

**R.F. Bane**

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David Schenck: So this is David Schenck and I'm talking with Mr. R. F. Bane at his home on Green River Road and so how long, you've lived your whole life here in the valley, Mr. Bane.

R. F. Bane: Yes sir, I've been here seventy-three years.

DS: Seventy-three years?

RB: Yes sir.

DS: And this property where we're sitting right now is part of the old family property?

RB: Yes sir, it belonged to my Granddaddy Joseph Bane and I bought it from his daughter Ruby Bane.

DS: So your grandfather, did it go back farther in the family than that?

RB: Yes sir, his daddy owned it at one time. His name was Davis Bane. And he also owned some acreage on Mr. Schenck's property. I guess you've heard of the Bane Field?

DS: Yes.

RB: He owned several acres right there and raised part of his family there.

DS: Right. And the family mostly farmed on the land?

RB: Yes sir, that's all my granddaddy ever done.

DS: What kind of farming?

RB: He just kept a couple of cows and some chickens and raised corn and stuff to feed them. He carried milk, butter, and eggs down to the company store.

DS: Right, down at the mill.

RB: Yeah and the neighbors was good to help one another. You know, then they didn't have much way of cutting hay and stuff or enough property to have a lot of hay, so they cut the tops and chopped them and pulled fodder. And the neighbors would pitch in and help one another do it. I remember when I was a little boy they would pull fodder and cut tops. I was too little to reach up and cut the tops but I could pull fodder. And all the kids always worked. Nowadays that's a different story.

DS: That's right.

RB: They have to have Mexicans to come in here and pick the tomatoes and beans. Our two kids they work for Grover Ward by the time they was big enough to pull a bean off the vine till they went to school.

DS: Mr. Ward, he grew a lot of produce?

RB: Yes sir and mostly pole beans. We always made the kids think they had to buy their own school clothes you know. They'd save their money and my wife would take them to buy clothes. Of course, we'd buy what they had to have but we'd make them think they had to buy it. Oh, I taught my kids to tithe off every dime. As far as I know, both of them tithed off every dime they ever made. The Lord has blessed both of them. They got about anything they want.

DS: And your son Randy lives right across the road, is that right?

RB: He lives on the back side of the mountain.

DS: Oh, on the back side, okay.

RB: In a log house up there.

DS: Oh, okay. I saw that.

RB: And they used to have a print building and a basement, but he's turning that into an apartment. My granddaughter, the only one I got, she got married Saturday.

DS: Oh, wow, congratulations.

RB: She's going to live in there till they can get her a house built.

DS: And that's Randy's daughter?

RB: Yes.

DS: Well, congratulations. You're proud of her I bet.

RB: Yes sir, sweetest little girl ever lived.

DS: I believe it.

RB: I shed a few tears when she got married.

DS: I bet you did.

RB: But I'm happy she got a good man.

DS: My son got married last May and I shed a few tears then too although he's married to the most wonderful girl. But, you know, those are important times.

RB: I was talking about the kids working in the bean field, I got two kids, Randy and Vicci, and she was picking beans, was seventeen years old and my brother was deputy sheriff for Albert Jackson, and he come up to bean field and asked her if she wanted a job as secretary for the sheriff. And it kind of scared her, she didn't know what to do. I told her go ahead and try it and they put her in an office up there where everybody comes in wants to see the sheriff, got that glass and little hole, and she was very shy about the public, but it didn't take her long to get used to it you know. She worked as the sheriff's secretary for I don't know the exact date but like six or seven years and he asked her if she'd be willing to take over child abuse and she was kind of nervous about that. She took it and she done that about eight years and then it got to getting to

her you know. He put her down in criminal investigation and she went to every school that she could go to and she went to Quantico, Virginia to that FBI school. She got a real good education in law and she's a homicide detective.

DS: Wow!

RB: And she retired with thirty years service. And she didn't have not one case that wasn't closed when she retired.

DS: That's a big change for a shy young girl.

