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### Oral History Interview: Lawrence M. Hancock

Lawrence M. Hancock

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ORAL HISTORY

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An Interview With  
Lawrence (Pug) Hancock

Conducted by

Tresa Scalise

April 6, 1973

Montgomery, West Virginia

Transcribed by

Susan Hutchison

TS: What's your full name, Pug? I never even knew you had another. It couldn't be Pug, could it?

LH: No, no, it's Lawrence, honey.

TS: Oh, Lawrence.

LH: Lawrence, Lawrence Hancock.

TS: You mind telling me when you was born?

LH: Born September 20, 1902.

TS: Gosh.

LH: Ain't that awful (laughs)?

TS: You don't look nearly that old.

LH: No, I'm not, honey, really.

TS: Hmm.

LH: I lived here in Montgomery until, ah, 1907 and, ah.

TS: Let me put this up on something, Pug. Wait a minute. Okay. You just tell me, let's see, we've only got down the date you were born.

LH: Uh huh.

TS: Where were you born?

LH: I was born, ah, in Montgomery on the corner of, ah, Thirtieth Street and Fifth Avenue. The house they just tore down to make room for the, ah, parking lot for the Montgomery National Bank.

TS: Yeah.

LH: My father built that house.

TS: Okay. When did he come here?

LH: Ah, he came here in, ah, 1890's as a night telegraph operator for the C&O Railroad. His whole family were railroad men that came over in Virginia, came into Alderson.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, he moved, was transferred on down here. He was General Agent for the C&O Railroad, ah, and he was appointed to the same position in Charleston in 1909. And, we moved to Charleston where I lived last till 1931. Course I was up here almost every week during that time and saw Montgomery change. I've stood out here and watched them lay down the brick in the street. I can remember that very well. All the streets were just a mud hole with boards laid down so you could get from one side of the street to the other.

TS: About how many people were living here then?

LH: Oh, I'd say possibly seven or eight hundred. And, ah, shortly before I was born, and the town of Montgomery's inception was called Coal Valley.

TS: Oh, Montgomery was called.

LH: Was called Coal Valley originally, uh huh.

TS: When did they change the name?

LH: Ah, it was long about 1900. And, ah, my family, which was the Montgomery family, and, ah, they all settled in here, and the town was named after my great-grandfather.

TS: Oh, I didn't know that, Pug.

LH: Uh huh, and by the way, he used to, ah, he used to run the ferry boat from Smithers to Crescent so the travelling salesmen could catch the trains (laughter).

TS: Oh, so the name, name Montgomery, ah, came from the family, your family.

LH: My family, my mother's family name, uh huh.

TS: Yeah.

TS: Okay, there we go. I just wanted to make sure we was picking it up.

LH: Uh huh. No, I, I moved to Charleston in 1909 and came back in 1931. Been here ever since and seen the town, well, grown from about five or six hundred people to thirty-five hundred people. And, of course, it's a modern little town now. Still bears the name of Montgomery, but there's very few of us left (laughter).

TS: Why don't you tell me something about when, when you first, your first memories of your childhood.

LH: Oh, my, my first, my first memories of this town were I can remember all the completely muddy streets and the few shoddy stores in town that stayed open to 12 o'clock every night.

TS: Twelve?

LH: Twelve o'clock every.

TS: What were the stores?

LH: Oh, J. F. White and Son was one of them. Of course, their store is still here.

TS: Is that, ah, the same location?

LH: No, it was, ah, that time the store was out, ah, right, right across from the Forthgood Shoe Store.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, ah, where the Sunshine Shop is now.

TS: Sunshine Shop.

LH: Then later it was in where Burns <sup>TS: Oh, yeah.</sup>, later it was in where Burn's Fashion Shop is now.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, there was, ah, H. Drizen. Drizen who was the leading tailor. He was sitting in a little shack right where the

LH: And, ah, my grandfather, who was John C. Montgomery, was elected mayor of the town, and he served for 12 terms.

TS: They liked him, huh (laughs)?

LH: He ruled with a iron hand and a cane (laughs).

TS: Yeah.

LH: Yeah (laughs).

TS: Like what would he do?

LH: Well, he was just the boss in the whole town.

TS: Did they have a council then?

LH: No, didn't have anything but a city jail, and a mayor, and one policeman. [TS: Yeah, in the street.] And, that policeman was busy (laughter). The town had about seven or eight saloons in it, open saloons. And, it was pretty rough in those days. I can remember hearing my mother say that no woman dared to come out of the house after dark on any night.

TS: Huh.

LH: There was so many people murdered in this town in those old days. Just murdered for anything they had. One, one, ah, they were murdered and put up in the old, ah, drift mines up in the hill where they found skeltons for years and years. Take them down to the old locks and head was held under water until they drowned (laughter). There was an interesting, interesting thing right there. Ah, my mother and father, when they were first married, lived with, ah, A. P. Silverstein who, ah, is now in the Midwest Steel Company. They own a junkyard in Charleston.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, ah, they had a burglar in their house one night in their room. And, the only evidence they could find was a handkerchief on the floor with the print of a peg leg on it. That's how they caught the man that broke into the room cause he was the only peg-legged man in town (laughter).

LH: If I had a dollar for every automobile I've sold, I'd retire (Laughter).

TS: I guess you do get to know a lot of people when you're selling cars.

LH: Oh, I, ten people come by here everyday that I don't know their face. I've long forgotten, but they know me for some reason or other.

TS: Yeah, from up the hollers, you mean?

LH: Up all the hollers. I can remember when Powellton Holler, ah, used to have 10,000 people up there.

TS: Oh, come on.

LH: Yeah.

TS: Powellton Holler?

LH: Powellton Holler used to have 10,000 people all working in the mines for Copper's Coal Company.

TS: What was the name of the company?

LH: Copper's Coal Company.

TS: They used to have a little store down here called Copper's in Montgomery?

LH: They used to have, they used to have the store where Island Creek Store is now.

TS: Yeah, yeah, that's the one.

LH: They bought, they bought that out. Island Creek bought all their stores. Now, ah, Powellton Holler is, a lot, a lot of people still live up there, but there's no coal mining up there. And, I can remember on Saturday's nights when everything stayed open. You could not walk on the sidewalks it was so crowded.

TS: In Montgomery?



Forthgood Shoe Store is.

TS: Now, he just left here a little bit ago, didn't he? That was his son?

LH: Well, this is his father.

TS: Oh, okay.

LH: Yeah, he left here about 15, 20 years ago.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, his son opened a clothing store over across the street in 1922.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, he sold out in, ah, about '69 [TS: Uh huh.] to Burns. (Whispers) What else you want to know (laughs)?

TS: What?

LH: What else you want to know?

TS: Oh (laughs), just anything, Pug. God, you know so much about this town.

