

INTERVIEW WITH PAUL MAYNARD

Fr: Beth Nogay

Nogay: Tell me about how you started in the mines. How old you were and what you did'

Maynard: Well I was about 10 or 11 years old. We worked at country mines then. Got coal out in the country. That was before the other mines come around here. We got about 75¢ a ton for it.

Nogay: Tell me what you did when you were a little boy. What time did you get up what would you eat and how much you'd make. When you first started out what would your day be like.

Maynard: We would get up about 5 o'clock in the morning. You had to make a cut with a pick then we didn't have machines. Make it in to 4 or 6 feet to a solid rock of coal then after you made the cut you would shoot it down with powder so you could load it on cars that you pushed out with your hands, sometimes you had mules if it was high enough and you pushed it outside and dumped it in the tipple.

Nogay; What was it like in the mines——dark——cold? How long a day did you work?

Maynard: You worked around ten hours. Leave early and come in late. In the winter time you never seen daylight. Always in the mine before daylight and always dark when you came out in winter.

Nogay: What was it like when you were in there?

Maynard: the same temperature inside the mines as you do on the outside it stays the same temperature winter and summer it don't get cold in the mines. Not much air. We had to build a furnace outside to pull the smoke out you had two entrys one intake and one return. This old furnace would pull the cold through there.

Nogay: What were some of the worst things you say happen inside the mine?

Maynard: Explosions.

Nogay: What would cause an explosion and what would happen?

Maynard: The gas. The gas would set the dust off. Spark sets the gas off and the gas takes up the dust and the dust is where the power is.

Nogay: Did anybody you know ever die in an explosion?

Maynard: Yes. In 1914 it echoed when it blowed up. It blowed up in 1926. I was working there when it blowed up. I was a night boss and I forgot my safety lamp and went back to get it and the shaft and I was setting there hitting on the bell for the cage that is what we'd ride down in and when it blowed out I was in #6 mine and it came out of number 5. Then we run up on the hill, we was on the outside and everything fell in front of us. Some of the men got hurt from the stuff blowed out or the mines. It fell on their heads. It blowed cars & everything.

Nogay: How many folks died and what happened to their families?

Maynard: I think it was 27 got killed in that explosion. In 1926 but the first explosion the 1914 there was 188 killed.

Nogay: Were there alot of accidents in the old days?

Maynard: Not as many as not because we didn't have the machinery then. Not so many motors or machines. They used mules to pull coal with instead of motors. They didn't have them then.

Nogay: Did you know of people who got black lung?

Maynard: Yes. Got it myself.

Nogay: What are the symptoms?

Maynard: Breathing. Lungs are coated over. Mine are solid coated over. Because of no dust control. I would shoot rock in the mines to make tunnels and road ways and things. There was no air and nothing to protect ourselves then. Just that old cilicate from the rock. In your lungs they call that cilicosis and the dust from coal was black lung but its all lung trouble. it all works together.

Nogay: How much were the miners paid and how were they paid?

Maynard: We got paid by the car no tonnage then. The car would average a ton and a half or 2 ton and you got paid accordingly. We got paid about 60¢ for a 2 ton car. Started at 40 and we would strike and get 10¢ and 5¢ a raise.

Nogay: How were you paid? In script. No we had pay days but you got script in the mean times and pay days came once a month and you got script at the company store to live on till you got a pay day. You didn't get much then of course you didn't need much. About 25 or 30 dollars a month is what you usually draw. And the boss would get about 100 dollars and the superintendent would get 150 or 200.

Nogay: Did you have to pay for the equipment you used?

Maynard: Yes. It was all yours. You didn't have anything but a pick and shovel. You had to furnish it.

Nogay: Did you live in a company town?

Maynard: No I lived out in the country. But it was close 2 or 3 mile to the company town. They had little towns company stores.

Nogay: What would the company store look like?

Maynard: Just like today. Just ordinary thing.

Nogay: When did the fight begin for the union in West Virginia?

Maynard: That was about 1901. They had some unions and some men killed then I had a cousin had his leg shot off.

Nogay: What do you remember about the Paint Creek Strike?
What caused it?

Maynard: Paint Creek was two wars. Pat Waters Branch that's on Paint Creek and Paint Creek is down at Kingston about 10 miles apart.

Nogay: Why did the minors want the union?

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Maynard: The coal operators was robbing them it was in slavery then.
If they wanted to pay you and you worked 10 hours and they said eight they paid eight. No protection. Then when you rented a house you had to sign up a red dog law that you couldn't let none of your people come in there that was union.

Nogay: What were the ways that the coal companies would keep the union from growing?

Maynard: They hired thugs. Baldwin detective agency they called them. They put them on the payroll as guards and they was murderers. That's all they was they kicked the people out of their houses.

Nogay: What did they look like. What kinds of guns they carried. Where they were during the day. If they were at the mines.