RB: And she got to go, got to travel a lot. She got to go to Hawaii one time, her and her husband. Her and Sandy Jackson he's a homicide detective and they work together most of the time. They both got to go and bring that prisoner back.

DS: So both of your children have traveled all around?

RS: Yes sir.

DS: But you were telling me before we turned this machine on that you were out of the Green River Valley for four years in the Navy but you felt like this was the place you had to be.

RS: Yeah.

DS: Could you tell me about that again so we can get it on the machine?

RS: When I went in the Navy there won't no jobs around here. I cut pulpwood and there won't no money at all in that and I decided I'd go in the Navy. I'd never been out, I'd never even been to Asheville. Me and a friend of mine, J. C. Beddingfield, borrowed his brother's car and went to Asheville to the recruiting office and signed up. Like not to got back out of Asheville. Had to stop and ask somebody how to get on 25. But anyhow, we signed up and went to Hendersonville and got on a bus and went to Columbia, South Carolina and took physical. They put us on a train and sent us to San Diego.

DS: That's a long train ride.

RS: I rode the trains for five days and five nights and had never been on a train. We got into San Diego and we got off the train. There was a big old chief petty officer come out there and he started talking rough, fall in, we didn't know what fall in meant. Back then they were kind of rough. They jerked you around, make you fall in. But I thought Lord, what have I got into now. He had all them twenty-year stripes and him a chief petty officer and I thought he was the commander of the Navy.

DS: He probably acted like it.

RS: Yeah. I got through boot camp good. Never got in no trouble in boot camp. I'd done cut pulpwood and I was a pretty tough boy.

DS: I bet.

RS: Push-ups was hard but I got used to them real quick because I had a lot of strength in my arms. A lot of the poor boys had never worked or nothing and it was real hard on them but boot camp wasn't really rough on me. Then I went over Tin Can and they promised me, they sent us to Michigan to pipefitters school. That was to get me in.

DS: Right, then they forgot about it.

RS: They put me on Tin Can and put me down in the fire room. I punched burners and broilers. But I enjoyed the Navy and enjoyed all the places I went.

DS: You went to Korea and the China Sea, the Philippines, all around in the Far East.

RS: Yes sir, Hong Kong and the surprising thing I didn't know nobody else from around this area that was in the Navy. Well, I was walking down the street just as I got out of boot camp in San Diego and I met a boy I went to school with. His name was Tuffy Crawford. We pulled into Hong Kong one Sunday morning and officer of the deck called for me to come up there and Harold Pace, there's twins, Carol and Harold, they both went in the Navy at the same time and they separated them when they went in and Harold found out I was on that ship and he came and visited all day.

DS: That's the most amazing thing how you run into people. I mean the Green River Valley is a small place. You're in Hong Kong running into people.

RS: Yeah and I was walking down the street in Acosta, Japan one night and run into my good buddy J.C. Beddingfield, the one I went in the Navy with.

DS: Right, yeah, you all went in together.

RS: There are just hundreds of people in the streets and we run face to face together.

DS: So after you got out you said you were thinking you might make some big money in California but then you decided that you belonged here.

RD: Yeah, well, me and J.C. went up there and we wasn't skilled or anything so we joined the labor union and I called home and told Daddy what I was making. I was making \$3.35 an hour and he was making \$1.50 an hour as a carpenter, and he thought I was blowing smoke. But we really made some good money. I worked on the Los Angeles Long Beach Flood Control. I worked real hard to start with. I've always considered myself a good worker, putting riffraff on the banks there. So he come out there about the third day I was up there and he called me up to the truck and I figured he was going to fire me. Had two or three other boys working there and they wasn't doing nothing but I was laying with it. He said I see you're a good worker, said I'm going to give you a good job. He took me down to the office and introduced me to the chief engineer and he said I want you to drive this jeep and do whatever he asks you to do. So I would drive the jeep for him. He'd lay out work for the engineers in the morning then we'd drive

downtown and have a glass of tea. I had it made and I worked about three or four months at that and all of a sudden the trucker's union went on strike and he said boy, there ain't going to be no work here long because they can't get, trucker's can't get material in here for this job, won't be no work. So I went home that home that night and J.C. was working for a housing contractor. I said I don't know about you but I'm headed back to Green River tonight. He said let's go. So we loaded up our stuff and headed back and we drove all the way through from California, didn't stop. You know, we stopped to get gas and get something to eat.

