

* This interview contains good information, including a story about Mr. Greene's experience in an accident on the Parkway, when he wrecked the dump truck he was driving.

Tape Index Sheet

General Topic of Interview:

Date: June 20, 1996

Place: Ennice, NC

Length: 65 minutes

Personal Data:

Narrator

Name Harvey Greene

Address Rt. 1, Box 23

Ennice, NC

Birthplace Ennice, NC

Birthdate _____

Occupations(s) Rock Mason,
truck driver, Bridge construction

☒ scanned

☐ returned from interviewee

☐ corrected

☐ final copy sent to interviewee

Interviewer

Name Alicia Gallant

Address 610 F. Clonert St.

Radford, VA 24141

Title: Research Assistant

What was the occasion of the interview?

Oral history interview for
BRP Project

Interview Data:

Side 1

Side 2

Estimated time
on tape:

00

13

16

17

20

25

28

00

04

05

Subjects covered, in approximate order (please
spell out names of persons & places mentioned)

Work done on the Parkway / sections worked

Working with Italians on the Parkway

Army

Employment in the 1930s

Accident on-the-job - wrecked the dump truck

Employment / wages / raises

50th Anniversary Celebration of the Parkway / Discussion of
other local
informants

Personal history / Army

Spare time activities

The Blue Ridge Parkway

Use back of sheet if necessary

Side 2

Time

15

25

28

Subject

Experiences working on the Parkway

Interviewer discusses the Blue Ridge Parkway Project

Feelings of locals towards the Parkway / snakes

Tape 2

00

02

Congressman Doughton

Relationships with co-workers on the Parkway

Names / Places

Allegheny Co, NC

Ashe Co.

Wilkes, NC

Emice, NC

William (Bill) Pruitt

Sparta, NC

Skyline Dr.

Smoky Mountains

Asheville, NC

Laurel Springs, NC

Cherokee, NC

Johnson City

Highway 81

Pigeon Forge

Rt. 21

Ice Rock

Doughton Park

Congressman Doughton

Harvey Greene

INTERVIEW LOG SHEET

Depositor: Alicia Gallant

Permanent address: 7206 Coulking Pl., Burke, VA 22015

Field Work Locations (state and town) Emira, NC

Description of Interviews: Oral History interview for Blue Ridge Parkway project.
Harvey Greene drove a truck on the Parkway during construction.

Tapes (number): 2

Accession number:

Other material donated (specify): -

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Release obtained: yes

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Interview with Mr. Harvey Greene 6/20/96 Ernice, N.C.
(Interviewed by Alicia Gallant)

TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE

HG: And I guess there was 50, wanting the job, and they hired about a dozen, but I was one that didn't get a job. (Laughs) And a little later, the dirt moving, when they come in and started doing that, I got a job in that. (Indistinguishable). About a year. Have you ever traveled the Parkway, from 18 across 21?

AG: Yes.

HG: You know that, the bridges, that down both sides of the mountain to Cherokee. I believe there are seven bridges there. And I worked anywhere from the Virginia Line to 18. Laurel Springs. And then I quit working on the Parkway, I worked at what was that, Cumberland Knob, that part. I worked there over a year. And then when that was completed, I went to Doughton Park, worked up there two and a half years, I guess it was. I worked at the Parkway in two parts. Total of two times in six years. (Indistinguishable).

AG: Now, what year was it when you started? What year was it?

HG: (Pause) I guess... Well, actually, '35, when I first started. '36. I believe it was '36, I believe. Spring. It wasn't the Summer when I first started. And I believe that was in '36. Might've been '35. 60 years is a long time, I can't remember. I enjoyed it all. Had it rough, sometimes, you know.

AG: When you were at um, Cumberland Knob, what was your job there?

HG: Well, just mostly doing anything there was to do. Rock masonry. You ever been up to the concession (indistinguishable) on Flagstone Mountain?

AG: M-hm.

HG: I helped with that.

AG: Oh, really?

