

INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM BLAKELEY

Ferraro: Alright Mr. Blakeley, tell me something about a your early days a growing up. Tell me where you were born and when and sort of trace your earlier years for me.

Blakeley: I was born at Little Mountain Farm just east of Welch. It is now Stevens Clinic and I went to my first...through first school up on Toms Mountain..¹³⁰ My mother had eight children. I was the youngest and of course in those days they was no welfare and she was having a real hard time. My oldest sister Rosa that got married to a conductor in Williamson, West Virginia, and she wanted to take me and did take me to live with her in Williamson where I went to my early school days. It was in Williamson that I met¹⁰⁰ into the Hatfield-McCoy fued family. The second generation just coming in like myself and it was here in Mingo County, East Williamson school that I got acquainted with all the Hatfield and the McCoys. Now in my class was Manervey Hatfield and there was a Denny and Donnie...and¹³⁰ Manervey Hatfield - Manervey McCoy and here I learned not only this generation but I met the rest of em and alot of participants of the feud that I met. Jim Mounts lived up the hollow there that come in through Williamson and was working for the for the a railroad and others that I met there, there was a there was a chief and John Shafin was my school teacher in east Williamson and then there was Leaf Shafin a pro-²⁰⁰secuting attorney and the Shafins, you know, were involved heavily into the Hatfield feud - a encounter.

Ferraro: Tell me about the a the train ride.

Blakeley: After, after few after a year a after a few months I became home sick for

my younger, my older brothers back in Welch ^{2:30} and my mother and the old farm and so they put me on a train there in east Williamson and I was, a nice old conductor and told him to take care of me back to Welch and on the way on on the train happened to be two two men. I never met, never saw before and one old one and one young one and and at the window was the they had a had a rifle and a they had invited me to come over. ^{3:00}
 Being a kid they invited me to sit down beside of them and ride with them. They got off at Matewan and I never knew anything about these men until a few months later, I went back to Welch got on the same train and the same two was on the train and they hollered and say Willy come back here and ride with us. So I went back and Cap Cap Hatfield ^{3:30} had called me the younger one, and he says I want you to Willy to meet my father, a Devil Lance Hatfield and I said Devil Lance Hatfield. I said my gosh, are you the man that kills all the people and he looked as surprised and I at me and says no sir son, says I'm not a killer. Says that just alot alot of publicity that we don't deserve and a they they were nice old people. They were, they treated me royally and a ^{4:00} he said what is your name? I said Willy Marshall and I said Blakeley and I said they call me Willy Marshall here in Williamson because a I live with my older with my brother-in-law named Marshall, a railroad conductor, and he said well you know Captain Bob Marshall picks me up sometimes. We a walking on along the railroad and says he'll pick us up and take us home and a he ^{4:30} said you would not be a son of Lewis Howard Blakeley would you? I said yes, I'm the youngest son and he said a well, says we sold all of our right away property here around the Devil, around the the a Hatfield tunnel to Lewis Howard Blakeley and I said...and a so a our conversation went on like that and when he ^{5:00} he says well...he says well says I was says I visit your father says I visit your father after he sold our property. Says I promised him

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I was going to come to McDowell that I'd heard it was doing great up there in the coal business coming and development. Says I went up to old Devil Lance and Elias and Cap and I drove up there - a load up there through the mountains and stopped at your fathers to the store where he owned ^{5:30} and the post office that he was postmaster and said he took us out to his home on Bounds Creek and to live. To stay the night and says your mother is certainly one of the finest organ players that I have ever heard and she plays the sweetest music and said a one of the songs that we really loved is that a Life is Like a Railroad and went on. So then, he then he ^{6:00} looked over and to the Butch. Now I don't know whether you know what a butch. I don't think the present generation know what a butch is but a butch is up in the up in the corner. He had a little stand up in the corner where he sells magazines and papers and fruits and gifts. So Devil Lance looked up at him says hey butch says come back here. Says I want to give my old friend something to remember me by. ^{6:30} So he remembered me a his father and so he gave me a little gun - little glass gun filled with candy pellets bout that long and somewhere my niece in Bluefield has that little gun yet I suppose.

Ferraro: That was your encounter with Cap and Devil Lance Hatfield?

Blakeley: Cap and Devil Lance Hatfield.

Ferraro: Well, ^{7:00} tell me how you got through high school.

Blakeley: Well, I had to work....I a....first at Yeager. I cleaned out stables and water boy on the section gang and it was on this section gang that I had the only bronze boy scout medal today in West Virginia and the scout head-quarter tells me that they have no records of these medals at all today

because this was only five years after the scouting was oked by congress
 and a there's no record of it but this medal, this bronze medal has the
 name of President Woodrow Wilson on it and as a food coordinators for the
 United States, Herbert Hoover, later president of the United States and a
 up my sisters husband ^{8.00} moved to Welch and in Welch high school, I was cap-
 tain of the baseball team. I was captain of the debating team and pretty
 active in, I was appointed to the West Point Military Academy in 1922, but
 I didn't want to take the military life. I wanted to stick to business and
 go on to business and a ^{8.30} at that time I was captain of the baseball team and
 winners of the county, winners of the high school team and Consolidation
 coal company sent a group over to Welch to ask me to come over and play for
 them and help plan for coal wood. I was playing with three, probably the
 greatest pitchers this State of West Virginia, Appalachian League has ever
 known and that was the ^{9.00} famous Paul Derringer who is now in the hall of fame
 with Cinncinati Reds and Shepland Field, Douglas was the famous pitcher
 from New York that that a Consolidation had sent down from from Pittsburg
 when he left New York team and then Keltchie Jennings went on with Houston
 later. Those are the people that we were playing with at that time. Me,
 this young seventeen year old shortstop and a ^{9.30} later in years I brought
 Keltchie Jennings to Beckley and played with the Black Knights here under
 the Detroit Tigers and he went on then to Houston. So a my days in high
 school were happy and successful and beautiful as I remember in in those
 days.