DS: Right, that's a long haul. So you were ready to be back here?

RB: Yes sir. I come back it was still hard to get a job but I just worked a little here and yonder and I finally went to work out at Cranston Printworks making \$1.05 an hour on third shift.

DS: Right, right, but you never wanted to work in the textile mill.

RB: No.

DS: Your mother worked in the mill.

RB: Yeah.

DS: Forty-three years you told me.

RB: Forty-three years. My dad worked in there off and on. He done a little bit of everything. He logged, things get rough he'd go down and get a job anytime he wanted it you know.

DS: I've heard people say that they would work down there in the winter and then either quit or get themselves fired in the spring and do their farming and then go back in the fall.

RB: Yeah, yeah, it was a good thing for a lot of people.

DS: Just to be able to use it that way.

RB: Yeah. They went on strike down there.

DS: When was that?

RB: I believe it was 1955, '54 or '55 and I never seen no such in my life. It was rough.

DS: Yeah?

RB: Yeah and it kind of, I don't know, it done something to the people. It kind of separated them you know.

DS: The people who were working in the mill?

RB: Yeah, some was for the union, some won't. I'd just got out of the Navy so that was in '55. I went down there a time or two and there was a gang of people down there, people fighting and fussing, little shooting. Somebody blowed up Ernie Boys boat house – all kind of bad things were happening. Yeah, I hated to see that. It didn't bother me then but I look back on it you know I hate to see it because it separated a lot of families.

DS: Right. I guess I've heard people say that it was real, one of the major changes in the community. The Boys, they sold it after that, didn't they?

RB: Yeah, sold it to J. P. Stevens.

DS: J. P. Stevens. And J. P. Stevens ran it for what, thirty more years before closing it?

RB: Yeah, something like that I guess.

DS: So when was the four lane built, 25?

RB: I can't remember. The closest I can remember I was working in Greenville, South Carolina and I bought a new 1972 Ford pickup. I had to go down through the watershed down 25 and they had the road just gravel down and had the barricades up and ever once in a while if I worked late I'd slip around the barricades and come up. So it must have been around the '70s when they started it somewhere along there.

DS: I heard some people say that made a big difference for their life here in the valley.

RB: It did but it, you know, it cut off a lot of things in Tuxedo. Freeman's restaurant down there, well it was two restaurants, and it hurt them.

DS: Kind of cut the Green River Valley community off from Tuxedo.

RB: Yeah, people had to come right through Tuxedo then and a lot of people stopped at the café, especially truckers. They'd stop there and eat, buy their cigarettes.

DS: But with the four lane they just rolled on through.

RB: Kind of knocked Tuxedo off the map.

DS: Yeah.

RB: I went to that Tuxedo school down there. My son went to school down there and when he graduated seventh grade to the eighth at Flat Rock. Flat Rock burnt down and he had to come back to Tuxedo for the eighth grade. It was some young man set the schoolhouses on fire back then. I don't know if you remember it or not.

DS: No.

RB: I can't even remember his name.

DS: So he did a lot of them?

RB: Yeah, he set two or three. That's the only one that I can remember that burnt completely down. We talked about my mother. My daddy, like I said, he done a little bit of everything. He started with logs, cut pulpwood, cut heater wood and stuff and worked at the cotton mill and he was constable for thirty-eight years here.

DS: The constable for thirty-eight years?

RB: Yeah, in the Green River Township. He was elected by the people for thirty-eight years and then they done away with the constable.

DS: So what did a constable do? Is that like a policeman or is it like a judge?

