

* The 1st side of this interview has a lot of valuable info. However, sides 2 & 3 contain irrelevant information, as Mr. Turner ~~wasn't~~ seemed more interested in discussing his early years on the farm, & playing basketball in high school more than his work on the Parkway. The 1st side & parts of sides 2 & 3 are worth transcribing despite this.

Tape Index Sheet

General Topic of Interview: Construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway

Date: July 11, 1996
 Place: Tratville, VA
 Length: 90 minutes

- scanned
- returned from interviewee
- corrected
- final copy sent to interviewee

Personal Data:

Narrator
 Name Bernard A. Turner
 Address 1525 Trinity Rd.
Tratville, VA 24175

Interviewer
 Name Alicia Gallant
 Address 610 Clement St.
Radford, VA 24141

Birthplace Herry County, VA (Sandville)
 Birthdate July 25, 1915
 Occupations (s) Driver truck,
lay rock for the Lambert Bros.,
district manager for insurance company
manager of grocery store, Surveyor, etc

Title: Research Assistant
 What was the occasion of the interview?
Oral history interview for Blue Ridge Parkway Project

Interview Data:

Side 1

Side 2

Estimated time on tape:

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

00

History of employment ~~on~~ on the Blue Ridge Parkway sections worked/employers

03

The boarding house Mr. Turner stayed at while working ^{stayed with the Terry family}

07

story about getting to work in the winter, just to earn money

10

working for the Lambert Bros. on the Parkway

12

Daily life in the ~~the~~ Terry household

16

Working on the Parkway - stories about on-the-job experiences

Side 2

00

Mrs. Turner asks the interviewer questions about home, school

03

Employment following the work on the Parkway - insurance co.

06

Education

Use back of sheet if necessary

Time on tape

Subjects

Family background

- 10
- 16
- 19
- 25

Family background - Loeing Lorse on the farm
 Daily life in the boarding house
 Farming / surveying job
 hunting

Tape # 2

- 00
- 02
- 10
- 14
- 17
- 20
- 22
- 23
- 25
- 27

Fairy Stone Nat. Park
 Leisure activities while working on the Parkway
 the Boarding House / Leisure activities
 The Army / WWII
 jobs following the Parkway work
 The Army
 Mrs. Turner speaks about meeting / marrying her husband /
 her family
 Dislikes about Parkway work
 Events (or lack of) taking place during Parkway work
 (building a dam at Kible, VA at the same time)
 Feelings of community members towards Parkway

Dates

- July 25, 1915 - Born
- 1936 - Went to work for the Lambert Brothers on the Parkway @ Meadows of Dan (worked for 6 months)
- June 5, 1941 - Got married

Names / Places

- Meadows of Dan (NC state line to Meadows of Dan was the section Mr. Turner worked on the Parkway)
- Lambert Brothers - contracting firm
- Mabry Mill
- Tom Terry - Husband of the family Mr. Turner boarded with while working on the Parkway
- Stella, VA - hometown
- Patrick Springs, VA
- Norfolk, VA
- Stuart, VA
- Mt. Airy, NC
- "The Yates Girl" - girlfriend while working on the Parkway
- Eileen

I

RECEIVED
BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY
1976 APR 23 AM 8:52
HEADQUARTERS OFFICE
ASHEVILLE, NC

Bernard A. Turner
1525 Trinity Road
Troutville, Va 24175
Phone
1-540-992-2660

Jackie Holt
Blue Ridge Parkway
466 BBT Bldg - Park Square
Asheville, N.C.

Dear Jackie

A few weeks ago you had an ad. in the
Fincastle Herald, Fincastle Va. Searching for farmer
employees of the parkway.

I have tried to contact you by phone three
times, but you were away at the time.

In the winter ~~and~~ fall of 1936 I drove a
dump truck, spreading the base rock for the
Road, with Lambert Brothers Contractors, Knoxville, TN,
They had a contract ^(Meadows of Dan, Va) of 13 miles from the NC
line into Va. They had worked about one year
crushing rock, there was enough crushed rock in
one rock pile ^{of} ~~to~~ more than the 13 miles, so they
got an extension for a few miles that extended
past the famous Mabery Mill, about a quarter mi.

It was 60 years ago I was then 21. I will
be 81 July 25th.

The driver and dump truck was paid \$1.00 an hour. Gasoline was about 15¢ gal. We bought our gas from Mr Dump Yeats at Mayberry near the parkway, a combination store & gas. Sometime as many as twenty four trucks were working.

I lived at Patrick Springs (Rt 1) Va. with my parents about 50 miles from the work.

I boarded at Mr & Mrs Tom Terry at Mayberry Va. Near the work. They had 10 boys & one girl. The girl and one boy was married at the time.

They charged me 25¢ for each meal and this included the bed room free.

We had some days work, due to ice and snow, but some of those days I would make some trips to Stuart, Va. to maintain me, for supplies etc.

I enjoyed the work, and it was a pleasure to work for Lombert Brothers.

Trusting this will give you some information and help for the survey.

Sincerely

Bernard A. Turner

PS

I shall be pleased to talk with you, if I can be of further help.

Interview with Mr. Bernard A. Turner 7/11/96 Troutville, VA

(Interviewed by Alicia Gallant)

TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE

AG: OK, Um, when were you born?

BT: I was born in Henry County, Virginia. Post Office box Sandville. Which doesn't exist anymore, long time gone?

AG: When?

BT: July the 25th, 1915.

AG: Um, how did you get involved with the Parkway, originally?

BT: Well that's an interesting story. I went to Hardin Reynolds Memorial High School, and at that time, it was what they referred to as a boarding school. They had girl's dormitories there, boy's dormitories. And one of the girls from Meadows of Dan, was in my graduation class. And after school was finished and all, she learned that I was drivin' a dump truck some. And she wrote me a letter, and told me if I'd come up there, they'd give me a job. So, I went up there, and soon as I got there, they loaded my truck, and when I came out of the office where we signed up for it, the truck was already loaded. I worked for, about six months, I guess, maybe seven.

AG: Uh, and how old were you, when you were first starting?

BT: I was, I was 21 years old.

AG: Urn, and what section of the Parkway were you working on?

