

**ROY RICE**

**Interviewed by Dr. Louis Silveri**

**August 12, 1975**

**SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS RESEARCH CENTER**

**University of North Carolina at Asheville**

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Interview with Mr. & Mrs. Roy Rice. Interviewed by Dr. Louis D. Silveri on August 12, 1975,

Dr. Silveri: I'd like to start with asking you when you were born and where?

Roy Rice: Well, I was born in Madison County in 1903, about a month before the Wright brothers took off at Kitty Hawk!

Dr. Silveri: And you were born in Marshall?

Roy Rice: I was born about eleven miles out of Marshall, north on Big Laurel.

Dr. Silveri: On big Laurel. Is that right on the French Broad River?

Roy Rice: No, the French Broad River is at Marshall. This is over on-- they call it Big Laurel River. There used to be a post office over there by the name of Eli. Now that's before my day. My mother's sister was post-mistress. Oh, say about 1900. Somewhere in the neighborhood of that. But when I was a small boy that post office was gone; I never did see it.

Dr. Silveri: Let's talk about your ancestors. How far back can you trace them in the mountains?

Roy Rice: My grandfather on my father's side was Spencer Rice. He served in the Union Army during the Civil War. His father's name was Joseph Rice, and Joseph Rice ran a — well, it's a stopping off place on the turnpike that came through Marshall when they drove hogs, cattle, turkeys, and everything else through there,, I know that Joseph Rice's father was killed, but I don't know what his name was.

Roy Rice: (continued) That would have been my great-great grandfather. He was killed in this fashion: he was carrying a mowing blade. Now most old people know what a mowing blade is: a scythe blade. He was carrying it on his shoulder, and he was walking into the house or to his home, and a snake ran across the path. He jabbed the handle down at the snake and split his skull open with the scythe blade.

Now, my great-grandfather was killed by a tree limb falling out of a tree and killed him. On my mother's side I can go back a little bit further. This little book I carry it around with me and get information like that sometimes. If I don't write it down, I forget it.

Dr. Silveri: Information you get from other people?

Roy Rice: Some other people, mostly kinspeople. But my kinspeople are getting about my age, and there's not many of them older than I am, they don't know much more than I do. My grandfather, my great-grandfather on my father's side was given a hundred acres of land on Big Laurel to go in over there and build a cornmill. He did that, and that cornmill—I have tended that cornmill myself. It's torn away and gone now, but the rocks were cut on what is called Spillcorn in Madison County. I used to carry the mail on Spillcorn.

Dr. Silveri: Was that the way he made his total living, running the mill? He must have had a farm?

Roy Rice: At the time of his death, he owned the whole business. I mean he owned land up the river for four miles, down the river four miles,

Roy Rice: (Cont'd.) on both sides. *My* grandfather had twelve children. That was Dad's father, and he gave them each one, (each one of the boys); he had eight boys. . . gave each one of them a farm.

Dr. Silveri: Now your grandfather was of age to run the business before the Civil War? In other words, I want to know whether he owned slaves or not, up in the mountains.

Roy Rice: They never owned slaves. Although my great-grandfather had black persons working for him, they were not slaves.

Dr. Silveri: They had probably been slaves in the past, but had bought their freedom?

Roy Rice: Now, I don't know about that; possibly true. Somewhere in the shoot out my great-grandfather married a Cherokee Indian.

Dr. Silveri: That's very interesting, O.K., on your maternal side, you were talking about ...

Roy Rice: On the maternal side, my great-grandfather was Jesse Rice. Now that makes me a full-blooded Rice.

Dr. Silveri: Rices on both sides.

Roy Rice: Rices on both sides. *My* mother, my grandmother was a Rice on the maternal side. *My* mother was a Reece; she married a Rice.

Dr. Silveri: I see.

Roy Rice: So, that gets pretty near—

Dr. Silveri: And we're going back, and those generations are in Madison County?

Roy Rice: Yes. .

Dr. Silveri: Early days in Madison County.

Roy Rice: Now, my grandfather, great-grandfather, was Jesse Rice, and my great-great-grandfather was John Rice Jesse Rice's father.

My grandfather three times removed was Isaac Rice,

Dr. Silveri: And as far as you know, all these generations lived in the mountains?

Roy Rice: They lived in the mountains, and this painting on the wall is a painting of my father's farm where I was raised, and that farm is also where Jesse Rice lived, my great-grandfather, and also my great-great-grandfather lived there.

Dr. Silveri: I see. Who did that painting?

Roy Rice: My daughter.

Dr. Silveri: It's very, very good. Is any of the land still in the family?

Roy Rice: That is still—one of my first cousins owns it. We sold it to him, Dad and I did.

Dr. Silveri: What about on the maternal side? Did any of your ancestors fight in the Civil War?

Roy Rice: So far as I know, no.

Dr. Silveri: Well, we were talking before, before we started, about the relatives that you had: one, your grandfather fought for the Union, and he had a first cousin that fought for the Confederacy, and both came from the same area.

Roy Rice: They were raised on Big Laurel, died there. Their fathers were brothers. They were both Rices.

Dr. Silveri: Why did they fight for the Union? Why did so many mountain people fight for the Union side?

Roy Rice: That I can't quite make up my mind about. Either they — well, I have heard it said, and I believe it to a certain extent, that the ones who fought for the North were Republicans; the ones who fought for the South were Democrats. That's what my older generation of people believed. It was not fought for slavery or anything like that; it was simply because they were a political party.

Dr. Silveri: That's very interesting because there is: an explanation that there was so much Union sentiment in the mountains because there were so few slaves there, the mountain people didn't want to fight the war with the slave holders.

Roy Rice: Well,, that's possibly true, also. But what I do believe is . .

I got ahold of a history of another Rice who had the same opinion that I have about that political party. Of course, they did not own slaves, but I don't think they fought it too much on the slavery issue.

Dr. Silveri: Did your grandfather fight for throughout the Civil War?

Did he volunteer? Was he drafted?

Roy Rice: He volunteered.

Dr. Silveri: He volunteered; This is the one who fought on the Union side. Did he get into a lot of battles? Did he get all around?

Roy Rice: No, he was never in combat very much. I have his record here from the War Department, and in that record he was AWOL for a certain length of time, but he went back and joined the company of his own accord. They were going to court martial him-when his commanding them officer told them that he had been on a special mission, and the papers do not state what that special mission was. So, I never knew. I didn't know that until four or five years ago. I wrote the Department and asked them if they had any information on any of this—oh, fifteen or twenty sheets of paper.

Dr. Silveri: About how old was he when he fought in the war?

Roy Rice: He was eighteen when he was discharged.

Roy Rice: Eighteen in this picture?

Roy Rice: Yes. I had his picture enlarged back there when he was discharged.

Dr. Silveri: Well, was he the only member of the family that fought in war?

Roy Rice: So, far as I know. He had a brother that was killed during the war. Well, in these mountains we had a whole lot of people who didn't belong to either side. They were just into for what they could get out of it, and a



Roy Rice: (continued) bunch of those people killed one of his brothers during the Civil War.

Dr. Silveri: I've read much about the bushwhacking that went on in the mountains.

Roy Rice: Yes, they were here.

Dr. Silveri: Marauders—you could almost call them criminals. They were taking advantage of the existence of the war to go through the area.

Roy Rice: My grandmother—now that's on the McKinnas' side, lived here in this painting. She said when these marauders would come around; they could hear them coming. They rode horses; they could hear them coming. They would take their fatback and ham meat, and put it on a pole and scoot it up the chimney to keep them from finding it. Or if they had on shoes, they would pull them off and put them under their aprons.

Dr. Silveri: That's very interesting. I've never heard of that before. Well, if your grandfather came out when he was eighteen years old—before you mentioned about a first cousin who fought on the Confederate side, and he, too, came back from the war, and there was there after a kind of coolness between them.

Roy Rice: Yes.

Dr. Silveri: You read so often about that happening in the mountains where neighbors and even families split.

Roy Rice: Yes, I'll never know why the families split up; I don't know.

But I do know There was a coolness there, but it's about  
died out.

Dr. Silveri: When was your father born?

Roy Rice: My father was born in '82.

Dr. Silveri: 1882; in the same place, the Laurel section?

Roy Rice: Yes

Dr. Silveri: How much education was a man like your father able to  
get in those days?

Roy Rice: My father finished about the fourth grade.

Dr. Silveri: The fourth grade – or the fourth reader:

Roy Rice: The fourth grade – about that.

Dr. Silveri: Was there a school in the community?

Roy Rice: There was.

Dr. Silveri: One of the typical one-room schoolhouses?

Roy Rice: Typical – Three months out of the year.

Dr. Silveri: Three month school term. Which would probably be in  
the fall?

Roy Rice: Yes, in the fall, and then if it happened along about the harvest time,  
they would have to quit school to take in the crops.

Dr. Silveri: How did the rural people make a living back in those days?

Roy Rice: Well, the rural people back in those days raised about what  
they used. What they raised and didn't need, they bartered for what they did need and  
could get ahold of, such as coffee, salt, sugar, and such as that.

Roy Rice: Now, outside of that they just about had what they wanted.

Dr. Silveri: Did they raise tobacco back in 188-~

Roy Rice: They raised a little bit of tobacco back then, but not too much. That came on a little bit later. I know Dad raised a big patch of tobacco one time. At that time we had to haul it to Greenville, Tennessee, to the market, and they would pack it in big wooden barrels and haul it on a wagon. He hauled two big barrels, something like—oh, had maybe eighteen hundred or two thousand pounds. Hauled it over there and didn't get the haul, bill out of it. Cheap wages; so, that just about cured the tobacco rates.

Dr. Silveri: Well, they must have stock on their farms?