Ferraro: Ok, I want to a back up a little bit. I don't want to get into too many of
 the baseball stories. I think w e'll range a little far field there. ^{10.00} Go
 back to a to 1914 in Raw and you were a boy of ten years old. I want you to
 describe that to me and tell me what a what you remember about seeing Mother
 Jones speak.

Takeley: You know in the fall in those days we had beautiful chestnut trees and they generally loaded and so...been advise and the boy was called Hog Molly decided that we were going out chestnut hunting on one Saturday and and a so as we got out as far as...right out of out of Williamson we decided to go on up to Raw where I had seen some Christmas trees up the hollow from a train and so we walked up about two miles further I believe, and as we went up in Raw hollow and looked around and got a looked at Christmas trees for the next for Christmas. We came back out and there was a real old woman a talking from a small stand that out beside the store at Raw. So we decided we thought it was another one of those pitch things like Indians coming through you know, coming through with a pitching the sales and trying to sell to the coal fields in those days which they did. They had some of em come through with a with a monkey and a dancers and different things and so went just thought it was another woman pitching the sales. So we went over to like three kids we went over there and we crowded right in up up where we could see and stood there and we could look right up and see Mother Jones a talking and that this was the wildest, I believe this was one of the wildest, meanest talking, dirtiest talking woman. I can't even tell you what she was talking and saying right there on that day on that TV, I mean on this TV, but ever-thing out of that ever word was something filth and now she called these bastards and told them said the SB's if you don't get down to down and organize says your going to have these SB's making slaves out of you. Says the time to do it is right now, right now and a so a she went on like that for several minutes. Now this part I don't know whether you want me to get up and show you what she did or can I get up and show you what she did?

Ferraro: I don't think you can get up. You probably just have to a describe it.. We're going to have to, is it possible to do it from where you are sitting? Stop for a second. Ok, lets go back and a take it from the story from where

a the three of you went up to watch this woman you didn't know what she was doing - selling or whatever. Start it from there.

Berkeley: We went up to watch this old lady and I didn't know her yet and she was really giving these coal operators H. ^{13:30} I mean they were called filthy names that I cannot mention at all on this TV. Then she looked at looked at the men she says you bastards, you'll have to organize so you got to organize, organize, organize. That's the only salvation is to organize the union and save yourselves. Says your living in John Houses ^{14:00} and everything else in these mountains and she really give em give em H that day to the coal operators and also to the miners cause they wasn't doing anything what she wanted em to organize. Then after she studies a few minutes and waited a minute - a few seconds and looked em straight in the eyes cold blooded in the straight in the face and she turned around no she well, she turned around she reached down. She had on a one of these long dresses ^{14:30} reached to the bottom of her shoes and she reached down and got this old this old black dress and pulled it up and tucked it under her arm and then she reached down and this peti-coat at least had ten yards in it. She pulled it up and tucked it under her arm. Then I said, then she reached down and alot of people won't remember ^{15:00} these old drawers that grandmothers wore years and years ago, a great grandmothers but she tucked these drawers - pulled em up and tucked them also under her arm and then leave turned around. She turned around to the back and look and looked to the side to the coal to the miners and she said as she leaned over I pat my fanny to all these coal operators, sons of bitches ^{15:30} and then she patted her fanny and that was my first labor relations course at ten years old.

Ferraro: What happened then?

Blakeley: The miners went wild. They just went wild. They just cheered and cheered and then a out of the commisary they knew something was going on but they they came out all the officials of the coal company and the doctors and ^{16:00} the representatives to the coal companies, they all came out to watch what was going on and they these miners were hollering go to it, go to it Mother Jones go to it and that was all I remember about that but several days later I was going to school in down in Williamson up a hollow, Williamson Hollow and a in front of the railroad station I had I went up a street that this ^{16:30} old lady was sitting on the porch and so as I went by we spoke and she says, ole yeah, says you're the little boy that watched me up there so earnestly as I was talking at Raw. Says you certainly did listen and I ask, I ask Mother Jones then, I said Mother Jones what is all this about? I says we kids used to go round out here and we could go out and fish around and play in these round ^{17:00} and they was no limit to going up one hollow or coal company from one to the other. We could go place, play baseball and a fish along the stream but I says now our families won't hardly let us out and she said son you're just too young to understand. You just too young to tell this story what what's being done.

Ferraro: ^{17:30} Once again tell me a you spoke to Mother Jones after she spoke to the a to the group at Raw. Tell me what she told you.

Blakeley: She told me that a I asked Mother Jones why all this trouble? I said alot of trouble and a I said what's the trouble? I said we kids here and boys and girls used to play around anywhere we wanted to in the county and I says alot of us boys ^{18:00} would go fishing and play baseball over these lots and I said a we now we don't feel like we can go anywhere. We used to go from one camp to another and play baseball but we don't do it now. Our mothers, our parents won't let us. Fraid to and Mother Jones came back and said son

says your just too too young for me to tell why, what we're doing but says the coal operators are causing alot of trouble. ^{18:30} Coal operators causing alot of trouble and they making slaves out of these miners and says they treating them like dogs and a they putting em in bad houses and forcing em to work long hours and says you just too young to understand. That's what she said and I went on to school.

Ferraro: What did she look like?

Blakeley: ^{19:00} Mother Jones was a just to be a dried up little woman. A dried up little woman and small and she had a she had this she had this long dress on black dress and said it had a black bossom waist that came up and a she had a lace seemed like around her neck and she had a little, little hat tilted on the side of her head. It reminded me a whole lot of the Schriners but it had a tilt on it - ^{19:30} made a little different that kept on the side of her head but she didn't smile she just, she was all she was all nerves. She was dedicated to what she was doing.

Ferraro: What did the other people who saw her speak, what did that what was the reaction to to what she was saying?