BT: It is the Meadows of Dan area, between the North Carolina line, and Meadows of Dan in Virginia. I worked for the Lambert Brothers Construction Company. And they had a contract from the government, from the North Carolina line into Virginia. 13 miles. They had enough rock that they crushed in one rock pile, to put the base rock on that road for more than 13 miles. So, when they found out they had some more, they asked for an additional extension on the contract so they gave it to 'em, to use up the gravel. That they'd crushed down. And it came by the famous Mabry Mill. Maybe you've heard of that. I helped them lay the rock, gravel, right along in front of that Mill. Which is a few, just a short distance from the Meadows of Dan Post Office. And, we worked through the winter months. I had an interesting boarding place. I went and worked that day and didn't have anywhere to stay that night. So after we got off, I began to drive up and down the road, thought maybe I'd have to come back to Stuart till somebody get a place to stay the night. At the same time, they were workin' on the dam that they were building for Danville, there in the mountains. And every bed there was available for rent, was filled up, just about. So I saw this fella, that I was, he was workin' with a shovel, spreading the gravel, from the trucks where they piled it up. And I looked him up and asked him if he wanted a ride, and he said, "Yeah." And then I told him my story. And he said, "The only place I know of is my daddy. He's got a vacant bed." But he said, "I'm gonna tell you, he's real feisty 'about who stays there." But he said, "It's gettin' late, and he said, "Chances are you can stay there tonight." So, I rode that truck up there, was already dark. And I made a big noise with it, turning around and all so they'd know somebody's out there. Here come a young fellow about my age, I guess, and I told him my story. He said, "Well, you can stay here tonight," he didn't even ask his parents. He said, "You can stay here tonight, I know. 'Cause there's nowhere else to go." I went in there, and they was lined up around the house. There was 'leven, ten boys and one girl in that family. Well, we talked a little and he said, "Now, I'll tell ya. We have Some rules here. You can see, if I didn't have any rules, my wife, they'd run her crazy in three months. And the boys do what I tell 'em. And anybody that stays here, will have to do what I tell 'em." He said, "We get

BT: (Continued) up and we eat breakfast every morning, six o'clock. And if you don't eat at six o'clock, you don't eat, in this house." Well, it turned out, and he said, "If you ever come in with any liquor on your breath, you can't stay even that night. I'll make you leave," And that suited me fine, because I didn't drink anything. And so, to make a long story short, he told me that "Now we have had some fellows here before, and I had to get rid of 'em. Not even my own boys can come home drinking." And he said, "If you stay here, the way we'll charge you, we'll keep up with every meal you eat. We'll charge you twenty-five cents for every one. And we'll give you the bedroom. So, he said, "If you don't eat a meal here, then you won't have to pay the twenty five cents." There were some occasions where I would take trips, unbenowing to what I knew the day before, and couldn't tell them where I'd be. And they kept up with it, and they'd discount the twenty-five cents, if I didn't eat. But, time went on, and we got along fine. The winter some days, it was so rough, ice and snow, and things, it'd close 'em down for a while. One day, they told us all to go home about, middle of the afternoon, I guess. Ice was all over everything, and just too bad to work any. Got ready to leave, and one of the Lambert Brothers, he said, "Turner," said, "Come here. I want to tell you somethin'." Said, "I want you to, if you noticed all these old men that been around here, that I sent 'em all home. Afraid they'd get hurt. I want you to come in the mornin'." "What do you want me to come in for, if I can't work?" He said, "Just come in." Well, I got over there 'bout seven o'clock the next morning, and he had a little slip of paper, about three or four inches square, and he said, "Take this over to North Carolina, and get me a drum of oil." One drum and you could order a dozen, you know. He said, "now go around by Stuart ice is all over the road and everything. If you can't go down that mountain road, you got to go around the highway." I finally got around there, went down the mountain, it was covered with ice. But I made it all right. Got to the place and I gave him this little slip. And I said, "well the man told me to come and get him a drum of oil." Fifty gallon drums. He said, "Just one?" "That's what he said." And I'm not gonna repeat to you what that man said about me coming all the way down there for one drum of oil. But I know, the reason I went was just simply to give me a day's work. He knew I was up there boardin', a ways from home, and didn't have anything to do. He also knew that I wasn't afraid of that ice, as much as some of 'em. So, I went to Mt. Airy, that day, gettin' a day's work. Well, time went on and we finally finished the gravel pile. It was the largest gravel pile I ever saw. Got the rock for the road in one pile. It was about fourteen, fifteen miles. They'd worked on it, crushin' it, by the mountain, about a year, gets it ready to put on the road. I stayed up after they finished the job, and they, they wanted to hire me on a permanent basis. They offered me a hundred and twenty five dollars a month. Salary. And that was big money then. The money that we was gettin' for drivin' the truck, the truck and the driver, was paid a dollar an hour, by the government, to build that road. One dollar. For a truck, dump truck, and the driver. And incidentally, I got thirty cents of that dollar. For my time. And, it was enough. We bought, paid for everything. We made a little money, at a dollar an hour. Gasoline was about, I don't remember exactly, it was about sixteen or seventeen cents a gallon, I believe. And then later on it went up to about twenty cents. But every week, I would come home, and, I'd bring it home, that truck, I didn't own the truck, it was my neighbor's truck. I'd bring him some money, and pay all the bills and bring in some cash money. It was a, got a dollar an hour. (Pause)

AG: Did you stay with the family for the entire six months?

BT: Yeah, I stayed at one place. His name was Tom Terry. I don't remember all the boys' names. It was interesting, every morning when he'd call us to breakfast, all the boys slept upstairs. I never did go up those steps; I don't know what it looked like up there. But, all those boys slept upstairs. And he had a door, to the stairway, where you could close it at night. And he'd open that door in the mornin', and he'd always call one boy. He's say, "Carney?" And if he didn't answer, he'd call him again. By the time he'd call the second time, all the rest of 'em was on the floor. Makin' noises, you know, gettin' ready. And he told them like he did me. He said, "Now, it's cold out there. No heat in your room. And in the mornin' when I call you, you put your britches on, and bring your other clothes, shoes and socks, and the rest of your clothing and come in here and sit by the fire, and put 'em on by the fireplace." And so, his wife was in the kitchen anyway, and all the boys would come down, carryin' their clothes in their hand, just with their britches on. (Laughs) It was an interesting place. And they'd go their different ways, some of 'em was workin', some of 'em goin' to school, various things.

AG: Did you have to help out around the house, or anything, for the board?

BT: No, I didn't have to. They didn't ask me to. But there were men, made the little gardens, and they had some corn. And on the days, there was a few days that I didn't work, and on some of those days, instead of just loafin' around, there wasn't anything to do, anywhere to go, and I'd go out in there and shuck corn. And help them. And the old man Terry and I got to be good friends. He treated me just like I was one of the boys. And the last day I was there, tellin' 'em goodbye, you know, he said, now he called me Bernie, my name is Bernard, but he called me Bernie, he says, "Bernie, you're datin' that Yates girl down yonder. Once in a while. And he says, "Maybe you're comin' back up here, and if you need a place to stay over here, instead of goin' home, just come over here anytime. There will always be a place for you again, as long as I live." So we got along fine. I went back to visit him one time, but when I went back to visit him, he had died in the meantime. And I talked to his wife I never did know for sure whether she remembered me or not. She tried to act like she did, but I wasn't—

AG: What did you like about working on the Parkway?