Roy Rice: Well, yes; They had hogs, they had cattle, they had sheep, they had all kinds of stock. They had a table full three times a day!

Dr. Silveri: Yes, that was one thing that they always had enough of, wasn't it? Of what importance was the French Broad River to, for instance your family—your father? Was it any use? I mean was it navigable? You mentioned about going down to Greenville—

Roy Rice: No, no. The French Broad in that day was never navigated.

I don't know if you could even use a canoe on it, although some people stick their neck out and try nowadays. In that day—well, there was more water in it that day than there is today, but even at that I don't know that it was ever navigated. In fact I told you about my great-grandfather running this inn, and by the way, it was just about a quarter mile below Marshall.

Roy Rice: And Marshall in that day was called Lapland.

He would raise corn over on his farm, bring in to this inn and sell it to people who drove herds of hogs and cattle through. Maybe take a hog for payment or if they didn't have the money, or cattle for payment.

Then after harvest time, he would get the word out, "I have pork or beef for corn. Come in and we'll trade!" That way he replenished his corn supply.

Dr. Silveri: I've read quite a bit about those drovers coming through from Kentucky and Tennessee, coming —

Roy Rice: Yes--

Dr. Silveri: Drove down into the south—South Carolina., You mentioned hogs, I guess they often came through with cattle and turkeys, wild herds of turkeys; I've heard, too, came in.

Roy Rice: And they also drove turkeys. Now, how, I don't know!

Dr. Silveri: They'd have some flying away somewhere!

Roy Rice: Yes

Dr. Silveri: Let's get back for just a minute. How long did your great-grandfather own that inn? Did he finally sell it off or—

Roy Rice: I don't know. I never knew when he started it or when he quit.

Dr. Silveri: But it never did come down into the family; so, —

Roy Rice: No, it never did.

Dr. Silveri: When was your mother born?

Roy Rice: Mother was born In the same community that Dad was born, and Mother was born in 1882, also or '83. Which was it? '82? ...'82, I think.

Dr. Silveri: O.K., and as you mentioned she was a Rice, also.

Roy Rice: Yes.

Dr. Silveri: When you say the same community, what do you mean?

Roy Rice: Well, Dad and Mother were born within one mile of each other!

Roy Ric

That's pretty TThat's pretty close.

Roy Rice: That's pretty close

Dr. Silveri: How much education was your mother able to have in those years?

Roy Rice: Well, Mother had finished what you might call the seventh

grade. She had finished grammar school.

Dr. Silveri: Was she able to do it in the community or did she have to go outside to finish?

Roy Rice: She finished it out in the community. Mother could write a good hand write, and in fact, Mother did Dad's business for him. She was his secretary, unpaid, of course.

Dr. Silveri: How many children were in your mother's family?

RoyRice: In Mother's family there were three.

Dr. Silveri: Just three including herself?

Roy Rice: Myself?

Dr. Silveri: No, including herself. Now how many brothers—

Roy Rice: Herself, one brother, and one sister: three.

Dr. Silveri: Small family for the mountains, wasn't it? Now, how about your father's people?

Roy Rice: In Father's family there were twelve, including him.

Dr. Silveri: That was more average size.

Roy Rice: Yes, eight boys and four girls, and they are all dead, except one.

Dr. Silveri: Where was your father in that twelve?

Roy Rice: Let's see,.. Father was fourth from the youngest.

Dr. Silveri: Fourth from the youngest. I always like to ask that because quite often on some of our people who were the youngest in a large family, and their father or mother was youngest in a large family. so that the generations are much closer than if they were the oldest.

What did your father engage in? Of course, he must have helped on the farm and so on?

Roy Rice: Father was never much of a farmer, He owned, as you  
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can see from this painting, a good farm. He raised hay, and Father was a cattle trader. That's how he made his living,

Dr. Silveri: What did he trade?

Roy Rice: Cattle, horses, mules, anything that walked on four legs.

Dr. Silveri: Well, he must have had quite a stock in them then,

Roy Rice: Yes.

Dr. Silveri: How much land did he have at that place?

Roy Rice: About a hundred acres.

Dr. Silveri: Hundred acres.... [inaudible]What about the roads back in those times?

Roy Rice: The roads back then, the less said about them the better, 'cause they were rough! Of course, we had no automobiles., we didn't worry about the condition of the roads, but after the automobiles came along then we begin to look at the roads. In the wintertime we have pushed a.n old T-model truck up to the top of the mountain so we could ride into town.

Roy Rice: Well, your father—you mentioned he was a stocktrader.

Did he take that over from his father?

Roy Rice: No, he took it up himself. His father, my grandfather , made his living with this mill that I've been talking about. That mill ran six days a week, grinding meal for the whole community and also two or three different communities. They all came into that mill; kept them busy. He didn't even have to raise his corn because he dipped his toll dish into the corn as they brought it in.

Dr. Silveri: What did you call it?

Roy Rice: A toll dish.

Dr. Silver: A toll dish.

Roy Rice: If a man brings a bushel of corn to be ground, he had a little wooden container that held one gallon. He dipped that in and filled it up and brushed off the top, and that was his.

Dr. Silveri: That was his pay?

Roy Rice: That was his pay!

Dr. Silveri: Very interesting.

Roy Rice: Of course, this mill was run by water, and there's no expense to the operation of it.

Dr. Silveri: What creek or stream was it on?

Roy Rice; On Big Laurel.

Dr. Silveri: On Big Laurel River That's a tributary of the French Broad, right?

Roy Rice: That is, tributary of the French Broad; it comes into the French Broad down at Stackhouse, just below Stackhouse.

Dr. Silveri: Did any of your relatives produce their own liquor?

Roy Rice: Now, we better not get into that!

Dr. Silveri: O. K., we won't go into that!

Roy Rice: They did; .Some of them did, yes,

Dr. Silveri: Well, I know there was a lot of liquor made in the mountains; maybe we can come up with that some other time. You can make some comments



Dr. Silveri: on it later on. When were your father and mother married?

Roy Rice: In 1902.

Dr. Silveri: In 1902, So, that's twenty years old when they got married, And your mother came to live with your father? At that time, then your grandfather must have given your father property?

Roy Rice: Yes, he did, and Dad traded it off and bought the farm where Mother's grandmother lived. Of course, she was dead at that time. So, that was in Mother's family for three generations.

Dr. Silveri: There was a house on there already?

Roy Rice: Yes, the old house was still there.

Dr. Silveri: He immediately took up stock trading—

Roy Rice: Yes, it was a good farm; it lays well. He raised hay and fed his cattle during the winter, if he had to, but mostly he would buy them In the spring and fatten them up during the summer and sell them in the fall.

Dr. Silveri: How would he sell them? Would agents come through there —

Roy Rice: He had a man in Tennessee by the name of Bill Russell. He's dead now, but Bill would come over in the fall and buy the whole herd, and also he would have Father to go around through the neighborhood and buy anybody else's cattle that he could buy. He would take the whole business.

at

Dr. Silveri: It's interesting to know what the prices would be for  
say oh ..whatever he sold back in those years.

least

one

Roy Rice: Prices were very cheap. You could buy a cow for  
twelve or thirteen dollars back when I was very young,

grand

father

Dr. Silveri:But of course taxes .... jinaudible] in those times?

's

:Well, World War I came along, prices got a little

home

bit higher, and people after the war was over, "Oh, prices are  
going

every

week,

to go back down!" They never did. World War H came along, and  
they

and

we

got still higher. Sometimes we hope that prices are going to come  
down now, but I don't think they ever will, not like they once were.

were

just

Dr. Silveri: How many children in your family?

as

Roy Rice: One.

happy

Dr. Silveri: You're the only one.

Roy Rice: I'm the only one. I was spoiled rotten, I guess.

Dr. Silveri: In what year were you born again.?

Roy Rice: 1903.

Dr. Silveri: 1903. I want you to begin now with your own conscious  
memory of life in Madison County. What do you remember  
about the early years of growing up, say before you went to school?

Roy Rice: Well... I hardly know how to express myself on

that. We were a close-knit family: Grandfather, Father and Mother,  
and myself, living within a mile of each other, all of us. We were in



Roy Rice: (continued) as we could be. Of course, my grandfather having twelve children, including my father, they all met there on Sunday afternoon, children and all, and I had first cousins by the dozens! Still have, and we enjoyed it.

Dr. Silveri: Of course, holidays brought the whole family to get together.

Roy Rice: Well, holidays didn't amount to anything except two:

Fourth of July and Christmas. Fourth of July everybody got the biggest firecracker they could find, and they got their shotguns and rifles and had shooting matches, and shoot for turkeys or calves or something like that.

Then on Christmas we children always hung up our sock at the fireplace. We'd get an orange, a banana probably, and mint candy. Fact of the matter, I was a good-sized boy before I knew that oranges grew any time besides Christmas, or bananas. either.

Dr. Silveri: So, it was a close-knit family, you say they all lived close together. Your father had a lot of brothers and sisters, and you had a lot of cousins to play with.

Roy Rice: Yeah.

Dr. Silveri: Growing up in the mountains in a rural area, the children became quite used to going out and hunting and fishing, and doing outside things in the mountains, right?

Roy Rice: Well, each child had a chore to do at home on the farm.

Roy Rice: We lived on the farm. Of course, if we wanted wild meat we just hit the woods and got it.

Dr. Silveri: What kind of wild meat was around in those days?

Roy Rice: Well, in my day, mostly squirrels, gray squirrels, because deer were gone. I've heard my grandfather talk about seeing deer in the neighborhood, but I never did.

Dr. Silveri: And bear were gone?

Roy Rice: Yes, bear were gone. Thank the Lord for that.

Dr. Silveri: Wild turkeys had long been gone, right?