Maynard: Well the guards would stay around the mines. But they was everywhere they stayed around the houses and stores and rode the trains in Logan County when they had that Blair Mountain march the coal company paid the sheriff gave him 10¢ on every ton of coal to keep the union out and they had it all blocked where nobody could go in there and you couldn't ride the train if you was union. See they had them guards on them trains.

Nogay: And what would they do if they thought you were union?

Maynard: They would knock you in the head and kick you off.

Nogay: Tell me about when they would kick miners out of their homes.

Maynard: Well the operators would give orders to go and throw them out. They would throw you out in the rain or snow it made no difference if you were sick or not. You had to vacate that house. They just threw you out whether you had a way of picking it up or not.

Nogay: What would those miners do?

Maynard: Well they couldn't do nothing.

Nogay: Where would they live?

Maynard: They would go and live in tents. The unions had some tents they would put up when you strike. Anyway you could.

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Nogay: How does a miner feel about the Baldwin Phelps Agent.

Maynard: They hated them. They hated one another. They were hired killers and back in the country they didn't take no stuff. Everybody loved to shoot then they liked to shoot at them them too.

Nogay: Is that when the fighting started?

Maynard: Yeah. It was over throwing the people out of the houses.

Nogay: How would the operators know what the miners were doing. Were there spys?

Maynard: Yes. We had spys and they had spys on their side too.

Nogay: How would that work?

Maynard: Well they would just tell one another about everything that was happening or going to happen.

Nogay: How would the operators spy on the miners? Like for example what would they do?

Maynard: These thugs knowed everything. They would visit the houses and the had people who would tell them things. They had spys over in the union.

Nogay: And they would tell them for money?

Maynard: Yes

Nogay: What did you do when the miners were getting ready to go up on Blair?

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Maynard: I was at Wallace Branch then. We was in a strike then ourselves. and I was working a werewood at a union mine right across from the scab mine at Wallace Branch. Wallach Branch was a scab mine.

Nogay: Did you go to Blair Mountain?

Maynard: I went to the foot of the hill. I took a machine gun there.

Nogay: Tell me how you got a machine gun, and what you did with it.

Maynard: Well we took it off.... it was shipped into Willis Branch by American Express Company and we had spys who when they told us it was on a #3 passenger train and we went about 6 miles above there and got in an express car and told a man when he come to Willis Branch not to put that gun off. He took it on by there and took it to Peck about 2 miles below Willis Branch. This train was moving out and we unloaded in a depot passenger train and there was a coal train freight train moving up and we held him up there and put this machine gun and 33,000 rounds of ammunition and taken about 6 miles below there and made him stop and unload it. Thats the one we taken to Blair Mtn. 33,000 rounds of ammunition.

Nogay: Did you use it all?

Maynard: No we turned it over to the Blair Mountain people where they was fighting against Logan.

Nogay: How many miners went up to Blair Mountain do you think?

Maynard: They were from all over this country. There was so much territory on that Mountain that they could use 150 to 200 men at one time.

Nogay: How did the miners organize their march on Blair?
How did the word get out?

Maynard: The miners had people just out of the army too. They had sargeants captains & all.

Nogay: What did the miners dress like?

Maynard: The miners then we wore big coveralls. Get them about 2 sizes big so you could put a gun down in. I wore about a 44 then so you could put you a gun down your leg and strap it under your shoulder under your overalls. That's how we got on that train, we had the guns.

Nogay: Where would you all get the guns?

Maynard: We'd buy them. We used the same kinds of guns that the thugs used. Only we used them better because we could shoot better.

Nogay: Why did you want to fight the operators?

Maynard: Cause they was kicking people out of their homes. That is what started it and they would shoot anywhere. My mother come to see us and the thugs stopped her and the thugs cussed her out and abused her. On the railroad tracks. That made me mad and I went and bought me 2 30 30s and a 45 and the next time the thugs was right across from where I was working and as they started to work we opened up on them 6 or 7 of them. I don't know how many got shot or killed but they jumped off a bridge into a creek. It was about 100 yards from them and we laid down beside the railroad

Nogay: How many miners do you think died in the wars here? From when they started in 1910 thru Blair Mountain.

Maynard: I wouldn't have no idea. No count of them.

Nogay: What would the miners have done with the bodies. Did they give them back to their families did they bury them?

Maynard: Yeah they get the bodies and bury them. But the thugs I don't know what they done with them I know we killed some of them.

Nogay: Do you remember what the men were like who lead the miners?

Maynard: Some of them had been in the army and been to war and we had it pretty good. We was organized.

Nogay: What kind of organization did you have. Did you have command post,

did you have meeting places.

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Maynard: Oh yeah we had union halls.

Nogay: Tell me about how you knew where to go and what kinds of places you would have to meet at.

Maynard: We had meetings once a month or twice a month or if anything would come we would call a special meeting.

Nogay: And where would that be?

Maynard: A special union hall meeting for that. After we was organized. and after that we would come out on strike and we would have to meet out in the country, have a private place. See the coal company wouldn't let us have their building.

Nogay: How did you get the word about Blair Mountain?