Blakeley: They went wild. The miners I think the whole crowd, I I don't know who was rednecks and I don't know who was scabs but the whole, whole miners organi- ^{20:00} zation, the miners in there went wild. They just cheered her on and on. A go to it Mother Jones. Tell them about it. Tell them Mother Jones, tell them about it and she a they just went wild but then a few minutes the people around the store worked for the coal companies came out but they didn't say anything. They just had to watch it. They just watched it that's all.

Ferraro: Why didn't the thugs move around?

20.30

Blakeley: They must not a been in there at that time. I don't know. I can't answer that.

Ferraro: They been in do you think they would have gone after her?

Blakeley: They certainly would. They would in McDowell County but I don't know about Mingo. 1914 it wasn't well organized as McDowell County. McDowell County was one of the most hardest organized counties in the United States...and I don't believe they would have bothered there ²¹⁰⁰ cause they had a real warfare on their hand I suppose. See see one thing about bloody Mingo - Mother Jones had a...five of the fast gunmen of the county that was on her side and it wasn't hard in those day to get gunmen because it was just following the Civil War and everybody knew how to use gun and could use a gun. ²¹³⁰ So she could get, she could get help in Mingo County easily but not in McDowell County.

Ferraro: Was a Logan County alot like McDowell in its non-union sentiment?

Blakeley: Logan County. I can't talk to much for Logan County but I've played ball over there and I knew alot of people - friends there but it was more it was more like a whole lot like Mingo County. It wasn't like there's no county like McDowell County. Free state of McDowell County was a police state of ²²⁰⁰ its own.

Ferraro: Tell me about a what do you mean by a police state?

Blakeley: A police state is where the a political set up backs the coal company and

the Boldenfelts men and a the a different officers throughout the county. It was heavily republican at that time. McDowell was heavily the republican and it had been since the Civil War and a ^{22:30} or since it was organized but a in a state like that ever ever community is a republican leader and it becomes heavy and it's heavy policed and the Boldenfelts were everywhere and then the county court it was also against organizing - bringing in the union. County court, county court and the Boldenfelts and the local organizations was a ^{23:00} hard and not only that the officers of the coal company. So it was a hard state to beat. It became it's rightful name - Free State of McDowell County.

Ferraro: Why was it called the Free State of McDowell?

Blakeley: Free State of McDowell County was called because it was isolated. In those days you had nothing but rough mountains to get into the state capitol. They was no roads. They wasn't any roads even to Wyoming County to Pineville. They wasn't any roads to Bluefield. ^{23:30} Cowpaths maybe not any real roads. No railroad in the early days and a see the railroad didn't get hooked up till 8 198 19 1893 at Rodefill. The east and west was connected and a the roads didn't come in until about 1922. Decent roads to go over with an automobile ^{24:00} So a it was an isolated county and politicians never looked down into McDowell at those days except the voting and they took times to get the results of that in those days but they never came down in there to hunt the votes or anything like they do today and a it got the name of the Free State of McDowell because at that time you see they could they could try the case - tryed the case that was number - they could they could a carry out that conviction and ^{24:30} then they could also execute without sending any more any other place. They could a try a case first. Try the case first and then a sentence judgement and then execute.

Ferraro: Without really having to deal with the state authority of Charleston.

Blakeley: Just deal, didn't deal with anybody and a ^{25:00} they was alot they was alot of killing and executions in the early days in the coal development. They was alot of them. Alot of killings going on in the coal field - alot, alot of moonshining in those days. Now a John, John Henry that you've heard so much about they they was never a John Henry never was it it only ^{25:30} a a not a realistic story at all. There's no proof at all that there was a John Henry. No record of the biological birth of John Henry. Now you want me to tell that John.

Ferraro: Not at this time. I just I'd like to a hear more about that story but I want to try to

Blakeley: Ok

Ferraro: Need to be about the coal field.

Blakeley: Ok

Ferraro: You said that there was alot of killing going on during the early days of coal development.

Blakeley: That's right. ^{26:00}

Ferraro: Why why was that?

Blakeley: Well, it was local law and it didn't have to pass it on to the state and then there was alot of a they was two things that brought that by. You

had alot of foreigners in there that couldn't speak English and a as you know I don't know whether there alot of people today know it but you see you had a famous tally town. That's where the Italians were put by the coal companies ^{26:30} and they were put in a spot of their own and they were called tally towns. Now they had their own little bakers out beside of it and it was really environmental. It was just like Italy. It was and they couldn't talk - speak English. Took em years. It's taken em years throught the years to be able to speak English. Then you had what they call a nigger town. They was stuck put in a hollow somewhere and their little shanties were put up side of side of the hill and they were put up in there and that was called nigger town. Well, that that in itself created alot of crime and alot alot a killings in those days and then another thing had a you had Cinder Bottom which was packed by the coal companies at that time and the politicians at that time and that that caused alot of killings.

Ferraro: What was Cinder Bottom?

^{27:00}
 Blakeley: Cinder Bottom was one of the most baughty places in the United States and noted from Coast to Coast and throughout the world probably was cinder bottom at Keystone. It was a place where beautiful girls...went and sold their soul to the miners and a...it first started in Keystone and about ^{27:30} in the early days it started in the lower part of Keystone at a boarding house where one girl came in and then a she began to take care of the some of the miners needs and a she had heard and wasn't long after that the other girls heard that the money was being made you know over in this coal field and they came in from Virginia and all around Virginia and far down as Tennessee and ^{28:00} they'd come in and she had the first first thing she had two girls working at the boarding house. So the next thing the the they was so many girls

