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Virgie Workman Farley

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DATE 9-1 1988Virgie L. Farley
(Signature - Interviewee)Rt. 3, Box 427
(Address)Branchland, WV 25506DATE Sept. 1, 1988Paul Salstrom
(Signature - Witness)J. Morrow, Virgie
LCH-2

LINCOLN COUNTY HISTORY

TAPE #2

July 31, 1988

AN INTERVIEW WITH: Virgie Workman Farley (VW)

CONDUCTED BY: Paul Salstrom (PS)

TRANSCRIBED & TYPED BY: Gina Kehali Kates

LCH-2

PS: ...to Virgie Farley, near Myra, West Virginia, in Lincoln County, on July 31, 1988. And how old are you, Virgie?

VW: I'm 63.

PS: And...where did you grow up?

VW: Oh, I grew up till I was seven years old [dogs barking in background] on Harts Creek, and daddy moved from the head of Harts Creek down (in Lincoln County, Harts Creek?) yeah, no, it was in Logan County. (Oh) And he moved from a covered wagon from side of the hill to the other one [laughs] and then whenever, why two years later, we moved to Wayne County, and...we moved in a covered wagon. (yeah)

PS: Unh. So that would have been around the 1920's.

VW: That was whenever, yeah I,... (or) well, I was born 1924. (Uh-huh) And that was during the, right at...in the depression. (yeah) And...we moved down there; and we stayed about a couple of years down there, and then we moved back to Logan, West Virginia.

PS: Where in Wayne County?

VW: Where in Wayne County? It ah, [inaudible] Ridge; it was up from Twelve Pole.

PS: Uh-huh. And what was your father doing? Why was he moving? How was he making his living?

VW: He was making his livin' through...he was, when he was uh, Hart's Creek, over on Big Hart, he was a constable. And uh, whenever we moved to Wayne County, he went into timber business. (Mmm-hmm) (For himself?) Yeah, for himself. And...things like that. And, you know, back in those days, you had to [inaudible] didn't sue money. [laughter] You took stuff and swapped it.

PS: Yeah. That's the kind of thing I'm interested in. How much that's changed over time, you know, and why that's changed.

VW: Well, it's really changed, that I can remember. It's really changed.

PS: Ray and Mabel Elkins today, swap things in WWII that (yeah, we did that, too) but stores were more anxious than they had been even during the depression, to uh, get vegetables and produce.

VW: Well, I guess we was lucky in a way; we raised our own garden and we had our vegetables, but we swapped, you know, some things, you know, like sugar, and stuff for meat; uh, things like that during the war. (Uh-huh) See, my husband was in WWII, (oh) and my (he went overseas?) my brother was killed. (Oh, in Europe or...) uh-huh; well, he was wounded in Europe, and they sent him...sent him back and he died after he come back from [inaudible]. (mmm-hmm) He's buried out here on the hill, where my mother and father's buried.

PS: The Workman family...

VW: Well, it's the Workman-Farley cemetery. (Workman-Farley)

PS: I remember going back and forth by there. [PS speaks to someone else in the room] Hi, Freelin, how are you? You wanta help us out? [reply inaudible] I'm asking questions about old times.

VW: He's not much of a talker. [laughter]

PS: Uh...[clears throat] was you living close to family, to your father's family, or your mother's family? In those areas?

VW: I was [inaudible] I was livin' with my in-laws, while he was overseas.

PS: Oh, yeah. I mean, uh, like when you was growin' up, so...there were Workman here, here near Myra?

VW: No.

PS: There weren't any more at that time, even?

VW: No, there wasn't any more. Uh, whenever we moved here in Lincoln County, I think we was the only Workman's. (uh-huh) Here. Down this far.

PS: Oh, so, that cemetary dates from then?

VW: Yeah. See, ah, that cemetary dates about three years after the war ended, and my brother was buried out there.

[inaudible]

PS: Mmm. 19...late 1940's (uh-huh) I see.

VW: He died in, let's see, 40, let's see, it's been 41 years. My daughter was three weeks old. Oh, it's been 40...almost 42 years. She'll be 42 next month. (mmm-hmm) He died when she was three weeks old. (uh-huh).