Roy Rice: No. Well, there used to be wild turkeys, but I never saw one in that neighborhood.

Dr. Silveri: How about wild boar?

Roy Rice: Not any wild boar.

[End of Side I, Tape IJ

[Side II, Tape IJ

Roy Rice: (Cont'd.) Now my grandfather at one time did turn some pigs loose on a mountain farm of his and they grew up wild. We had to take rifles in and get them.

Dr. Silveri: What about snakes in the mountains?

Roy Rice: Yes, we had them. Neither one of my grandfathers wanted a black snake killed, especially if it was around the barn. They said it kept rats away or would eat rats. I never did like a black snake.

Roy

Roy Rice: I don't like any kind of a snake.

Rice:

Dr. Silveri: Is a black snake poisonous?

Yes,

Roy Rice: No, no. We only have two poison snakes in that territory, and that's a copperhead and a rattlesnake, I've killed both.

we

had

Dr. Silveri: Anybody in the family ever get bitten by them?

our

Roy Rice: Not so far as I know. If they did, we had a remedy: I cut the snake in pieces and put it to the bite. That will draw the poison.

own

meat.

Dr. Silveri: Does that work?

Roy Rice: It will.

Dr. Silveri: That's very interesting. Speaking of home remedies, what other land of home remedies did they have when you were growing-

up, that you can remember? For sicknesses, for illnesses?

Roy Rice: Well, the only medicine that I remember taking

as a boy was castor oil, and I hated the stuff! I still do!

Dr. Silveri: I wanted to ask you about food that you ate as growing up there. What was the favorite food? Was cornbread always on the table?

Roy Rice: Cornbread was on the table twice a day; wheat bread for breakfast, cornbread for—well, we called it dinner and supper.

Farm produce and meat; meat was on the table three times a day.

Dr» Silveri: Of course, you slaughtered your own meat?



Dr. Silveri: How did you preserve it?

Roy Rice: Well, mostly canned in glass jars.

Dr. Silveri: Meat?

Roy Rice: Yes.

Dr. Silveri: That's quite unusual, isn't it?

Roy Rice: Or you can put it in the smoke house and salt and preserve it like that. It was kept both ways.

Dr. Silveri: Wasn't the smoked way better for taste?

Roy Rice: Well. . . . you take sausage, and they canned it mostly.

That was before the day of the home freezer, and ribs could be cut up

and canned, and they are really good. But the hams and middlins and

that part of the hog was always salted down and preserved as such.

Dr. Silveri: And the slaughtering of the hog would take place after the first heavy frost in the fall?

Roy Rice: Oh yes, we waited for the first big heavy frost to kill hogs.

Dr. Silveri: How many would you kill? Your father?

Roy Rice: Father always had a couple. Of course, after the weather turned cold, you might have a hog killed every two or three weeks.

Dr. Silveri: That would last you throughout the year?

Roy Rice: Oh yes.



Dr. Silveri: How about beef?

Roy Rice: Beef was—well, mostly beef was preserved just dried.

We didn't have beef too much; We had pork a whole lot. Of course, somebody would kill a beef and pass it out through the community, and we had beef. Mutton the same way: sheep.

Dr. Silveri: Oh, that way, too. There wasn't too much of that around—

Roy Rice: No, there wasn't too much, but everybody had beef and their mutton, and when they took a notion when they got tired of pork, some old sheep or cow caught it,

Dr. Silveri: Did they raise the sheep more for the wool than the meat?

Roy Rice: They did. They raised it for the wool especially.

Dr. Silveri: Right, that's the way they made their clothes.

Roy Rice: That's the way they made they made their clothes.

Dr. Silveri: I wanted to ask you about church. Did your family belong to a particular church?

Roy Rice: There was one church in the community and everybody belonged to it. It was a Baptist church.

Dr. Silveri: What was the name of it?

Roy Rice: Big Laurel Baptist Church; it's still in operation. It's in a different location and in a different building.

Dr. Silveri: So, the church played an important part in the lives of the - -

Roy Rice: Oh yes, everybody went to church; nobody was home on

Roy Rice:(continued) Sunday. Everybody went to church.

Dr. Silveri: Did the minister come from the community, too?

Roy Rice: Well, no, not all the time, but the minister would come once a month, have his business meeting on Saturday. Stay over in the community on Saturday night, and then have services on Sunday; mount his horse and go home Sunday afternoon.

Dr. Silveri: And he probably did that for three other churches, too?

Roy Rice: Oh yes. He probably had maybe four churches, four Sundays a month.

Dr. Silveri: What kind of services would take place on the other Sundays ? Or would you just go one Sunday?

Roy Rice: No, everybody went every Sunday. We would meet, we would have Sunday School, study the Bible. Then after Sunday School, they sang for an hour or maybe an hour and a half, long as they wanted to. Everybody would go home.

Dr. Silveri: It was also a social occasion after- -

Roy Rice: Oh yes, sure. Everybody went home with everybody else.

Dr. Silveri: Who built the church there? The local people?

Roy Rice: Local community built the church or. repaired it. Here is, a copy. I have the original paper for this. This is a copy that was made in 1855, I mean the original paper was made in 1855, designating one of my great-grandparents to repair the church, or the meeting house, they called it. There's the names of the ones that donated and the amount and all about it.

Dr. Silveri: Oh, in 1855.

Roy Rice: If you see Jesse James Bailey, you give him this, and ask him—no, do you know the Judge Bailey?

Dr. Silveri: I've heard of him, yes.

Roy Rice: Well, Jesse James would be a little bit interested in this. I have the original of that, too; That's where they called in a jury to assess my great-grandmother's dowry when her husband died, and the signature on that is a Bailey.

Dr. Silveri: Yes, that's Bailey.

Roy Rice: I believe that that might be Judge Bailey, but Jesse Bailey will know who it is.

Dr. Silveri: The date on this is April in 1858, That's quite fascinating,

Roy Rice: You tell Jess Bailey if he's interested in seeing the original copy of that I've got it.

Dr. Silveri: O. K., I'll do that. You said that church we were talking about is still standing there today.

Roy Rice: No, that church is gone,

Dr. Silveri: That's gone.

Roy Rice: That church--I never attended services in the church that they repaired here on this paper, but I've seen it. I've been in it, and the seats were split logs; no back, just split logs, and it dressed off.

Roy Rice: When I came along, they had another church house, also they had school in the same building.

Dr. Silveri: Did you ever hear your father talk about politics very much?

Roy Rice: Yes, Father was quite a politician in his way, he didn't take a great hand in politics, but he would talk about it some.

Dr. Silveri: Did he ever try for public office? Did he ever hold public office?

Roy Rice: No, he never held public office. I think he ran for County Commissioner once and got defeated. That cured him.

Dr. Silveri: Well, we come to the time when you go to school. Did you start school at the usual age, around six years old?

Roy Rice: Yes, I started school when I was a little past five. I reckon they wanted to get rid of me around the house, so they shoved me off to school.

Dr. Silveri: How far away was school from your house?

Roy Rice: About a mile,

Dr. Silveri: That was easy to walk, wasn't it?

Roy Rice: Yes, that was a nice walk. The school was in the lower end of the community so, I had a lot of company. We all walked together.

Dr. Silveri: And again, was it a one-room schoolhouse?

Roy Rice: One-room schoolhouse, seven grades, in one room!

Dr. Silveri: Seven grades? Do you remember how many were in the first grade with you that first day- you went to school? How big the class was?

Roy Rice: No, I don't remember.

Dr. Silveri: Do you remember the teacher you had?

Roy Rice: Yes, I remember quite a few teachers, but the first one I don't remember.

Dr. Silveri: What year are we talking about? Your first year in school?

Roy Rice: My first year in school would have been 1908, I imagine.

Dr. Silveri: How long- was a school term?

Roy Rice: As best I can remember, it was about six months,

Dr. Silveri : Six months? And did they have a subscription school afterwards, too?

Roy Rice: Sometimes they would. They would make up extra money and pay the teacher to stay on another length of time, whatever they could make up.

Dr. Silveri: I've read so many stories where discipline in the schools was very difficult for the teachers to control.

Roy Rice: Well, no. We never had any problem with the discipline.

Dr. Silveri: The very reason that she had so many different ages in the same room, so many different things, so many different levels and so on, that often has been a problem.

Roy Rice: Well, if there was a problem- we didn't realize it because that was all we were used to. Of course, a lot of times I have sat there, and while the older students were rehearsing their lessons, and I would listen. I would be able to pick up something that maybe did me a little good somewhere

Roy Rice: (Cont'd.) else, but I didn't realize it then or  
I would have paid more attention than I did.

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

Roy Rice: I finished high school.

Dr. Silveri: You finished high school, but not in that same  
building?

Roy Rice: No, I finished the seventh grade in the community,

Dr. Silveri: Yes, what was the name of that school?

Roy Rice: That was the Big Laurel School.

Dr. Silveri: You went there to the seventh grade, and then  
what?

Roy Rice: Then Father sent me off to high school to  
Mars Hill.

Dr. Silveri: Was that closer than Marshall?

Roy Rice: Mars Hill is about twelve miles out of Marshall,  
and about the same distance from where I lived; kind of a  
triangle.

Dr. Silveri: Right. Well, you had to live then in Marshall  
when you . . .

Roy Rice: I had to live in Mars Hill. I mean, I boarded  
and went to school.

Dr. Silver!: Now, that was not a public high school, was it?

Roy Rice: That was a public high school.

Dr. Silveri: Is that building still standing?

Roy Rice: I wouldn't think so. Some of them might be, but there's so many out there now that I would have to orient myself to tell you.

Dr. Silveri: That was probably Mars Hill High School?

Roy Rice: It was called Mars Hill College.

Dr. Silveri: Oh, yes, this is the college. I see.

