go to church once a week. We had our Sunday School and our teachers, and so on.

Silveri: Did somebody else conduct the service when the pastor wasn't there?

Jones: Yes. We'd have a lay speaker, ^{and} / we'd have a lot of singing. We had an old organ in the church, and we'd sing good songs, have a good time, you know, fellowship and so on.

Silveri: Did you have a hymnbook?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: How far away was the church from your home?

Jones: It was near the store I was telling you about. It was about a mile. Within a mile, I would say.

Silveri: They had Sunday school for the children?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: What was the name of the pastor? Do you remember? The first one you can remember.

Jones: The first one? I'm sorry.

Silveri: It's not that important. I was just wondering. Did he used to visit the house?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: You mentioned ^{that} the parlor was always open when he came around.

Jones: Yes. Right. Right.

Silveri: Did he come around for Sunday dinner sometimes?

Jones: Yes. Yes.

Silveri: Was that a special event for the family?

Jones: Yes, right.

Silveri: What can you remember about the pastor when he had church?
Was he a good preacher?

Jones: Yes, I'd say he was a pretty good preacher.

Silveri: They were all pretty good preachers up there?

Jones: Yes. They'd stick to the Book pretty much. Of course, now, we had a camp meeting in August each year. Once a year, in August, we had preachers from California and New York. Bud Robinson was his name. Oh, he was a great preacher. People would go from miles in wagons, and they would go there and stay all day. It was about this time of day. They would take their lunch and just go there. They would have these preachers, and they would have a piano. They would have great singers to lead the singing. They would get together and all in the whole area of the community would fellowship together. It was a great thing.

Silveri: Would it last more than one day?

Jones: Oh, yes; it would go on for about two weeks.

Silveri: Two weeks?

Jones: Two weeks, yes.

Silveri: Most people wouldn't stay for two weeks, though, would they?

Jones: No. Well, they would come and go. They'd go back. Yes. Dr. Robinson bought his boy a Model-T Ford, and Daddy bought me a Model-T Ford. I thought that was the greatest thing in the world. It was more than having a new Cadillac now! Oh, Gee! We'd go to

Jones: (Cont'd.) this camp meeting. The Ford had running boards. There would be four girls on one side, four girls on the other, two in the seat, and me driving, going up the highway. We called it Big Sandy. We had no hard surface; it was sand. Eventually, they did sand the road and widen it. and you'd just go through. That little ole Model-T a-going up Big Sandy.

Silveri: You got stuck quite often?

Jones: Yes, yes.

Silveri: Well, when you finished school. . . you were born in 1908. You finished school after the first World War?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: What effect did the war have on Ashe County, that you can remember. . . the first World War? Do you remember any boys going off to war?

Jones: Yes, I do. I remember the boys leaving and coming back in World War I. It was very exciting to see those. . . it was a happy day to see those boys coming back! It was a sad time to see them leaving. . . people we knew, quite a few from Ashe County. I remember the day when they were leaving, went on and through World War I, went overseas, and came back.

Silveri: Do you know whether most of them volunteered, or were drafted?

Jones: I think they were mostly drafted.

Silveri: You finished school, then, in the 1920's. Did you stay on the farm?

Jones: After I graduated from high school, New River High. . .

Silveri: Wait a minute. After you got out of this school, seventh grade, you went down to Jefferson to the high school?

Jones: No, I went to New River. They built New River High School, and I went to New River High School. It was a pretty good sized school. A professor Hopkins was the principal, and I went there. After I graduated from high school, I did go up North and worked some there.

Silveri: Let's go back to that high school for a minute. Was that a public high school, run by the county?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: What did they have? Did it start at grade eight and go through grade twelve?

Jones: Right, Right.

Silveri: Was there a law then that everyone had to go to school through the twelfth grade?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: This was a fairly large high school. So, you graduated from high school. Do you remember what year that was? Late 1920's, wasn't it?

Jones: Yes, 1927.

Silveri: Now, you said you went North after that. Why?

Jones: They were building a large dam in Maryland, Conowingo Dam. They were going from all over the world there. It was a huge operation. They had to move a lot of railroad. It was on the Susquehanna River. I went there to make me some money.

Silveri: How did you hear about that dam?