LH: Well, my, my, my earliest memory is, is walking one Sunday morning walking down, ah, from home down to Front Street to, to the Fayette Bottling and Ice which sits right now, ah, sits where, ah, Highlander's Dry Cleaner is right now. I can remember it was made out of great big, great big, great big, old, heavy, square, heavy, square-cut logs with rusty wire running down the whole front of the building; and that was right on the main street.

TS: Yeah.

LH: Used to go down there to get distilled water to drink at that place. And, ah, I went into business in, ah, as a Chrysler-Plymouth Dealer in 1939.

TS: Oh, you had your car lot?

LH: Uh huh. That's, that's in, in, ah, Viking Building, where the Viking Building is now.

TS: Let me see.

LH: That's where Dr. Elias and TS: Yeah. all their offices TS: Yeah. are. And, had the used car lot up on the corner where the, ah, Kanawha, ah, where the Merchant's Bank, ah, Parking Lot is now.

TS: Yeah.

LH: Course I didn't go to school here. I did, I did go to school in the first two years. I can remember that.

TS: Where did you go to school after that?

LH: Then, then I went to school in Charleston after that.

TS: What?

LH: And, ah, went to Kanawha School up on Quarrier Street and to Charleston High School. Then went to, to, ah, college at Washington-Lee University, Lexington, Virginia.

TS: Oh, I didn't know that, Pug.

LH: Uh huh, uh huh. Course that was back in the 20's. You wouldn't remember that (laughter). TS: Gee. So, I closed up my business in 1959, and I'm, I'm still here. Still selling automobiles almost 40 years.

TS: You never went into the coal business?

LH: No, I never. My father got in the coal business for a brief time TS: Oh. up on Campbell's Creek in Charleston. But, ah, coal business I know nothing about. I've sold all my life. Sold, ah, Florida real estate, industrial and commercial lighting, and now back to selling automobiles again. Ah, I guess I know everybody up every creek and up every valley for miles around.

TS: Yeah.

LH: Everybody had, had a pocket full of \$2 bills. That's what they paid off in those days. Eveything was \$2 bills they paid off in.

TS: Huh.

LH: And, business on Saturday night, they come, they spent it all. They drank it up, and they bought clothes, they drank their beer.

TS: They drank a lot around here?

LH: They, they did everything in those days (laughs).

TS: It was rough then, huh, Pug (laughs)?

LH: Yeah, and Montgomery used to have several pool rooms, but it's cut down to one pool room now.

TS: Which one is left?

LH: The Top Hat about all that's left.

TS: Yeah. What were some of the big ones then? Maybe they know the people that ran them.

LH: Oh, ah, they had the Smokehouse there for years that was run by Corelli boys.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, ah, back, back in the old days the first pool room in town my uncle ran. And, that, ah, that sat right where the barber shop is on Front Street.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, before it was a pool room, it was a picture show. He had a picture show.

TS: Do you recall the name of that?

LH: The Princess Theatre.

TS: When they tear it down?

LH: Just, ah, just, just finished last week.

TS: Oh, I, yeah. I didn't even know they tore that down.

LH: Yeah, uh huh. That, those three, yeah, those, those, those, three, those three homes there, ah, my grandfather gave that land to his three children.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, ah, we, we lived in the one my father built, the house, and the one on the corner and, ah.

TS: That was a big house.

LH: Yeah.

TS: What did it have four chimney's, fireplaces?

LH: Uh huh. And, my mother's sister, who was Mrs. Owens, her husband was one of the original old doctors here. And, ah, she, she built the next house that they just tore down.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Then the house when O'Dell Funeral Home is which is going down next week, too. /It is? Where are they moving to?/ Yeah, my mother's, my mother's father, ah, brother lived in that house. He built that house. They all built their homes right there together.

TS: Those are nice houses.

LH: And, I tell you, it was tough on me seeing those three houses tore down.

TS: Oh, they were beautiful!

LH: They were nice homes in those days. There were fine homes.

TS: I bet they were mansions in those days.

TS: The Princess.

LH: Then there was one more in town owned by Burt Huddleston, an old timer, called the Gem Theatre. In those days, it cost you a nickel to get in the picture show. And, summer--summer-times I was living in Charleston, in summertime's I would come up and run the machines, the projectors during the summertime  
 [TS: Uh huh.], every summer for my uncle.

TS: There a lot of people that came to the movies?

LH: Oh, oh, I don't know. Maybe.

TS: Well, things were hopping so much on the outside (laughter).

LH: You know, the doggonest thing I remember about anything, course I was living in Charleston then, was on Saturday I'd get a quarter allowance. And, we lived about a mile from town up on Quarrier Street, and I would take a nickel and ride a streetcar downtown [TS: Uh huh.]; take another nickel, and go to the Hippodrome or the Plaza Theatre; another nickel, ah, to go out to Cablish's Store, which was on Capitol Street, confectionary and homemade candy and get a soda or a nut sundae or anything for a nickel and a bag or, ah, fresh home-made candy, taffy or peanut brittle [TS: Umm.]; and with the other nickel, I'd ride the streetcar back home. That would cost you five bucks now to do that (laughter) what we used to do for a quarter. [TS: God.] So, times have really changed.

TS: They sure have.

LH: And, my, my father when he, when he got married was making \$50 a month for the C&O Railroad. And, he built a nice home out of that and raised four children.

TS: Where was your home in Montgomery? Was it on Ferry Street? That was the one he built?

LH: Yeah, right. It was right where the Imported Motors was.

TS: Yeah.

LH: The motorcycle shop.

TS: Yeah. Do you think it keeps Montgomery alive, Pug?

LH: It helps some, a lot, I think.

TS: Well, what keeps the town going then?

LH: Well.

TS: I mean, coal mines used to.

LH: Well, the coal, the coal, the coal mines still are responsible for most of the money.

TS: Which, which coal mines are left?

LH: Well, I'd say Cannelton, and Cement Solvay, and, and, ah, Valley Camp down to, ah.

TS: Where's Valley Camp?

LH: It's down to, ah, Riverside, or, ah, not Riverside, Suesberry.

TS: Yeah, now, I know where it is.

LH: They, they used to be up to Ward which was, ah, up a five-mile holler from Cedar Grove, and there used to be six, seven thousand people working up there. Now, that's completely worked out and gone. No money up there come out of there anymore.

TS: Where did the people go, Pug? I mean ...

LH: They had to go to Ohio, or get a job in other mines, or any place they could. But, ah, ah, the mon--the money is really kept up by Alloy, and Cement Solvay, and Cannelton Coal Company, and Campbell's Coal Company [TS: Uh huh.], and of course, Central Appalachian Coal Company which belongs to Appalachian Power Company up the creek right here across from the garage.

TS: Yeah.