Roy Rice: You are beginning to understand, now, where it is?

Dr. Silveri: Yes, I know. Yes.

Roy Rice: It's a four-year college now.

Dr. Silveri: Back then it was both college and high school?

Roy Rice: Well, I don't know that it was so much college as it was high school; but it went by the name of Mars Hill College.

Dr. Silveri: Even though it was a public school supported by ...

Roy Rice: Yes.

Dr. Silveri: That is very interesting. And you finished your high school education there?

Roy Rice: Yes.

Dr. Silveri: In other words, would you go on a Monday and then come home on Friday?

Roy Rice: No, I usually went home about once every two or three months.

Dr. Silveri: Oh, I see. And during all that time you just studied; you didn't work or any tiling?

Roy Rice: No. We ran around and had social activities on the week end that I didn't go home, such as they were.

They had a little bit more discipline in my day than they have now, because we weren't allowed to have dates with girls except once a month, and then under strict supervision.

Roy Rice: Then it was coming up to the First World War period around now. Were you in high school during the first World War?

Roy Rice: I was in high school during the first World War. Yes.

Dr. Silveri: Right. Oh, I want to come back to that later on, I forgot to go back and talk about a very interesting development in Madison County, and that's when the railroad came through. Now, that's before your time. It came through in the 1880<sup>T</sup>s, I believe. I imagine you heard stories from your parents about that railroad coming through Madison County.

Roy Rice: I've heard just a little talk about it, but not too much. Seems to me that it didn't excite them very much, I know that the talk that I heard, that everybody went to see it. They went to see the train come through. The thing they talked about was the smoke that



Roy Rice: (continued) emanated from it.

Dr. Silveri: But it did bring employment to some people in—

Roy Rice: Oh, yes, it employed quite a few people in Madison County. When the railroad came through, it opened up the timber industry. On this Big Laurel River about six miles above where I was born and reared, they built a dam, and below that dam they would cut timber and drag into the bed of the river. Then when they got enough timber cut, they would turn the dam loose and float it down to Stack-house, or I believe Runion they called it, which is just down beyond Stackhouse down the river just a tiny bit. In fact you can see Runion from Stackhouse down the road.

The water would carry these logs down to Runion; They had a big band mill there, so they were sawed into lumber and shipped out.

Dr. Silveri: Oh, I see. I thought perhaps they might have gone down the French Broad River.

Roy Rice: No,

Dr. Silveri: But it was too shallow for that.

Roy Rice: It must have been,

Dr. Silveri: I suppose—you know you mentioned Tennessee a number of times,, and it seems to me that Madison County was more oriented to eastern Tennessee than it was to the Asheville area.

Roy Rice: Well, Madison County joins Tennessee, and when I carried the mail, I turned around in Tennessee twice. Turned around

Roy Rice: (continued) at the state line toward Greenville, and also at the state line toward Flagpond.

Dr. Silveri: I see. Yes, that's right we should keep in mind that it does border on eastern Tennessee as well as on Buncombe County, in which Asheville is located. When you were growing up, did your parents and you make many trips to Asheville or over into Greenville or—

Roy Rice: No, my grandmother made one trip to Asheville when I was a baby that I do not remember. The next trip she made to Asheville, I took her after I was carrying the mail, and she and Mother came over to visit. I came in off the mail route, and I named something to my wife and to them about going to Asheville that afternoon. Grandmother said, "Oh no, we can't go to Asheville today; that takes a couple of days!" But I finally got her to agree to go, and we went, and she enjoyed it.

Dr. Silveri: So, people just didn't do much traveling back in those days ?

Roy Rice: No, they didn't do too much traveling.

Dr. Silveri: One of the reasons was it was so hard to get along.

Roy Rice: Well, there was not much way to travel. Now I did go to Asheville with my grandfather when Teddy Roosevelt spoke in Asheville--well, he was running for president on the Bull Moose ticket and got defeated. But I did see him, and heard his address in the old freight depot at Asheville. There was such a crowd, and I was such a little guy

Roy Rice: (continued) that standing on the ground I couldn't see anything. So, I rode my grandfather's shoulders as long as that lasted. Thy crowd was spilling out over the railroad tracks, and I reckon the Authorities, Southern Railway authorities were afraid that somebody would get runover by a train; so, they drove a big locomotive downright behind me, and I divided my attention between it and Teddy Roosevelt.

Dr. Silveri: Do you remember much about the speech? I suppose you don't remember what he said.

Roy Rice: I don't remember one word that he said!

Dr. Silveri: But you remember seeing him there?

Roy Rice: I remember seeing him. He looked just exactly like his picture.

Dr. Silveri: O. K., I was wondering—well, yes. You must- - the main paved route through Madison County must have been there by the time you were born. Route 70, isn't it? That goes through Madison County through Marshall and out? Do you remember when that became a paved road?

Roy Rice: No, I don't.

Dr. Silveri: It's always been paved as far as you can remember?

Roy Rice: No, I have driven it, when it was not paved, with a T-model Ford. But I don't remember just exactly the year that it was paved. I know when it was paved we thought we had something, and did!

Dr. Silveri: That bisected the whole county through the county seat.

Roy Rice: Yes, that goes through from Buncombe County through Hot Springs on into Tennessee.

Dr. Silveri: How frequently did the family make visits to the county seat of Marshall?

Roy Rice: They tried to make it from the Laurel community over there—the older people. By older, I mean fifty, fifty-five years old. They tried to make it about once a month.

Dr. Silveri: Well, that would be essential for shopping for anything you couldn't raise?

Roy Rice: Yes, shopping and also to see the neighbors and friends on about the first Monday in the month, you know, that's county business taking place. And also another thing, they didn't know how wrong it was, but they would set their watches by the clock on the courthouse. Come back home and just swear now that was the time of day, and I used to believe it until I moved to Marshall and got to checking on that clock.

It runs *every* which of way!

Dr. Silveri: Well, what did you do when you graduated from high school?

Roy Rice: I taught school.

Dr. Silveri: Oh, you did?

Roy Rice: And we'll not go into that very much, but I taught school for six years.

Dr. Silveri: Six years? Where?

Roy Rice: Different places in the county—in Madison County. First was Big Pine. Then I taught in my home school where I went to school, and then three miles down from our community, I taught in that community.

Then I taught two schools in my wife's community; that's where I met her.

Dr. Silveri: I just want to get straight now what year did you graduate from high school?

Roy Rice: '23.

Dr. Silveri: 1923, O, K. So, you taught until 1929?

Roy Rice: No, now my diploma says '23, but actually my diploma was granted to me a year before, and I didn't notice that the date was missing for about a year. I went back and had a date put on it, and they put '23 on it. But I started carrying the mail in '28,

Dr. Silveri: I want to ask you about your first year of teaching.

Do you remember how much you got for your salary?

Roy Rice: Yes sir, forty-five dollars per month.

Dr. Silveri: Was that considered good in those years, or what?

Roy Rice: That was the lowest possible--that was the low item on the totem pole.

Dr. Silveri: Forty-five dollars a month for a school year that went six months?

Roy Rice: They went eight at that time, I believe.

Dr. Silveri: The first school you taught in was another one-room schoolhouse?

Roy Rice: No, we had three rooms; three teachers.

Dr. Silveri: Oh, that wasn't too bad. What grades did you have?

Roy Rice: I had the fifth, sixth, and seventh.

Dr. Silveri: When you said you taught for six years, you didn't indicate that you wanted to talk too much about it. Were those unhappy years for you?

Roy Rice: No, they were happy years, but if I had to go out and pick a wife, I'd never pick a schoolteacher.

Dr. Silveri: Why?

Roy Rice: Because they are too bossy!

Dr. Silveri: You think that's part of teaching, and they come out too bossy.

Roy Rice: Well, back then it was. You had to preserve discipline, and we did. We had no trouble; I never had any trouble. I never had to lay the limb on anybody! All in all they were just a group of good children. I know some of them yet.

Dr. Silveri: Did you find it difficult to get out of the county superintendent the kind of money you thought might be necessary to buy things for the school?

Roy Rice: Well, no. It was no problem because we didn't have much money. We just made do with what we had; paper, pencils, that's about it.

Dr. Silveri: I talked with other teachers who told me that they quite often would use a mail-order catalogue to help the students.

Roy Rice: Oh, yes.

Dr. Silveri: Apparently it was something you did not want to do for a career for the rest of your life, to teach?

Roy Rice: Well, if I hadn't got in the mail service I probably would have wound up at that.

Dr. Silveri: Still teaching?

Roy Rice: Because I had my certificate built up. During the summer you could take summer school and build up your teacher's certificate. I had mine built up to where I was drawing a respectable kind of a salary for that day.

Dr. Silveri: Where would you go to school in the summer?

Roy Rice: Asheville; where the old Memorial Mission Hospital is now. They would have a summer school there in the summer for teachers.

Dr. Silveri: Well, you did that then for two or three summers to build up your teaching certificate so that you were. . . you had that finally. Well, did you have to do that every year?

Roy Rice: You had to do that every year, if you wanted y our salary increased.

Dr. Silveri: I see. By the time you finished teaching, what was your salary?

Roy Rice: Oh, about a hundred and twenty five; somewhere in the neighborhood of that.

Dr. Silveri: For a school year that went eight months.

Roy Rice: That's a month, and I believe we were running about nine months at that time.

Dr. Silveri: What would you do in the summer besides—

Roy Pace: If I didn't go to summer school, I would take me up a job most any thing that I wanted to work at. I know one summer I worked at a sawmill. There isn't any easy job around one.

Dr. Silveri: Did a schoolteacher in the community have the respect of the people?

Roy Rice: More or less, yes. Not in his own community, but in other communities, yes.