HG: Yeah. There are three large ones outside. One's up at Cumberland Knob. I don't know whether you've seen 'em or not. One points to Pilot Mountain. And one to Pisgah Peak. And about so large, and Cumberland Knob's cut on one, and Pilot Mountain one and Pisgah Peak is another. Took a hammer and chisel and cut (indistinguishable) There's an arrow pointin' in the direction. I done that. (Indistinguishable) in the pine trees. There was, I believe, all kinds of things out there like that. Helped build them furnaces on the picnic land.

AG: The furnaces?

HG: Uh-huh. Fireplaces, or what you call them. I helped build them. At Cumberland Knob. Doughton Park, too. When I started at Doughton Park, it was in August. August, September. And the first work there was, to go up there was clean out all the dead timber, stumps, and everything out of the woods. Get, do away with everything. Well, we'd meet back at the shop in the evening after the work day, and then we'd come home. This boss would say, "Well, we killed so many rattlesnakes today. We killed so many copperheads today." I decided that was no place to be, up in them woods, you know. I quit. And after it got cool enough that Fall, the snakes wouldn't bother us. So I went back. And I worked there until it was complete. (Indistinguishable) I was a rock mason up there. And a truck driver. Anything that come up on the Parkway.

AG: So at the parks, were you all building the whole, you know, all the structures and everything that was there? Um--

HG: You mean the, I don't understand just what you're asking.

AG: Um, like uh, the concessions, and all that. Like all the buildings. Were people out there actually building buildings?

HG: M-hm. Well, when I started, there wasn't anything. There was a coffee-shop, they called it. Something that was built after I quit, (indistinguishable). Well, it was, all that siding was completed, but I didn't help with that. I didn't have anything to do with that. I just was in the part that they called the cat walk, water tank. I helped do plumbin' with that. We were building roads, trails, puttin' topsoil on the banks, settin' shrubbery. Anything.

AG: Do you have a favorite story, from that time?

HG: A what?

AG: A favorite story about something that happened then?

HG: Well, not particularly. Um, I know, one morning, well I, I got sick on Friday, and sick all over the weekend, and come Monday morning, I thought I had to go to work. It was in the Winter. I don't know what the temperature was here, about probably 15, 18 degrees. It was always about ten degrees colder up in Doughton Park than it was here. It was higher up there. Well, I went on to work, rode the back of the truck up there. Got there and stuck with it most of the day. I caught me a ride back out here, it was about three miles, back to the camp. And I walked on in. Now, I can't believe I did it. Next day, it got worse, and the doctor had to give me pills. I had it, I'd been sick three or four days, but still, I thought I had it beat. But I come in, and I was out two weeks. Till I come back. I went in there, one time, I drove a pick-up, back and forth, all the men, the last year or two I worked up there. I turned it over here about a mile (indistinguishable). We all got out except two men, . They just put gravel on this road through here and it was loose on a curve, and it was just about dark. Nothin' to it. And I remember I hit the brakes, tapped the brakes, and hit the bank, and tipped over. It didn't hurt nobody. Broke the mirror off the side of the pick-up, the side that got hit. That was on Friday evenin'. On Monday mornin', I went back in, at the office, and told the Superintendent. Boy did he get mad. I said, "I turned the pick-up over, Friday evenin'." "Did anybody get hurt?" I said, "No." Well, I got him convinced that everything was all right, and I went out to work. And he come and got me and brought me to Cumberland Knob. And I sat there, and I signed my name and address on 14 different sheets of blank paper. I didn't know why I had to sign 14 or 'em. I thought they was gonna send me to prison. (Laughs) I had But it was all just routine, by that time. After that day, I never heard him say anything about it. They had a lot of other things happen. Like I said, we had it rough. Hard work. You know. (Indistinguishable). Back then, we didn't go out here at a job and make 6 or 8, 10 dollars an hour. You get a job at the Parkway, started working on this, that you could get a job for more than 10 cents an hour. They started me at 30 cents an hour, and that was, that was something else, to go from 10 cents an hour to 30. (Laughs)

AG: Yeah, I bet.