LH: There's about 400 men working up there. And, the telephone company had an installation up there, and the power company itself has a electrical installation up there.

LH: Yeah, dear homes. But, they're gone now.

TS: How many kids were in your family, Pug, cause that was a big house.

LH: I had, ah, two brothers and one sister, and, ah, all's left of our family of six now is my sister and myself.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Course that's to be expected, you know, the old has to give away to the new as you found, you'll find out as you go along (laughter). And, I'm 70 now, and I've seen Montgomery come just from a little, ah, scattering of homes and few stores to a pretty nice town now 3,500 people. And, it's really progressed in those years and seeing the, seeing the college come from the, from Montgomery Preparatory School, and it had only one building they called Old Main. It's still up there.

TS: When was that first started?

LH: Oh, honey, that, that was back in, in the early 1900's. And, that just had the one building, and people came from miles around to go to that school.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: It was the only school like it anyplace. Then along in the thirties, it was changed to, ah, to New River State College.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, that's when they had fine football teams and everything.

TS: They don't have that now.

LH: No, they sure don't (laughter). Then they changed it, of course, to West Virginia Institute of Technology. It's grown from about 50 students to, in those first days, up to, up to about 2,500 students now.

TS: Yeah.

LH: So it's really progressed more than the town has.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: So, there's a good deal of money comes out of there, too.

TS: But, like in the old days when they had the coal companies, ah, like Powellton, and did you get some of the people come from Gauley Bridge to Montgomery? I mean, did the people all congregate in Montgomery or do you think they went to Gauley, too?

LH: Mostly to Montgomery. In those days Montgomery was really the hub cause just, just little villages around it.

TS: Yeah, that's the impression I got.

LH: And, it was TS: Like Smithers., that's right, Smithers. TS: Of course, Smithers has it's own fame for. Smithers, Smithers up, up and gone now. It's a good little town. Fact they do more business than Montgomery does.

TS: Yeah.

LH: That's right (laughs).

TS: Well, yeah, in the past five years, I guess, it has come up.

LH: Yeah, uh huh, yeah, it's become a nice, nice residential town. Over there on River Street that's as nice as you're going to find anyplace.

TS: Yeah.

LH: Wouldn't anybody mind living over there.

TS: Right. Well, in Montgomery there's no room now.

LH: No room to go anyplace except up. TS: Yeah ... All you can go. That's why the town, the town had, had some land to grow on, it would probably be 15 or 20,000 people here now TS: Yeah. instead of 3,500. But, when it got to 3,500, the land was gone and nobody could build, so it's stayed stationary.

TS: And, the streets, for instance, the streets are so tiny, aren't they?



LH: The streets, they, they were just like our original bridge which was built in 1912, which was right below the present bridge.

TS: Yeah, I remember when they tore that down.

LH: It was, it was built for T-Model Fords, and bicycles, and horse and buggies.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, it's a wonder it ever stood up there. That was built in 1912. It served all that time.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: So, we've got our nice modern bridge now. All in all, I think Montgomery has progressed pretty good for what it's had to work with. It's a nice place to work and live.

TS: What about some of the people you remember, Pug? There must be some outstanding people [LH: Ah.] as you grew up that you might have recalled.

LH: Well, I, I, ah, there was old man Huddleston. Huddleston was a prominent family and an old family here.

TS: They were? I don't even remember their names.

LH: Huddleston?

TS: Yeah.

LH: It was, it was, it was, lot of them here. But, they're all, they're all dead, and all passed on. But, I remember old man Huddleston especially. He was a great big fellow, and he had a great big handle-bar white moustache and white hair. [TS: Uh huh.] He and was the toll collector on the bridge.

TS: On the old bridge.

LH: On the old bridge. He collected toll there for years, and years, and years. He was just, just a figurehead. Everybody

knew him. And, of course, I remember my grandfather real well, John Montgomery, who was mayor of the town so long. He was a great seven foot man with shoulders about four foot broad. He had a moustache, and a gotee, and wore a big hat.

TS: Like on the movies.

LH: Carried a cane. He was a whopper (laughs). Then, ah, my uncle, who was Lawrence C. Montgomery who died during the flu epidemic. He was a doctor, and he had a flair about him, because every-time a carnival or a circus would come to town, he'd, ah, send out and buy balloons and all sorts of novelties and have, have boys out selling that stuff.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, he'd, he'd practice medicine for a while and get tired and open a pool room and, ah, let that go awhile. Then, he'd get tired and go and close it up and go back to practicing medicine.

TS: Yeah.

LH: Then, he'd close, and he'd quit that and opened a picture show (laughs).

TS: Jack of all trades.

LH: He was just sort of a character. He just, he just enjoyed live. He did what he wanted to.

TS: How long did he live, Pug?

LH: Ah, he, he was 49 when he died. He died, /TS: Oh, he was young./ he died, he died in 1918 just three days, ah, apart from my grandfather.

TS: Oh /LH: Yeah./, I thought maybe that that type of a person might live a lot longer.

LH: Well, he had, he was a doctor, as I say, and he, ah, on, on the coldest night we had that winter in 1918 when all that big ful epidemic we had that killed hundreds and thousands of people in West Virginia.

TS: I never heard of that.

LH: Oh, gee whiz, they had, ah, they had, they had bodies stacked up in the Springhill Cemetery in Charleston five or six hundred stacked up. They couldn't bury them fast enough.

TS: From the flu?

LH: From the flu. [TS: Ooh.] So, my uncle, ah, made a, got up three o'clock in the morning and had an old open (inaudible) automobile, which I can remember real well, and went across that bridge and all that wind blowing in that open car and delivered a baby over there. The next morning he had pneumonia. And, he lived about four days and died, and, ah, we took him to Charleston and buried him. And, my grandfather was sick at the time, and we came back to Montgomery on No. 2 and just as the whistle blew, he died. [TS: Hmm.] So, and there's old Doc Henderson that was a druggist, and he owned the Henderson Drug Store. He started in 1899, and it's still there with his son-in-law and with, not his son-in-law, but, ah, his son still owns the building, but, ah.

TS: His sons daughter's husband owns the building.

LH: Ah, now old Doc Henderson's son owns the building it's in.

TS: Okay.

LH: But, ah, when he, when he died, they, they, ah, ah, thought it was working for him, and old Doc Thomas, they called him, he bought, he bought the drug store.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, it's still in his family. He daughter and son-in-law own it and still run it. And, they boast they've filled, ah, filled over a million prescriptions since 1899. And, let's see who else there might be that I can remember real well. There's, ah, old, ah, guy named Burt Hastings. He was mayor of the town for five or six terms like, ah, then he was Justice of the Peace. Then, he got old and though he was, ah, fading out. He started drinking. He passed out every night in the middle of the town (laughter).

TS: What was this a big evening thing?