BT: One of the things I liked best was the people I worked for. It was a real pleasure to work for those people. They'd treat you like you were somebody. And not only me, but all the rest of 'em. Some of the old men that hauled the trucks, trucks, they'd just simply, they were farmers up in the mountains there, and they learned that they did a job, and if often involved a truck. And they got a job so they could pay for it. And that way, they'd have a truck for their own sake. And a lot of 'em couldn't drive, at all. You'd think they were drivin' a mule instead of a truck. (Laughs) One of the fellows had a, he had a new Ford Truck. And he pulled down, there's a little low place, we had worked it out for the trucks to go out. And the old man would race it on in, and let the clutch out, that old trick would just jump up and down. Wouldn't go out. And I pulled it up around there, and he hauled out up there for a country mile. He said, "Turner." Said, "Get out here and drive this truck outta here for this old man!" I got in, pulled it up just a little ways, then he got in. But they, they had never learned to drive, very well. Some of 'em had never had had, truck or a car, either one, before. And they didn't know how to shift gears' We used an old roadway, instead of drivin' over the gravel that we put down, we'd use a side road. And it was up and down. Narrow, one—lane road. I'd come right out and come across there with the truck loaded with gravel. I'd come down one hill, go up the other and I'd come down and hit the bottom of that hill about thirty, forty miles

BT: (Continued) an hour, that truck in third gear, and go clean over the top in third gear. And some of the fellows would go real slow down that hill, and put them in low gear and crawl up that hill. Those inspectors, the man would get behind one of those fellows^{s1} and he just wouldn't like that at all. He asked me, he says, "Where'd you learn how to shift gears on a truck?" "Well, I don't really know," I said, "I drove a school bus a couple a years." And uh, we had an old farm truck at home, and that's the only experience I ever had. But I learned how to shift gears, though. That's when he wanted, be decided he wanted me to work for them.

AG: Uh, so overall, did you like the experience working for the Parkway?

BT: Pardon?

AG: Overall, did you like your experience?

BT: Oh yeah, it was a wonderful experience. I met a lot of people. And everybody was real friendly. And, particularly the men I worked for. They were some of the nicest fellows I ever worked for, I believe. They cared for you. And when it would get rough, ice and everything, he'd go around and caution everybody to be real careful, and drive slow on the ice, and thin^{s4}ke that, you know. But I was young and I didn't much care, and I'd bust out on the road, knock—in' ice and snow everywhere. But we got along fine.

AG: How many other people were out there working with you?

BT: I remember that, at one time, there was twenty-four trucks, hauling gravel. Of f of that one rock pile. But some days, some of those farmers would stay home, do some of their work around home, wouldn't come in. But when they'd come in, they'd give 'em a job.

AG: Did you ever have traffic jams out there with all those trucks?

BT: Well, see every one of 'em would be going in the same direction. They'd go one way and come back another. So we wouldn't meet each other. We had a little narrow country road and if you started meetin' all those trucks comin' back, you'd have a problem. Particularly those men that weren't too good at drivin'. So we'd go one way and come back another, to the rock pile. 'Cause, twenty-four at one time is the most I remember. They wanted me to work for 'em permanent. But they said one thing that I guess caused me not to go to work for 'em. They said "Now Turner", when they took me in to the little office, they had a little trailer for the office. They called me in one day and both the boys talked to me. And they beat around the bush a long time, wouldn't tell me what they called me in there for. Finally they told me, they said, "We want you to work for us permanently. We wanna give you a job to stay with us." But, tell you a story. They said, "When we complete this job, we'll go where the money is. We'll get a contract somewhere where we can make some money. That's where we're going. And it might be South America." Oh brother. I was a young fellow, never had been away from home much, livin' at home. I didn't want to leave home. So I turned it down. (Pause) But I enjoyed the work with them. And the people that worked for 'em and all. . And it was, uh, it's good to look back at the work and see what you had completed, too. After the work was finished, you enjoyed sayin', "Well, that's part of my job." You look to see what a nice job was done. Get some pleasure out of that, too.

AG: Can you still drive along that today and see the work that you've done?

BT: Oh yeah, I've been up there many times, since then. The Mabry's Mill is a famous (indistinguishable) But uh, they have a restaurant there, they have an old corn mill, make molasses the old-timey way. And it's such a crowd around there on holidays especially; it's hard to get anywhere close to the place. So many people. It's really an important place to those people. (Pause)

AG: I've been there. I've never eaten there or anything, but—— (Indistinguishable words from BT's wife?)

AG: Was everyone working there from this area? Or from that—

BT: I believe that most of 'em was around in that general area, or not far from that. I was about fifty miles from home. It was called Stella, at that time. They'd get away with it; it's Patrick Springs, Virginia, now. At that time we had a little railroad train that came through¹ the Norfolk and Western. It went through Norfolk Virginia, and Stuart, Virginia, the only place it went. It got to Norfolk and turn around and come back. But the biggest thing was people would ship pulpwood on those trains. And you had several stations

And then too, people would ride it to Martinsville from Mount Airy, which was 'bout, no more than twenty miles. Go to town, go (indistinguishable), go 'shoppin' on the train. I thought that was interesting, 'cause, I had a brother that left home, and worked and lived at Mount Airy and he'd go over there early on Monday morning, and catch a train to Martinsville, and get there in time to go to work, seven o'clock. Then he'd stay over there. And on Friday, he would come back on the train, come home, on Friday. It was a real, real good thing for the community. Trucks, one thing and another, just didn't have any use for them.

AG: Did you ever get to come home on the weekends, like your brother?

BT: See, I was still at home, when he was workin' down there, that was before I was—I went home most every weekend, sometimes when it was real, real snowy and icy, I didn't go. But most of the time, I'd drive that vehicle. One reason I drove it home of course, was takin' money to the man that owned the truck.

AG: How did you end up borrowing the truck from him?

BT: What?

AG: How did you end up borrowing his truck to come do the job? Did he just offer it to you?

BT: Yeah, we wanted me to—He bought the truck, and somebody else drove it at one time. And he wanted me to drive for him. And I started (indistinguishable) Fixed up on the farm, so I could leave my Daddy there. I was drivin' for him, then come back. Finally I just quit the job, and let him hire somebody else.

AG: What was a typical day like, on the job?