RB: They have the authority to arrest anybody anywhere in the county for anything that was unlawful. He concentrated a lot on liquor stills. They got a lot of liquor stills. I remember when I guess I was about ten years old I went with him across this mountain right here. I won't call no names.

DS: Now are we talking about across the river or the mountain behind us?

RB: Go across the river and across that mountain, Long Mountain I think they call it. Went down the other side and right where Bobs Creek Church is right now, about a hundred yards up the branch, walked in there and had a liquor still. I was barefooted, about nine or ten years old. Kind of scared me. He walked around and stuck his finger in a barrel or two and tasted of it, told me when it would be ready to run. I didn't know nothing about what he meant by that. They had a stack of sugar setting over there in shorts. I don't know if you know what shorts are or not.

DS: No, I don't.

RB: People used to feed them to hogs. It's made out of wheat, kind of round. They use that to make liquor. Put it in the barrels, put yeast in it and make it make it work and get a head up on it and was ready to run. Anyhow, we come back home. He said son, don't you tell nobody where you've been today or what you've done. I said no, sir. I was scared. You know, it was a big thing to me.

DS: So he would go and he'd figure out when it was going to run and then he'd go back and catch them while they were running?

RB: Yeah. So he called a revenuer. Usually when he'd find one like that he'd call a revenuer then they'd take them to Asheville and try them in federal court. Well, I don't think there were but two deputies in Henderson County then. Anyhow, one of them, Jim Gilliam, he was the head deputy, he got him and he got the state highway patrolman and put them one on one end of Bobs Creek and one on the other end. They didn't have radios or nothing but they just planned out exactly what they was going to do. Daddy was to go across the mountain and go down in the still at a certain time. I had some pictures here but I don't know where they're at right now, of the guys that they caught. They was all, they didn't get mad at Daddy or nothing. He caught one of them running down, handcuffed him to a little old sapling and then he run another down and caught him and they had pictures of every one of them.

DS: So these were probably people he knew.

RB: Yeah, he knew them all.

DS: And they weren't mad at him?

RB: No, one of them sit in our house and I was in there listening. Daddy told him said, I almost called the name.

DS: No, no, don't say any names.

RB: Said you ought to go down to South Carolina and make your liquor. If you don't I'm going to catch you and he kind of chuckled. He said, oh, you couldn't catch me if you wanted to. But anyhow, he caught him.

DS: So it was sort of a game?

RB: Yeah.

DS: A dangerous game sometimes I bet. Sounds like your father was a brave man.

RB: Yeah. I heard a lot of them talk about back before, it wasn't illegal I don't reckon to make liquor for a long time and they make it illegal and a lot of old people, well, all of them that I knew that and talked to, they're dead now but I talked to one man and he said he made liquor. You know where that place out there on the CC Road used to be a camp.

DS: On the old CCC Road?

RB: Yeah.

DS: Is it Falling Creek? No.

RB: Perry's. I'm trying to think of the man's name that owned it then but he was a caretaker for him and he told me they made liquor in the same furnace and had a tin over it and he worked every day like working a job for five years. I said how'd you get that liquor out of there. He said he hauled it on a wagon and a yoke of oxen to Hendersonville.

DS: I've heard people say that it was a whole lot easier to haul liquor than it was enough corn or enough of anything else to make that much money and then you get it right down there in a little jug. But getting work in the valley has always been, well, since the war, the Second World War, has been challenging. People have gone out to DuPont and other places.

RB: That's probably one of the reasons a lot of people made liquor.

DS: Right, right.

RB: But I was glad to see that DuPont plant come in. It really helped a lot of people. A lot of people got to retire.

DS: But you've talked about you worked at DuPont. You worked down in Greenville. You worked in Asheville. So driving an hour or so to work is just kind of a regular thing for people in the valley.

RB: Yeah. Gas wasn't much then.

DS: Right, it's changed hasn't it? So why do people stay in the valley? Why do they love it so much? I mean you came all the way back from California and you know.



RB: Well, I just had, I was close to about everybody down the river and good friends with everybody and just a good place to live.