LH: No, he just got drunk every day and passed out every night. They had to carry him home every night.

TS: How long did he survive?

LH: Ah, he, he died when he was about 60. Whiskey just killed him.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, there's a guy called Andy Mankin that ran, ah, one of the saloons on Front Street. He has a lot, lot of descendants here now. I'm not going to name them, because they wouldn't be too nice for them (Laughs).

TS: Oh, no.

LH: He ran this gambling room upstairs. [TS: Uh huh.] And, ah, I never will forget one of the tales they tell that my grandfather liked to go up there and play poker all the time. So, ah, my grandmother, who was a very militant woman, ah, she went up the back way one night, and, ah, the door was open, and she broke into the poker room where they was playing poker.

TS: Yeah.

LH: (Laughs) And, she just, she just, ah, had an apron on, spread that apron out, just took all the money on the table (laughter) in her apron. Old Andy Mankin said, "Well, Aunt Mag," said, ah, said, "Now, all that money don't belong to John." "Yeah, but he's lost enough here in the past. I want him to make up for it." She just took it all and back down the down stairs.

TS: God. Were women pretty strong willed then? More so than now, you think, Pug?

LH: Women? Women?

TS: Yeah, compared to women today to back then.

LH: Oh, no, women, women were just as meek as lambs, and the

LH: Sheltering Arms.

TS: I'm really learning a lot about the history of this town.

LH: That, that was up on the hillside down to Hansford. And, ah, the hillside started slipping and started, building started cracking and sliding. They had to abandon it.

TS: Ah.

LH: That's when Dr. Laird came to Montgomery [TS: Yeah.], which, ah, that must, that must have been in the 20's. And, ah, started the Laird Hospital which was over on Fayette Pike at that time.

TS: Fayette Pike.

LH: It's right, it's right in there where that fraternity house is up there now. And, ah, Myers actually, C. L. Myers and, ah, and, ah, Apartments.

TS: Oh.

LH: And, that was the old hospital, old hospital.

TS: Yeah, I know where that is.

LH: Uh huh. And, ah, see, ah, Aaron Myers who used to the, run the Fayette Bottling and Ice Company which is now gone. Ah, they did all their own bottling, ah, Coke-Cola, not Coke-Cola soft drinks and pops of all kinds.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Made their ice. And, Aaron Myers, one of the founders of it used to go in the, ah, on the road selling, and he had no way to go except go on the train. He'd flag a freight train or anything. Go right up the holler selling the stuff. And, it would be delivered the next two or three days on the train.

TS: Huh.

LH: Ice Cream, and ice, pop, and everything. That's the only way they had of going to sell it.

husband was a 100 percent the complete boss.

TS: Yeah.

LH: There were a few of them militant that, ah, tried to take over, but for the most part women were homemakers and devoted to their home and their husband and their children. And, they just simply didn't have any outside interest. Their family and home was their whole life. /TS: Hmm./ So much like back in the pioneer days. Of course, we know that day is gone forever, too (laughter).

TS: Yeah. Like, ah, you know, I think you're right there. Women today aren't going to be the pioneer type to stay at home.

LH: Yeah. That day's gone forever.

TS: You think that's bad?

LH: Have children now and get a baby sitter and right back to work.

TS: Yeah, well, a lot of them stay home a couple of years maybe, Pug.

LH: Some do, and I know some gone to work in six weeks.

TS: Yeah, that's true. /LH: Yeah./ You've got a point there. Well, what about when women had babies in those days. You had one doctor around. Didn't have hospitals.

LH: Had one, well, we, we had a hospital. We had the old Sheltering Arms Hospital which is down to Hansford about five miles below here.

TS: Now, I never even heard of that.

LH: Yeah. Dr. Laird founded that. Old Dr. Laird.

TS: Yeah.

LH: He founded that, and then they, ah, ah, they did a big business down there. It was the only hospital around here anyplace.

TS: What was the name of it?

TS: Hmm. They didn't have the ice cream trucks then?

LH: No, wasn't anything not until later on till, till trucks started into use.

TS: When did trucks, when did automobiles first start around in this area, Pug?

LH: Well, the, this fellow Burt Huddleston that ran the Gem Theatre had the first automobile.

TS: What was it, you remember?

LH: I don't remember the name of that, but that around 1907.

[TS: Uh huh.] And, ah, used to get out in that darn thing, and it would chug along about five miles an hour. Be about 50 of us kids running right behind him. And, he would just get mad and tell us to get out of the way. About that time the darn car would stop, and we'd have to push it back home, and then he was tickled to death to see us (laughter). In 1909, my uncle bought a new Ford. Ah, all body, all made of wood. Ah, oil cloth upholstery and everything. And, that's about the first car I ever drove in my life. When I was about 12 years old, I learned how to drive that darn thing.

TS: You didn't have to have a license or anything?

LH: No, you didn't have to have anything. No license on the car, no driver's license, no nothing.

TS: Just as long as it went.

LH: You just got in it and drove it. Heck, there wasn't any roads to go on.

TS: Yeah. What did they have then, horses, they used mostly in Montgomery?

LH: Horses, yeah. Yeah, I can remember very well my, ah, grandfather owned a lot of property at Smithers, and I would get in the horse and buggy with him at the first of every month and go over to collect the rent (laughter). I can remember that very, very well. But, ah, wasn't anything but horse and buggies. That's all they was. And, the automobile kept

TS: Oh, my gosh. How much gasoline did it take? I mean, like how much did gasoline cost then?

LH: Oh, about 15 cents a gallon.

TS: Mmm. Boy, we sure need that now, don't we?

LH: Of course, there wasn't any gasoline stations. Henderson Drug Store that I mentioned earlier [TS: Yeah.] they had one gas pump that sat out on the curbing, and you could blow your horn, and the man in the drug store would come out and pump your gas for you. Man name of Ernest Davis, ah, really delivered the first gasoline around here in a horse and buggy in, in oil drums.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: He, he would, he would deliver gas to the where the man had the pump on the sidewalk. And, ah, oh, I can remember horse and buggies before any thought of automobiles. For years after the first automobile came out, there was still plenty of horses and buggies in use.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Every town had its livery stable.

TS: What were we talking about? Oh, horse and buggies, the livery stable.

LH: Oh, oh, yeah, uh huh. Yeah, I can remember, I can remember 1923 that year I went to school over at Washington-Lee in Lexington, Virginia, and, ah, right, right across from the railroad station in Lexington, Virginia, ah, was a big livery stable called Smith's Livery Stable.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, today that is Smith's, Smith's, ah, ah, Lines. It's one, one of the biggest, ah, biggest truck lines in the country.

TS: Oh, yeah, I know what you mean.