BT: Well, it was pretty much routine. We would be out there at seven o'clock in the mornin', lined up to get the truck, loaded. They had what the people referred to as steam shovels, but it was a gasoline operated machine. The trucks would line up there, and the operator of that shovel would load the truck for you, and then you would line up when you got 'em and go over on the road to unload it. And by the time you, you'd get a little ahead while they were unloadin' you. Not very far, because he'd load one in a hurry. But you'd be a little ahead of 'em. And that way, the trucks wouldn't be right together all the time, they'd be separated because of the time that it took to load the truck. It wasn't more than two or three minutes, but in two or three minutes, you'd be down the road, you know,, half a mile or so. And that's so you wouldn't be bumpin' in to each other. That way we kept separated.

AG: Was there any interaction I guess among all the workers during the day? Did you ever take a break and talk together?

BT: Hardly ever. We'd drive solid down. Not even, we did even take a lunch. We'd eat our lunch while we were driving. And I had an interest in lunch. When I first had that lunch, I thought it was the best thing in the world. It was apple butter, and biscuits, man, I liked that fine. They'd put a biscuit, homemade biscuit, slice that biscuit open and put a piece of butter the same size of the biscuit in it, and then fill it full of apple butter. And she'd put probably five or six of 'em in a bucket, and I'd eat 'em every one. But we'd eat it as we went along. But you know, after a few months passed by, you know, 'course, she'd have some other things too in there, but that was

BT: (Continued) the basic thing. But she finally got us all tired of those. Particularly in real cold weather, they'd be cold, that butter'd be cold, nowhere to heat it. But I thought that was really somethin' good. Biscuits and apple butter. They just sort of had to use what they had. It wasn't like it is this day and time. Whatever they packed in that lunch, you'd eat it. And didn't complain, either, cause you was glad to get what there was there.

Mrs.T: Weren't any restaurants there.

BT: Naw, there wasn't any restaurant any where close.

AG: Did you work six-hour days, or eight-hour days?

BT: Twelve.

AG: Twelve-hour days? Wow.

BT: Uh—huh. Seven in the mornin' till seven at night. Most of the time we did that. It wasn't all the time, 'cause some of the time we maybe worked eight, ten hours. But the whole other times, they were just anxious to get that done, and we'd drive our trucks twelve hours. I was glad of it. Didn't have anything else to do anyway.

But the man would—some of his boys would work late, and their momma would fix them supper. But in the mornin', he said, "If you don't eat at six o'clock here, you don't eat at all. Not at this place." But whenever they got home from work, boys who worked, some of 'em workin' out on the same job I was on, they would come in, and eat dinner. They always had something to eat. Well it was a long time ago. 60 years ago. 60.

(END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE)

TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO

Mrs.T: (Indistinguishable)

AG: No, I've been working in this area, and I did some other interviews down in Sparta, North Carolina, around that area. So, we have other people doing some interviews in Asheville.

Mrs.:Is your home in Radford?

AG: Um, temporarily. I go to Radford University.

Mrs.:My daughter went there.

AG: Oh, really?

Mrs.:Yeah. Thirty three years ago, she graduated

AG: It was a different place then.

BT: A whole lot different then, from what it is now

Mrs.T: It wasn't co-ed then.

AG: Oh I know.

BT I was district manager in the insurance company. Is that on?

AG: I just turned it back on.

Mrs.T: Where's your home, originally?

AG: Um, most recently, Northern Virginia. My dad works in the air force, so we moved around a lot.

Mrs. T: Our granddaughter's husband is in the Marines (indistinguishable).

BT: The district officer in Roanoke had a detached office, a staff of men in Pulaski, VA. And I'd go up there, and we'd have a meeting, go over whatever the problems were during the day. And everytime I'd go through Radford, and every time I'd go through Radford, that was before the Interstate was built, and you'd have to go through the center of Radford, to go to college. And almost every week, he'd send somethin' up to the office. And it was up to me to go to the dormitory. And I'd go to the dormitory, and there wasn't any such thing as a man goin' up into the girls' dormitory. Sometimes I'd have somethin' maybe a little bit heavy to carry, and I'd tell 'em who I was downstairs, at the desk, and who I was wantin' to see, and they would announce that, on the loudspeaker, so everybody said, "There'll be a man on the floor." (Laughs)

Mrs.T: Not that way now, is it. Are the boys and the girls in the same dormitory?

BT: You know what they do that for? The girl's be running from one place to another room to room, you know, according to the authorities, one probably wouldn't be properly dressed.

Mrs.T: Before, he'd have to have, a young man would have to have his coat on if he came to see his girl. And the girl couldn't leave there in shorts. Sarah graduated in '63.

BT: If they went out, calisthenics, one thing or another like that, they had to wear shorts, they had to dress to take care, they'd make 'em wear a raincoat out in the public. (Laughs) Really. Wouldn't let 'em expose themselves out, you know, like, to the public. They had to wear a raincoat or somethin'.

Mrs.T: What dorm are you in?

AG: When I lived on campus I lived in (?). And then I lived in Norwood. More talk about campus life at Radford.)

AG: So when did you all get married?

Mrs.T: June 5th, 1941. We've been married 55 years. He'll be 81 this month. It's been 60 years since he worked on the Parkway. Incidentally I'm not that Yates girl that he was talking about. (Laughs).

BT: She was in my graduation class.

AG: Oh really?

Mrs.T: I didn't know him when he was graduating. I met him in Memorial School.

BT: That's Hardin Reynolds Memorial School. If you're familiar with the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company in Winston—Salem? The big tobacco people, Critz Virginia is their home place, And that's where all 16 of 'em was raised. And they sold tobacco there at Critz. They had a warehouse where they sell it. And 'course when I was going school there, we'd practice basketball in the warehouse, where they sell tobacco. And eventually they quit selling there, and moved on to Winston, North Carolina. But it was an important little town, to start with, when we were goin' to school there. It had the boarding school, see that was before they had any school busses. And if a person lived out ten, or fifteen miles away, it was too far to go back and forth. And they had, I believe there was five high schools in Patrick County. County. And then they had some other schools, that didn't have but two years of high school. And if you graduated, and you didn't have any way to go back and forth, not many people owned cars, back in those days, there was no way to get back and forth, and it's too much of a job to go back and forth every day. So what they'd do is come over there and board, like they do in college. Like the colleges are now. And it was for the benefit of those that didn't have a way to go back and forth. I didn't live that far away from it, I didn't live but six miles from the school. And my brother went to school, and graduated. He graduated the year that I started. He was five years older than I was. And he rode a horse to school. They had a barn, a stables where they could keep horses, and all. And a whole lot of the time, in the wintertime, when we wasn't using the horses or the barn, they'd ride off, back and forth, every day, six miles, each way. But when it got busy, then, you know, when weather began to break, and the farm animals, you'd need the horses, he'd have to walk. He'd walk that ~ miles. (Laughs) .

AG: Did it take him about an hour and a half, huh? .