Dr. Silveri: When you taught school, did you board with families of the students?

Roy Rice: I did, I boarded with different—I mean, I would pick out a family in the community and board with them.

Dr. Silveri: One family throughout the school year?



Roy Rice: One family during the school year, yes.

Dr. Silveri: And you would pay them so much a —

Roy Rice: Well, if I stayed continually seven days a week cost me just a bit more, but if I went home on Friday that cut down a little bit.

Dr. Silveri: Did that arrangement work out well, boarding—

Roy Rice: It worked out fine.

Dr. Silveri: No difficulty there?

Roy Rice: No.

Dr. Silveri: O. K., so 192S, you became a letter carrier?

Roy Rice: Letter carrier.

Dr. Silveri: How did that happen?

Roy. Rice: Well, a first cousin of mine came over from Marshall; he lived in the community. He had been to Marshall, aid he'd found out they were going to hold an examination for a rural route in Marshall. He came by the house and stopped and told me about it. He said he wasn't interested in it. Well, I said maybe I am. So, I went down and put in my name and got my papers back from the government, and they told me the date that the examination would be held which was the day after Thanksgiving in 1927, It was sixteen of us stood the examination. All of them older than I was, and all of them had more sense than I did.

End of Tape I

Tape II, Side I

Roy Rice: Went on through January, February, and I hadn't heard one word, didn't know one thing. The last of February, somewhere in the last half of February, I was notified to begin work the twelfth; day of March.

Dr. Silveri: You had to quit your teaching job before the end of the year.

Roy Rice: I was not teaching at that particular time, So I had to get me a horse and a buggy or thought I did; I did any way. I had a T-model Ford, and the route that I stood for in the examination was strictly a horse and buggy route. But before the twelfth day of March, another man in the office had taken that route; he wanted it. His route was a little bit longer, and he wanted to swap. So, they gave him the authority to take the route that I stood for. I took his which he had always used a horse and buggy on.

I got by the first summer and fall good using my A-model Ford and tickled the people to death because they had never had their mail so early. So, I was getting along famously. That fall it came a snow storm, I went down to the post office, and the post master said, "Well, now you're not equipped to carry the mail now." I said, "Well I've got a horse and buggy at home." He said, "O. K. "

So, I harnessed the horse and hitched him to the buggy, and I got back about five-thirty. That didn't suit me. Next day, I rode him bareback,

Roy Rice: (continued) got skinned all over, and I told my wife when I got back in that afternoon, if that's all there was to it, they could have it! So, I went back to the T-model Ford, and before Christmas I had it swapped for the first A-model that came to Madison County, .and we've had it ever since,

Dr. Silveri: Oh, that's very interesting. Let's go back a little bit here.

You were married by that time, right?

Roy Rice: I was married in 1925.

Dr. Silveri: 1925. Did you come from the Laurel community, too.?

Mrs. Rice: From Grapevine.

Dr. Silveri: Grapevine?

Roy Rice: Grapevine community; there's a mountain between,

Dr. Silveri: Did you have to go over the mountain to get to one another?

Roy Rice: Yes, we had to go—you could either go around through Marshall or cross the mountain.

Dr. Silveri: O. K., if you went around through Marshall, it would be quite a few more miles than if you went over,

Roy Rice: If you went around through Marshall, it was about twenty-four or twenty-five mites. If you crossed the mountain, it was about four! So, we crossed the mountain.

Dr. Silveri: Could you take a horse up over the mountain?

Roy Rice: Oh, yes!

Dr. Silveri: That's very characteristic for Madison County, I understand; you could go over or around.

Roy Rice: Yes, we'd go over and around. I've been around quite a bit of it. We started carrying the mail. I carried almost five years on the route that I started with. Then we had a man to die. One of the rural carriers died, and the government took an economy binge about that time. So, they began to put routes together, and when this man died and one other man retired, they slapped those two routes together and transferred me onto it, and I had to use an automobile on that.

I carried that for three or four years, and then they came down and they really went on a binge that time, and they laid out one through that Laurel country seventy miles long. It happened that an older man in the office—it was his route. He'd never driven an automobile. He bought him an automobile, and he tried it, It was just about to worry him down,. So he came in and petitioned the government to relieve him and let him trade routes with somebody. So, I wound up with the seventy-mile route, and within three months after I took it over it was ninety-two miles long.

I carried that all during World War II, and you can't travel ninety-two miles in Madison County without hitting something that's straight up and down.

Dr. Silveri: Let's go back to your first .route, which was in 1927. How long was that one? The first year you became a mailman?

Roy Rice: Twenty- three and three tenths miles,

Dr. Silveri: Can you trace that? Where did it go in the county? Where did it start, where did it go, and where did it end?

Roy Rice: Well, if you're acquainted with the town of Marshall — have you ever been there?

Dr. Silveri: Yes.

Roy Rice: You go straight out the lower end; The Highway 70 goes up the hill. Go straight out the lower end of Marshall, and it takes in the Little Pine section,

Dr. Silveri: That was the whole route? .

Roy Rice: That was the first route that I carried,

Dr. Silveri: That was twenty-three miles? O.K., that was the first one you started off . . . with horse and buggy, and then you went to your car. Were you able to use your car through the winter months?

Roy Rice: Yes.; Had to.

Dr. Silveri: In spite of the fact that the roads were unpaved.

Roy Rice: Well, I had been stuck inside the highway several times, and I've been pulled out of mud holes, but I don't know whether it was just to get me out of the way, but they would pull me out of a mud hole and never charge me a penny for it.

Dr. Silveri: About how many families did you have on that first route?

Roy Rice: Well, I wouldn't know about that. It was pretty thickly settled,

Dr. Silveri: Would they have mailboxes outside the house?

Roy Rice: Oh yes. Mailboxes were along the road, just like we have them today along the highway.

Dr. Silveri: How often did you deliver the mail? Once a day?

Roy Rice: Once a day.

Dr. Silveri: Saturdays, too?

Roy Rice: Saturdays, too. Six days a week.

Dr. Silveri: The mailman was always welcome, wasn't he?

Roy Rice: Oh yes. Back during World War II we had gas rationing.

Well, some of ray patrons lived as much as thirty-five miles from Marshall, Some of them would get sick; doctor would go to see them. He would give them a prescription; that's where the mailman came in. Now, we were strictly not allowed to do that. I mean we were not supposed to. They would bring me their prescription, and I would take it to the drugstore and have it filled, pay for it, take it back to them. They'd pay me what I paid for the prescription, and I never charged them a red cent for my trouble or anything like that. They knew that. They began to find that out, and if I had a flat tire—I never fixed a flat tire in my life on the mail route. Somebody was right there to fix it!

Dr. Silveri: The mailman really served other purposes, then? Well, not only did you bring the mail and helped to fill prescriptions, but you also brought news of what was going on around in Marshall?

Roy Rice: Oh yes, I brought news of what happened in different communities. For instance on Little Laurel; that's the highway toward

Roy Rice: (continued) Greenville, Tennessee. I would go up there first, I would come back and then go up what they called Shelton Laurel, and there was a lady that lived up there. She's dead now. She would come down to the road. She lived about a hundred yards off the road. She would be there waiting, and she'd say, "I thought it was about time for you!"

Well, I wondered how she knew that it would be about time for me, because sometimes I was as much as thirty minutes behind time or maybe before time, but there was a forest service telephone. She had one in her house, and a lady had one in her house on Little Laurel. So, she would call to find out what time I passed there. It was quite a while before I found that out!

Dr. Silveri: Well, there weren't too many telephones in the rural community ?

Roy Rice: Oh no, there were no telephones—there was a telephone up through there on Shelton Laurel and Little Laurel, that belonged to the forest service, that connected into Hot Springs. Now, if, which I never did do, but if I had had to, I could have called Hot Springs, and if the forest ranger had been in his office, he would have put me through to Marshall. But there was no certainty that he would be in his office; so, I just had to use E. S. P. when I needed help!

Dr. Silveri: How about electricity? When did that come into Madison County? Do you remember?

Roy Rice: We got electricity in Madison County in 1941, wasn't it?

I think so. The rural electricity program went into effect in 1941 down there, because I was one of the first subscribers,

Dr. Silveri: That was kind of late for Madison to get it,

Roy Rice: Yes, and telephones didn't come along until way after that!

Dr. Silveri: You were on that first route that you had began in 1927 for five years, and that fifth year was 1932. Now we entered a depression that began in 1929, and you mentioned that the post office department wanted to economize so they combined two routes and gave it to you to do. That was about 1932 or '33.

Roy Rice: That was in 1932,

Dr. Silveri: But before we get into that, what do you remember about Jesse James Bailey. He became sheriff of Madison County in 1920, I believe, around that time. Do you remember him?

Roy Rice: I remember him well.

Dr. Silveri: Do you remember his campaign? Do you remember what he did? What was he noted for?

Roy Rice: He just about put the revenuer out of business! He had his job cut out for him, too!

Dr. Silveri: He was elected as a dry.

Roy Rice: Yes, he was.



Dr. Silveri: And for two years then he did quite a lot of stillbusting, I guess.

Roy Rice: Oh yes.

Dr. Silveri: Did the people like him for that? Or not?

Roy Rice: I don't know how much they liked him about it, but he was very popular in Madison County, and still is.

Dr. Silveri: Did you ever meet-him?

Roy Rice: Oh yes, I've met him several times. I've sung for him, and he enjoys that, too, gospel singing.

Dr. Silveri: Oh, do you do that?

Roy Rice: I used to. Used to have a quartet. That's the way I got along with my patrons on the mailroute. When they had a revival meeting, we did the singing.

Dr. Silveri: Very interesting. I was going to ask you before what impact the Great Depression had on Madison County. It began in 1929 and went on for a decade.