Jones: I heard it through others close by that were talking about it. I think someone from Ashe County had been up there and we got the news about it. Probably saw it in the paper, too. I went up and got me a job. I was timekeeper. They had dozens of timekeepers, you know, but I was a timekeeper for Stone & Webster. That was one of the largest construction companies in the world at that time.

Silveri: You went with the idea that this would be a temporary job, and you would come home?

Jones: And I did, yes.

Silveri: You just wanted to get some money.

Jones: Yes, yes.

Silveri: What did your parents think of you going off?

Jones: Well, it was okay.

Silveri: How long did you stay away?

Jones: Oh, about two years.

Silveri: Two years. Did you come back with money?

Jones: Oh, yes. Yes.

Silveri: You worked up there two years at the same job?

Jones: Yes, yes.

Silveri: Were you able to save some money?

Jones: Oh, yes, yes.

Silveri: Two years. Does that mean you came back about 1928 or 1929?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: What did you do when you came back?

Jones: Well, I worked around on the farm some, and in 1931 I got married.

Silveri: Well, how long had you known your wife?

Jones: Not too long. Her father retired from the service and came close by where we lived, and bought a big farm in Ashe. My sisters got acquainted with my wife, Mary. Mary, Muriel and Betty would visit each other. It was close by. On Sundays, they were going from house to house. One day I met Mary there, and that's the way it started off.

Silveri: You got married, then, in what year?

Jones: Nineteen and thirty-one.

Silveri: Did you stay there in Ashe for awhile?

Jones: We stayed in Ashe for awhile. Yes.

Silveri: On the farm?

Jones: Yes. My wife was a secretary to a lawyer down in Jefferson. In fact, she was court reporter. She did some court reporting in Ashe.

Silveri: I wanted to ask you about politics in Ashe County. We haven't talked about that yet. Politics in mountain counties was usually quite fascinating. People took politics very seriously.

Jones: Oh, yes. Yes.

Silveri: Was it mostly Democrats in that county?

Jones: Mostly, at that time. Yes. They were mostly Democrats.

Silveri: When you were growing up, was there any one particular person

Silveri: (Cont'd.) that came to be known as the strongest political leader in the county, or a family?

Jones: Well, yes, T.K. Miller, I think it was Tom K. Miller, was quite a figure in the political field. My Grandfather Jones was Register of Deeds in Ashe County for two terms, two four-year terms. That would be eight years. He was quite a politician. A lot of politicians would come to Granddaddy's home. I can remember them coming there, like Mr. Doughton. That was Bob Doughton. He was Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. He was a great friend to my granddaddy, and Walter Worth. He was a banker. And Joe Hampton; he was the Sheriff of Ashe County; Dr. Ray, and different ones.

William Austin (Bill Austin), we called him "Bill," or Ira T. Johnston; they were out front in the political field.

Silveri: Your Grandfather Jones was important politically because he knew where the votes were and he could get the votes out?

Jones: Right, right.

Silveri: He showed that by being elected Register of Deeds.

Jones: Yes, yes. He was pretty popular, and he was a great singer. I would like to hear him sing now. He was terrific. Not saying this because he was my grandfather, but he was a great singer! I mean, he had a wonderful voice. He taught singing schools throughout the community or county. I mean, county-wide. People would go for miles to hear my grandfather sing.

Silveri: What kind of songs would he sing?

Jones: He would sing religious songs from the songbooks like Cokesbury, or

Jones: (Cont'd.) something like that. He had a tuning fork, a little tuning fork, and he would pull it out of his pocket and get the tune to start, and start off. He could play the organ. He was terrific on the organ.

Silveri: What did he teach. . . teach the shaped-notes singing?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Do you remember ever singing from shaped notes?

Jones: Oh, some. . . a little. . . not too much.

Silveri: What about musical instruments? Did anybody in the family play, besides what you just mentioned?

Jones: The banjo, the violin, the fiddle (same thing), the piano and the organ.

Silveri: Who in the family played them? Neighbors or anything?

Jones: Well, there were the Richardsons: Bobby and Vance. They were good on mountain music. Mouth organs. . . we had what is known as a French Harp. I've played those. They had a little thing they put up here in their teeth, a little harp; a Jew's Harp, they call it.