BT: Well, I found out. I walked that six miles, it wasn't nothin'. If my brother and I was at home, and we and we had some kind of entertainment at the school, or something like that, you know? The PTA was a big thing then. The PTA had the different classes put on little three—act plays. Then they'd run the school—

El: (Continued) busses. At first they didn't, the first two or three years, before they didn't have any school busses. But then they started runnin'. They started school busses the year I started high school.

Mrs.T: And he drove a school bus.

El: I didn't drive it the first two years. The second two years, I did, I drove a school bus.

AG: While you were still in school?

BT: While I was in school. They won't let you do that, now.

Mrs.T: Times have changed. Drastically.

BT: You take a 15-year old boy, back in those days, they considered him a man. He'll do anything a man will, all sorts of work, no matter what it was. For example, I started shoein' horses when I was 13 years old. Now that's a job. You got a mean horse, you got trouble, but my daddy'd done it, I'd hold the horses for him to put shoes on. And I knew how to do it a long time before that. But I wasn't big enough, wasn't man enough to hold the horse's foot up. So one day he plowin' a little patch of corn right close to the house. On an old horse named Bob, I was plowin' him and he lost his shoe. And I went down and got what they call a horse shoein' box. The things that you need to put shoes on, nails, and everything. And what they call a drawing knife. To clean his foot down a little bit ¶nS1~ail that shoe back on. My daddy'd been walkin' around there for a while. He saw that box out there under the apple tree. Old Bob lost his shoe off, and I nailed it back on. And man, he went around there and grabbed that horse's foot up to see if I ruined it. Those nails, they're beveled. They're straight on one side, and slanted on the other. And when you drive that into a horse's foot, and you turn it wrong, it'll turn and go into the hoof, and it'll ruin it. But if you go in like you're supposed to, that bevel part will turn that nail out. And it'll come out about an inch from it, up on the hoof. Well, he looked at it, and he said, "Looks like it's all right." He had two young horses then; we had two old horses and two young horses. Had a one about two years old, and he could put shoes on 'em. 'Cause when you start workin' 'em up on the plowin', and you're pullin' 'em hard, if you don't put shoes on 'em, their feet'll break, and you'll have trouble. So everybody put shoes on 'em. .

Mrs.T: They still put shoes on 'em. You're gettin' an education on farm life (to AG).

BT: I'd been drivin' some of the, I'd been drivin' the horses, plowing, workin' the horses. And, one of the young horses, well that's a different story, from old Bob, the old plug horse, you could do him any way you wanted to. But this young horse was a little more spirited. So, he was down at the barn, and I was around the yard there somewhere and he hollers at me, "Bernard, come down here and put a shoe on old Nellie." (Laughs) Nellie was a two-year old, about a 1500 pound horse, looked just like a picture. Prettiest thing you ever seen. And he went on about his business somewhere. "Just do it." (laughs) And I learned a whole lot about it you know, when I was thirteen, I took that, we had a long (?), and I took, bridled him, and pulled that horse's head up in the air, just, like that as high as I could, and tied it so he couldn't get his head down. I took that hoof, and did anything I wanted to with it. (Laughs) If you let a horse get their head down on the ground, you better look out. They'll kick you, stomp you, and bite you and do everything else, when you're workin' on them. But if you tie it up so high that it can't get their head down at all, then you can handle 'em all right.

Mrs.T: You've lived all around haven't you? You ever get out of the city?

AG: I lived in New York for four years.

Mrs.T: My home is in Georgia. But I've lived in Virginia 56 years.

BT: She was a Georgia Peach when we were goin together.

Mrs.T: Still am!

BT: And after we got married, she was a Georgia cracker!

BT: We've managed to stay together for 55 years. 55 years. Incidentally, the man workin' for me, doin' a little job for me this morning, workin' on my tiller, garden tiller. He worked out along the Skyline Drive too. I didn't-know that till today. He's done a little bit of everything. He told me that they helped—he and somebody—they helped haul in the asphalt when they finished the road here. He said he'd worked at it some.

Mrs.: He was hired by the State Highway Department. He, Bernard saw it in the paper, did you write—?

BT: Yeah, I called down there a time or two, it give us a number to call. You have to go through about three or four exchanges to get to the old office.

Mrs.T: Extensions.

BT: (Laughs) Extensions. And I called twice, and asked for Jackie Holt, it was in the paper, that's the only one I knew, her name was in the paper. And it was a recording, said that she would be back in the office on a certain Friday.

Mrs.T: She's the curator.

BT: And I called-Friday, I called in later on, and still didn't get 'em. I finally wrote her a little note.

AG: What's your favorite memory from working on the Parkway?

BT: My what?

AG: What's your favorite memory, from that time, when you were working on the Parkway?

BT: Well, I don't know. It was all interesting work. I 'guess the boardin' house was the most interesting place. With all that bunch of boys. Get up every morning. All of us eatin' breakfast at six o'clock in the morning at one time. And incidentally, we had to wash up before breakfast too. And out on the back porch, they had buckets of water, and dippers, and pans. To wash in. And you'd dip in that bucket, it'd be icy. And you'd dip you some water out of that ice, put it in the pan, and wash your hands in a basin of ice water. And all the boys did that too. We had to sorta take our turn to wait to wash in that ice water before breakfast.

Mrs.T: (indistinguishable)

BT: That's the way we did it though. Wasn't no such thing as an indoor bathroom. Outside, on the hillside out there. (laughs)

Mrs.T: Well, times have changed for the better in some ways.

BT: You know, I enjoyed going to school. Lotta people, you know, hated to go to school. I wasn't one of those. I'd a whole lot rather go to school than stay at home and work on the farm.

Mrs.T: I liked school, too.

BT: But I had to stay at home a whole lot. I had to miss a lot of days at school, on account of workin' on the farm. School started in September. My daddy'd say, after a period of time, there were seven of us children, and all of 'em had left home, except me. When I graduated, I was the only one left. I guess, three years, before I was in school. I was only, the only one of the children who was at home. And school time started, he said, "now Bernard". And Daddy'd say, "You go to school, go on now. You get your stuff lined up, get your books and everything. And then you can go back again when we sow the wheat, and get the corn up." Which were sometimes five or six weeks. I'd be way behind if it hadn't a been for the teachers, back in those days, I never would've graduated from high school. 'Cause they would help you, you know, if you'd get