LH: That's, that's, that's what it came from; it came from that



on coming slow, and slow, and slow, and, ah, I can remember the first trip we made from, ah, Charleston to Montgomery in 1917 in a car we just bought, Oakland, Oakland eight cylinder. Oakland Touring Car. There weren't any sedans then. /TS: Uh huh./ So, we decided to drive to Montgomery on day to see my grandmother. Took exactly four hours.

TS: Oh, my gosh.

LH: And, I've ridden it in the same time on a bicycle (laughter). The only pavement there was ended at Malden, and the rest of it was just a cow path all the way.

TS: Uh huh. When did they put the road in, you remember?

LH: Oh, I expect, ah, ah, the first road into Montgomery was in the early 20's. Maybe the late, maybe the late teens. Uh huh. Yeah. I can remember driving my cousin. She had, ah, she had a 1919 Huffmobile.

TS: What was it?

LH: Huffmobile.

TS: Huffmobile?

LH: Huffmobile. And, she wanted, she wanted to go to New York to visit a friend. So, a cousin and I, we were just about, ah, see in 1919 I was 17 and he was about 16. So, we thought we'd drive her to New York. So, I can remember starting up the road and a dirt road all the way. And, it took us two days to make Goshen, Virginia. And, we took a long, and I remember after we left Anstead, it was just room enough for one car, one horse and buggy.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, ah, I couldn't tell you how many times we had to get out and move a tree that had fallen across the road to get that car up there, but we made New York in four days.

TS: You did?

LH: I never saw a piece, piece of paved road (laughs).

Smith's Livery Stable.

TS: Livery stable.

LH: These boy's grandfather had that have it now had the livery stable.

TS: Huh.

LH: And, that's where, where Smith's Transport Lines started which is one of the biggest.

TS: How did you get down to Washington and Lee?

LH: Ah, we took, ah, took, ah, ah, ah, a local train to Staunton, and out of Staunton we had to take what, ah, they called a Cannonball. And (laughs), get on this little Cannonball, little narrow gauge and one car on the railroad train.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, went into Lexington about thirty miles away, and it took about four or five hours. Stopped at about 50 stations along the way and went about ten miles an hour (laughs).

TS: Oh, there's five million other things I could ask you about. Ah, how about food, Pug?

LH: Oh, food. I remember my grandfather had his own garden. He had his own stable. He kept three or four horses. Ah, of course, he used one of them to plow with, and they lived, they lived right, at that time, ah, right on the corner of Ferry Street and Sixth Avenue.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, the house, the house was, was a great big farm house. It's been rebuilt three times. One right over the other until it's a modern home now.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: But, my grandmother lived there until she died. Then my mother lived there. And, my mother died in 1961, and none of

us ever went back in it. We just sold it. [TS: Oh.] But, ah, they had, ah, killed their own food in the early days and had a smokehouse where they smoked hams and made good country hams.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, she had her own, my grandmother had her own garden out back; a tremendous garden. Raised almost everything. Made your own bread which nobody's been able to equal yet in these stores (laughs).

TS: No.

LH: And, I don't know, everything tasted different back in those days, cause it was all home grown I guess.

TS: Yeah.

LH: Any--anything you wanted to eat was in that garden every year, and, ah, of course, they put everything up so you had it all winter, too.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Put your green beans, potatoes, put everything up and canned it. And, of course, the smokehouse was full of meat they killed in the fall.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: So, you didn't hardly go to the store for anything. Fact there practically weren't any grocery stores. And, of course, they, they began to spring up, and they were real small. I can remember A, A & P had a store here, ah, down on Front Street. I believe that's in the same building Capital Finance Company is in now. It just didn't have anything. It was the shoddiest looking darned old thing you ever saw in your life (laughter). You look over there now, you wouldn't realize it was the same kind of store that come from that.

TS: Was that your first store?

LH: Ah, no. I believe the first store I remember was the, ah,

where my grandmother bought what she did was people by the name Chapman, named Chapman. And, that was on up, up right across from, ah, from the bank parking, the Montgomery National Bank Parking Lot now in a building Tom McCellan's got a paint store in now.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, when I was a kid, it was the only grocery store in town, and that's where just about everybody traded.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, of course, there's been eight or ten since. Now, it's all chain stores as you know. Taken it all over.

TS: And, pay an arm and a leg for meat.

LH: Yeah. Yeah. That's a funny thing. I was over in Penneyfare Store over at Oakland last night [TS: Uh huh.], and those meat counters were stacked two feet high. And, I stood, stood at the checkout counter and checked ten buggies, and there was not a piece of meat in one of them.

TS: They're sticking to it, aren't they?

LH: They're sticking to it. That thing was crammed with meat, and crammed with high prices, too.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: So, we didn't buy any either. We're going, we went the whole week. We didn't buy any, and we didn't load up last week either (laughter).

TS: That's what a lot of people did, I think.

LH: That's right.

TS: Where did you get your meat back.

LH: Back in those days?

TS: Yeah, back in those days.

LH: Some friends of ours made, German people made, made sauerkraut and always gave us a big batch of it every year.

TS: What nationality are you, Pug? Where's your family come from?

LH: Oh, I don't know. They, they say there's some French and some Irish, and we're, we're a mixture like everybody else. I don't know (laughs).

TS: The name Montgomery seems like it would be English, would it?

LH: That's, that's more of a French name.

TS: Is it?

LH: Uh huh. I don't, ah, I haven't followed the thing back. I'm scared of finding some horse fleas in it.

TS: Oh, come on.

LH: If I dug back too far (laughter). We're like any other family. Had some fine people, and we have some that wasn't so fine.

TS: Oh, yeah.

LH: Every family has the same thing.

TS: Sure.

LH: But, we're still proud of the family. We haven't had any really bad people in all those years.

TS: Yeah. You all a fairly small family for those days. Wasn't it three?

LH: Four.

TS: Four.

LH: Uh huh. Three, three boys and one girl.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Yeah, but just, ah, that wasn't, that was just about the average.

LH: By golly, you, you raised it and killed it yourself.

TS: You had cattle then?

LH: Huh?

TS: Cattle, you know, beef.

LH: Yeah, beef, uh huh. Steak, hams off, off your hogs, and your spare ribs, and everything.

TS: Oh, wasn't nearly as much, was it?

LH: No, that's right.

TS: Well, did they have the animals in town in Montgomery?

LH: Oh, you could keep anything you wanted to in your yard. Chickens, hogs, cows, anything.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: You just kept it all right here in town. There wasn't any ordinance against anything like that then. That's the only reason the ordinance didn't pass where you couldn't keep livestock in town. In those days, people any, anything they wanted they kept it at their home in their yards.

TS: What was your favorite food, Pug?

LH: Oh, back in those days, you mean?

TS: Yeah, you know, everybody has their favorite.

LH: Yeah. Oh, I always loved fried potatoes, and, ah, steak, and pork chops, and spare ribs. I love spare ribs. Of course, I'm scared to eat them now (laughter).