PS: Now, did you, talkin' about stores again, and uh, produce and trading things, did you take things into uh, stores, like uh, wherever you was living, to get credit to, to get merchandise? (no) Take any of your produce in? (no)

VW: We [both talking at same time-inaudible].

PS: And uh...what kind of experiences did your father have when he was a constable?

VW: Well, that was back hard times. [laughs] (Depression?) Yeah, it was...I gues it was a joyful life. He...he would kill a hog or something like that, and he'd take it to...part of it to the store and trade it for flour, and meal (yeah) and uh, then we'd take eggs to the store and trade it for salt and sugar (yeah) and stuff like that.

PS: So, you did do some of that in...in Logan County?

VW: Yes.

PS: Now, is that on this north side of Logan County? Or...

VW: That's uh, well you go up ah, up to Little Harts; there's a place up Little Hart's in Lincoln County, and then you take off up to the road to the right, as you go up, and it takes you over to Big Hart. And right in the head of Big Hart is mostly where I was raised, and that's where all the Workman's lived. [laughs]

PS: Well, up on the...right side of the Guyan River, as you go...go up the side of Guyan.

VW: Yes. It...back in there, I know of, I can remember back whenever we just had a horse and buggy, [laughs] it seems like I'm awful old, but I'm...I'm not that old. [more laughter]

PS: Well, there really [VW coughs] isolated parts of Wayne County, still where people are self-sufficient, more or less (yeah) still.

VW: Well, sometimes I think you're better off, if you went back to those times, in a way.

PS: Well, you know what you could count on then. (Now you can't) except for these drought years (yeah) [laughter].

VW: Boy, this year's been terrible.

PS: They said this year was...the worst since 1930; I don't know if they still say that after the rain this past...

VW: Uh, it's still; they still say it.

PS: Well, people didn't get much help, I know, like from the Red Cross, cause I looked into that, in 1930, and that winter of 30, 31, you remember that drought at all?

VW: No, I don't say as I can remember much about that drought, cause I was too small, I guess to remember. I can remember the kids...the bigger kids going out and digging

[inaudible-noise in background] and stuff, so that they could get some money to buy stuff with.

PS: Diggin' what?

VW: Diggin' [inaudible] and uh, red root and coon and you know, stuff like that, to just get our clothes with. And I can remember that, but they was a lot older than me. I was the youngest one. [pans rattling in background]

PS: Do you ever remember anything about uh...moonshining, your father, was he ever involved in...making up stills?

VW: No. No. He was kinda involved in some of it, but, not really either, because he was the sheriff and he had to tear up a lot of them stills.

PS: That's what I meant, yeah.

VW: He was involved in the whole lot of it, but you know, bout tearin' up the stills (on the law side) yeah, on the law side. [laughter]

PS: Well, the one thing I've wondered, uh, first they had prohibition during the 20's and right up until 1933, where it was illegal, and I've always wondered if there was more moonshine then, you know, for people making their income that way during the 20's and then if....if it declined and fell off after it was legalized, after liquor was legalized and the new deal started. And I...I don't know how you explain something like that off, you know.

VW: No, but I uh, daddy always talked about it and I think there was more moonshine back then, people, you know, makin' it to sell and stuff. (yeah) I heard one time, that back in those days, it was about 30 cents...30 dollars a gallon (oh, thirty dollars) Yeah [laughing] (that would have been

during prohibition) Yeah, it was during ah, back in the early '30's.

PS: Yeah. Well, maybe they were shipping it out to urban areas. Of course this that they make here is good. I mean, any I ever had, is good. It doesn't...it won't hurt you; it's made around here, I mean, you just assume it's whereas what people was making in the cities, often poisoned people. (yeah, [inaudible]) Because they didn't know how.

VW: I don't drink, or my...my husband, who drinks a beer every once in awhile. But....

PS: No...I'm more or less up, but...but ah,....yeah, cause they were growing so much corn, you know. They'd put corn right up the hill [end of side one-end of interview].