come in. Somebody set up Cinder Bottom that was on the east side of Key-
stone and a little place and had whore house fixed up around you know for
us girls and a they ^{28.30} made it Cinder Bottom. Called it Cinder Bottom cause
they took the cinders from the a coke ovens and filled it in and made a
street and then it wasn't long till a it grew. It just kept growing and
growing and a they had a famous moonshine. It was dispersed there and they
had gambling and they had a girls sold themselves. It cost ^{29.00} three dollars
for a girl maybe thirty minutes. They'd spend thirty minutes and then
charge three dollars, course she her wages at the end of the week was about
around twenty seven dollars a week and they was always alot of fighting,
alot of killings there, especially at at a Dead Mans Cut right below Key-
stone there where ever. Saturday night they was always somebody found dead
there. ^{29.30} Either robbed of their payroll, killed and left in the tunnel and
same way alot of fighting went on at Cinder Bottom. Now Cinder Bottom
couldn't exist by itself ah unless it had some backing. The coal operators
saw that these were hungry men. They were hungry men and lonely men far
away from home and a they was nothing more lonesome and lonely than a ^{30.00} lonely
man away from home and Cinder Bottom seemed to be a answer and there is
where he a he went there to get his ashes hauled and so a that was Cinder
Bottom. Now they served as many as eight hundred people, eight hundred men,
eight hundred men to a thousand men at some weekends. Some busy weekends
eight hundred to a thousand men. They grew to that size. ^{30.30}

Ferraro: Three dollars a day was alot of money back then wasn't it?

Blakeley: Three dollars for a half an hour.

Ferraro: I mean but a I mean a guy loading coal could make three or four dollars a day right?

Blakeley: Yeah.

Ferraro: So you're talking about a days wages for a girl?

Blakeley: That's right. It;s like twenty seven dollars for a she'd get twenty seven dollars a week but the house keeper would get three the ^{31:00} three dollars and they could disperse moonshine and they could disperse moonshine and gambling. They made more that way to. Now a Cinder Bottom didn't have an easy time to go sometimes. How they was a what they call there was a one of Thelmas grandmothers, big Mamma Dillion, ^{31:30} lived there at Keystone or below Keystone at husband was a ah looked after their mules and she had she took in a young couple for boarders. She ran a boarding house. So she took in a young couple. A nice girl from Virginia and a nice boy that she had married and anyway he hadn't been there long till he want he tried out Cinder Bottom and he got to go ^{32:00} Cinder Bottom so a his his wife told him that if he did not

Ferraro: Tell me about a how the company stores were set up in the coal coal mining town.

Blakeley: The company stores were set up in necessity. You remember they was no roads out of a coal company mines and a they had to set up a way of a getting merchandise and food to the miners within around the area. They worked ^{32:30} the mine becasue they wasn't no any railroads in there at beginning and no roads at all and no transportation. So they set em up to serve the people, serve the miners and then they begin to a use script. I don't know what year the script came in but they begin t use script and then the miner could go there say for six dollars ah for he would pay six dollars and they'd get a probably five dollar ^{33:00} script and then they his family could go there and deal and a that's the way that begin - the necessity of it and it went on

through the years.

Ferraro: Was that a did the company stores treat a the miners equitably?

Blakeley: That I can't speak one hundred percent but I do know some of my own
 33:30
 experiences here in Raleigh County. I a knew alot of store managers because
 we dealt with em through the years. A my company served em the laundry and
 dry cleaning through the company stores- commissaries and we'd give em a
 discount and that driver would pick it up there. So through the years I
 picked up alot of information and I do know that a there was alot of finagling
 going on in script, I knew some of the store managers would a say sell,
 34:00
 sell a script and then somebody on the weekend that a wanted maybe a pint
 of whiskey they needed three dollars and they'd buy the script back for
 three dollars.

Ferraro: Where were we. We were on the subject of the company store.

Blakeley: I don't know a great lot about it except what I hear say from different
 34:30
 miners and things that they did have exormate prices.

Ferraro: Pause it. Alright I just I want to go onto something a little bit different.
 35:00
 Let's go back to a a to Welch. I think this was in a 1921. You were in
 Welch and I want you to tell me about how you were going into business with
 your a brother setting up a smoke shop and a I want you to tell me about a
 what you saw on the day that Hatfield and Chambers were shot. Tell me the
 whole story.

Blakeley: That was my brother-in-law, Bob Marshall and I I was just getting out of
 high school and we had set up a little smoke shop down next to my brother.

35.30

John Blakeleys' theatre and the smoke shop is of course where we sold candies and cigars and drinks and newspaper, magazines and this was directly in front of the courthouse. The Appalachina Power building and those buildings along up there on Wyoming Street were not built at that time and there was a clear view across to the courthouse. So a there were Johnny Loman was a recorder of the city of Welch and I he came up and had a drink and in the place that morning and he went out to help me put up a chocolate cream. Cream chocolate candy company sign put up on the windows. Show window and as we were putting it up a shooting started up around the courthouse front of it up at the head of the steps and I looked up and there was three men at the head of the steps and a so I immediately pulled the door to and just ran right up there because like a boy I wanted to see what was going on and what was happening. So I went up set and one fellow had fallen down the steps into the what they call a pit where you turn in off of Wyoming Street up the steps and the first landing they was a they was a man dead there and a woman leaning over over him crying and a she was down on her knees and crying and holding him in her arms and kissing him and saying oh my love, says they've killed you cold-blooded and says they've killed you. Says they promised to protect you up here to this day and trial and a after a few minutes she just seemed to calm down and just got her strength back and just stood up and she looked straight up to Lively who was standing on the right side at the courthouse at the head of it and with that parasol that she had been carrying she took a hold of it like a baseball bat and started up them steps a determination and then as she got to the top of the steps a she started to draw it back and Lively who had been watching her all the way with cold-blooded eyes knew that she was determined to come up there to hit him or kill him with something. So he grabbed the parasol just reached out and grabbed it and threw it over our head. I was sitting at the bottom of the steps and watching it all and he threw it over our head back into the