TS: Yeah, yeah.

LH: I always liked sauerkraut.

TS: Oh, yeah?

Course some, some of them had eight, nine, and ten, twelve.

TS: I guess I'm reflecting on my grandparents.

LH: Yeah.

TS: They had so many.

LH: Cause, ah, I remember, see, ah, in, in, ah, my grandfather only had, family only had three children, and, ah, our part of it had four. Then, ah, ah, one of the other daughters only had two, and the other son had three. Only nine grandchildren all, all together.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, ah, let's see. I believe out of those nine grandchildren, ah, seven of them are still living. So, my grandfather died at 70, and my grandmother died at 75. My father's father died at 85, and my mother died at 83, so there's some long life in there someplace (laughter).

TS: Yeah, I guess.

LH: Even though we don't know who it's going to hit (laughter).

TS: Did you all have a lot of family gatherings?

LH: Oh, every, everything centered around the family in those days.

TS: Really?

LH: It's not like it is now at all. There wasn't anything else to do. So, families were close in those days.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, ah, one of them's troubles was everybody's troubles. You, you really liked, and respected, and admired each other, but that seems to have gone now, too (laughs). Everybody goes their separate ways now.

TS: It's a much faster pace now.

LH: Yeah, that's right.

TS: Everything's, yeah.

LH: Yeah, people, people didn't move away from their families. They all went to work, got married, and lived till they died right in the same town. All of them.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: They didn't wander like they wander now.

TS: Uh huh. Yeah. You remember any holidays, any specific gatherings? Can you [LH: Oh.] tell kinda me something about that?

LH: Oh, we always, the, the big--biggest day was the Fourth of July.

TS: The biggest day was Fourth of July?

LH: Yeah, they always had had a carnival which was allowed to sit up right on the main street.

TS: In Montgomery?

LH: Yeah, cause there wasn't much, much traffic or anything, so they just set the carnival right up on the main street.

TS: Where was that? Where the train station is?

LH: It would start from the, from the, right on down that street from just about, ah, block above the, the, ah, train station to the block below.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: It would take the whole street up. And then, they'd have a slippery pole out there, and you got a prize if you could find the slippery pole. We'd chase greasy pigs and everything (laughter). And, that was great in, in those days that people wouldn't pay any attention to now. But, I've seen, ah, I'm glad I lived in this generation cause I've seen the first electric light. I've seen the first automobiles. In fact, I've seen just about the first of everything that's happened



down as long as I am able to walk.

TS: Sure.

LH: And, I'll work as long as I can. If I'm 80, if I'm 80, and I'm still getting around, I'll be working (laughs).

TS: That's great.

LH: Yeah.

TS: That really is. Of course, you're fortunate to be in a business where you don't have to retire [LH: Yeah.] like some of these people at Carbide and Alloy.

LH: That's, that's, that's right.

TS: That's a real shame. They're still productive.

LH: That's right. It's a shame when a man gets 65, it's, everywhere is a mandatory retirement age when a man don't get any sense till he gets 65.

TS: And, back in the olden days, they didn't hang people up because they were 65.

LH: Why, heck, no. They'd work 90 and 95 and work everyday.

TS: So, maybe progress in some respects isn't that good, huh?

LH: That's right. You know it's just pretty bad when you see a man that's through at 65. He might be in the peak, peak of health [TS: Uh huh.], peak of productivity, and everything else; and most plants will kick him out [TS: Yeah.], wants somebody younger. They don't know near as much as that man they retired.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: So, we're, we're wasting a lot of, ah, people in their productive years, I think. Just, just like on the railroad you can't be a engineer usually until you're about 75.

TS: Really?

in the last, in, you know, that's that really progress.

TS: Yeah, uh huh.

LH: Cause there's been more progress in the last 70 years than there's been in the last 7,000 years.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: All, all progress has come in the last 70 or 75 years.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Ah, I've see in all happen, and I think I'm fortunate to have lived in a time like that.

TS: Yeah.

LH: Seen every, every bit of it. Seen transportation change completely a 100 percent.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Seen, ah, electrical power come in and change the face of everything. And, I it's just, just been a wonderful age to live in. And, I'm soory I ain't going to be here another 70 years (laughs).

TS: Well, P<sup>U</sup>g, I'm telling you. How old are you now?

LH: Seventy.

TS: And, you work, what six days a week?

LH: Work six days a week.

TS: I never, I had no idea you were that old.

LH: Yeah, I, I actually retired at 65, but I didn't last but ten days. I just, I just like to be around people and talk to people.

TS: Yeah.

LH: I like people in general, so I'm not going to go home and sit

LH: Yeah, that's right. They won't take a young man and let him run a passenger train or a fast freight train. [TS: Huh.] You have to work for years and years till you get up to that. And, they work on until they're about 70, and they can retire. I guess when they know something (laughs).

TS: Yeah, what, let me think of something while you rest here. How about the music, Pug?

LH: Oh, music, music back in those days course, ah, as I remember it was the big, the big band music of the 20's and 30's.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: As far as I'm concerned, that's the only music we've ever had.

TS: Well, name some of the big bands.

LH: Oh.

TS: I know Glenn Miller. I remember that one.

LH: Oh, Glenn Miller, Ben Burney, ah, Jan Garber, ah, Stan Kenton. He's still going, by the way, too. He was in Charleston not very long ago.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, ah, ah, Guy Lombardo. Course Guy Lombardo's band is almost 50 years old, and he's still playing that good music.

TS: Yeah, he's still on TV every New Year's.

LH: That's the only time, only time I enjoy any music on TV is on New Year's Eve when I can listen to Guy Lombardo (laughs).

TS: Did, ah, anybody used to play in your family?

LH: Huh uh.

TS: No one.

LH: No musicians. No, I had one brother that could sing pretty well, but, ah, he didn't try to carry it anyplace. [TS: Yeah.]

He would just sing in the Elk's Minstrels in Charleston and stuff like that.

TS: Uh huh. What about in the bars and pool rooms around here?

LH: There's no music or anything.

TS: Really?

LH: No, just good serious hard drinking, that's all (laughter).

TS: Well, what did you do during prohibition around here? Seems like liquor kept this place going.

LH: Well, went, went up a creek and got your some moonshine which was plentiful.

TS: Yeah, where? Like up, ah, Cowton Holler?

LH: Well, Powellton Place, and go down Charleston, and go up to Malden, and go up George's Creek.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Get good whiskey if you wanted any (laughs). But, moonshine was a big thing in those days. A lot of these mines up in the mountains had been played out.

TS: Yeah.