Maynard: It was in all the papers. That was the news. Everywhere.

Nogay: How did the people who lived here feel about it. How did the wives and families feel about about the wars and fights.

Maynard: They knew it was just tough and they was with the miners they'd shoot too they didn't care. Most of the women could shoot back in them days caused they was raised in the country.

Nogay: Did they help the men. What did the women do?

Maynard: They did everything they could. They would protect them anyway they could. They'd lie misinform on the people to these thugs and anything. Hide the men from them. it was pretty tough.

Nogay: What did the men do on the way to Blair Mountain?

Maynard; They was all organized they had men on both sides and the unions and they knowed everything. We raised guns for them and money and food From around here before they stopped that war I guess there was 25,000 people and they was coming in from Ohio, Pennsylvania and Illinois and wipe Logan County away. That's how is stopped the

government had to stop it. They sent the troops in if they hadn't Logan would have been gone.

Nogay: What would the miners have done?

Maynard: They would have shot everything down there.

Nogay: Why Logan County? Why was Logan part of it?

Maynard: It was a big coal operation. They had a whole ...100s of mines in there and they didn't want the union in there because they wanted to pay you so much a car or ton and if they didn't want to pay you they didn't. Operators was millionaires then. The other companies was helping from other states were running cheaper coal in Logan County because they didn't pay no union wage and Ohio and PA was paying union wages and Logan was paying what they wanted to. That is why the other states was helping & sent money and guns and everything to help us. Because Logan County was hurting their sales because we had a better grade of coal in WV than the other states and could mine it cheaper.

Nogay: How would they get the money and the guns here.

Maynard: Oh they had tricks. One time when we had a strike, we had a worker with a peg leg. He brought in 70,000 dollars that he collected in Ill., Ohio and PA in his peg leg. His name was Peggy Dwire I believe it was.

Nogay: How did the miners travel here?

Maynard: The train was the only way there was or horses and go through the mountain. Lots of times the miners couldn't ride the train cause they had the thugs on there. They'd kick you off or knock you in the head and sometimes we'd get on the train and run the thugs off.

Nogay: Sounds like a real war.

Maynard: It was a war. They had machine guns and trenches at Willis Branch and had trenches on the hill and we'd slip around and shoot on the end of them.

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There was no difference in the democrats and republicans they had them on both sides. The operators had them bought off. If anyone raised a fuss about the miners would treat them somebody would snoot them. Them thugs would shoot him whether he was a judge or a justice of the peace or government worker it didn't make no difference.

Nogay: How did the miners feel about the government troops coming in?

Maynard: They was glad they come in tnen cause the government promised them the protection. They would clean up all this mess.

Nogay: Did they?

Maynard: Yeah, Yeah. They gave right to organize.

Nogay: What did the troops do when they got here?

Maynard: They put everything into martial law. They controlled everything and took it out of the hands of the operators and unions & all. Martial law was all there was. Nothing moved if they didn't want it moved. That's the only thing that stopped it.

Nogay: Was there a straw that broke the camels back? What stimulated the people to get together and have the government step in?

Maynard: There was 1000s from around here coming in from other states, the miners was and they told the government if they didn't open up Logan County they was going to open it up thereselves, just blow it away. That's why the government had to send in troops. They wanted this racket stopped in West Virginia and that's why it stopped. This Logan War. But in Paint Creek in 1912 tney had a senatorial come in SENator Norris and a Senator from Oklahoma and Governor Harfield was governor he told tnen to turn these people out or prison and he said do it not or we will. The people in prison over the union that was in 1912.

Nogay: What was the march on Blair Mountain like?

Maynard: I was just at the foot of it. I wasn't on the hill I never did see it. We just worked through the unions. we took the machine gun to the foot of the hill.

We had a place where we brung rifles and food and stuff in too you see. That was up on the mountain some distance from where we had taken this machine gun.

Nogay: Was it like a war?

Maynard: Naturally they had people that worked on the same system as a war. You knew what you was doing. You took advantage of one another. We had people in the union who had been in the war, we had captains and sargeants corporals and they liked to shoot too. They were raised back in the mountains and they knew all about it. We used the same systems as you do in a war. It was a war. At Willis Branch they had trenches and put machine guns in them but we would slip around and shoot from the ends of them you see.

Nogay: What do you remember most about that?

Maynard: When the governor come in and they had the passenger train in there and he loaded them on there, made the thugs come out after we had that battle they went through the mountains and tried to escape. We loaded them on the train and kicked them and everything. That was the last of the thugs that come around this country.

Nogay: What did the mine wars accomplish?

Maynard: That got us the right to a union when they ran all the thugs out then they organized. You had nobody fighting against us. Course we couldn't on coal company property but we had private property in country towns we had meetings out there.

INTERVIEW WITH PAUL MAYNARD

Ferraro: What what is the name of this area? How do what's the name of this area?

Maynard: This is the Surveyor. We're about ten miles out of Beckley.