DS: You said earlier that, you know, way back you knew everybody up and down the road, all the people, all the kids, everything else. So that's one reason to come back.

RB: Yeah. All the kids would get together and play. It was just fun.

DS: So what are the biggest changes that you've seen? I mean you're seventy-three so you've seen a lot happen in this valley. What are the big changes.

RB: People selling off their land and people moving in here. When I was a boy you could go anywhere. You know, if you wanted to go hunting on somebody's property. Kids wanted to go play and walk in the woods, it wasn't nothing said. I've got neighbors right now that they won't let nobody walk on their property but they take a walk all the way around my property every day. And they come one day they asked me if I cared. I said no, walk all you want to. A lot of people come in here and they want to make all kind of changes.

DS: What kind of changes? Partly it's not letting you on their property like people used to. What else have they done?

RB: Little environmental things, they'll go to court for it, stuff like that. My brother-in-law's son that lives down here, he done a little grading out there the other day and he broke his shoulder and he hadn't got the silt fence up. Well, he was trying to get somebody to put it up for him. Next day I don't know, somebody from the county come down and got on him and told him they'd give him so long to get it up. He said how'd you know that I'd done this. He said your neighbor over here, called her name, called in on you. I don't know if you noticed that curve that's been took off, right out there?

DS: Yeah.

RB: The state was out there. They took that off and they hadn't finished with it. The boy that was operating the backhoe told him he got pulled off of it for a couple of days on something else. I mean it's rock. He said the same people called Raleigh on him. Said the bossman said you get back down there and get grass sowed on that and they sowed grass on rock. Just stuff like that. You know, I don't understand it.

DS: People have a different idea about what the land is for, how to use it or something. You know, Lynn, who told me to call you and who called you, she said the same thing. She said growing up as a little girl she just thought that the whole valley was hers. She could walk wherever she wanted to, play, the kids played wherever they wanted to. Nobody thought, well, this is Mr. Bane's land. This is Mr. Osteen's land and, you know, Mr. Capps' land. They just kind of everybody went where they wanted to.

RB: Like Sandy's land, Sandy Schenck's land, they got hunting clubs and things on that and I don't just go pull up there and park and go busting out through the woods. I went and asked Sandy if I could walk out in the Bane field. I wanted to take my grandkids out there. He said well sure, go right ahead. And I went up there one time, I kind of dreaded this though. It was a hunting club but they just had the place for deer and bear. A friend of mine liked to hunt grouse and we asked him if would go up there and grouse hunt a little. He said sure, you go right ahead. So I thought that was awful nice of him.

DS: Yeah, that's good. So do you find grouse? Aren't the grouse, they're about gone now aren't they?

RB: There's a few, not many like there was when I was a boy. When I was a boy I used to ride that road when I was working and have to go home on account of rain on construction, I'd go ride around, just drive slow and kill two or three grouse.

DS: Was that on the Green River Road?

RB: Yeah and around the CC Road

DS: Through there, yeah. So one of the big changes is people selling off their land and I guess why do they sell the land? I mean they must have needed the money? Was it taxes? Or was it different? What was it?

RB: No, I think mostly the younger kids get a job way off somewhere making good money, they think well, I don't need that land no more. I think that's one of the reasons they sell it and the taxes are really getting up so high it's hard to pay the taxes and you're on social security and that's all you got. I worked construction. I never did have no retirement. The Lord's always blessed me. And my kids would pay my taxes if I couldn't.

DS: Right, well, you're lucky in that way.

RB: I've divided my land up here. I split it up half and half between our daughter and our son.

DS: Your daughter lives in the valley now?

RB: No, she lives in Laurel Park and she's fixin to build her house up on Jump Off. But she's got it in her head she'll build her a house the way she thinks she likes it and sell that and then she's got another lot and she'll build her another one and do the changes and she's planning on building one right on top of this mountain here.

DS: After she does these other two projects?

RB: Yeah.

DS: Well, she sounds like an enterprising woman.