BT: (Continued) behind. Particularly the Principal, he was one of the finest fellows I ever saw. He knew my circumstances, he visited out on the, he knew my daddy and my momma, he knew the circumstances, they needed me at home. And he was willing to help. And particularly in the subject of geometry. I'd rather not talk about the grades that I made in English, and such as that. But I made a straight A in geometry. (Laughs) As soon as I finished high school, the county agent, the government had what they called a Soil Conservation Program. And he came to the school and asked if there was anybody in the school that could measure acreage on the farms. Measure the land. "Yeah, I got a top boy. And he got a straight A in geometry." Well, they come and see me. And my daddy and I was plowing, each one of us was plowing one horse. They pulled up, both of 'em knew my daddy. "Come to get your boy, Mr. Turner." "What do you want with him?" (Laugh) They talked on a little bit, said "Well, we looked over the records, and he's the only boy In (?) County that got a straight A on geometry. And I've been told by the principal here that he can measure land. Acreage." They said, "We got a job for him." They would send you out on the farm, and you'd make a map of the man's farm. And you'd number the fields. And each field would have a certain thing in it, and you'd make a chart, and you'd put on here, you'd make a number, and give all on the field a number. Number one, for example, that's pastureland, and you'd write it out. And this, number three, is over on the edge of the southern part of the county, three acres of tobacco. And you'd list it out all the way up like that. And these acreage's, we'd have to measure. Not everything, but things like, (indistinguishable), crops like clover, and things that would improve the land, they would have you to measure them, and you'd just make a surface measure. You didn't have a transit like they do for surveyin'. You'd measure it with a chain. And then we'd put the acreage down on that, and then the government would pay us so much. It was a decent job, I liked doing the job. But they came to me because of my grades in geometry. They didn't talk about my grades in the other things, though. (Laughs) I passed, that's about all I can say. I had to lose so much time, stayin' on the farm. Had to walk a mile and a half to catch the bus. And before that, I walked to the school; it was a little bit less than two miles, a two-room school. We had two teachers, seven grades.

Mrs.T: I never went to a school like that. Back in the State of Georgia, the year I started.

BT: School house had two rooms in it, each room had a big stove in it. One of those wood stoves with a big fat top it. And it was in a wooded area. Big woods behind it, big trees, and all. Wooded area. And most of the time the school boys would go down there in the woods and cut the dead limbs where it had fallen off the tree, and we'd break the whole thing up and get out own firewood. Once in a while, some old farmer would take pity on us and haul us a load of wood. My daddy hauled more than anybody else. But we got our wood. Had a big fire goin all day.

AG: It must have been so hard to keep up and everything.

BT: We didn't know any different back in those days. (Laughs) I made—I earned some money too, when I was goin' by myself, goin' to school.

Mrs.T: He was always very industrious. He should tell you about trapping the muskrats.

BT: When my older brothers, I used to go to the traps, when I was too young to do any trappin' or huntin' myself. But I'd go along with 'em, tag along, and watch them catch the muskrats, minks, things like that along the road in steel traps. And I'd learn how, I'd watch them, the way they'd kill that Muskrat and things like that, and where they'd set the trap to catch 'em.

BT: (Continued) and all. And I learned from them. And when they all left home, they left the traps. And I didn't know what happened, I never did buy a steel trap. Just took over my brothers' where they left off. And I'd make somewhere in the neighborhood of fifty, seventy—five dollars every year, catching muskrats. And when I'd go, I'd get up early and go, the river was between our house and the school. And I'd go along the river, and get the muskrats, get 'em out of the trap, and when I got down to the bridge, where I crossed the river, up onto that bridge, there was an abutment up there, where the concrete thing, and you lay your muskrats up there, where a dog couldn't get 'em or anything, during the day, and I'd sometimes put three or four of 'em up there and by the time I got home, they usually were dry. If I got home, I'd skin 'em. And I'd stretch those things and ship them to New York. Caught a mink one time. Brown, he wasn't a black mink, they were the ones that brought the most money. But I caught this mink, and skinned it myself, and stretched it, shipped it, and when I got back, they sent me a check for fifteen dollars, for that mink. I went to town to buy me a suit of clothes. And I took that fifteen dollars and bought the best suit of clothes they had in the store. They had it priced about seventeen dollars, I think. And the man knew my daddy, that run the store. And he traded with him some. And he knew who I was. I said, "I sure like this suit." It was sort of a brownish color. I said, "I sure like this, it looks like it's just the right size and everything. But it's a little too high, can't afford it." And he said, "Well, it's about the best I can do, I can give you a cheaper suit, but that's the best one in the stores the best cloth, and everything." And I reached in my pocket and pulled out the check and I said, "I got a fifteen dollar check that I got for a mink that I caught." And he studied round it a little bit. He said, "Barnard, your daddy trades with me anyhow. I'll tell you what I'm gonna do. I'm just gonna let you have that suit for that fifteen dollars anyway." Man, I wanted that suit.

Mrs.T: She didn't ask you what kind of work you've done since then.

AG: Let me get back to—really quick—how long before you worked for the Parkway was that?

BT: Well, I went to the Parkway the same year I graduated from high school. 1936. And I graduated in June, whenever it was. And I went to the Parkway that fall. Early Fall. And I've done several jobs since then.
(END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE)

TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE

BT: You know about that. Farry Stone State Park was built largely by the men in that CCC Camp, and it was while I was in high school. We used to go over there, when they finished it, we'd go over there and go swimming. It's a quite interesting place. It's a man—made beach. They hauled sand in there in trucks, and they made a beach out of it. You go over there and you wouldn't have any idea that they hauled that much sand in there. But it's along that beach.

Mrs.T: When our daughter was little, we lived in Fieldale, Virginia. Right down near Martinsville. So we used to go down, it's a real nice park.

Field Park Lake is not far from there, now. But it was back then.

BT: When the government bought the land, to build that dam, on the on the Field Park Land, which is not far from Farry Stone Park Dam, my grandma and grandpa owned land where the water backed over. And 'course they had died, and my momma had died. And my brothers and I got the amount that my momma would have gotten. And you know how much it was that each one of us got? Six dollars. (Laughs) We all got six dollars apiece.

Mrs.T: That hadn't been too many years ago. When they built Grandfather Lake.

AG: Um, when you were working on the Parkway, what did you do for in your leisure time? Or I guess, whenever you weren't working?