Ferraro: Ok, Surveyor West Virginia. Ok, Paul tell me about a tell me about your early days getting started in a in coal mining. Tell me how old you were and what the kind of work you did and everything.

Maynard: Oh, I was about ten years old. I started in the country mines getting out house coal ^{:30} in the country.

Ferraro: What kind of work was that?

Maynard: I was loading coal - digging it with a pick.

Ferraro: I don't believe it.

Maynard: You know what that is don't you?

Ferraro: Yeah, I do. I don't believe it. Well, we'll keep on. Ok, so you were ten years old and this would have been around 1908-1909?

Maynard: Yeah, yeah.

^{1:00}
Ferraro: And a now how how how could a fellow ten years were there alot of young a

children working in the mines at that time?

Maynard: Oh yeah, yeah that's where you a...you train these miners. Kids went in the mine. It was in the summer see they was no other work.

Ferraro: Oh, so this wasn't year round. This was something you did during the summer off from school.

Maynard: Yeah, yeah with your dad. You'd go in with your dad or somebody would ^{1:30} take you in there and teach you you see.

Ferraro: So the the operators encouraged that then right?

Maynard: Oh yeah. No you couldn't go in there...you had to be about twelve or fourteen before you go in there operators mine - a that a big mine.

Ferraro: This was a now what kind of mine did you call this? This was just for house coal right?

Maynard: Yeah, yeah country mine.

Ferraro: Country mine.

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: How did that differ from an operators mine? ^{2:00} Just smaller?

Maynard: Was just small that's all. You didn't have no machinery - nothing in there

that...you just had a car a pick and a shovel and augger where you drill the holes and shot em.

Ferraro: What a...when did you go into a regular mine? When did you leave school and go into the mine...or how old were you? 2:30

Maynard: I was about a...a fifteen.

Ferraro: Did you quit school to go into the mine?

Maynard: Yeah, yeah.

Ferraro: How far did you get?

Maynard: I got about the forth grade.

Ferraro: Tell me about that - about your first job and everything.

Maynard: Well, the first mine I went in I went in with my brother-in-law. See 3:00
called them backhands then. Yeah, you take you in and teach you that and you worked with him. He was responsbile for you and he give you so much - so much of your work. He'd say well, they give you a third or something what you both made. That was just learn till you...till you 3:30
learnt how to do it yourself.

Ferraro: Where was a what was your first a big mine that you went into. Oh yeah, ok hold. Ok thank you. Tell me about that a the first big operators mine you went into when you were fifteen.

4.00

Maynard: Well, it was they didn't have any machinery then - pull the coal with mules. They dug it with a pick - made you cut it with a pick...cause they didn't have no coal cutting machines...and they hauled it with a mile. Hauled it out to a main line and then a motor would take it to the tepel...you loaded by the car then - so much a car. 4.30

Ferraro: How many hours a day would you work?

Maynard: Well, we just work a...we just worked eight hours then. No, before that we'd work about...oh eight ten hours.

Ferraro: And for a for a days work a mining Logan coal, what could you expect to make? 5.00

Maynard: Well, back in them days about oh about three dollars. Some sometime you can make four.

Ferraro: What would be the difference? How much you could get out.

Maynard: Yeah, yeah. You got so much a car for loading it. How many cars you loaded you see.

Ferraro: And what would be what would be the limiting factor on how many you could load? The kind of seam you get into or... 5.30

Maynard: Yeah, it was about you averaged about...eight nine tons a day then. That's a digging it with a pick. That was the average. That was a big average too.

Ferraro: On a good day, what would you get out?

Maynard: A you get ten - eleven ton.

Ferraro: So a tell me about...^{6:00}when you when you joined the union. What was your experience with the union when you went into the mine?

Maynard: I don't know how to do it.

Ferraro: Well, when you first went into the coal mines was there was there a union?

Maynard: No, not when the first.

Ferraro: So when did you first start hearing about unionism?

Maynard: Well, in this field we was always union people. ^{6:30}See our parents was union and I had uncles that was out west and they brung their union into here.

Ferraro: Did.

Maynard: They come from union mines and this old Herbertson mine. That was 1909. They - my uncle organized it. He's from Oklahoma or Arkansas. Arkansas.

Ferraro: So what a...^{7:00}so when did you first join the UMW?

Maynard: Bout 1916.

Ferraro: Where and when. What was the circumstances do you recall?

Maynard: Well, we got a - if you could come out in strikes then and get a raise...
see before we had the union you couldn't strike or... 7:30

Ferraro: If you before you had the union if you had a difference with the operator
on a on a check weightment or a wages, how did you settle your differences?

Maynard: They didn't settle em. If a they didn't want to pay you why he didn't
pay you - nothing you could do about it before you had a union.

Ferraro: So when the union came in what a how did that affect a how did that affect
those things? 8:00

Maynard: Well, it just it all together different then you see you had committees
and you could take it to the to the superintendent. Your committee would
set it. He would they would go to the superintendent board and tear it up.

Ferraro: Was that effective?

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: What did it accomplish? Did you get what you wanted?