Roy Rice: I'll have to tell you that I didn't know the Depression was going on! Because at that time I was making —I was carrying mail, I was making more money than I had made in my life. So, therefore, no Depression for me! But it didn't have too great an effect on Madison County because Madison County being a rural county—well, a few people might get knocked out of their jobs, but if they did, they just came back home and lived on the farm.

Dr. Silveri: That was the difference between living in the rural areas and living in the city?

Roy Rice: That's right.

Dr. Silveri: You could always raise what you needed to eat on the farm. Well, in any case in 1932 there was quite a presidential election taking place then between Hoover and Roosevelt. What did the people feel about that? You were in contact with them because you talked to them on the route.

Roy Rice: Well, they had had enough of Hoover.

Dr. Silveri: Even though many of them were Republicans?

Roy Rice: Yes, even though he was a Republican, they had had enough<sup>1</sup>.

In fact they blamed Hoover for the Depression, Whether or not he was guilty, I sometimes doubt. Anyway, he got the blame for it That's what elected Roosevelt, and Madison County was for him, too.

Dr. Silveri: Well, in that year that they consolidated the two routes, you had one that was seventy miles, then?

Roy Rice: Yeah.

Dr. Silveri: Where did that go? Could you trace that?

Roy Rice: Yes, that goes out of Marshall on Highway 70 to Laurel River, up Laurel River to Belva, from Belva to the state line toward Greenville, comes back and up Shelton Laurel. Long about three months after I took it over, it was ninety-two miles long, as I told you. Goes up Shelton Laurel to the Tennessee state line toward Flagpond and comes back through what they call Cutshalltown, comes into Whiterock which

Roy Rice: (continued) was the post office when I took it over, but they soon cut it out. Then went into what they called Revere, popularly known as Sodom, and came back out of there and then up Big Laurel to Spillcorn, four and a half miles up Spillcorn, and I mean UP. Back out of there coming on up Big Laurel to this Rice's Store, across to Walnut Mountain, down Walnut Creek into Marshall.

Dr. Silveri: And it became ninety-two miles? How could you do that in one day?

Roy Rice: Well, when I first started through that country they said they were going to pick me up on a shovel just any time. I traded automobiles every twelve months. (I'll get to your question in a minute.) I drove Plymouths and Dodges the full time I was in the mail service. I got off of Fords in '35, but I would tell my dealer, "Now, I want a four-door sedan; I don't care about trimming on the outside or the inside, but I want the biggest motor you can get hung in it." And that's what I got.

So, I have carried that route that I have just knocked out for you and been back in Marshall by 11:30; start out at 8:00. The Postmaster is supposed to go with you once a year to check the route. We had a postmaster who would get in with me: "Now, Roy, if you get scared I want to know it. That's all he'd ever say about it, Mrs. Rice: It's a wonder he's alive today.

Dr. Silveri: Well, that's amazing.

Roy Rice: I've just about quit my wild driving because back during World War II, the tires got bad, and I've gotten—I can't hardly trust one yet.

Dr. Silveri: I wanted to ask you how--Did you get so much per mile for the car in the post office?

Roy Rice: Yes, they give you so much per mile When I quit the allowance was ten cents per mile for your automobile. That don't cover!

Dr. Silveri: How about when you began? What was it?

Roy Rice: I don't remember.

Dr. Silveri: But you did get some allowance for your automobile?

Roy Rice: I understand that we've always gotten some allowance for our automobile.

Dr. Silveri: What was your pay the first year at the post office?

Roy Rice: Bring me that scrapbook,

Dr. Silveri: See if you can just make a guess about what you were making as a salary that first year you were; the mail man.

Roy Rice: Well, I can remember-as I told you before I went to work on the twelfth day of March. Pay day was the fifteenth, and I got paid the fifteenth, and I got a check for twenty-four dollars and some few cents.

Dr. Silveri: For about three days work.

Roy Rice: I thought that was pretty good for three days.

Dr. Silveri: Yes.

Roy Rice: And I had stripped the back end out of my T-model, so I had to spend part of that to get it put back.

Dr. Silveri: Was there only one post office in the county back then?

Roy Rice: Oh, no. There was a post office at Mars Hill, Marshall, Hot Springs. . . I think that was all. Of course, there were new ones, little post offices through the county, but that was the main ones.

Dr. Silveri: And they would all be connected by car; the mail would be picked up from each post office?

Roy Rice: Oh, yes. Mars Hill got their mail out of Asheville. We got ours by train (the train running both ways then). Hot Springs got theirs by train.

Dr. Silveri: Were there any days during the winter that you could not deliver the mail?

Roy Rice: Well, when I first started, we were required to go if we possibly could, and if we were out there and we could find somebody that could go where we couldn't. . . to hire them. . . , but they soon dropped that. Later we had a few days that we couldn't go, because before I retired they started shipping the mail from Asheville by truck, and some mornings the road would be so bad we couldn't get any mail. . . so there was no point in

Roy Rice: (continued) us trying to go empty handed.

Dr. Silveri: You still got paid, though, for those days?

Roy Rice: Well, not--you got paid, less your equipment allowance.

Dr. Silveri: Now, you mentioned you always went around in your car, and you had a fairly big car. Did you carry your mail on the seat next to you? Or were there times; in which the whole car would be covered with bundles of mail or boxes?

Roy Rice: Well, I have seen the time when, back around 1940, I owned two automobiles at that time, and I would send my wife with a full load; tell her to wait on me at a certain place. She would go wait I would work a full load of mail off. By the time I got to her, I would take her load. She'd come back to town or come back home. We had one Presbyterian preacher who would get a full load of mail himself. I have carried—I have gone in the afternoon after I'd get back off of making the whole route just to take a special load to him!

Dr. Silveri: What have been some unusual cargoes that you've had on the route?

Roy Rice: Well, that would take us the rest of the day, the rest of the week! I don't know. I tried my best to see the people on my route as I passed by, no matter if they were half a mile up in the field., I tried to see them, and they'd know that I saw them. If they got a mess of beans before I did, I got part of it. They were just the nicest people in the

Roy Rice: (continued) world ! In fact, I told them so before I retired at the time that I retired. Of course, they are independent.

Now, Shelton Laurel had a bad reputation; as perhaps you know. But those people over there will give you the shirt off of their back , if they like you. If they don't like you, they wouldn't touch, you with a ten-foot pole!

Dr. Silveri: I imagine there were times in which you had to carry some very bulky packages, probably even chicks that came through the mail?

Roy Rice: Oh yes) now the government put out a bonus for World War I veterans, and we were not allowed to deliver that check to anybody except the person to whom it belonged. I had quite a few of them, and of course, they didn't know what time they were coming and I didn't either; but I think about two days was the longest I had to carry them.

Dr. Silveri: They were ready and waiting?

Roy Pace: Oh yes, they would inquire about it. One man, he's dead now, but I didn't know him. I had only been on the route a little while. I had never seen him. He lived up off of the road I knew where to leave his mail, but I had his check one morning, and I think I'll drive up to the house. I couldn't see the house from the road, but I drove up to it; I guess three hundred yards. He came out, or who I thought it was, and I called him, "Hello, Mr. Gunter!" He said, "Gunter is not my name. My name's Fortner!" I said, "You're the man I'm hunting for!"

Dr. Silveri: That's the way you used to check up on who were handing the mail to, right?

Roy Rice: Yeah, that's how I found out who he was.

Dr. Silveri: That's very interesting. Well, as you drove along, you had to stop your car at each house—

Roy Rice: Oh yes!

Dr. Silveri: Get out and put the stuff in the mailbox?

Roy Rice: No, you don't get out!

Dr. Silveri: You don't get out?

Roy Rice: These mailboxes are situated beside the highway on the right-hand side, and you drive up to the box; the boxes, if they maintain them like they should, they are easy to reach from your seat. Of course, we could have used the right-hand drive a whole lot, but we didn't have it, so I rode the middle of the seat and made out pretty good,

Dr. Silveri : Well, that must have been very difficult with the early cars because they had funny pedals on them, didn't they ?

Roy Rice: Yeah, I drove them, straight drive, you know. You had a clutch, you had a brake pedal, and you had to keep your left toe in reach of that clutch, but after you get used to it, it's easy done. I could still do it, I think, but I don't want to.

Dr. Silveri: What time would you start work in the morning?

Roy Rice: I would get up at 5: 30 and leave the house about 6:30, Of course, the office opened (when I was working, the early stages of my work) at six o'clock, and of course I could get in any time I would go. We would



Roy Rice: (continued) work up everything in that office. I mean we left nothing. Sometimes we would walk in there, and there would be four hundred Sears & Roebuck catalogues weighing about four pounds apiece, I mean four hundred for me, and they went out the same day they came in!

Dr. Silveri: There must have been some days in which you would—well, particularly in the winter, you wouldn't return until after dark.

Roy Rice: Well, during the Christmas season, I have left home before dark and got back after dark,

Dr. Silveri: And you never got paid extra for all of these extra hours?

Roy Rice: No, we didn't get paid extra. Now, in October, they got so that you could put in in October if your mail was heavy, and if your route was long, and they would pay extra to have somebody to help you to carry a certain part of it.

Dr. Silveri: You say October of this year—last year?

Roy Rice: Yeah, October of any year, you had to put in in October for your help during Christmas season. Back when Christmas cards went for a penny and a half, it was no trouble for me to pick up five hundred at one stop! We'd get in, and we had no cancelling machines. I mean, you had to hand stamp it with a steel stamp, and I've peeled the hide off that thumb many a time! That wasn't my job, but somebody had it to do, and the post master and his clerks were just busy; so, we'd just grab the hand stamp and help. All worked together.