LH: Stills in a lot of them there where they made their whiskey.  
[TS: Yeah.] And, everybody had their own private bootlegger or moonshiner. They knew where to go to get it (laughter). And, they got it. Home, home brew was a big thing, too.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: You go to the grocery store and buy you a can of malt, and, ah, set that in a five-gallon crock for about 11 days until it fermented.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, you'd, ah, bottle that, let her sit for a few days until

it settled, and that was better than anything you can buy now.

TS: Huh.

LH: And, you'd go to the bootlegger's house, and buy that for a quarter a bottle and knock you on your can (laughter).

TS: Did the trick, huh?

LH: Yeah. Oh, just, there's just so many things. Every--everything's changed. Nothing's like it was. Of course, 50 years from now nothing will be like it is now either.

TS: Yeah. Maybe I'll be saying that (laughs).

LH: So, as they, they say that the OR has to change and give away to the new.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, that's just the way it goes. Every generation's different, but I think mine's been the best one.

TS: You think so?

LH: I think so (laughs).

TS: You all have certainly have done a lot.

LH: Yeah, lived a good life. I've enjoyed every minute of it. I've never really been sick.

TS: Never?

LH: Never been in the hospital (knocks).

TS: Knock on wood there.

LH: Let me find some wood to knock on (laughter).

TS: You remember of any incident, ah, I recall my parents mentioning some hangings in Smithers.

LH: Well.

TS: Remember anything like that?

LH: Well, I, I don't remember any of them. I do remember one up to Fayetteville. It was a judge's, judge's son at Fayetteville was the judge of the circuit court. His son supposedly shot and killed his wife.

TS: Yeah.

LH: And, their name was Bennett, I believe, and I can remember they hung him up to Fayetteville. But, I don't remember any around Montgomery. They had plenty of them, I understand, but I don't remember any.

TS: Did they have a trial, or they just hung them?

LH: No, they just took him out and hung him. Indignant neighbors (laughs).

TS: Yeah. Goodness. Were the jails pretty well filled around here on Saturday night?

LH: Well.

TS: That was probably the big night, wasn't it?

LH: It's just like they are now. There was a few people around every community that are going to stay in jail half the time, and they have the same people in there all the time (laughter).

TS: Yeah.

LH: Yeah, I can remember during the Depression, ah, 20, and 29, and 30, and 31 at, ah, every morning when the freight trains went through here, ah, there'd be a bunch of tramps come off those freight trains [TS: Uh huh.], and they'd, then they'd scour the town. My grandmother kept food, ah, ah, cooked up for them.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: She never turned anybody away. She'd have eight or ten every morning for breakfast that got off of those trains. They'd come in town and scour the town and bum breakfast, and go

catch the next freight train on. And, the next morning, you'd have another batch. They was restless. There was no work. People were hungry, and they were constantly on the move looking for work or trying to find something to eat. And, nobody will ever know what that Depression was unless they lived through it.

TS: Yeah. Did, was your family hard hit?

LH: Well, my father was still working on the railroad, and he had a steady job, and it didn't bother him.

TS: Uh huh. But, you could see it all around you.

LH: That's right. Yes. I remember it got down to where, ah, you could buy two loaves of bread for a nickel instead of 30 or 40 cents like it is now (laughs).

TS: And, some still couldn't afford it.

LH: That's right. People couldn't afford it.

TS: Were the coal mines being working during the Depression, Pug?

LH: Yeah, they, they, they, they were, were working some, but they couldn't sell coal. They didn't have any market. In those, in those days, they didn't get out much coal anyway, cause it was all done by, ah, pick and shovel, you know, load cut down with the pick, and load it with the shovel, and hauled out by a mule car out of the mines. So, they didn't have the industrial market or the foreign market for coal like we've got now. [TS: Uh huh.] And, it sold for about \$2 a ton. I think it's about 10 or 12 now (laughs). [TS: Uh huh.] But, people went, went to work in the mines. Would go in, ah, boy that did the trapping, which was a door that let, would let the fresh air into the mine all the time [TS: Yeah.], and they'd have to open and close that trap door. They'd go in there 10 and 12 years old and trap for a dollar a day.

TS: Mmm.

LH: And, the man mining the coal probably didn't make over 2, \$3 a day, and it was a slow process. He was lucky if he got

maybe three or four, ah, ton cars of coal out in a day.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: One man with his pick and shovel. [TS: Hmm.] Back breaking. So, I, I, naturally, I think that those old days when you could make \$50 a month and live in luxury and peace and quiet are much better than we have now [TS: Yeah.] where you've got to have 7 or \$800 a month to exist and not quiet and no peace.

TS: Even in Montgomery you don't think it's very peaceful?

LH: Well, it is to me cause, ah, when I get through work, I go home and sit down in a lounge chair, and I don't bother anybody (laughter). But, I always enjoyed living in Montgomery, and I know everybody, and I made a lot of friends. I think it's a wonderful place to live myself.

TS: Yeah, well, a lot of the young people are discontent here. [LH: Yeah, well.] and want to leave.

LH: I would probably be, too, if I was that age now. When I was that age, things were different here than they are now.

TS: Well, the mountains are a little confining to some of the young people.

LH: Yeah, but you know you go away from these mountains and stay for a month or two, you're mighty glad to see them when you come back (laughs).

TS: You're talking to the voice of experience.

LH: That's right (laughter).

TS: Yeah, I'm still here.

LH: I don't, I don't, I don't mean maybe.

TS: Right.

LH: Those mountains get in your blood, and you can't live peacefully without them [TS: Uh huh.] or satisfied, I don't think.



TS: Yeah, you've been, you've been, have you travelled out of state a lot, Pug?

LH: Not, not too much. I used to go to Florida every year for quite a few years, and TS: Uh huh. I'd go over to Nag's Head and do some surf fishing.

TS: But, you've been out?

LH: Oh, oh, oh, yeah.

TS: I was just wondering how you would compare the people of the other states to the people here.

LH: Well, ah, I travelled, most of the travelling I've done been in, course I've been in Ohio a whole lot, and, ah, North and South Carolina, and Virginia, but, ah, to, to me the people of Virginia and North and South Carolina are more like the people of West Virginia than anyplace else, cause they're friendly, and they seem to talk our language.

TS: What's our language? You mean.

LH: Well, just common people.

TS: Yeah.

LH: No airs. TS: Uh huh. Everybody's democratic and everybody looks alike to me TS: Uh huh., and you treat everybody as an equal.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, you just, ah, well, everybody, everybody in those states seem to like other people and do, do for them what they can. TS: Uh huh. But, ah, course if I, ah, was going to retire anyplace I thought for years I would go to Florida. I used to go every year, but now if I wanted to leave West Virginia and retire, I think I would go to the Shenandoah Valley.

TS: Yeah.

LH: Over in Virginia, cause I love it.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, I try to get over there at least once every year. Go up and down that valley from Winchester down to Roanoke.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Just, just I just feel good in there (laughs).