HG: I remember, to the top it was about two miles, and at the Parkway, we'd be workin' six-hour shifts, two six-hour shifts. You know, my shift was from six to twelve. His was too, when he got his job, they told me, I don't know whether it's true or not, but he stayed up all night, so he would be up in time to go to work. (Laughs) he stayed up all night. I think, that's what they said. But when 12:00 come, you handed your pick, shovel, what you had, over to the other fellow. And he took over at twelve. And he worked till 6 in the evening, two six-hour shifts. Never stopped. Nobody, I mean, you never missed a lick, hardly, with the shovels. And I knew another

HG: (Continued) feller, he went to work for it, Tom Anderson. And I remember, we were on the side of Mount Cherokee there. I was workin' with Nello Teer. When he got the first contract gradin' (indistinguishable) ditches. It was Winter, 15, 18 degrees out there. (Indistinguishable) And we didn't have no boots. None of us did. We wasn't expecting to be in mud up so deep. And it was cold. And the fellow there across the road from where we was a-workin' there, he'd come up there and stand there watchin' us. He said, "Boys, I see every one of 'em workin' in that mud and water as cold as it is with no boots." I told him, I said, "If it don't kill me today, it won't kill me, 'cause I'm not comin' back." And I did. I didn't go back to the grade work. Went back to the bridge work from that. Worked for a bunch of Italians. Doin' stone wall abutments for the bridge, settin' on the four corners. And I enjoyed it after I got used to him. To start with, I couldn't understand. He couldn't speak too well, English, couldn't understand him all the time. But after I got used to him, I knew what he was saying, and I didn't even (indistinguishable). I liked workin' with him. He gave me several hours rock work, two or three hours on a Saturday morning to finish up my job. And he gave me a full day pay. And that was something else. That was good work after I got used to them.

AG: Who were you working for, at that point?

HG: Well, I was, whoever had the contract for building the bridge. I don't remember who it was. It was Italians, though, they come in here. They done all the rock work. They hired two or three AMericans. And I was workin' on it. They didn't-- they couldn't do the work like the Italians, the Italians do it. I just don't remember who it was that had that contract for the bridge. Maybe just the foremans, the Italians. But Nello Teer had the grading contract. I remember one day, on Number Seven Bridge, on down the side of the mountain, I was up high, 15, 18 feet from the bottom, and down here from the top, we had a chute built out of concrete. You could roll the wheelbarrow down that chute, just down to where the masons were working. And if you were able to balance on concrete in that, and basically turn loose with the wheelbarrow, you might live. Came to me and I went down there, and hit him, and I thought it was gonna kill him, but it didn't. He got up and went right back to work. (Laughs) Somethin' else. That's hard, I don't remember who had the contract. Well, I was about 20, 21 years old when I started workin' on it. 22 maybe. And I remember, we stayed, they were workin' on the Park, Doughton Park, a short time after that. They called me up for military duty. I was farmin' then, Daddy's place, and milkin' cows, and made, we'd make so many points farming. You know, you'd get deferred, wouldn't have to go. But I had to go in eventually. (Indistinguishable) Had a lot of, a lot of good friends, grew up with, people I knew, I worked with 'em, you know. (Indistinguishable). They wasn't hard on us, the work, who we were workin' under. But it would just, more or less, give people work anyhow, you know? The first drive, after you enter Doughton Park, turn up from this way, turning off on your right. And just around down the side of the Parkway, we sloped the same bank, we were doing it by hand, and we sloped the same bank, at least three or four times. We'd get it completed. And then the inspection people would say, "No, it's not right, it has to be like this." And when we quit it, we had it back to the same shape we had it to start with. Come to find out, they had so much money. And you know, they wanted to spend it. If they didn't spend it, they had to turn it back in. (Indistinguishable).

AG: Did they ever hire extra people because of that?

HG: Oh, I don't know how many there was, workin' along. 'Cause it varied, from time to time. On the Doughton Park, we had people from Alleghany. Wilkes, Ashe, Cherry. All the men at that time, they would more or less go along the Parkway, get the parks built. But it was more to give people work, I think, than anything else. You see, back in the '30s, we didn't have jobs. There just wasn't much work to go around. Not in this country. And about everybody was like me, they needed to work. I hadn't been married but just a short time when I started. Maybe six months, or a year, or something like that. (Indistinguishable).

AG: Did they provide any housing for you all?