36.00

36.30

37.00

37.30

38.00

street across now where the old Appalachian Power Company building is I believe and a Mrs., Mrs. Hatfield she run like a scared rabbit. She ran up them steps and never stopped. Went on through the courthouse steps ^{39:30} and step and stopped in in the prosecuting attorneys, the late Judge Count, a nice gentle old man who took care of her. Took her in and took care of her and a I went down to the bottom of the steps and Sid Hatfield was laying down there curled up. His eyes wide open and his coat open and I reached down and got a bullet ^{39:00} about the size of my thumb that had batted. I reached down and got it and a that morning sometime late that day a group of us going up to play baseball and we had a third baseman come in from Baltimore. I forgot his name and he wanted to see this bullet. He he had come up there by that time and he wanted to see this bullet and I've never seen it to this day yet and a they's one other thing in there that ^{39:30} I I reflects back in my mind is Lively. When Lively had had shot done the shooting he crossed over onto the grass over side the ledge that comes down on to the on to the yard and came down that steep grass and shot another load into Sid Hatfield ...and later then that I run I had a boyfriend of mine who's name is in high school with me and he become an undertaker. He was learning undertaker there in Welch and he was in Charleston and he told me that the bodies were really really loaded with bullets.

Ferraro: Ok, I'd like you to tell me the story again alright and I want you you the first time you went through it you named ^{40:30} the people who did the shooting. Did you know who they were? Ok, I'd like you to do that again. This will give Charlie a chance to shoot a little bit differently too. Ok, could you tell me that story one more time what you saw?

Blakeley: Just exactly what I told now?

Ferraro: Pretty much except name the people who did the shooting.

Blakeley: Well, that morning...Ed Chambers was leading a two two a couple. ^{41:00} Ed Chambers and Sid Hatfield. Ed Chambers in front coming up from the station and they crossed as they passed the El Wood Hotel is long gone now and they was a fellow run it Hoses Off Hoses Off because they always betting on the races and his nickname was Hoses Off and a he talked to them a few minutes as they went by and then they passed up by the old Rexall Drug ^{41:30} which is now the Welch Drug I understand and on the corner was Jim Wood and Ed Blakeley talking usually of a morning conversation and another Boldenfelts. A Boldenfelts man was with them. Those three were just chatting away that morning and so as they passed the drug store the Boldenfelts man just begin to trail right behind them slowly, unnoticed right behind them until they ^{42:00} turned into the courthouse. When they turned into the courthouse a he stopped at the bottom of the steps and as they started up the steps a Ed Chambers led and he got up got up to the first landing. Ed Chambers and his wife had turned had a turned made the turn up the second at third step before Sid Hatfield ^{42:30} and his wife turned the next turned the corner but soon as Sid Hatfield and his wife turned the corner then the shooting begin. From the from the top was Soldiers, Spence, and Lively. Lively was on the right side with is foot up on the ledge and the other Boldenfelts was down at the foot foot of the down on the street and that's when the shooting began...and of course Ed Sid Hatfield fell to the bottom and his wife ran like a scared rabbit on to the courthouse and a Mrs. a Mrs. Chambers knelt down and hugging her husband and crying and really looked very emotionally up-set and then all of a sudden she just gained her strength and started up the ^{43:00} steps and toward Lively. She a looking at Lively and she went up to see Lively to with her umbrella. Using it like a baseball bat. ^{43:30}

Ferraro: Hold on for a second. Ok, go ahead.

Blakeley: Like a baseball bat and then a Lively had never taken his eyes off of her and still still eyes were set on em and he watched her come up there cause he knew what she was going to do to him so he grabbed the umbrella as he as she started to strike. Grabbed it and threw it over my head where I was sitting there at right there on the bottom. Right close to where Ed Chambers was laying and threw it over my head into where now is the Appalachian Power Company property.

Ferraro: Describe what you did a when you when you saw Sid Hatfield's body. What did it look like?

Blakeley: When I looked down then and course Sid after after a after Lively had gone down and shot him again. He'd hopped over the ledge and gone down the steps and shot him again and another load from his gun and so I went down and he was laying there on the on the in that little offest there where you start up the steps and his body was curled up and a had his eyes wide open and didn't seem like no life in him at all and so I reached down. I saw the this bullet in the pit of his stomach on the sidewalk where it had gone through his stomach and had batted and I picked it up, picked up this bullet and I looking at it and by that time there was one of our fellow ball players had come up and he wanted to see it. Picked it up and I've never seen the bullet to this day.

Ferraro: Show me how big it was...

Blakeley: It was at least about the size of my thumb as I can remember.

Ferraro: Get get a close up.

Blakeley: At least bout the size of my thumb.

Ferraro: I can cut it in you see.

Blakeley: Course I didn't measure it or anything. I could just reflect back to my memory. It was spread out because it hit the sidewalk. ^{46:00}

Ferraro: Ok, now a who were these men that shot Sid Hatfield and Chambers?

Blakeley: At the top of the steps was a Sauders, Spence and Lively and down at the a foot of the steps was another Boldenfelts but I can't remember his name right off but I do have his name on record.

Ferraro: Ok, who were these men working for?

Blakeley: They were Boldenfelts people. They Boldenfelts hired by the coal companies ^{46:30} to keep out unions.

Ferraro: Ah what do you remember hearing about the a the Matewan massacre?

Blakeley: The Matewan massacre there is alot of bitterness and of course there was alot of joy seems like in Williamson and in around Mingo County. They seem to bank alot of joy there that because it was heavily. It was on the verge of going union and it had Mother Jones down there and stirring alot ^{47:00} stirring up alot and it seemed to be alot of joy on the killing down there in Matewan but up in McDowel County was a sad sad feeling among the people. On the people especially because it was more of a a one sided town - one sided county.

Ferraro: What do you remember hearing about the Matewan massacre?

Blakeley: Ah

Ferraro: What was it about?