RB: Yeah. The Lord blessed me. I had twenty-one acres over at Cedar Springs Church there, lived in an old house, raised my younguns in that house.

DS: This was on Rock Creek Road or just right there at—

RB: No, it was on Green River Road.

DS: Right there at the church?

RB: No, it was about a half a mile past the church.

DS: Yeah, okay.

RB: And I got a chance to buy this and I had to sell it to buy this.

DS: You said earlier this was the old family place and you really wanted to be back here.

RB: Yes sir. If I'd been smart I'd borrowed the money and bought this and built a house and kept that. I'd had some retirement.

DS: That's right. That would have been your retirement plan.

RB: But a lot of times a man can't see that.

DS: Right, I know. So the river itself, did you do much fishing? Did people do much fishing in the river?

RB: Yeah, a lot of people fish. I hardly ever fish anymore but I used to when I was a boy. We'd go down to the river and catch a mess of trout any time I wanted to. We didn't have a refrigerator. We'd catch them in the evening and bring them to the house and clean them. My mother would pour salt all over them. She'd fry them for breakfast in the morning. People say you eat fish for breakfast. I thought they was awfully good the way we eat them. We had to either eat them right then or for breakfast the next morning.

DS: Now the river, I guess we're far enough upstream that it doesn't flood very much. I heard that there was a flood that took out the lake at one point.

RB: Yeah. I guess last three years we've had more flooding than we've ever had.

DS: Oh, really?

RB: Yeah, right in here.

DS: Why is that?

RB: One thing there's a place across the river over here used to belong to Mr. Cecil I think. I think York Pharr owns it now. My wife's granddaddy owned that land and he went to Florida and brought a little old thing of cane about that long and planted it on the riverbank and now a snake can't crawl through that thing and it throws the water out on this side of the river. And another thing, the river is stopped up. There's all kind of debris in the river. When I was a kid like my granddaddy, he trimmed the riverbanks every year and cleaned anything that fell in the river out and kept the river clean. You could fish up and down the river and not get your hook

hung. You couldn't fish to save your life or wade in that river now. You can see from the road down here there are all kind of old trees and stuff in there. OSHA come up here and they said they're going to clean the Green River up and they stopped down about the edge of my property. They were getting some trees from across the river down there and I told that guy I said the river is completely stopped up right there fifty feet. I said can you get that out. He said no, OSHA just pointed out what we could get. Not OSHA, what is it?

DS: It's not DOT. Is it the Natural Resource people?

RB: Something like that.

DS: Yeah.

RB: Anyhow, he said he wasn't allowed to get nothing but exactly what they wanted out.

DS: So it's blocked up with trees and bushes and stuff?

RB: Yeah. Stuff is broke off in the river. It'll wash down and get crossways and stuff.

DS: Is it silted up at all, silted up or sand built up in the bottom?

RB: Yeah, in places. I wish they'd clean that river out.

DS: People always farmed or had livestock right up to the river or in and out of the river?

RB: Right up to the river, yes sir. After I bought this place I didn't ever have nothing but corn, rye, stuff like that. I throwed it down and made a pasture, got me some cattle and I was living up there, had the cattle down here. Got up one Sunday morning the neighbor was out calling said your cows are in my bean patch. I decided I couldn't raise cattle down here.

DS: Right, and live up there. So does your property go right down to the river here?

RB: Yes sir.

DS: How much footage have you got on the river?

RB: I'll tell you the truth I don't know. It goes from right here down there to where that curve is. Goes out to a little old nothing in that curve. That much land it's just a hole in the world.

DS: I understand. I understand. Well, are there other things that you can think of that you'd like to tell me about growing up here? Did you go to school in the valley?

RB: No, I went to school at Tuxedo.

DS: Tuxedo. Did they have the smaller schoolhouses? They had some of those a long time ago, didn't they?

RB: Yeah. I didn't go to any of them. I remember the one at Cedar Springs when I was a little boy but there won't nobody going to school there.

DS: They'd already moved everybody to Tuxedo?