HG: No. They brought us back and forth to work to start with. They had trucks, and they'd load 20 to 25 men. And the last year or two that I worked, (indistinguishable) they had employees to pick up the men. I told you about the pick-up that turned over. I'd haul 'em back and forth. And it was just (indistinguishable). The back had a shell, covered over the back there, and he just, I don't know, (indistinguishable) and that top went off there, and rolled down the hill. If there'd been somebody back there, they'd have got hurt. But it didn't hurt anybody that I could see.

AG: How did you get the pick-up back up again?

HG: Well, the fellow that I was meetin', (indistinguishable) I hit the brakes, and (indistinguishable) his vehicle. And there was two of them, and there was three of us. So, it was just turned over on its side. We just turned it back on its wheels. And the pick-up just had a, some kind of old tin car, or can of something, some scrap for the gas-cap. And it come off turning over on that side, and all the gas run out. When we got it turned back on its wheels, it couldn't go anywhere. The gas, the fellow we were meetin', went to the gas station, on the way, he was starting home. And he went up there and got a can of gas. Which was enough for us to get back on the job. That kind of thing. It scared me to start with, that's the only time I ever turned over. And it was (indistinguishable) dirt, behind us, you know, and it turned over on my side. And these other few fellows, they were down on the floor mat, you know, there was dirt in the mat, it got in their eyes. It was a mess. But I was pleased nobody got hurt, because if somebody would've got hurt, I might've been in trouble.

AG: Yeah. Did you drive the pick-up any more after that?

HG: Yes. I was going to quit the next week, I remember the job was just about over anyhow, and I'd said to myself, "If I quit, in a few days or a week, they might think there was something wrong." That I was quittin' to get out of there. And I didn't think much about it. (Indistinguishable) In a way, I kind of hated to see it over with. 'Cause I liked it. Like everything else, it was (indistinguishable).

AG: Was it hard to find another job? As you moved from different jobs on the Parkway?

HG: Oh, no. Most of the time when I was doin' a job, I would have another job in a day or two. If you needed work, you could get a job (indistinguishable) it would keep goin' up. It was 30 cents an hour, was the common labor pay. I got a raise twice. Or three times. Anyhow, up to 43. I mean, 43 cents an hour, which was right up there. (Indistinguishable) I got a job, a raise, when I was layin' rock, it went from 30 to 35 cents an hour doin' that. And later when I was doin' some carpentry work, it went to 40 cents an hour. And it wasn't long before I quit, I got another raise, 3 cents an hour, makin' 43 cents an hour. And that was big money at that time. But it's all a long time behind, now. Well, it's been 60 years, really. 60 or

HG: (Continued) 61 years since I started. How-- I don't know whether I'm supposed to ask you or not, but, how'd they get my name and address for this?

AG: From my supervisor, Jackie Holt. She gave me a list or people. There was a, I guess, a thing published in the newspaper, about the Blue Ridge Parkway project we're doing. And it was my understanding that everybody on the list had responded to that ad. But um, I know that she sent letters to a bunch of people, so... Do you remember seeing the newspaper?

HG: No. What I had in mind was you got it from when they had the 50th anniversary. That's been, I believe, the 50th. Out here at Cumberland Knob. They had a big to-do out there. They wanted everybody that worked on the Parkway to sign their name and address. And I figured that was where you got it from.

AG: Oh, it might have been. Because somebody else told me they had been at that same thing. And I guess she must've gotten them from there. I'm not sure.

HG: Well, most of the employers had my name and address, so I didn't think nothin' about it at the time. 'Cause everyone that worked on the parks and the Parkway was on the Register. Which I did, and I didn't think anything about it 'till I heard about this, and I wondered where in the world did they know how to get ahold of me. I registered up there at Cumberland Knob. That's, that was the 50th, 50th anniversary, I believe, that they started work up there on the Parkway. It must have been-- (indistinguishable) have they got, do you have anybody else's name? In this section that worked on it?

AG: Um, William Pruitt? Do you know him? He lives off of Glade Valley Road.

HG: Yeah, Bill. They always called him Bill.

AG: Yeah. I interviewed him on Friday. And, um, gosh, who else this week? There's several people in Sparta, and several people in Laurel Springs. I can show you the list, a couple of them.