Blakeley: Up the hollow there round close to Red Jacket was a little mines that the coal operators had set some strikers what they call rednecks out in the street. They they they wouldn't get out of the houses and so the Boldenfelts sent down a their Boldenfelts - eleven eleven men down to a Matewan. They came down on train number fifteen that run about noon. Hit Matewan about noon and stopped there at the little one way one station. Wasn't any station it was just a stop opposite the old Buskirk building. They run that built parallel on an old old building that's built along the right opposite the stop and then they got out the train and walked up the hollow to this coal camp. They wasn't long up there and they a set all these people out. They set em out - cleaned the house out furniture and everything and got em all out and set it out in the street and then they headed back down to Matewan and a course they was alot of bitterness in Matewan that would never been in McDowell County because they was different - way different set-up but the chief of police happened to be this...a Ed Chambers that was with Sid later and he was he was the main gunman. One of the main gunmen of Mother Jones and he was the chief of police of Matewan.

Ferraro: I thought Sid Hatfield was the chief of police?

Blakeley: Ah your right. Can I

Ferraro: Sure just go ahead and just start start that over again.

Blakeley: Ok (nothing on the tape) two brothers that were killed down at Mingo County and Bill Hatfield were in the office and it was not long after they killed him and a Tom Felts told told my brother and Bill Hatfield and John's office that he'd get the son of a bitches that done this to his brothers and...so a

Ferraro: Do you believe that he ordered a Hatfield and Chambers shot? ^{49:30}

Blakeley: I coulnd't swear to anything like that but a...as I looked at as I reflect now, you've ask a question that I can only go back and reflect one thing that a as I looked at the bodies right there at the bodies and looking down at em and as their coat was open I could see no guns on either one of em and a with the bitterness that they had in those days I I would assume that that was what was done. ^{50:00}

Ferraro: You're saying that a to the best of your ability to see that neither Hatfield or Chambers were armed when they were murdered?

Blakeley: They had no guns on em cause I could see the pockets and I could see sides and I could see their I could see no where guns are hung. I they wasn't no guns. They wasn't no guns on em. ^{50:30}

Ferraro: Did you a get to see Mrs. Hatfield at all after the shooting?

Blakeley: I didn't see her till years in later that I ran into her at Morgontown. I was a freshman in Univeristy and somebody told me that she was up there. I just remember seeing her and that's all but I I never I never did see her or talk to her. I didn't see her that day no more because somebody they taken care of quick and fast. ^{51:00}

Ferraro: Ok, can you do that for me one more time Mr. Blakeley? Describe describe Sid Hatfield's wife reaction when her husband was shot.

Blakeley: Mrs. Mrs. Hatfield was for not here a minute. She headed up them steps like a jack rabbit scared and a she went into the courthouse and went in to the office of Judge Counts and his daughter Lilian Counts and a protection and guidance ^{51:30} and the old honorable judge gave it to her. Now Mrs. Chamber it was different. She she knelt down on beside of her husband and began to cry and really very emmotionally disturbed that her husband just killed right out from under her and she she a told him says these people ^{52:00} of this sheriff had told us they'd bring him up here for protection for this trail and a said they have killed you and then she suddenly she got strength. Just seemed like the Lord had given her strength and she just got up and looked up up towards Lively. She didn't look at the other two. She looked at Lively and a she got her parasol up like a baseball bat and started up them steps ^{52:30} determined to get up there and do something to this man and as she got up the steps Lively who had not taken his eyes off of her from the time she left - from the time he had killed her husband and and she got up there and started to strike at him like baseball and a he grabbed that parasol and threw it over my head that was sitting down at the bottom of the first on the first landing ^{53:00} over into the street and over on the where the present American Appalachian Electric Power now office is.

Ferraro: Ok, that's good. Let me ask you what happened to the men who shot Hatfield and Chambers?

Blakeley: They were tried and a Lively, Lively who was one of the main fellows in the whole thing and I didn't tell you before but Lively was the one that was had ^{53:30}

been sent down to Matewan years, months before this. He had been sent down there on a secret mission for the Boldenfelts and he put up a little cigar store of some kind of little joint and a never known to the miners and never told them who he was and his purpose was to stay down there and get what information he could from the miners and then relay it back to his headquarters at Bluefield - Boldenfelts. ^{54:00} So he stayed down there several weeks and gathered all the information he could on the miners organization secret and then carried it back and a this this he was one of the main fellows that done the shooting that day.

Ferraro: What happened to them in their trials?

Blakeley: Ah...they came clear. ^{54:30} I don't know why. I can't answer why but they they weren't sent over the line. That's that was justice in those days.

Ferraro: Ah, how did a how did the mine mine operators back in those days employ Boldenfelts agents? What were they used for?

Blakeley: They were used to protect the mines. - security for the mines and it's operation ^{55:00} and get the coal out and at that day Mother Jones was running over the state. She was running over the nation but she had begin to hit the West Virginia and the turn of the century and they had also knew a the coal operators you see are a are the big mine owners of the big cities especially the they big companies are on Wall Street and they are big companies are in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia and New York ^{55:30} and the big cities and a so they they had a they had had enough history experience of Mother Jones so when she begin to come into the state you see Mother Jones was put in put in prison up here in in a right out of right out of a Charleston and several times here in

West Virginia and tried...and they they had a history of it I mean they ^{56:00} had a history of her and the pulman strike and the steel strike - pulman strike in Chicago and a strike in Pittsburgh and the one with John see not many people know it but see she was in the I believe it was in the what what what medal is the John Rockefeller having? Was it Utah or one of these western states that that a she she pulled a strike there and they put her in jail there. ^{56:30}

Ferraro: Lodlow, Colorado. Tell me a how the operators were using the Boldenfelts people.

Blakeley: I don't know exactly how a so far as hiring em and so forth. I don't know whether they were on a regular payroll or paid em or how they paid em so far but I do know that they were tied in heavily with the coal operator because the operator and then they a done what they told em to do.

Ferraro: Such as...

Blakeley: Such as a keep out organizers and keep out the union and either beat em up ^{57:00} or kill em and destroy em in other words stay out of my state - out of my county.

Ferraro: Evicting miners from their houses.