Silveri: There were quite a few musical. . . a guitar? Do you remember the guitar?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Where would this mountain music usually be played? In the home?

Jones: They would get together at home, yes.

Silveri: They would really do some foot-stomping there. I want to get back to politics here. Did you start voting as soon as you turned twenty-one years of age?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: What about your father? Was he active in politics?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Did your father hold any kind of political offices?

Jones: No. He only just worked for the government in that capacity.

Silveri: Did it get pretty rough, politics in Ashe County?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: There were certain very important positions in the county, like sheriff, was a very important thing.

Jones: Right, right.

Silveri: And county commissioners?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: What did they have? Three or five of those?

Jones: Three.

Silveri: You mentioned Register of Deeds, County Clerk. What other county offices were there? Oh, Superintendent of Schools.

Jones: Yes, yes.

Silveri: That was very important, wasn't it?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Because he's the one that would choose teachers.

Jones: Right.

Silveri: You had a school board?

Jones: Right, right.

Silveri: For the whole county. Did you have school commissioners

Silveri: (continued) for each section of the county?

Jones: Yes. They did have.

Silveri: What was the name they gave those people? Was it commissioner?

Jones: Well, they would say on a school board in the community. I've forgotten just what the correct name, but they were the ones who saw the schools were run properly. There would be about three for each school.

Silveri: Trustees?

Jones: Yes. I think so.

Silveri: They would have quite a bit of influence on who the teachers . . .

Jones: On who they hired for the teaching and so on. Right. Yes, that's true.

Silveri: You elected the members of the school committee in the county, and they are the ones who hired the school superintendent?

Jones: Yes. Right.

Silveri: Were there any other county officers elected that you can recall?

Jones: Well, they had a coroner.

Silveri: The judges weren't elected, though, were they?

Jones: No. The judges weren't elected at that time.

Silveri: The Superior Court Judge rode the circuit. He would come to hear cases?

Jones: Yes. Right. He would come to Ashe County and hold court at the courthouse, and I think, the solicitor also. I know Solicitor Graves, from Mount Airy, would come to Ashe County. The judges

Jones: (continued) would come at the time they held court. Maybe it would be a different judge sometimes, maybe from Asheville, or maybe from Greensboro.

Silveri: Did you ever sit in on any trials?

Jones: I've been on the jury.

Silveri: Been on the jury. How often?

Jones: Not too often, but a few times.

Silveri: Can you remember the cases that you heard?

Jones: Well, some. Yes.

Silveri: What were they? Can you remember just generally, without necessarily having
^ to mention any names? What kind of cases would they be?

Jones: They were trying a sheriff there one time.

Silveri: An incumbent sheriff?

Jones: Yes. Joe Hampton was his name. They had him up for embezzlement or something like that. He was sending out candy to different ladies, and putting a five-dollar gold piece under each piece of candy. They caught him. Yes.

Silveri: What was the verdict of the jury?

Jones: They found him guilty.

Silveri: Did they deliberate very long?

Jones: Not too long. No. About three hours.

Silveri: That must have been a touchy case, the Sheriff of Ashe County being tried. There must have been some people on the jury who voted for him.

Jones: Yes, I voted for him. Really!

Silveri: Voted for him twice, once for sheriff and once for jail!

Jones: But the best one, talking about trials. . . and you might like to put this in your record. . . we had a Dr. Robinson, W.J. Robinson, who was all over the county. I remember he rode a horse. He was a good old doctor. . . he was a fine man and had a fine family. They had him up there for character witness in court in Ashe County. This fellow, Hugh Tucker, had been hauling whiskey from Ashe County over into Tennessee and selling it. They caught him, and they were trying him in Ashe County and had Dr. Robinson for a character witness.

They called Dr. Robinson to the stand, and Dr. Robinson, "Yes. Yes. Yes." (That's the way he talked.) They swore him in. He put his hand on the Bible. (You know how they do.) He said, "Doctor, what is this man's character?"

"Oh, good, good, good. Good neighbor. Fine, fine."

"All right, Doctor, come down." He came back down and sat down beside me, and he was kind of holding his head down, like this.

"What's the matter, Doctor?" He says, "You know something? I just swore a damn lie! Why, that man hauls liquor all over everywhere! I don't know what I was thinking about!"