HG: Well I, I forgot about Bill Pruitt. After I told somebody, I found out that you were doin' this, that I couldn't think of anybody else in the Glade Creek Section that was still livin' that worked up there. 'Course he worked on the Parkway long after-- I don't believe he worked there while I was there. I think it was later. He worked on the maintenance crew. I don't believe he worked at the time while I was there. I'm pretty sure he didn't. It's not been too many years since he retired. (END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE)

TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO

HG: ...on that bridge crew. On the abutments. And I worked with them, and I've been livin' here all my life. I was lucky, I guess, to get anything.

AG: I guess so.

HG: (Indistinguishable) be 83 years old.

AG: Were you born here, in this area?

HG: M-hm. Born in the second house on the left, down here.

AG: Really?

HG: Yep. Where I never lived anywhere, except Alleghany County. I survived 82 years, I guess I can't live longer than everyone. Have you interviewed Bill Pruitt?

AG: Yes. Yes, I talked to him last week. On Friday.

HG: I've not seen him in, I don't know how long. I don't think I've ever seen him since he retired. I didn't retire when he did.

AG: You left for, um, to go into the army? Is that why you left?

HG: Oh no. No, that was long after I quit working. Was a long time (indistinguishable) in '80, '84, (indistinguishable) and I stayed out, I don't know, over a year, I guess. And every three months, you know, we'd have to re-classify. They'd reclassify the Parks, they'd classify you at 1A, well, you'd go in the service, see, and I'd been back, and I'd windup again, I'd get a 4L card, deferred. And I got that regularly. Every 15, 18 months. I told 'em, (indistinguishable) I said, I'm gettin' called this, I said, "I'm gonna go in." (Indistinguishable) 30, 60 days. I went to the office at Sparta, had to get there at 6:00. Got up there and went to the office. And I was only 26 years old. (Indistinguishable) Then when I was almost 28, I thought I had to go. And I thought (indistinguishable) leaving town. I thought I had to go. (Indistinguishable) my wife. Seventh of July. Seventh of next month. (Indistinguishable) We had a, we had a 66th year, we had a good time. We had a hard time. You're too young. (Laughs) You married?

AG: Not yet, no.

HG: Won't be long, though.

AG: Yeah. Won't be. (Laughs) What kinds of things did you do in your spare time? When you were working on the Parkway?

HG: When we wasn't workin'?

AG: Yeah.

HG: Farmin', cuttin' wood. Any, most anything that come around. I done a little of everything. I liked carpentry work. Off and on, several years of that, 'till I got to where I couldn't work. (Indistinguishable). Just survivin', that's it. (Laughs) I've had some hard times, in my life, and I've had some good times. Mostly the good times are what I want to be passin' on.

AG: What do you think about the Blue Ridge Parkway today?

HG: Oh, it's wonderful. It's wonderful. It's the most beautiful road, I've traveled a lot of Interstate, and I love comin' through the Parkway. I like to go down, (indistinguishable)

AG: Skyline Drive?

HG: We start along Virginia. Anyhow, about 69, been over down the mountain, and I been over 18, and up Shenandoah Mountain, been up that way a lot of times. On the Parkway, dozens of times a year. But I never have been all the way to the end. I intended to go to the end of the Parkway down in Virginia. But I never have made it. Been down, what's that, Peaks of Otter? I've been down that part before, and I've been all the way to the Smokey Mountains. You ever been up, traveled from here up to the Smokey Mountains?

AG: No, not all the way. No, I'd like to. I've never been, um, that far down South on the Parkway before.

HG: Well, I want you to go.

AG: I'd like to.

HG: Travel and see what's up there, around where it goes up to Asheville, up there in the mountains. Unless it's changed since the last time I was up there, it's, I don't know, it must be a 15 or 20 mile section, passing Asheville, that you don't see a house or building, no kind. Just the mountains, that's it. You can look off, and for miles (indistinguishable) And there's lots of tunnels. It's interesting. Some people don't like the traffic, but I do. They say you can't make no time at 45 speed limits you know. But I tell them, "You're makin' the trip up on the Parkway, that's a good time to (indistinguishable) the State Highway." You can run 50, all right, and not get pulled over, and you got no stops to make, don't make a stop from one end to the other. It's a steady drive. (Indistinguishable).