Maynard: Yeah, it it was you got justice that way. 8:30

Ferraro: Were there any operators that you ever worked for that a gave you what you
considered to be justice without a union?

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: There were some that treated you fair?

Maynard: Yeah, this a guy at Willis Branch, Tom Lang, had run that - run that mine. You see when he he...he opened up the mine and run into trouble selling his coal and he got in with Bill McCall. ^{9:00} He was a big coal operator and a Bill McCall wouldn't had nothing to do with the union.. and a Tom Lang had to let him sell his coal and then a...Bill McCall he he belong to the you remember Coal Operator Association and then he ^{9:30} didn't like the union and he went to join the Gulf. He joined the Gulf Organization and that throwed a Tom Lang out of it you see he was cause McCall owned control interest in his company and that's how he wouldn't sign up a contract with us - McCall wouldn't. See Lang he would - Tom Lang would but a McCall he owned control interest and he said no he wasn't going to sign up with no union and he went to ^{10:00} the Gulf Operators Association. See you had operators fit as well as the miners. See had operator - see a New River Operators Association and they had a Gulf Operators Association. That was all down in Mingo County and and Gulf and Logan and all. They belong to it.

Ferraro: So you had some a some operators that were sympathetic to the fact that ^{10:30} you needed a union.

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: Did those operators treated you pretty well then?

Maynard: Yeah, Yeah, El Stock was a running the coal company and Tom Lang and... Doc Callaway. He he was over on Price Hill. He didn't care about the

11:00
union along with the union or what.

Ferraro: Did you ever know an operator named a Henry Ward?

Maynard: Henry Ward.

Ferraro: Yeah.

Maynard: I don't believe I did.

Ferraro: Ok, just checking. Ok, why did a...what were the working conditions like when you a well you pretty much told me about that about why you joined the union. The fellow just wouldn't get any justice without it.

Maynard: No, no you couldn't. 11:30

Ferraro: What do you want to do? Ok, we're going again rain or no. Tell me about that yellow dog.

Maynard: Bout what?

Ferraro: Yellow dog contract.

12:00
Maynard: Well, it was a contract you signed up. I was up in
give you a slip take it to his office and then you had to sign up - sign
that yellow dog contract. That was you could had nothing to do with the
union or let none of your people come in to see you if they would belong
to the union - father, mother, or brother or nothing - had to be ok by

the superintendent.

12:30

Ferraro: You mean any visitors that you'd have?

Maynard: Yeah, yeah..that was in the contract you signed.

Ferraro: How did the men feel about that contract?

Maynard: They didn't like it but they had to it would work.

Ferraro: Just that way.

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: Tell me about a Sid Hatfield. You knew him. Where did you meet him?

Maynard: I met him in Bluefield. It was at some kind of a miners rally.

Ferraro: What kind of man was he? 13:00

Maynard: Well, he was a good man. I just met him that one time but...

Ferraro: See a he was a he was a union man then?

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: How about a when he was shot down in Welch. How did that make the miners feel?

Maynard: We started to go down there and clean out all them thugs - shoot em out.
Hell a I don't remember how what stopped us but they was getting ready
to go. They'd have a regular war down there.

Ferraro: Well alot of them went and tried to get past Blair Mountain.

Maynard: Yeah, yeah.

Ferraro: As far as they went right?

Maynard: Yeah, but they got blocked.

Ferraro: What do you remember hearing about that - Blair Mountain. Did a did
anybody come and ask you to come on down to Blair Mountain and fight?

Maynard: No, we went to a...we got in contact with em when we had this gun. We
wasn't going to use it...we told em we'd let them have that gun.

Ferraro: Tell me about how you came by that machine gun.

Maynard: Well, it was shipped out of the out of Bluefield from Boldenfelts Agency
to that Willis Branch and then...but other Stress Company and we had
connections and they told us that the machine gun was on number three
train...it was going to be unloaded on Willis Branch. A we went up a
about six miles and got on a train - the passenger train. They wouldn't
let him unload it a Willis Branch made him take it on down to Packs about
a mile and he unload it on a depoy and a we was afraid the thugs would
come down there of course we had guards and everything else and a as the

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passenger train pulled off passengers unloaded the machine gun. A local freight train pull up to unload some stuff and we just unloaded it on it. We held it up and loaded - had thirty five thousand rounds of ammunition. We taken it down to a about three mile below the Pack and ^{15.30} held the train up again. Made him stop and let us unload it and then we taken it to the mountain.

Ferraro: Boldenfelts boys miss that gun?

Maynard: Uh

Ferraro: Did the Boldenfelts people miss that gun?

Maynard: They'd like to had it but they knowed they wasn't no chance of getting it because we had the roads jarted and...

Ferraro: So tell you were up a Paint Creek from what 1916 on through 21, 22 there up Willis Branch? ^{16.00}

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: What was it like up there?

Maynard: That's all that Willis Branch that's in that's on Paint Creek. That's ahead of Paint Creek.

Ferraro: What was it like? You had some trouble up there didn't you?