Silveri: Were you on the jury on that one?

Jones: No. I was a spectator. A lot of people would go to some exciting case; they would flock into the courthouse, fill the courthouse to running over.

Silveri: Were there any famous murder trials you can remember?

Jones: No. No.

Silveri: There must have been quite a few trials for making illegal liquor?

Jones: Oh, yes.

Silveri: Were the judges usually hard on the moonshiners?

Jones: Yes. They were, yes. We had quite a few of those.

Silveri: Did you ever make any?

Jones: No! No!

Silveri: No one in your family ever made it?

Jones: No. No.

Silveri: There weren't many drinkers in your family?

Jones: We'd have some whiskey in the house at all times for medical purposes. I know Mother has given me a little whiskey for maybe a bad cold. It would loosen me up kindly. We always had some whiskey.

Silveri: How about hard cider? Did people around there have hard cider?

Jones: Yes. They made hard cider.

Silveri: How did they make it?

Jones: They ran a cider mill (they called it). It had a crank, and they would put the apples in this mill. It would crush them up. It had a spout. The pulp of the apples would go through one place, and the juice of the apples would come through a spout into a container. Then they would take that and let it age, and it would become hard cider.

Silveri: Would it age in a barrel?

Jones: Yes. Yes.

Silveri: It would ferment, wouldn't it?

Jones: I don't know. They may have put something in there - I've forgotten - but that was the original, the starting-off way, of doing it. It seems like it would ferment, but it was what they call hard cider. Now, sweet cider, fresh, we would just have it and take it down and put it in that big old spring house. We would have sweet cider all along. I'm not sure about that hard cider, though, but that was the original way.

Silveri: Were you on any juries that tried moonshiners?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Were they usually men who had come in before or had been caught before? For more than one time?

Jones: Not too many times. They were pretty hard on them now. They had a stiff sentence, and they didn't dare do it too many times. Of course, this day and time they turn them loose. They do something, and they turn them loose the next day, and they are back at it the next day!

Silveri: If somebody was caught making moonshine and he had a lot of friends, he could possibly get some friends on the jury, too, right?

Jones: Well, they would try too, but they would screen those pretty much. The lawyers were aware of that fact, and they would reject a lot of them, of those they had on the jury. They'd call for the ones who didn't know too much about it.

Silveri: Did you get paid for serving on the jury?

Jones: Oh yes. Yes.

Silveri: Do you recall how much it was?

Jones: Yes. Three dollars a day! Big pay, wasn't it?

Silveri: You had to serve, too?

Jones: You had to serve, **yes**.

Silveri: You couldn't get out it?

Jones: No. No.

Silveri: Unless you were sick or something.

Jones: That's right. You had to have an order from a doctor that you were ill, to get off the jury.

Silveri: When you voted, where did you go to vote in elections?

Jones: We went to Clifton, a little place nearby. They had a voting place two miles apart, I guess, throughout the county.

Silveri: Private homes?

Jones: No. No. They had a regular voting place. Not just for that, but they would use the schoolhouses. There would be no school on that day. They would use the schoolhouses like they do now, here. Up here they have the library. They use it for voting up here in North Asheville now.

Silveri: So, when you went to vote, you got a paper ballot?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: You marked your ballot and put it in a box?

Jones: Right. Folded it and put it in a box.

Silveri: Were they still campaigning at the polling places, the candidates?

Jones: Oh, yes. Yes.

Silveri: Did the candidates come to your home, too?

Jones: Oh yes. Yes.

Silveri: To get enough votes.

Jones: Yes. Yes. Some of the people, lower class people, in Ashe County.

At that time when I was growing up, if a man ^a ^{of} liked / drink/ liquor, they would take him a drink of liquor. If he didn't drink liquor, they would give him fifty cents. They would go as far as fifty cents to buy his vote.

Silveri: That's pretty cheap!

Jones: Yes. But that's true.

Silveri: They wouldn't go more than fifty cents?

Jones: No. Fifty cents.

Silveri: Back about the 1920's, you're talking about?

Jones: Yes. Right. Right.

Silveri: The members who ran for the school committee were not paid, were they?

Jones: No.

Silveri: But that was very important because they controlled the school budget, and they selected the superintendent?