HG: (Continued) It's a beautiful road, and in the Fall of the year, long about October, the leaves and colors and everything, it is beautiful. I wish it was so I could take you up there in the Smokey mountains sometime. (Laughs)

AG: I'd like that. (Laughs)

HG: Well, the Parkway isn't too far from where you live. It's a beautiful road. Back down to the flat country, you know, (indistinguishable) it's nothing to the mountains. I like the mountains.

AG: When were you last on the Parkway?

HG: When?

AG: M-hm.

HG: You mean, when was the last time I was on it?

AG: Yeah.

HG: Oh, several times a year. I go up-- I hardly ever go any farther than Laurel Springs, unless I'm goin' up to Asheville and the Smokies. Used to be I'd go up to around Cherokee and the Smokey Mountains every year. It would take a long time, I quit that. I want to go back. I put it off too long, I want to go back sometime. Down around Cherokee, and Pigeon Forge, and Gatlinburg. It's been, let's see, it's been about four or five years since I was up in that part. My nephew, the one up, I had a cousin that was sick, back up there, the one up close to Johnson City, Tennessee. I been up there to visit him. And we come back out there on 81, and he said, "Let's go up on the mountain." I said, "It's too late, it's already 5:00. Too late." Well, we come out and start down this way, you come down four or five miles, comin' down. And I said, "Let's go up the mountain before we go home." And my daughter was standin' with me here at that time. And I says, "Mary, (indistinguishable)." We did. And we went on up through Gatlinburg, and Pigeon Forge, and Cherokee, and Asheville, and Station. But then, we got in, I don't know, about two or three o'clock the next morning. Longest we stopped was to eat supper and (indistinguishable). And that's the only time we stopped, except to get gas. Probably gone 600 miles, before we were done.

AG: Wow.

HG: But that's the last time I been on the Parkway for a while. It's been about five years, I guess. But I'm on the Parkway from, oh, down in Virginia, way back up through Laurel Springs, oh, I don't know. (Indistinguishable) But I really like to travel it. There's so much scenery.

AG: What's your favorite part?

HG: Hm?

AG: Do you have a favorite section? Of the Parkway?

HG: I guess. (Laughs) But uh, when I think about going back, there's a whole lot I think of. Which I done thought more about it since I've been sitting here talking to you than I had in a long time. And this part out here, it's uh, there's 1000 acres of land. And 7000 I believe, in Doughton Park. I been over all the big parks on the Parkway too. I've been there last year. Still, I'd like to go back there in the mountains, the Smokies, again. And I'd like to go the Southern way. We used to have what they called down there (indistinguishable) But to where traveleing is satisfaction in itself.

AG: What did you like best about your experiences on the Parkway? Working on it?

HG: What did I like?

AG: The best.

AG: Good question. (Laughs) I know, one morning, I didn't like it too well. I was goin' up on the side of the mountain, where you get to 21. We were building a bridge out there, and it was cold. And my foot slipped off a

HG: (Continued) rock, in the water, and I went about so deep. And it was really cold. We had a fire built up there where the men were working. And the boss said, "Go up there and take your shoes off, and stand by the fire and dry your socks and your shoes out, and before they freeze off." Well, I went up there, they dried out. But a lot of things I liked more than I disliked. There was always some-- it ain't all fun. There's always something. But uh, I thought the work, I didn't know I'd be building the Parkway, and the parks. I never thought about ever learning about the buildings all the way through. I knowed they was building the road, and (indistinguishable) I was reading something in the paper about the Parkway not too long ago. Said it was the most beautiful Parkway in the United States, I believe, somehow that was nice that I helped build that.

AG: Do you remember the first time that you saw it, after it was finished?

HG: Well, not altogether, but-- you mean all the way through?

AG: M-hm.

HG: Or just down here? The part I was talkin' about, back past Asheville. I hadn't been over it in ten years, since the first time I ever went on it. 12 years, since the first time I was ever on that part of it. But all the rest of it, I been over it for a long, long time. I don't remember when the first time I was ever up through in that country. Several years back, but I just don't remember just how long it's been. My brother and his wife, and my wife and me, used to go up together several different years, and spend about three days, ride around Cherokee. My brother, he liked to go up there too. He'd talk about goin' to the beach, but (indistinguishable). I've not been up there in a long time. Not since the day he died. We'd be gone about four days, most of the time. And we'd travel most of the time and go around seein' different things. We'd spend the night in a motel over this side of Cherokee, we spent several nights in it. In the day time we'd take our gas bottle. We had two bottles of it. I'd fill it up, we'd take it, and stop on the side of the road for pictures, lunch, you know. You ever been down to the Ice Rock up here?