Dr. Silveri: Of course, you brought mail in as well as delivering it, right?

Roy Rice : We brought mail in, yes.

Dr. Silveri: In fact that was the only way most of those people could mail their letters was by giving them to you?

Roy Rice: I have carried out everything except the kitchen stove, I think, and brought in just about the same amount!

Dr. Silveri: It could be that some days you would go out with a full car and come back with a full car?

Roy Rice: Yes. One little instance: you asked me awhile ago about anything odd that happened. Well, the man died about a couple of months ago. He was in World War II over in the South Pacific. He wrote his mother, and he had his captain's authorization for a pair of leather boots. His mother came down and had these boots done up in a nice package and gave them to me to send to her son. I said, "Mrs. Sams, we can't do it!" She said, "Why? He wants them, and his officer—"

[End of Side I, Tape II]

Roy Rice: (continued) said he could have them!" I said, "They are too heavy!" So she dropped her head and said, "What'll we do?" I said, "If you give them to me, I'll see what I can do with them!" O. K., she pitched them in the car. I came to Marshall, and I tore her package up. I mailed two packages: one boot in each package. I got by like that! He got one one day and one the next!

Dr. Silveri: That was quite a fascinating story about missing packages.

Of course, in a rural community, kind of isolated like Madison was, the mail carrier was a very important person to the people.

Roy Rice: He's a very important person because he was the link with the outside world.

Dr. Silveri: Yes, you often brought newspapers—

Roy Rice: Oh yes, during the war I had one hundred and fifty Asheville Citizen's going out every day!

Dr. Silveri: Well, you delivered mail all through the 1930's, also the Depression years, in Madison County, didn't you?

Roy Rice: Yeah.

Dr. Silveri: Did the W. P. A. improve some of those roads you drove over?

Roy Rice: Yes, the W. P. A. improved quite a bit.

Dr. Silveri: Well, you mentioned before that the Depression didn't hurt the county very much at all because it was a rural people, and you mentioned that your job still continued because the mail had to be delivered but they did try to save money.

Roy Rice: Yes, they tried to save money. They went on an economy binge and consolidated routes, not only in the Marshall office, but all over.

Dr. Silveri: Did anybody lose their jobs in the post office?

Roy Rice: No, nobody lost their job in the post office; they either died or retired before the consolidation took place. In fact the routes were not up

Roy Rice: (continued) for consolidation unless somebody did die or somebody did retire.

Dr. Silveri: During those years—of course During the '30's you were very happy to have that job—

Roy Rice: Oh yes.

Dr. Silveri: It sounds as though you really enjoyed being a mailman?

Roy Rice: Yes, I loved it.

Dr. Silveri: When did your route change? Did it change very much at all after this--

Roy Rice: Well, yes, it changed quite a bit. Now they took me off of Revere, Spillcorn, and Big Laurel, and cut me back through another section, but it didn't change the mileage,

Dr. Silveri: When did they do that?

Roy Rice: They did that before I retired-around 1950, I guess.

Dr. Silveri: Now, the war—the Second World War came, you were telling some stories about that. What kind of an impact did the war have on you as a mail carrier, the kind of mail you delivered, and so on?

Roy Rice: Well, now I didn't get to deliver death telegrams, because they were delivered by somebody else, but once in awhile I would deliver one where somebody was missing in action. That was quite an experience.

Roy Rice: When you have to call a mother out and tell her that her son is missing in action, that's something that I didn't like to do, but had to do it. I cried with them, I remember one boy was missing in action, been raised by his grandmother; his mother was dead. I had this telegram going to his grandmother that he was missing in action; we cried together, and a week from that time, I carried another telegram that they had found him. He had been wounded, getting along fine, and we laughed together. So, we got along.

Dr. Silveri: Well, of course, a lot of men from Madison County went off to fight in the war.

Roy Rice: Oh yes, there was a lot of them.

Dr. Silveri: So, you continued your route throughout the war? Year in year out continued to carry the mail?

Roy Rice: Well, they came down from Washington, D. C. at one time and wanted to know if any of us rural carriers wanted a commission to go into the A. P. O. At that time I told them no, I didn't want to go.

About a year from then I think, "Well, maybe there might be some fringe benefits that I might get ahold of. So, I wrote them back that I would take a commission in mail service if they would transfer me to the South Pacific. They fired me a letter back, said, "You're right where we want you. Just hang with it!" It worked out better after all.

Dr. Silveri: Did you work under the same post master all those years?

Roy Rice: I worked under five different post masters.

Dr. Silveri: Five different ones. You know, years ago there was a lot of politics involved in the post office.

Roy Rice: Yeah.

Dr. Silveri: Was there any in your post office?

Roy Rice: We were not bothered with politics; We were under the Hatch Act, of course. We were not supposed to take part in politics, but, as you says the politics were there, especially when it came to the post master. If a Republican was president, a Republican had to be post master . If a Democrat was president, a Democrat had to be post master. We didn't mind that because we got along whether we were Republicans or Democrats. I had good friends on both sides, and I tried to keep them.

Dr. Silveri: Did you continue the carry the mail after the war? What year did you retire ?

Roy Rice: I retired in 1960.

Dr. Silveri: 1960, You must have seen—well, I'm wondering if you've seen any significant changes in rural delivery of mail, except for the kind of automobiles you used.

Roy Rice: No, up until the time I retired, I didn't see any significant changes, but there's been quite a few takng place of late in the last fifteen years, since I retired. Well, we'll not go into that because I don't know too much about it. I do know a lot about it, too, but I'll not talk about that.

Dr. Silveri: How many automobiles did you own while you were a mailman?

Roy Rice: I couldn't tell you to save my life. I just don't know.

Dr. Silveri: Almost a new one every year?

Roy Rice: I would trade every year, yes. Now, they looked good on the outside. At the end of twelve months they looked good on the outside, but the inside was something else.

Dr. Silveri: And you would put on about ninety miles a day? Six days a week?

Roy Rice: Yes.

Dr. Silveri: That's five hundred and forty miles a week just on your route!

Roy Rice: That's just on the mail route, Well, now as I told you, when I had carried thirty years, they notified me that I had traveled a little over 650, 000 miles, just on the mail route! Well, during that time I had been to the west coast twice, I had been to Canada,. I had been to Mexico, and all over the east coast. So, they had no record of that.

Dr. Silveri: Amazing! You mentioned about the Second World War in which tires and gas were rather hard .to get, but you as a government employee had no trouble with that, did you?

Roy Rice: No, we had no trouble, We had a good rationing board, and they looked after us pretty well. Of course, they would issue us gas coupons at the rate of fifteen miles per gallon, and you can't quite do that on a mail route. So, we would have to go back before the time was up and request more

Roy Rice: (continued) gasoline, which we always got.

Dr. Silveri: You mentioned the tires, too, were a problem, and they were not always good tires that you got the second time.

Roy Rice: I bought a brand-new tire one morning and blew the whole side off of it before I got back! And there wasn't a thing you could do except throw it away; no guarantee.

Dr. Silveri: Did you ever get more than one flat in one day?

Roy Rice: One time.

Dr. Silveri: One time?

Roy Rice: I got two flats at one time, both on the rear!

Dr. Silveri: What could you do? What did you do?

Roy Rice: I walked about fifty yards to the top of a knoll, and over there on the other side .was a sawmill, and they were running. They saw me standing up there and shut down the mill, and asked me what was wrong. I told them I had two flats. They still shut the mill down, and everyone of them came over there and fixed those flats\*; pumped them up.

Dr. Silveri: Did you have any accidents?

Roy Rice: No accidents; and while we're on that, I never received a ticket for a movable violation, and I've been driving since T-model days! Now that doesn't mean that I'm such a good driver; it just means I haven't been caught!

Dr. Silveri: But you had no serious accidents on your route?



Roy Rice: No, my son--he was my substitute for a while. One morning he took my automobile out and turned it over in the creek, mail and all.

Dr. Silveri: Did you often have to ford a creek in the automobile?

Roy Rice: No, there were bridges when I got around to them, but before I took over there were several fords, so they tell me, and I know where they were.

Dr. Silveri: Did your car ever break down on the route?

Roy Rice: Oh yes, yes.

Dr. Silveri: What did you do then?

Roy Rice: Just walked to the nearest neighbor that had an automobile and tell them my troubles. They would say "O.K., what do you want done?" I would say "Well, I've got to go to Marshall and get something done." Well, to Marshall we'd go! I'd go to Marshall Only twice they've had to send the wrecker out after it: once when the steering knuckle broke off. Just split—the ball just split, and I had just come off of doing about eighty miles an hour. Then I would tell them at the garage to go get it. They would go get it and loan me an automobile to take and finish the route with.

Dr. Silveri: You had to pay for those repairs? Yourselves, right?

Roy Rice: Oh yes, you had to foot your own bills .

Dr. Silveri: You mentioned before that quite often on the route you would be invited in to have something to eat, have dinner and so on, and

Dr. Silveri (continued) lunch.

Roy Rice: I hardly ever took lunch with me because I was usually at home at 12: 30 or 1: 00 o'clock.

Dr. Silveri: Oh, I see.

Roy Rice: And if I stayed out a little later, I was just that much hungrier when I did get home.

Dr. Silveri: You got back about 12: 00 or 12: 30 and your day was finished? You could go home?

Roy Rice: Oh yes, you could go home if you wished or you could—we got a mail train in about four o'clock, another one in about six something, and if you wanted to you could go back when those run and work up your mail and have a headstart on the next morning.

Dr. Silveri: So you wouldn't have to get up so early the next morning.

Roy Rice: Well, we had a mail train coming in the next morning before we left, and it was a heavy one.

Dr. Silveri: So, it wasn't so much the number of hours you had to put in a day, it was just that you had to finish that route every day?