Maynard: Yeah, that's where we had this trouble. That's where we got this machine gun. That was...that a.....a forget it.

Ferraro: The a what what were you fighting about up there?

Maynard: They come out on the strike. What we was a fighting about at Willis Branch a their contract run out and they couldn't sign up with the New River Operators Association and a Gulf Operators Association. They didn't have no union. See the operators split up same as us.... and Bill McCall belonged to the.... Gulf Operators Association and...Tom Lang he wanted to sign up but he had Bill McCall had the control in that seeing he couldn't. He wouldn't sign up with it.

Ferraro: And that's what the fight was about up Willis Branch?

Maynard: Uh

Ferraro: That's what the fighting was about up there?

Maynard: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ferraro: Cause they were out on strike.

Maynard: No contract.

Ferraro: What a...did they have mine - did they have thugs up there at Willis Branch?

Maynard: Yeah, had Boldenfelts. That's where we put em on a train and run em through the mountains that we broke it up there Willis Branch.

Ferraro: How?

Maynard: Rum em away. Made em put em on a train and not come back. Alot of em didn't come back.

Ferraro: Well, how did you do that? You just go up and ask them to leave?

Maynard: No, that's when we had this big battle - a whole day battle in August.

Ferraro: Tell me about it.

Maynard: Everybody had Willis Branch surrounded and the thugs and everybody in it and we had it surrounded and started about daylight on....a I guess we shot till about three or four o'clock. Then went through the mountains and creeks or anyway they could a go and what was left why we made em - we loaded em on passenger train. The governor was there and the statesman - all of em.

Ferraro: Did the a thugs make a practice of a putting people out of their houses?

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: Tell me about that.

Maynard: That's what they was hired for. That when you come out on strike or boss

didn't like you a why you was...fired. Why you done more than leave, why they just throwed your stuff out in....in the weather or anything. See if the people were sick or didn't have no place to go - no money, why they just the same.

19:30

Ferraro: What kind of men were these a these guards?

Maynard: A they was a just like the KG of Russia - same thing.

Ferraro: Tell me more.

Maynard: That's where they...maybe I don't know whether the Boldenfelts got it from Russia or Russia got it from Boldenfelts. Same tese...come around
20:00
ease drop on you tear your door down if you had one of your people in there or...

Ferraro: Were they pretty brutal?

Maynard: Yeah yeah, that's what they was. They was outlaws.

Ferraro: Ah do you know whether the Boldenfelts a employed spies in the in the coal camps?

Maynard: Yeah, when they had a chance. Yeah, the operators would. They'd have
20:30
em in the union of course in them battles we had the same way...and we didn't strike and we had man on either side just the same - our man too.

Ferraro: Really you had your own spies?

Maynard: Oh yeah.

Ferraro: What kind of intelligence could you get from them?

Maynard: Anything that went on...that was you know a just as any your two our any.

Ferraro: Did a up where the fighting at Willis Branch a were you what kind of responsibility did you have, I mean were you one of the ring leaders or were you a... 2100

Maynard: We was all the same. We didn't have no ring leader. They was about a half dozen of us that done the work.

Ferraro: Really, sort of a committee.

Maynard: Uh.

Ferraro: Was it sort of a committee?

Maynard: More or less. See so many of em you couldn't trust.

Ferraro: Of your own men?

Maynard: Yeah, yeah.

Ferraro: Why not? 2130

Maynard: Well, they was get get excited and they just was out shooting. You

couldn't take em with you. They liable shoot you. We'd slip em off somewhere else out of our way. They didn't know what we was going to do.

Ferraro: I was always under the impression that the good union man was a hundred percent union and he'd believe union and everything else but you telling me that some of these guys just weren't trust worthy.

22:00

Maynard: Yeah, yeah that's right. Some of em was a union man. Some of our leaders wasn't no union either.

Ferraro: Really.

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: Who was president up Willis Branch?

Maynard: Uh.....(very long pause) 22:30 - 23:00

23:30

Ferraro: Ok....I'll ask you something else. We'll go it again. Uh, did you ever see Mother Jones?

Maynard: I seen her one time in Charleston. She was...at a meeting she spoke down there.

Ferraro: Union meeting?

Maynard: Yeah.

Ferraro: You remember what she said?

Maynard: No, I can't remember.

Ferraro: Or how she said it?

Maynard: She just say give em hell. ^{24:00}

Ferraro: What a what kinda what do you remember about her. What kind of woman was she?

Maynard: Well, she was friendly but she was solid in her talking...she would a... she didn't care about the president or the governor or nobody. She just said what she thought...and she kept the operators...^{24:30} cause they was fighting the union.

Ferraro: Yeah, everything I've heard indicates she was pretty strong - pretty strong on the union. Ok, I was back before we were talking about you were saying that a...^{25:00} talking about that fighting up at Willis Branch...ah do you do you remember who was a president of the local then?

Maynard: At Willis Branch?

Ferraro: Yeah.