RB: Yeah. My aunt I bought this land from she went to school there and they had one down here at Green River. I don't remember it. But the old building stood there right where you turn to go to Bobs Creek. It was kindly about half way fell in and we kids when we'd go to church we'd get in there and play.

DS: So there was one where Cedar Springs Church is and then one where the Green River Church is?

RB: Yeah. That's the only ones I remember. I've heard a lot of talk of that stuff. I wish I'd recorded it. Grandpa said they used to have a post office right out here.

DS: Oh yeah?

RB: Yeah.

DS: Now I haven't heard about that. I've heard about one where Mrs. Beddingfield worked in Tuxedo. (Telephone rings.) I heard stories about those schoolhouses. When was the road paved up this far? The pavement only came a little ways out of Tuxedo for a while, is that right?

RB: Yeah, I think it ended right out here at this curve.

DS: I think it was Gladson that was telling me about it.

RB: Gigs Beddingfield, he's passed away now, his wife's still living, he got to be county commissioner and he got enough pull some way or other to get this road paved. We were opposite sides of politics but I always thought the world of him. We got along good. We helped him all we could and he returned the favor.

DS: Right, that's good. Well, the Bane family is one of the families that's been in this valley the longest amount of time I guess. Is that right?

RB: I imagine so.

DS: That cemetery I haven't been in the cemetery but it's close by here?

RB: Right straight up on the hill.

DS: Do you know how far back the gravestones go?

RB: No sir, there's some that's not even marked.

DS: Right.

RB: My great granddaddy I don't remember the date he was buried but he's up there, him and my grandmother.

DS: So there are some stones that don't have any writing on them or I guess there are probably some graves that don't have any stones at all.

RB: There probably is but I remember when they didn't used to keep it up too good and they started keeping it up real good. A distant cousin of mine, Jerry Bane, do you know him?

DS: No.

RB: Jerry Bane, do you know him?

DS: Un-uh.

RB: Anyhow, Jerry is the one that started trying to get markers on people's graves that there wasn't none on, stuff like that, so they've got it in good shape now.

DS: Well, last thing I want to ask you if there have been on these changes in the valley, is there anything that you'd like to see preserved the way it is, anything about the land or people or some of the things that really made this place the kind of place you loved and wanted to come back to and never leave because that's what you did?

RB: Yeah, I'd really like to see, of course, you can't stop it, but I'd really like to see people that own the land now stop selling the land and I'd love to see that river kept up a little better.

DS: Right. So the people who lived here for a long time realize what keeping the land was about and continued to hang onto it?

RB: Yeah.

DS: And keeping the river better means keeping the branches and the trees.

RB: Yeah.

DS: Well, it's a beautiful place. You picked a good place. Well, the place picked you I guess as much as you picked the place. You've grown up and lived in a beautiful area.

RB: You're talking about your cousin Sandy there. Now wouldn't you hate to come back in two or three years and see houses all over there?

DS: That would make you sick.

RB: I enjoy it. Going up that road, no houses, driving up through there and everything nice and quite. See all kind of nature.

DS: Yeah, it's beautiful.

RB: When I was a boy we used to go out there and pick what you call blueberries. We called them huckleberries then. Every Fourth of July we'd go out there and pick huckleberries.

DS: Did you go up on the ridge where those rocks, the open areas up there?

RB: Yeah, around Bald Rock, all in there.

DS: That would be a good berry picking area.

RB: I tried to think who owned that property then. Is it Dr. Howe? No, it wasn't Dr. Howe. It's Cummings.

DS: I think so, yeah.

RB: They didn't mind us going up there and picking the huckleberries. That was just a way of life. Running home and can them and we'd have huckleberry pies all winter.

DS: All winter, sounds good. It sounds good. Well, I appreciate you talking to me about these things.

RB: Well, I appreciate you coming. I wish I could help you out more.

DS: No, no, you've done great. I appreciate it. I'm going to turn this thing off.

DS: So we're turning this machine back on because Mr. Bane's going to tell us about the Indian Cave.