Blakeley: That was down in bloody Mingo but I don't know of one ever in McDowell because it was all one way. They knew one way they wasn't any objection.

Ferraro: Explain how the a guards would treat organizers who might come into an area. ^{57:31}

Blakeley: The only way that I can only thing that I can go back and and tell you is that by my own a...experience of running into these people is a as you know Welch is a closed little town and you don't secretly go around it. You have to go through the town because the mountains are straight, the mountains are up and they were rough in those days. They wasn't no high-ways like up back of Welch now that cut through. ^{58.00} They were rough - come down right down to the river bed and right down to the edge of Welch. Nobody went around it or secretly went around so they had to come one way the train cause it wasn't no roads and the only thing I know is that organizer came down to Shannon Branch. That's right below Welch and a he came up on a train humped up between the coal cars and two Boldenfelts men caught him down there ^{58.30} because they always on the alert in those days for organizers and at ever moment. So a two Boldenfelts caught him down there when the train stopped to get some water at at a water tank at Shannon Branch a they soon have to question him pretty close that he was an organizer and headed toward Gary to organize. Try to get some sympathy for some work for the union and a these fellows ^{59.00} beat him up pretty bad and pistol whipped him and left him there to die and told him, says you some of a bitch if you don't die, says we'll come back and finish the job and a it happened to be fortunate to the colored man that two little colored boys were fishing or out that day and they found him and helped him took to the home or had their folks come and help him help him get back and he got up enough enough health back and he went back to ^{59.30} back down in bloody Mingo below Williamson. Now as I remember also that a in those days John Blakeley was a powerful man of the day. He was a powerful man not not many people knew how really powerful he was because he the first thing he he was with the coal operators cause he had alot of their insurance - fire insurance and another thing he was in ^{100.00} sympathy with the coal operators and no union - no union and a as a as his

policeman would train as a organizer would come through and the policeman recognized or though he was an organizer or found out he was an organizer that he would call immediately to somebody or one of the coal operators out that he was headed your way and half way between somewhere between there and the coal operation somebody would stop him and they would really ^{1:00:30} give him the works and tell him to get out of the county and never come back.

Ferraro: So your saying that your brother was a was deeply involved with the coal operators and in terms of the political structure of running the county?

Blakeley: That's right.

Ferraro: Was there an economic arrangement between the the a operators and your brother?

Blakeley: No, no.

Ferraro: Did he a...

Blakeley: Nothing only that he got lot of the coal company business. Which is a whole lot. ^{1:01:00}

Ferraro: Was he paid a royalty per ton to keep the union out?

Blakeley: No, he wasn't paid anything. He wasn't paid anything like that.

Ferraro: Just the legitimate business opportunities were enough for...

Blakeley: Yeah, that's right.

Ferraro: Ah, ok one more time tell me the story about your encounter with Mother Jones at Raw.

1:01:30

Blakeley: Bennett Bias a classmate of mine and another boy we called Hog Molly decided to go up and get some get some chestnuts. Those days the big chestnut trees were available everywhere and we loved to go chestnut hunting. So went up to a to a camp right out of Williamson, east Williamson - 1:02:00 Cinderella and we stopped at Cinderella to get some chestnut trees and by noon I decided and suggested that we go up and look at some Christmas trees that I had seen from the railroad train where it go back and forward to Welch. A I seen alot of Christmas trees up the hollow and a so we decided to go on up to Raw another coal company east of Williamson, just out of Williamson. 1:02:30 So a it was in walking distance. We could get back home by five o'clock easy. So a we walked up there and walked up the hollow and looked around some Christmas trees and spotted for the Christmas holidays. That was two months away and as we came back out of the hollow down close to coal company store we heard this we saw this old woman over around the big crowd around her that we I thought it was a pitch sales like it come 1:03:00 used to come through the coal companies. Like an Indian you know selling these wares or medicine and like a any anybody used to come through. Hungarians used to come through have a have a monkey trained monkey and people would you know go by their wares and so a we thought it was another one of those things so a we went over. We boys went over like little curious boys would be. We went over and the little stand was just where 1:03:00 we could just peep up and see just over it you know and see up what was going on. So we crowd in the around the crowd and got in close like little

boys do at a baseball game and look just looked up and we just had a perfect view of grandma grandmother Jones and a so a we saw this woman was really immotionally really immotionally an immotional a deep immotional talk and a she was calling the miners everything she could call them because they wouldn't get out of get off of asses. She said you get off your asses or you're going to die here to the coal operators wishes and I said your you too lazy to get out and work and that kind of language she called and she called operators anything that lot lot of things. She called them everything. So after a few after few minutes that she talking to em she paused for a second or two and then she reached down and got ahold of what I call then yard old black dress and pulled it up and tucked it under her arm. Then she reached down and got tucked the peticoat which had another ten yards in it and she looked at em and didn't say a word she just looked at em cold-blooded and in the eye like she was going to fight everybody. So then...grandmother drawers in those days were big. You could put two or three legs through em one. So she reached down there and tucked that and left everything bare and as I as I an then she turned around. She leaned over she leaned over and course as I as I remember this was my first labor relations course and a first contract. So as she leaned over and this bare part she just begin to pat it and says this is for all the son of bitches the coal operators...and then of course the miners went wild. They the in her crowd that day she knew they was scabs in it and she knew they also they were were a rednecks which was her which was her following was a rednecks and she had plenty but she didn't have enough as a scabs. The more scabs but they were all around her all around and a so when she did that and they begin they really cheered her. Tell em about it grandma, tell em bout it Mother Jones. Tell em about it and she put em in a fighting spirit. That was one of the most fighting spirit that I have ever heard the miner gets in was that very day right there and a then right after that all the officials

of the coal company that was in the commissary and offices all come out to see what was going on and that's what they saw. Then about a week later I was.

Ferraro: Ah hold on for a second. Didn't you speak to her up there?