Maynard: Well, when we was throwing that fighting that was over at Werwood - up across the creek. That was a union see....Grant kid was one of em.

Ferraro: Do you remember Bill Blizzard or Frank Keeney?

Maynard: Yeah, I seen them.

Ferraro: What do you remember about them? 25:30

Maynard: Well, that's...Blizzard was a good talker...and he didn't care what he said either - get mad...they was union men.

Ferraro: Where did you ever hear Blizzard speak?

26:00
Maynard: Oh, he was he was coming to Willis Branch and Werwood.

Ferraro: What was what were you thinking when this fighting was going on? What was what were you thinking - how did you feel about it?

Maynard: Well, these thugs come in - these Boldenfelts come in and they was just taking over everything...and you couldn't didn't want you to go down the road or up the road or railroad. They'd get out and stop em on the railroad. 26:30
They got to shooting at my mother and and a kid when they was - hit a kid about oh he was just four or five years old...then that's when I got mad and...I went to town and bought me a thirty thirty. A three hundred eighty Remington Automatic and I come back and I shot the place all to hell. 27:00

Ferraro: How did the other men feel about it?

Maynard: Uh.

Ferraro: How did the other guys that maybe you worked with - how did they feel?

Maynard: All the same. We didn't care. We was all just one.

Ferraro: Did you feel like the operators had their boot in your back?

Maynard: They did. They that's the reason they kept the guards was to do it - these Boldenfelts upheld it. If you worked in the mines and you tell the boss that you were an hour short, ^{27:30} he'd say forget it. Nothing you could do about it. They didn't pay you.

Ferraro: What about the the police or the law? Could you did you feel like you could turn to the courts or to the....

Maynard: No no, the operators - the coal operators owned all that - You had no The Raliegh County - the Fed County and all through the state. Bill McCall controlled it for a number of years. He had he had a ^{28:00} Charlie Lawson was his democrat...representative...democrat chairman. I forget who his republican was and he owned both of em. A they was working for him. Didn't make no difference who got you in why he was in there. They done what he said. He was the boss. Governor had nothing to do with it. He done what Bill McCall told him ever year in this state. ^{28:30}

Ferraro: So you couldn't...they were no you didn't have any recourse to the courts?

Maynard: No no, the courts they owned the courts. They took their own jury and had their own judges and prosecuting attorney. You had no chance - none.

Ferraro: So you you would compare the Boldenfelts to the KGB? 29.00

Maynard: Yeah yeah, their the same - same system.

Ferraro: Tell me about that system one more time.

Maynard: Well, they would come and knock on your door...if you had a stranger would come in and they ease drop and hook up your telephone...same system as the KGB is. 29.30 One got it from another one. I don't know - was no freedom.

Ferraro: What do you remember hearing about the the a trouble down at Blair Mountain with the other miners? Do you remember hearing much about it at the time or were you to pre-occupied with what was...

Maynard: Well, we was trouble of our own you see. That's the reason they didn't want us to help em. They had plenty of men but a what a that started about was a them union men they wanted to come in and get organized in Logan County and they couldn't for them thugs. See all a...the coal operators they give the sheriff of Logan County so much role on a ton to keep the union out. Don Shafin was the sheriff when when that trouble was going on and when Kenneth when he got out, 30.00 Kenneth Hatfield, they put him in. He was the same way. I knowed Kenneth well. He was raised around here most of his time. 30.30

Ferraro: Did you know Don Shafin?

Maynard: Uh.

Ferraro: Did you know Don Shafin?

Maynard: I wasn't acquainted with him. I just knowed him when I seen him.

Ferraro: Yeah, was did Kenneth Hatfield get the same royalty on a ton that Don...

Maynard: Yeah, yeah.

Ferraro: What was the arrangement they had? Do you know?

31:00
Maynard: Well, they a just turned it over to the sheriff what they'd they collect and if you didn't have enough why they'd chipped in and made enough.

Ferraro: The operators?

Maynard: Yes sir. That's what kept the union out of this. That's what started this here war from Blair Mountain. They the miners over there told us they'd like for us to come in organize it but you couldn't for all that... thug. Nobody could get in there.

Ferraro: What would happen when you sent organizers in?

Maynard: Uh.

31:30
Ferraro: What happened when you sent organizers in?

Maynard: Organizers didn't get in. No you couldn't get in. They had everything locked up. They had them Boldenfelts on the trains and and didn't have

no cars then.

Ferraro: Did you ever hear a story about Don ok Shafin (pause) end of tape.
That yellow dog contract - What was it?

33:00
Maynard: Bout the yellow dog. It was all through the state - over in non-union places. Before you got a job you had to sign that up before you went to work...or you didn't work...and a the that yellow dog was that you couldn't wouldn't let no union people come in and people - your father your mother or...and none of your friends. They couldn't...had to get ok with the superintendent. 33:30

Ferraro: So it was the superintendent of the camp had to ok any of your association?