AG: M-hm.

HG: That's (indistinguishable) rock, it's close to building the roads. How far have you been on it?

AG: Um, that's about as far as I've been.

HG: Yeah?

AG: Yeah, I've been up a lot more on the Northern end. Um, I've been through the Shenandoah and Skyline Drive, and right through past the Virginia line, on, I guess, do you know where Floyd, Virginia is? I been up through Floyd, down this way a lot.

HG: I've got a granddaughter livin' close to Floyd, now. (Pause) Well, before you get too old to enjoy it, travel the whole section. If you're afraid to travel it yourself, get someone to go with you. I promise you, you'll enjoy it.

AG: I'm sure I will. (Laughs)

HG: I believe it's not too far from 69, I believe, going this way. Coming to Doughton Park. I believe it's 260. Out of Shenandoah Park, up to the Great Smokey Park. I wish I could go over the whole thing once a month. I don't believe I'd ever get tired of it. (Pause) How long you been doing this kind of... work?

AG: Um, I started in the beginning of June.

HG: You're new at it.

AG: Yeah. This project is.

HG: Well, have you got a lot more of it to do? I'll interview you for a minute.

AG: (Laughs) I'm about halfway through. (Indistinguishable).

HG: You got quite a bit more to do?

AG: I'm pretty much, I'm almost done. I have um, another interview down in Laurel Ridge today. And I have somebody else up in Sparta. And unless, um, you can think of anybody else, or any of those people can, I'm pretty much done.

HG: If you were to come to me first, and ask me who you could go to, talk to, somebody else that worked out there, I wouldn't know. (Indistinguishable) I forgot all about Bill. 'Cause I only worked with him (indistinguishable). But he worked, he did maintenance work on the Parkway. Most of 'em's done and gone, that worked on the Parkway. I remember when they were building that road, some people had doubts. That was when they started. Let me see, it was '35 or '36, when it started, and World War Two started in '41. It was only about five or six years before the War started. And they done already talkin', some people'd say, "They're building this for the War purposes. To move war equipment on it." They wanted all they could get to come see it. They didn't want a tree to run out on the road, or anything cut. They wanted it to look like it was visited. And they'd say it was there for war material. It was built a lot better than State roads in our day. I mean, thicker base on it, so it wouldn't ever, shouldn't ever give way. They didn't say it was built just to travel on, they were buildin' it for the war materials. (Laughs)

AG: Were the people um--

HG: They were (indistinguishable). I don't think there'll ever be any war material, machinery, equipment, moved on it. Could be. I doubt it.

AG: Did they have good feelings towards the road, or were they--

HG: Yeah. Yeah. (Pause) We had to kill a lot of rattlesnakes, copperheads, like that out there.

AG: Seems like there was a lot of 'em out there.

HG: Yeah. There used to be all kinds of-- in this section out here, for two or three miles there. I've been to Laurel Gap and come back in, and my wife and kids had never seen a live rattlesnake, and there was one that crossed the Parkway. It was layin' out on the Parkway, and I pulled up on the (indistinguishable) and I was gonna tie it, you know, and bring it home to my wife. And when I got out, there was about that much of his head part was loose. I was going to try and tie that, and I was afraid it would try to get off somewhere else. So I took the tire to it and killed it. And put it in the back of the pick-up and rode home. Well, when the word up on Doughton Park (indistinguishable) outside, and I had fresh dirt, (indistinguishable) fixing the grass, and I cut me a fork in a stick, stepped down over like that, up behind its head, and held it. (Indistinguishable) strings out of his shoes, and tied it, and we took it into the office, and they had one there in a cage, and he put it in there with that one. About three or four days, I don't know whether it killed the other one or not. 'Cause I never (indistinguishable).