BT: Well, once in a while, you'd go to a basketball game. When I finished school, I played basketball. And got interested in baseball too. But uh, Stuart, the County seat, was the only place that had a gymnasium. All the rest of us had .to playout in the dirt, outside. I'd go to a ball game once in a while, when they had one, and I had the opportunity. Bout the only thing was, of any type of recreation. There wasn't much goin' on. But I enjoyed going to the ball games because I played, you know, before graduating. Incidentally, we got good enough to play in the tournament, our team did. Two years, we played, the last two years I was there; we played in the tournament against Blacksburg. And they say that gym that we played in then is still there. They use it for practices and such as that. And on top of that, I made the All—Star team. Don't I look like a basketball player? (Laughs)I looked a little different then from what I do now. But we couldn't play basketball much; we didn't have enough practice. We did a better job hoein' corn than we did dribblin' a basketball. We could pass the ball pretty good, and that's how we won our games, when we'd start dribblin' down the court, you know, we'd hit our foot with it, kick it, and everything would go wrong. But the coach, knowin' all that about us, you know, knew we were farm boys, and hadn't had any practice much, we would pass the ball to each other. We did a lot of passing. When they expected you to dribble with it, instead of dribblin' you'd pass it to one of your mates. And we won us some games, doin' that. Got good enough to go to the tournament. Two years. But we had a good baseball team. The baseball that we played back in those days was at least equivalent to what they do now. They don't have any better baseball team than we had then. But basketball is just another story. We couldn't even think about playing the modern boys, the way we were. But we could play baseball.

AG: Did you ever play that when you were working on the Parkway? Or just basketball?

BT: Say what?

Nrs.T: You didn't play while you was workin'.

BT: No, I didn't play that. I played baseball a couple a years, on what we called a summer team, after I finished school. But I didn't play any basketball.

AG: You mentioned dating before, when you were doing the work on the parkway. What was that like?

BT: Oh yeah. Yeah, I went to see Eileen in a dump truck. (Laughs) We were friends, from high school, you know, we knew each other from school. She played on a basketball team, and I played on the basketball team. Girls—all the high schools had girl teams and boy teams both. And when we would go play other schools, the girls would play first. And then the boys would play. The girl's team wasn't much back in those days. They had three sections on the court. The forwards and the centers, with the two forwards on each end, and they had a line across there, and they couldn't cross the line. The forward couldn't—you'd have to pass to the center, and the center back to the forward, and then they'd try to make the goal. They couldn't go all the way across the ~ court. They used to get me to call the girl's games. I never did learn why really. But I'd do it; I got a kick of it you know. But it just wasn't much. Girls now, girls' team now could beat us to death, the way we played back then in those days. But girls can play ball now. Like the men. We played in Meadows of Dan, one time. And I haven't figured it out event to this day exactly what happened. I was callin' the girl's game, I was refereeing' for 'em. Schoolteacher was on the side, lookin' on, laughin' about it I guess And one of the girls in the Meadows of Dan high school, did somethin' to one of

BT: (Continued) one of our girls, I don't know what it was. Somethin' made her mad, and she ran out down to the side of the road and got a rock and threw it at her. She didn't hit her, but she threw it at her. And I just—when I saw what she did, I just ran and grabbed her and give her a bear hug, and I said, "What in the world is wrong with you, thrown' a rock at the girl." I never did know what she said. But she fussed around and I said; "Now you better go down there and sit down a while." We made her sit on the bench, while the other girls played. Then after a while, just about the time the game was over, she ran up there and got that girl in a hug and she said, "I sure am sorry. I don't know what happened to me." (Laughs) And I was Glad she did that. (Indistinguishable) But she ran and got a rock, and threw it at the girl. (Laughs) --

AG: Um, well, when you were at the Parkway, did you ever have the opportunity to go to any of the neighboring areas, like any towns nearby or anything?

BT: Not very much. We'd go to Church, quite often. They had a Baptist Church up there, and a Presbyterian Church not far away. Mayberry Presbyterian Church. And then they had a Baptist Church, see. Wasn't much to do. I went to Church quite often. At night, I'd drive that old dump truck too. (Laughs) The man told me, said, "Go anywhere you want to. Don't ask me nothin' about where to go." I'd ask him, you know, if I could take the truck somewhere. "Quit askin' me about that. Go anywhere you want to." He figured I'd take good care of it, you know. I'd come home and ask him, "Would it be alright with you if I went to so—and—so on the way home?" He said "Bernard, I wish you'd quit asking me that thing, go anywhere you want to." I could've gone places that he didn't know anything about it. But there wasn't much to do as far as, people would have, where they knew each other, they'd have parties in their homes. They'd play games, and things like, as far as anything in the outside, there wasn't much goin' on. The cities had theatres and places like that. And I'd go to the theatres too once in a while. But the only theatre there was in the county was at school.

AG: Did you ever get together with the other guys that you were working with, outside of work?

BT: No. One of the boys that worked up there was from Critz. And we'd go to Mt. Airy, North Carolina, to the theatre once in a while at night. But he was the only one. He (indistinguishable), closer to where I was, we knew each other, you know, we'd get together. Take one of those dump trucks, drove to Mount Airy. All four of us. Two girls and two boys. It was big enough for four of us to get in there. Back in those days, it didn't take much room for you anyways. (Laughs) But they didn't, yeah, they didn't mind ridin' in the old dump truck.

Mrs.T: Boys will be boys. ~

BT: I went in the military service, too. In the Army. Gone three years, doing it. Wound up in the Philippine Islands. Seven months. General MacArthur, you know about him. I was stationed at a place called Baquio, the city near the camp. And the camp was Camp John Hay. In the Philippines, about 200 miles from Manila. And our, our camp was, they had a special place over there, a house for General MacArthur. And we were invited to go over there all the time. But I didn't have to go into battle. The war ended before I got there. We thought we was goin' to—and they told us, later on, that we were drafted, to go to Japan. You know, the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor, tore up a lot of things, and destroyed a lot of people, killed a lot of people and everything. And when

BT: (Continued) I was drafted, I was drafted for the purpose of goin', in having an invasion on Japan. I didn't know it at that time, but that was the sole purpose for that, I was headed for the war in Japan, and then, while I was in training, they dropped the atom bomb. And that changed the whole course of the war. And as a result of that, they had thousands and thousands and thousands of soldiers, in a similar position like me that's gone over there for one purpose. To kill Japanese, and nothin' else. And we went to camp, General MacArthur said, "You come here to learn to do one thing: to kill Japanese." And we had a fifteen-week course, and there wasn't a single solitary minute to tell us how to capture 'em. Just how to kill 'em. But never capture 'em. They didn't teach us anything at all about capturing the Japanese. Only taught us how to kill 'em. I thought that was quite -interesting. If we'd have caught a Japanese, we wouldn't have known what to do with him. Except kill him. That's all.

AG: Did you leave the Parkway to go into the military?

BT: Ma'am?

AG: Did you leave the Parkway work to go into the military?

BT: No that was a long time afterward. I was married and our daughter was two or three years old.

Mrs.T: He managed a grocery store. I guess that was your first regular job, was managing that grocery store.

BT: After I was workin' on the Parkway, I got a job at a grocery store in and worked on that a while, and then I got the job at another one that made me the manager. There was seven of us working at that store. I was the only single man there. I was making seventeen dollars and a half a week, and the others were making fifteen dollars. (Laughs) But you know we made money? That little store was a regular gold mine.