Roy Rice: Yeah, we had the same route every day: we didn't get paid by the hour. We just got paid for the job done, and we took pride in doing our job- For example, those Sears & Roebuck

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catalogues laying there. If they'd been left until the next day, probably nobody would have said anything about it, but we had a little bit too much pride in us, we wanted to get it out of the way!

Dr. Silveri: Very good.

Roy Rice: And those things are heavy. You put four hundred Sears & Roebuck catalogues in an automobile, and something's going to go down!

Dr. Silveri: Now over the course of those thirty-two years that you delivered mail, you have seen improvement in the roads?

Roy Rice: Oh, yes.

Dr. Silveri: But by the time you retired, not all of the roads you went over were paved, were they?

Roy Rice: Oh, no, no.

About half of my route I would say was paved before I retired--not half, but over a third. Since I retired they've paved quite a bit of it.

Dr. Silveri: A lot easier now to go over it now with the paved roads?

Roy Rice: Well, I've been over two or three times since I retired, and I'd get lost! They've changed the roads, you know. When they come along and pave a road, they will straighten it out.

Dr. Silveri: Yes; yes, that's right. Of course, when the road was unpaved, it would become a mudhole in the spring, and in the summer there would be so much dust.

Roy Rice: Yes, there was dust in summer; there was mud in winter, But it was more or less an all-weather road. Of course, I have been stuck right in the middle of it. They'd get a mudhole, and somebody—they would haul a lot of wood and timber out of there on trucks, and you know what they do to an old country road. But the worst thing that bothered me

Roy Rice: (continued) was getting the road all cut up and let it freeze!

Then you would cut your tires all to pieces, or fall down in a rut and get stuck.

Dr. Silveri: That route you mentioned, "the ninety-two mile route, was that the one you still had when you retired ?

Roy Rice: Yes.

Dr. Silveri: That's the one that touched the Tennessee border?

Roy Rice: That's the one that I had when I retired, and I'd had it since—well, I'd had that many miles, not the same road, but that many miles, I'd had since '37. So, that was about twenty-three years.

Dr. Silveri: Did you ever in those years find one of your patrons that was in dire need of medical attention, and have to take them to the hospital?

Roy Rice: No, I never did. The first route that I started carrying, I came up on a man lying by the side of the road, and I knew him. He lived about four hundred yards on up the road there at the next mailbox. I had stopped at a mailbox when I saw him, and he was man about sixty-five, maybe seventy years old then, I got out and walked over to him. I asked him if I could help him in any way. He said, "I'm awfully sick. I want to go home!"

Well, I had a T-model -Roadster, just one seat. I got the mail bag out and put it in the turtleback they called it, got under him and helped him into the front seat, drove up to his porch and rolled him off on it, and then got the doctor for him. That winter I was stuck in a big mudhold in sight of his house. He hooked his team up, came down, and pulled me out. I said, "Mr.

Roy Rice: (continued) Payne, what do I owe you?" He said, "If you Don't get out of here, you're going to have trouble!"

Dr. Silveri: When people would give you letters to mail on your route, did you have to sell them stamps or what? Who did they pay?

Roy Rice: No, I collected a lot of money, and we were never bothered around Christmas time with unstamped letters too much. I told them that I had a little dog that licked my stamps for me when I had to lick them, but during Christmas I gave the dog a vacation; so, lick your own! And they were pretty good to do that, but any other season of the year you pick up a lot of money.

Dr. Silveri: What about the occasion when they had to mail a letter, but they didn't have any money for stamps? What did they do then?

Roy Rice: Well, at one time I opened the mailbox and got a couple of eggs out of it, and I opened another one the flag was up, but there wasn't any letter or any money in it. There was a groundhog in it, and he was alive! He came right out to me and out the other side of the car!

Dr. Silveri: Well, when you found the eggs in the mailbox, that was for payment for stamps or whatever?

Roy Rice: Yes, I took the eggs to the nearest store and swapped them for money and took it from there.

Dr. Silveri: Well, there was eggs: there was a groundhog, you . . . mentioned. Anything else unusual in the mailbox?

Roy Rice: No . . . well, you were liable to find anything. Along about Christmas time you'd open the mailbox, the flag would be up, and letters would just jump out at you. They were just packed in there. Of course, people don't write as many Christmas cards as they used to. They're getting too high. That was back when they were a cent and a half a piece. I don't know but what they made more money at it then than they do now.

Dr. Silveri: Was it traditional along the route that when Christmas time came the people would give the mail man a little gift?

Roy Rice: I never got many gifts. They would just give me what they had any time. It didn't make any difference whether it was Christmas; if they had something they wanted me to have, I got it. Along about Christmas time, or a little before, I would load candy in the back of my car, and a few little toys, and pass them out to a kid if they came out to meet me. Of course, when they found it out, they all met me.

Just before I retired, I was going up Shelton Laurel and saw a young man and woman standing by the side of the road at the mailbox. They had the flag up and I stopped. The young woman walked over and said, "You don't know me, do you?" I said, "No, I don't remember seeing you before in my life." She said, "Well, this is my brother here. Do you remember one Christmas you gave us some candy? We were just little kids, and Dad had just died and we didn't have any candy. (She had her hands behind her back.) Now, we are trying to pay a little bit of that back. Here's five pounds of chocolate." I just couldn't help it, but tears came into my eyes

Roy Rice: (continued) a little bit. I'd forgotten all about it.

Dr. Silveri :So, you played Santa Claus at Christmas time?

Roy Rice: Oh yes, we played Santa Claus, and they still do to a great extent.

Dr. Silveri: You became very close to your patrons on your route?

Roy Rice: Yes, the closer you can get to your patrons, the better service you can give, because you know what makes them tick, and they'll know what makes you tick pretty soon!

Dr. Silveri: How about the availability of medical help in Madison County? I know they still don't have a hospital up there.

Roy Rice: No, we don't have a hospital.

Dr. Silveri: Did you ever have a doctor on your route?

Roy Rice: No, I didn't have a doctor on my route.

Dr. Silveri: You mentioned before the Presbyterian minister that you had on your route.

Roy Rice: Yeah.

Dr. Silveri: You had his church, right? What was the name of that church, and where was it?

Roy Rice: Well, he was a Presbyterian missionary more or less.

Of course, he would pastor any Presbyterian church around in the neighborhood, .but he didn't have any certain one. But he was a good man, and he really was interested in his people, and he worked with his people, not only if they were Presbyterian, but he would work with any of them regardless

Roy Rice: (continued) of church membership or if they belonged to a church or not. He was a good man, and he's dead now. He was full-blooded German, he and his wife.

Dr. Silveri: You mentioned before about Cherokee—were there any Cherokee Indians living in Madison County?

Roy Rice: Not that I know of.

Dr. Silveri: How about blacks? Were there many blacks?

Roy Rice: We've got a few black people living in Madison County, mostly around Marshall.

Dr. Silveri: Around Marshall? Now, when you had a vacation from your work, did you do a lot of traveling around?

Roy Rice: Well, yes, because I tried to get as far away from my job as I could get. If you take a vacation and stay where they can get in touch with you, they're pretty apt to want to know something. So, just get away.

Dr. Silveri: You mentioned before that you have traveled around the country!

Roy Rice: Yes, I've been to the west coast twice, been all over the east coast, I've been to Canada once, and Mexico once.

Dr. Silveri: I want to ask you some questions about mountain people. You've heard the term Southern Appalachia, of course?

Roy Rice: Yes. .

Dr. Silveri: What does that term mean to you? Are you--you consider yourself a mountain man, don't you?



Roy Rice: I consider myself a mountain man, and I consider the mountain people my people.

Dr. Silveri: Right, O. K. Do you often use that term "Appalachia" when you talk about mountain people?

Roy Rice: I never use it» I never use it.

Dr. Silveri: O. K. This might be an embarrassing question because you might be describing yourself, but what are the characteristics about the mountain people that you like very much? How do you explain those?

Roy Rice: Well, the characteristics of mountain people: mountain people might be a little bit shy; they may be a little bit hard to get acquainted with, but mountain people are the best people in the world! They appreciate anything you do for them; they appreciate you talking to them. They appreciate you becoming one of them, and if you stay here long enough, you will find that out!

Dr. Silveri: Of course, they are a little suspicious of strangers or outsiders.

Roy Rice: Well, not suspicious particularly, as they wait to see which way he's going to jump!

Dr. Silveri: Well, in your education and growing up, did you ever feel; and because of what you read or you might have seen later on television that your own life has not been as nice as it could have been? In other words, did you feel as though growing up in the mountains

Dr. Silveri: (Cont'd,) deprived you of something?

Roy Rice: No, I never did feel that way. I've been out in the flat lands. I've spent. . . I had an uncle that lived in Illinois; I spent some time out there. It's a nice place, nice country, nice people, but give me the mountains and the people.

Dr. Silveri: What do the mountains mean to you? You look out your window some time . . .

Roy Rice: Well, it's God's handiwork that you can just look out and see. If you've ever been out in the West, which I suppose you have, you'll notice the mountains are just denuded. The thing that pleased me when I came back from the West was seeing a tree on a mountain.

Dr. Silveri: Tell me: I never asked you about your politics.

Roy Rice: No. I'll tell you: I don't go for politics too much. I never did. Of course, my people, when I was a young man, were Republicans. Most of them have changed over. They don't know how I vote.

Dr. Silveri: So, you look back on those thirty-two years as a postman and you think if you had it to do over again you would do the same thing?

Roy Rice: I think I would. I think I would. Well, I can see now where I've failed in a lot of ways that I think I could do a little better. I think I could do a better job of it.

Dr. Silveri: I think we all, looking back, have the same kind of feeling. Thank you very much.