RB: When you up Green River and turn back to the right on the CC Road at Blue Ridge Church, I'd say it's about a mile and a half, two miles on the right there's a cave. You have to walk down below the road I guess a hundred yards and when you think of a cave you think of going back in the mountains but this one goes down the mountain and there's a little branch runs through it. Why they call it Indian Cave I don't know.

DS: But it's down below the road and you kind of go downhill into it?

RB: It's a round hole and you go down in it. My son's been in it. I'd be afraid to go in it because I took my sister and showed it to her one day. It was in the wintertime. It was a real warm day and there was a big copperhead coiled up right there before you go down in it.

DS: He was guarding the hole. And then there's a branch, a little stream down at the bottom?

RB: Yeah. But one time somebody made liquor in there. My granddaddy told me that his daddy was in the Army in the Civil War and they was in Knoxville, Tennessee and their commander didn't get enough, they run out of food and everything, supplies, so a bunch of them just decided they'd go back home. And he come back home and said he hid out one whole year in that cave.

DS: In that cave?

RB: That's when they lived in Bane field and said his wife would carry food to him once a week and said she would go a different route every time so nobody couldn't track it. I asked grandpa one time was he a deserter. He said well, I don't know whether you'd consider him that or not. They just had made it so tight on them and he had to leave. And I said how in the world did he get back from Knoxville, Tennessee. He said he walked just as hard as he could walk all night. Before daylight he'd find him a place to lay down and sleep in a brush pile or.

DS: Right, go to the ground.

RB: Go to the ground.

DS: Well, it was pretty, I gather you know you read the histories; it was pretty rough towards the end of the war. They just didn't have anything, troops.

RB: Yeah, I'd hated to have to fight in that war.

DS: Bad thing, bad thing.

RB: That's about all I know about that. All I know I took a lot of people up there and showed them the cave and none of my people that I knew of had ever been down in the cave. My grandpa had.

DS: But your son went down there?

RB: Yeah. My son had a good friend was in the Rangers and he was visiting and they went up to show him the cave and he said let's go down in it. Randy thought well, if he can go I can too so they took a flashlight and went down in there. He said there was a small hole to crawl back in and then it opens up again.

DS: Kind of a chamber of a room back inside.

RB: Yeah.

DS: What is this story about the, is it the lead mine that's supposed to be down under the river?

RB: Yes sir. My grandpa told me this a lot of times. He said his daddy, where Toad Beddingfield used to live, do you know where that's at?

DS: I got a rough idea, yeah.

RB: You know where that sawmill is on the left hand side, that old house up on the bank there?

DS: Un-huh.

RB: There were some Maybins lived there and I don't think they were any kin to the Maybin's that are here now. I'm not sure. Anyhow, he said he went with his daddy when he was a boy to get lead and he said the only time they'd let you have it if you'd come after dark. Said they had gone for a while and he come back and said their shoes and pants were wet and he said the lead mine there, he said I don't really know. Said I was kindly surprised. They might have been bringing that from Tennessee and they were just trying to fool people. (Laughter) But I heard the story that two men, I won't call their names, they lost their whole crop one summer. Instead of farming they hunt in the lead mine. But said they waded the river up and down. But nobody's ever found it.

DS: Well, it was one part of the story the first time I heard it was from Robert Morgan, you know, who grew up down there near the Green River Church. He said when he was a boy he



was told that there was a pool somewhere up there and if you swam down through the water and got under the rock then you could get into the cave where the lead mine was.

RB: Yeah, I heard that but I believe that somebody would have found it if it had been there.

DS: I believe so.

RB: Plus, I couldn't figure out why it wouldn't be flooded by the river. I guess that's what I was trying to figure out. But he said it was a story he loved as a little boy because it was, you know, mysterious.

DS: He wrote some interesting stories, didn't he?

RB: He has. He has. You know his new book is Daniel Boone.

DS: Yeah, I hadn't go to read that. I can't read much. I read about ten minutes and my eyes get to bothering me and I can't.