Jones: Right. Right.

Silveri: They had some influence on who the teachers would be?

Jones: Yes. That's true.

Silveri: You mentioned your grandfather was register of deeds for two

Silveri: (continued) years.

Jones: Two terms.

Silveri: Two terms. Your father didn't serve on any--

Jones: Yes. My father was on the schoolboard. I'm sorry. I was thinking of higher up. My brother-in-law was on the school board. My brother was on the school board. My sister is still now a teacher in Ashe. One of my sisters, Myrtle, and my nephew's wife is a teacher. My cousin was principal of New River High. He just retired last year, two years ago. We were born the same year, Paul Miller.

Silveri: So, the Joneses have been very active, then, in education?

Jones: I'd say, yes.

Silveri: All good Democrats, too?

Jones: Yes. They were Democrats.

Silveri: Before, you mentioned Dr. Robinson, I wanted to ask you about health care. There was no hospital in the county, was there?

Jones: No, sir.

Silveri: There must be one now?

Jones: Oh, yes. They have a nice hospital, Ashe Memorial Hospital.

Silveri: When did that first come in? Do you remember?

Jones: Well, they've built a new one now. Yes, it's about--this is '76.

They've had a hospital for thirty years, I'd say, at least. Well, maybe more.

Silveri: Was there one when you left in 1936?

Jones: No.

Silveri: Well, where did people go if they had to have hospital care?

Jones: My brother had an attack of appendix [appendicitis]. I drove his car and took him to North Wilkesboro, which was about forty or fifty miles away. At that time . . . now they do since. . . I'm not sure about the time, but they do have a nice hospital there now; in Ashe.

[End of Side II, Tape I]

[Tape II, Side I]

Silveri: In Jefferson?

Jones: Yes. My niece's husband is a doctor there. That was my brother's daughter, Norma. She married a doctor, Dr. Roy Freeman. We don't have enough doctors in Ashe County. They have just a few doctors there; short on doctors.

Silveri: How about back when you were growing up? Was Dr. Robinson the only doctor around?

Jones: Well, Dr. Robinson was the main doctor, the closest one. There were other doctors: Dr. Wilcox, Dr. Ray, Dr. Blevins (he was down at Warrensville. It was four or five miles, which was a long ways then.)

Silveri: Were most of these doctors born in Ashe County?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: They went out and got their education and came back?

Jones: Yes. Right, right.

Dr. Silveri: Were they good doctors?

Jones: Yes. They were good doctors.

Silveri: Would they come when you would call them?

Jones: They would come, if it was two o'clock in the morning, if it was possible to get there. If they were visiting some other place, they would come when they got through. I know Dr. Robinson came to our home, to my father's home, someone was ill in the family. He spent the rest of the night. He was so tired, and he was a good friend, not only a good doctor, but he was a good friend of the family. He just stayed, and Mother had breakfast for him the next morning as though he was one of the family.

Silveri: He would ^{go} around delivering babies at homes, too, right?

Jones: Oh yes. Yes.

Silveri: How about a midwife? Did they have midwives?

Jones: Yes. I had a midwife when I was born. Elizabeth Eller was her name.

Silveri: A neighbor?

Jones: A neighbor. She delivered many babies in Ashe County in the area where I was raised. That is true. Right.

Silveri: You mentioned Mr. Doughton. You did mention for many years he was in the Congress of the United States. As a matter of fact, I think he has, until recently, served the longest there of anyone.

Jones: He did. Yes.

Silveri: He was up in his eighties when he was still in Congress, and Ashe

Silveri: (Cont'd.) County was part of his district, right?

Jones: Oh, yes.

Silveri: Where did he come from?

Jones: Just over in the other county: Alleghany County, Laurel Springs.

Silveri: Laurel Springs.

Jones: I've been in his home, and I've been by his home many times. Yes.

Silveri: Was he a lawyer?

Jones: No, no.

Silveri: What kind of business was he in before?

Jones: He was a big farmer; he was quite a farmer. "Farmer Bob," they called him.

Silveri: "Farmer Bob" Doughton.

Jones: They called him "Mule" Doughton on the news record, Newsweek, and they called him "Honest Bob." It had his picture on the front. He was quite a character.