AG: I don't think I'd wanta mess with one. (Laughs)

HG: But there was plenty of 'em up there.

AG: Did anyone ever get bitten by one, while you were working?

HG: Hm?

AG: Did anyone ever get bitten by one while you were working?

HG: Don't think so. Not that I can remember. I don't know why they didn't. But now they're (indistinguishable).

AG: Were there ever any things like forest fires, while you were there?

HG: M-mm.

AG: No? Did anyone famous ever visit the construction sites? Like Senators, or Congressmen?

HG: Hm?

AG: Anyone famous ever visit while you were building it?

HG: Mmm, you mean, it was uh, oh, they had the Senator Doughton, they named the Park after. That's where Doughton Park got its name, Congressman Doughton. I don't know if you heard of him or not. He was from Laurel Springs. He was a Congressman. And he was the one who got, Congressman Doughton got it to come through Alleghany County. That's what they told us, anyway. He had a big pull in Congress, at that time, and that's where the park got its name, that Doughton Park.

AG: Did he ever come visit there while you were there?

HG: Well, if he ever did, I didn't know it. I didn't see him. I guess, of course, he did go up to Doughton Park. I don't know. (END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE)

TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE

HG: What they called Bed and Breakfast places, you know. (Indistinguishable) he was born and raised and lived there all his life, except for the time he was in Washington. He was, he was, well, he was for building the Parkway all the way through, try to get it to come through Alleghany county. (Coughs)

AG: Is that house, is that the big white house? Off the road?

HG: M-hm. Yep. Now, well, it's just a little ways, it's not right on the road, it's a ways off. You go back through there, just after you pass the Laurel Springs Post Office, Route 88, I believe it is. Turns right there, you just have to pass that and go to your right, and it's a hundred or two yards from the road. The houses were kind of run down before these people bought it. I've never been in it. But they say they've got it fixed up real nice. Spent a lot of money on it. I reckon it's still one of the Bed and Breakfasts, (indistinguishable) yeah, I know Congressman Doughton (indistinguishable) 25, 30 years. They gave him credit for the road, I guess, he had somethin' to do with buildin' it. 'Course, I don't know which way it would've went if it hadn't come through where it did. But they said he worked for it to come through Alleghany County. He brought a lot of work into the County. On the road and in the parks and on the maintenance crews and everything. It's been good for the county.

AG: I've heard stories of people going to work, um, when they were working, and there would be people, kind of, waiting inside, in case anybody was fired, or quit, or anything. Did you ever see anything like that?

HG: No, I can't remember anybody ever gettin' fired. Lot of people I worked with quit. I don't know, I guess I was (indistinguishable) I started, when they first started, and worked through to Doughton Park, about, somewhere around five or six years. And I worked (indistinguishable). (Pause)

AG: Did you um, ever get together with your friends that you met there, outside of work?

HG: No. (Indistinguishable) Some of them I'd never seen before I went up there, and never seen since. We had people from Ashe County and Alleghany, and Wilkes, and I worked with 'em. But as far as goin' before and afterward, (indistinguishable). I'd like to, I'd like to be able to visit every one that's still alive, and talk to them, and everything. Bill out here is the closest one, I guess, that's still alive, and I don't ever see him. I

HG: (Continued) don't ever go out there, and he don't ever come over here. I haven't seen Bill in a long time. I don't know whether-- how his health is, whether he can get out and go anywhere. What kind of condition he's in. I know I had an uncle who worked with the maintenance crew. Out there for a long time on the Parkway. You was talkin' about snakes a while ago, he pulled a snake off the side of a wall, a rock wall. This old vine stuff would build up, you know? And he was there pullin' that off, and he pulled a rattlesnake with him. It climbed in there, got in there in the shade or somethin', I don't know what. But he didn't get bit. (Laughs)
(Pause)

AG: That's good. (Laughs)

HG: Well, I'd like to have a record of the whole thing, from the time they started to all the way through, and have it down on paper. That I can read over. Because there was so much a lot of stuff that I didn't even know about. Back then, they didn't know so much about it, like they do now. (Pause)

AG: Can you think of anything else, that I should know?

HG: No. I think I've said too much. I think there's nothin' else worth talkin' about. (END OF INTERVIEW)