TS: Yeah, Florida is much faster life than what we're used to.

LH: No, I've owned property in Florida that I bought 14 years ago with the intention of moving down there and going my living.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: But, it seems like the older you get, the more you want to stay among people you know.

TS: Yeah.

LH: So, I've outlived my desire to go (laughs).

TS: Well, how do you feel like about, for instance, Jay Rockefeller wanting to bring in industry and, and make West Virginia more progressive state. What [LH: Well.] are your feelings about that, Pug?

LH: Well, well, ah, my, my feelings about Jay Rockefeller, he's a nice young man from a good family, of course, and he's rich. But, ah, my idea of his coming to West Virginia was just simply the same thing as his Uncle Winthrop Rockefeller did it out in Arkansas. Ah, they can't get anyplace in their home State of New York, because there's too many prominent people ahead of them.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: So, Jay decided that he would do just what Uncle Winthrop did. He'd pick a backward state where his, his name and his money would impress everybody, and go in and move in with the yokels, and, ah, run for public office, and, and be, he'd rather be, I guess, rather be a, ah, big duck in a little pond than he would a little duck in, ah, in, ah, big duck in a small pond.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: So, my opinion is he moved to West Virginia to take advantage of, of a backward state and get himself elected [TS: Uh huh.], and I'm just tickled to death that the people didn't buy it. I thought there was no way in the world Arch, Arch Moore could win. I believe I was the most amazed person in West Virginia when [TS: Uh huh.] election night when they announced it that Arch Moore had won that election.

TS: Did you feel like you was an outsider electing him in?

LH: Ah, I, I didn't feel like he was an outsider as it he come in here to take advantage of what he considered ignorant people and people below him. [TS: Do you.] He thought he could pull the wool over their eyes.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: Like, you see, his Uncle Winthrop did the same thing in Arkansas, and he served two terms as governor out there [TS: Uh huh.], but he got beat last time. People got enough. So, that's, that's the way I felt about it. I think Arch, I mean, ah, Jay's a nice fellow, and I think everybody likes him. Actually, we had no need for him. He had no training to make him run the State of <sup>WV</sup> West Virginia that I could see.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: So, I think we've got a home, home-state boy, and we've got one with our interest at heart, and I think he's done more for any, for this state than any governor that we've ever had. And, I'm a die in the world democrat (laughter).

TS: Well, how about the, do you think that progress of West Virginia is really important? I mean, we've been told time and time again we're behind other states.

LH: Well, ah, that's people trying to sell us something. Since he's a politician trying to sell us something and raise taxes to so they can say we need, need, need to be taxed higher to do more things. Ah, but I've seen it in my, in my lifetime, there's never any politician done anything for West Virginia

except steal from us.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, got the same idea down there in the legislature right now. You've got a bunch of men down there and an editorial in the Gazette yesterday just rang true today in today's paper. Said, "Who's running the State of West Virginia, the Legislature or the JP's?" Justice of the Peace.

TS: Yeah.

LH: They Justice of the Peace was, they were trying to abolish it, and at the same time, they had a bill to make a sheriff eligible for two terms.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, the sheriff's have actually been coming down and telling the legislators if they wanted to be elected another time, the next time, they better vote for keeping the JP's and for letting the sheriff succeed himself. So, I don't know whether all other legislatures are that way, but we need a Consumer Protection Bill bad where this doggone holder in due course can't help skin people out of their life savings for, ah, fly by night company comes in and does work on a man's home and sells his note to somebody else, and there he is, and they can collect whether the work was any good or not.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, to me, one of the worst things in West Virginia is letting these department stores and the Bank Americard just flagrantly break the law and charges 18 percent interest when the legal rate of state in this state is eight percent. [TS: Uh huh.] And, they're letting them get away with it. [TS: Yeah.] And, anybody that doesn't do something like that, this legislature hasn't got the interests of the people of West Virginia at heart. To show that that is a true statement on Texaco's gasoline statement on the back of that statement, they have the legal rate of interest eight percent, and that's what they charge you on a past-due account not 18 percent. So, this legislature, I've gone through, seen a lot of them, and I've never seen one that had the people's interest at heart.

TS: Yeah.

LH: It's all for their own good. Ah, we don't.

TS: Well, you feel then that maybe the people of West Virginia are somewhat undereducated [LH: Ah.] to, to accept this sort of policy?

LH: Well, they, they, they don't care. That's all I can, they, they, they elect the same people down there every year.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: People that spend 60 days, and in their last two days, they, ah, rush through a lot of stuff that doesn't do anybody any good except them and some business firms or something.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: So, to me, of course, I guess that's the same in every state, and it's the same nationally, I guess, so there's nothing we can do about it.

TS: Uh huh. Let's reflect a moment upon education back in the olden days and then [LH: Yeah.] right now. What kind of schools did they have in Montgomery?

LH: Well, ah, I, I just all I went to school in Montgomery was two years in grade school. The rest of my school, grade school and high school was in Charleston.

TS: Yeah, well, did they have the, ah, one elementary school and a high school or what?

LH: Ah, just one elementary school and one high school.

TS: Uh huh.

LH: And, ah, when I first started to school, ah, you had one room either second grade or third grade or fourth grade, and it was all one room, and that one teacher taught all the subjects. You didn't change classes like you, everything was in one room. [TS: Yeah.] But, I, I, I think, ah, there's no doubt about it that teachers back in those days had your

interest at heart, and they taught you something. Not like they do now.

TS: You don't, excuse me, you don't think teachers have the children's interests at heart now?

LH: No sir. All, all the teachers, all the teachers want to do is just stay in there three or four or five hours, and get a good salary, and a good retirement, and get out. And, I don't know that I blame them what they've got to contend with the kids of these days. I can remember, though, when I was in high school in Charleston, and I never was much good in mathematics. Had a algebra teacher called Betty Kay Stark, and brother she was the old type. She wore a black dress clear down around her shoe tops, white shirtwaist, and she was tough (laughter). And, I can remember I took that first-year algebra, and I flunked. She flunked me, and she says, "You just don't know enough about it." Second time, I studied harder, and she passed me (laughs). These days, they pass you on. Get rid of you, but they didn't back then.

TS: So, you think they're too lax then? They only do it for a job.

LAWRENCE MONTGOMERY (100) RANDOLPH - born September 10, 1902 in  
Montgomery, West Virginia. Father who worked for C & O Rail-  
road was transferred in 1890 from Virginia to Montgomery. Law-  
is still a car salesman in the same town in which he was born.  
he left Montgomery for a short time to live in Charleston, but  
has spent the greater part of his life in Montgomery. The tape  
deals for the most part with the changes that Law has observed  
in the past 70 years in the town that bears his family's name.

tapes submitted by Tresa A. Sealise

April 10, 1970