Silveri: Why did they call him "Mule?"

Jones: He was stubborn; he wouldn't give. They couldn't sway him one way or the other. He didn't give. "Look, now, you go with me!" He didn't go with it; he went with what he thought was absolutely right! Honest.

Silveri: He was strong in his district, wasn't he?

Jones: Yes, yes.

Silveri: He stayed there so long! Do you remember any other interesting politicians? How about governors? Did any governors come from that

Silveri: (Cont'd.) area?

Jones: No, not at that time.

Silveri: They came through campaigning, though, didn't they?

Jones: Oh, yes, yes. My brother was a campaign manager for Ashe County for . . . well, that's not been that far back. We're talking back . . .

Silveri: . . . twenties and thirties. . . forties.

Jones: Yes, yes. That's been quite a ways back. I've known a lot of the governors, but I don't know too much right at that time about it.

Silveri: Ashe County was kind of isolated then. I want to ask you a few questions about the Depression which hit the country so hard. I imagine it didn't hit Ashe County too hard, did it?

Jones: Well, not as much as other places, because people was more self-sufficient, I'd say, due to the fact they had their farms and there was very little industry at that time in Ashe County, and it didn't affect them as much, I'd say, as other places.

Silveri: But you did have New Deal programs in Ashe County?

Jones: Yes, yes.

Silveri: WPA?

Jones: Right.

Silveri: Anybody in the family work on those?

Jones: No, not that I know of; no. We were kind of fortunate. My brother, he was a car dealer; in fact, he owned a franchise in Ashe County, he was the county-wide Chevrolet dealer. The only dealership; owned the building, the franchise, and all. I know of people who did

Jones: (Cont'd.) work, was in those programs, WPA, et cetera, CCC camps, but not so much because they could live. You didn't have to have too much money to live then.

Silveri: Did you say you left Ashe County in 1936?

Jones: No; I left Ashe County after I was married. We were married in '31; I believe '32, or '33, probably. We went to Delaware; Newark, Delaware.

Silveri: And then did you come back?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: To live again?

Jones: We came back to Ashe. Her father, my wife's father, was retired from the Army and he had bought a big farm in Ashe County, a beautiful farm. It was a place where the former Sheriff of Ashe County owned; and he was no farmer. He didn't know anything about farming. So he heard about Asheville. You know, "Land of the Sky" . . . well, he talked us all into coming to Asheville. So we came to Asheville in 1936.

Silveri: You came to Asheville from Delaware in 1936?

Jones: Well, we came from Delaware down to Ashe and stayed a while with my folks, and her people. We knew we were coming on; we agreed to come on to Asheville, and we came to Asheville in March, '36, and we have been here since.

Silveri: Been here since?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: With frequent visits to Ashe?

Jones: Oh, yes.

Silveri: How far is it from here to your home in Ashe County?

Jones: About 115 miles. I go up there quite often to see Mother and my sisters. When I get off from out here, I'll go up there probably and stay a couple of weeks, you know, two weeks.

Silveri: Is your mother on the old homestead?

Jones: Yes.

Silveri: Who does the farming up there? Is any farming done?

Jones: My brother-in-law; he and his brother are in the timber business. They have two sawmills, Roland Brothers. Howard Roland, he married one of my sisters, Myrtle. She teaches school. He has 400 acres of land, and he leases out this land, you know.

Silveri: Is most of it cleared, most of the 400 acres?

Jones: Well, no, no. I'd say partly; I'd say fifty percent.

Silveri: And does he do timbering on the other?

Jones: Yes, yes.

Silveri: Did your father ever cut timber for sale when you were growing up?

Jones: No, no. The only timber we cut was for our own use; wood, or posts. They used to build a lot of fences through Ashe, you know, where the lines of the property were, and they'd use locust posts. You know, they last longer.

Silveri: Was any logging done in Ashe County?

Jones: Oh yes, yes.

Silveri: Were there any minerals in Ashe County?

Jones: At one time there was a mineral. . . what they called Ore Knob in Ashe County, and it was quite a going place at that time, ore, but it has been closed for so long. . . a long time. They're talking about opening that up, think there's some. . .

Silveri: What kind of ore?

Jones: Iron ore, I think.

[Tape apparently incomplete -- ends here]