Mrs.T: Then he went into the insurance business.

BT: Yeah, I went in the insurance business. I left that store and went into the insurance business.

(Indistinguishable) Then three years, four, in the Army

Mrs.T: Then you went into the army. And when you came out, you went back to the same company.

BT: I was in the Army 18 months, after I went off defense work. I was drafted, off of defense work. Which didn't happen to stop me.

But when they needed you to go fight the Japanese. they took anybody, no matter where you were.

Mrs.T:(Indistinguishable) You had two basic training's, too.

BT: That's part of it. I think that's got a whole lot to do with my condition. They had 2300 of us in the camp in Florida. They transferred us to Fort (?)Virginia, and started out in combat engineering. And we thought we'd had a tough time as- ~ But that's rough stuff, engineering. Combat engineering. What makes it so hard is, you have to work like maniacs, dig ditches, and do all sorts of work, and carry your gun and ammunition with you all the time. Pack a gun on your back. Pick and shovel and (Laughs) separate the men from the boys, too. But, combat, and particularly in that training, 'course if you're right in combat you'd have some bad times too. But combat training is a whole lot worse than anything. You had to carry so much stuff with you. All the time. Just loaded down. You had to carry your gun, rifle, ammunition, bedroll. Your messkit, somethin' to eat out of, everything. You had to carry it on your back. And work too. You didn't have to work in the

I came back after I got out, went to work for the same insurance company, I worked at. After 40 years, I retired. It was

BT: (Continued) 40 years from the time I started till I retired. And three years I was gone in the military. There

Wasn't much to do along the Parkway, for young fellows. You'd have to go visit somebody's home didn't Get invited to anybody's home at all, I don't think, I knew two or three people up there. I knew Laura Bowling. The girls that was in my graduation class, there was three of em'. Ruth.

Mrs.T: (Indistinguishable)

BT: Ruth, and Laura, and Eileen. I believe that's all.

Mrs.T: You went to see Eileen. Incidentally, she married a Baptist preacher, and she's got, how many children, nine children?

BT: Seven, somebody said, I think.

Mrs.T: I think she lives right up in (?)

BT: Who did she marry? What's his name? I forgot.

Mrs.T: I don't know. I never met him.

BT: You heard his name though. Married a preacher. (Pause)

Mrs.T: (Indistinguishable) (Talks about meeting/marrying her husband)

AG: Um, what didn't you like about working on the Parkway?

BT: What did I like?

AG: What didn't you like?

BT: (Pause) Cold weather, I guess. About the worst thing about it. Freezing, ice, and such as that. Get up early in the mornin' and wash your face and hands in that ice water. Go to work and get there at seven o'clock. That was before the sun got up then, you ~ in the wintertime. And you'd be out there, loadin' that truck. haulin' gravel. That area is known for its cabbage country. There's a piece in the Roanoke paper here a while back a whole sheet of paper, had a man's picture, had a picture of his cabbage field too. They had 400 acres in cabbage. And I didn't know there was 400 acres of cleared land in that whole neighborhood. But that's what the paper said, he had 400 acres of cabbage. And we raised cabbage on the farm, in the garden, you know. I never did like it much. My momma would cook cabbage, and I didn't know it at the time, but she'd cook it too long. Cook it too much. There'd be red streaks in it. I didn't like it. But I got up there and got to eat some of that mountain cabbage, and that woman knew how to cook it. And she wouldn't cook it that much, but it was real good. I liked it fine. But I didn't like it, why, I thought my momma was the best cook in the world, you know. But I learned that she didn't know how to cook cabbage. After I got up there.

Mrs T: (Indistinguishable)

BT: That was just one farm up there. They had a whole lot of 'em. The whole area, they had big fields of cabbage. I don't know, they had 'em marked. How they get rid of that many cabbage. Oh a hundred acres. Ooh, I can't imagine. But it was in the Roanoke paper.

AG: So, were there ever any accidents, while you were working there?

BT: Only minor ones. Once in a while one of the farmer's -would run into somethin'. But never, never hurt anybody. If anybody got hurt, I never knew. But most of 'em that would drive those trucks would go so slow, that if you bit somethin' it didn't amount to anything.

AG: Uh, were there any big events, like forest fires—

BT: Pardon?

AG: Were there any big events like forest fires, or search and rescue?

BT: Not that I recall. Things went along pretty smooth. But there was, there's an interesting thing, it wasn't exciting, only they were building what they called a (?) on that mountain. The head of Dan River, that goes by Danville Virginia, the head of it, is right there at (?) dam. And it starts out as a little spring, one of those little streams. And then as it goes farther down the mountain

BT: (Continued) there'd be more streams, and more and more. And they built some dams, small ones, you know, what they called Holdin' Dams. So when the dried up, got dry, and it didn't rain, such as that, they'd have a reserve, and then they built three of those. And the farther down you go, the bigger they got. And then they had one great big one, and they had an electric plant at the foot of this mountain. They had an electric ~ 90 miles long. That furnished electricity for the city of Danville. There at that place. The name of that place is Kibler. And I guess it's still got an electric plant there. As far as I know they didn't do away with it, I don't know. They furnished it 90 miles away. Said the electric line was 90 miles long. I thought that was a right interesting project, the way they did it, built all the dams, and then if the water was gonna get low they'd have reserve water, see, and they built the dam that furnished electricity wouldn't be so low that you couldn't use it. But that was goin' on at the same time as building that road, and that's how it made it so hard to get a place to stay. So many people workin' there, workin' on that dam. A lot of Danville people up there.

AG: What were the feelings of the community like towards all the people that were up there working on the Parkway and the dams?

BT: Well, most of 'em was for it. But then there's always some of 'em that objected to it, takin' the land you know, and things like that. But I don't think they had any problems, really, in that area, to obtain land where they wanted to build the road. I didn't hear of it if there was. But some people you know, goes right through the middle of their farm, they didn't like it very much. But what it did, I guess it increased the value of the place. I don't know how much, but no doubt, quite a bit.

(END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE)

May 13, 1999

Mr. Bernard Turner
1525 Trinity Rd.
Troutville, VA 24175

Dear Mr. Turner:

Enclosed is a copy of the 1996 interview about your experiences on the Blue Ridge Parkway. This copy is for you to keep. The original transcription and tapes are being inventoried and stored in the Blue Ridge Parkway archives collection where they can be used by park staff and the public for future research.

I want to thank you for your participation in the Parkway Oral History Project and helping us to preserve the history of the Blue Ridge Parkway.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (828) 271-4779, ext. 243.

Again, thank you for your contribution to this very important project.

Sincerely,

Jackie Holt
Park Curator

enclosure