Blakeley: No, I never spoke to her at all. I didn't talk to her. No she just...

Ferraro: While up at Raw?

Blakeley: No, she was talk. She was too busy with that miners. I didn't speak to her at all. 1:06:30

Ferraro: Ok.

Blakeley: No.

Ferraro: Then you spoke to her down at Williamson?

Blakeley: Yeah, Williamson. Now about a week later sometime after. I don't know exactly when it goes back that far. I can't except the time but I was going to school when she was sitting on a porch in back up in a hollow there. A little house setting on the front porch and a we started talking and she said oh yeah, your that little impotent boy that watch me up there at at the a watched me talk up at Raw. I said yes, I am and a I said a Mother Jones I said, a whats causing all this trouble. I said we boys boys used to go round here. We could go out and fish up in any any of these places along the bank and we could play baseball - sandlot baseball and all these camps around us but I said now we can't. We're afraid to

go out anywhere because it just to to dangerous times for us to go out
 and she said son you don't says. You just too young to understand whats
 going on and said and told me then about the coal operators that they
 were putting these people in a dinky little houses and not paying them
 enough overtime. Working them and treating them like dogs or slaves and
 a that that was all and I just had to get on to school...up the hollow. ^{1:07:30}
^{1:08:00}

Ferraro: Are there any other stories about about a this period in time that you
 want to tell me that you haven't told me?

Blakeley: I think there's one thats that marks the real history of this coal. The
 development of the coal business and that is in those day you remember in
 these mountains that after the Civil War alot of these squatters or alot
 of people that came into these mountains to hide from the Civil War es-
 pecially the south and alot of them came into this coal fields then I mean
 there wasn't anything but rugged mountains. You get lost in these mountains
 nobody could ever find you. If you'd go down to Johnny Cape there below
 Yeager and get back in there on the Wyoming and the Wyoming on a Guyandotte
 River and nobody could ever find you and a so a lot of them came in here
 and and build out of the mountains. They had plenty of timber to work with
 and plenty to eat and a I mean food is in the animals and up up in game and
 so they just stayed in there and nobody could ever find them so a moonshining
 become one of the heaviest businesses of the day and there was a moonshiner
 I think moonshiner up ever hollow and they'd generally get way up head of
 the hollow where somewhere they could get their mule to or carry a load of
 corn or supplies to and especially where there is a fresh spring and so
 they were really flourish because there lonely men away from foreign countries
 from a everywhere in the east. Really want they like to drink and these
^{1:08:30}
^{1:09:00}
^{1:09:30}

fellows just flourished to sell moonshine. So the the a corporation had
 to do try to do something about it and a so they got a preacher there at
 Welch. A noted preacher and happened to be a first cousin a double first
 cousin of my mother, Sally Day Blakeley, and a had to be a double first
 cousin so a they hired Preacher Day and it wasn't long till he had a any
 search for any moonshiners and rumrunners and that he had killed several
 men and he got the name there through the coal fields and especially from
 the negroes Booger Man Day. Booger Man Day and a he he that name carried
 with him right on through it all and he he he is was supposed to have killed
 around eleven men in his life and in order to Booger Man was afraid of no-
 body. He was quick on the gun, on a rifle or a pistol. He was quick and a
 so a he sent he was hard it was hard to to get to these moonshiners cause
 a you you had to go up rough terrain and it always had guards out on high
 spots where they were working - making moonshine. So what Booger Man did
 sent to Armer and Company and got a got a calf suit made to fit his body
 and then got a a bell got a little calf bell and hung it around his neck
 and a if you if you remember McDowell at all, you remember just a heavy
 laurel and thick it thicket that you creep through there and a now the
 reason they got the bell was the fact that in those days and I farmed there
 our cows would just run all over the mountain side and nobody would ever
 I mean you hear a cow up way up top of the mountain you know it was a cow
 and you wouldn't suspect it was a man. So a Booger Man got this cow bell
 and he'd creep up right up to the still and the cow bell be ringing you
 know and they think it was a cow around the place and never think nothing
 about it. All of a sudden he'd hop out and boys hold up stop and if they
 didn't stop that was to bad. A if they had somebody try to shoot at em it
 was too bad cause he was quick and fast and he he dropped em right there and
 a so that that was the legend not the legend but the real story of Booger

Man Day which is noted there in three states in Virginia and Tennessee
 and West Virginia and now years later after a after he had died, got ^{1:13:00}
 killed there at Rotofield. A negro moonshiner killed him. Shot him
 through the head and a two fellows then killed a negro as he run out the
 back porch and up through the railroad track. They shot him down and so
 years later cousin Jane over here brother lived here in Raleigh County
 named Millem - George Millem to a funéral. So she was telling me about ^{1:13:30}
 this and I ask I says cousin Jane, I said I've heard much about cousin
 Mack. A said he now get this that he a he saved saved a boy in his church.
 He married the boy and then he killed him at a moonshining still and I
 said was that real true and she said yes. ^{1:14:00} Said that is real true. Said
 a that that hurt she called him daddy. Says that nearly killed daddy.
 Says that nearly killed daddy. Said that hurt him worse than anything he'd
 ever done and a said this boy a that he just loved that boy. He taken him
 into the house and saved him and so a then she wanted me to stop over when
 I went to Welch. So I stop at her little apartment right below Blakeley ^{1:14:30}
 field. You know where Blakeley field used to be? You know where the
 Armory is there now? Well, you see my brother built a Blakeley field there.
 It was a beautiful ballpark. Why they ever tore it up and put an armory
 in it cause they could put the armory up on top of the mountain but they
 can't built a ballfield and a she she lived right there close to it. So
 I stopped to see her one day just for a few minutes and see cousin Jane
 how she was doing and a she gave me a bell that bell that he used. That ^{1:15:00}
 old crimped up bell that he used in that hunting hunting them moonshiners
 with.

Ferraro: Thank you very much. I really appreciate it.

1:15:19