Maynard: Yeah, or one of his thugs or a they had a people swore in as deputy sheriff of course they paid for em. They paid the county what they was what they had to. They was the head men...they done their dirty work. 33:00

Ferraro: Did you ever see the a the Boldenfelts detectives put people out of thier houses?

Maynard: Yeah, they did at Kingston on Paint Creek.

Ferraro: Why?

Maynard: Cause they was on a strike.

Ferraro: What did they do? They just a throw people out in the street?

33:30

Maynard: Throw em out in the street. Raining snowing or what they didn't have no where to go a such a thing. That's what they hired em for. That was their job.

Ferraro: Were they rough about it?

Maynard: Uh.

Ferraro: Were they rough about it?

Maynard: Yeah, knocked the women down. Kick a kid or anything. They no mercy at all. 34:00

Ferraro: Did you a were you were involved in the fighting up at Willis Branch?

Maynard: Yeah...I was in that big battle.

Ferraro: Tell me once more about the big battle.

Maynard: Well, it started in August about...I guess six o'clock in the morning. Lasted some time three or four o'clock in the evening and the the Boldenfelts they went through the mountains, the creeks and...anyway to get away from there, course we had em surrounded. None of em would have got away but we had some weak bunches. They got afraid...afraid that they told em the state police or the...marshall was coming in - government marshall - United States Marshall. That left on wing open you see and some of em got out went through the mountains. They had me was going to close in on em.

34:30

35:00

Ferraro: Did you shoot any of these men yourself?

Maynard: Uh

Ferraro: Did you shoot any of these men yourself?

Maynard: Well, we was shooting at the war. You didn't know everybody a shooting you didn't know that who hit who or what.

Ferraro: Tell me about getting that machine gun down to Logan ^{35:30} down to Blair Mountain.

Maynard: Well, we taken it from a...we taken it from Willis Branch down there...we left one night with it to everything was guarded and we went down Coal River through creeks and we went through fields and...dodging see afraid the a people would be a watching - the ^{36:00} thugs would be a watching for us. So we a taken it to a we had arrangements made first with a union officials a...down next to Blair Mountain. We taken it to a school house. It and thirty five...thirty thousand rounds of ammunition. It was four ^{36:30} four cars load...and we met em there and we had a contract to get the gun back. He told us to be careful with it. We turned over to to Mounts and Adkins but a I don't know whether they were...that was their real name or not but but we didn't do business that way. ^{37:00}

Ferraro: What did what did they tell you when you got the gun there?

Maynard: They told us they'd take care of it.

2

Ferraro: I'll bet they did. What a what did they tell you about whether you could stay and fight or whether you should go back to Willis Branch?

Maynard: I can't hear you.

Ferraro: Did they a they told you that they didn't need you they had enough men. I was just trying to get you to tell me that.

Maynard: Yeah, they wanted us to help em to get the get em guns and ammunition. That's all ^{34:30} - that's all they wanted. They had plenty of men.

Ferraro: Ok...do you think that all the fighting that a that went on back in those days - do you think it was worth it?

Maynard: No, it was all it was foolish. It was all foolish. People with brothers against brothers and fathers against their son and sons against their fathers. It it was all foolish. It was uncalled for...but it wasn't under slavery. We had to do something. They they could a they was a law - we had no chance.

Ferraro: If the laws had been different would any of this have happened?

Maynard: Uh

Ferraro: If the laws had been different do you think a all... ^{38:30}

Maynard: No no no, we had no laws. For the company that was the law. They didn't go you a judge or a prosecuting attorney. You just done what they wanted

you to do - coal operators and the governor of the state. Wasn't no freedom.

Ferraro: ^{39:00} Let me a if you had it all to do over again would you do it the same way do you think?

Maynard: Yeah, I'd have to and under same conditions.

Ferraro: I mean if if the conditions got if this the conditions today were the same would you feel the same about going out and taking up a rifle and fighting for your rights?

Maynard: Oh yeah...if you didn't have no other chance but you got all kind of chances now. You got the law. ^{39:30}

Ferraro: What (pause) Do you a what do you think a what do you think of the union today?

Maynard: ^{40:00} Well, you you've got to have it but it's not perfect. It theres crooked.

Ferraro: I know they've had alot of trouble in recent years. Do you think the union is as strong as it used to be?

Maynard: No, I don't think so.

Ferraro: What's the difference?

Maynard: Man won't stick together now like they did then.

Ferraro: Thank you. NO:30

Paul Maynard

Q Tell me about how you started in the mines. How old you were and what you did?

A Well, I was about 10 or 11 years old. We worked in country mines then. Got coal out in the country. That's before the other mines come around here. We'd get oh, 75¢ a ton for it.

(Pause)

Q Tell me what you did, when you were a little boy, exactly what you would do to work in the mines. What time would you get up, where would you eat, how much would you make-- when you first started out, what would your day be like when you worked in the mines?

A Well, I would get up about 5 o'clock in the morning. You would have to make up a cut with a pick then, see we didn't have no machines. You would make it in about 4 to 6 feet in a solid block of coal then you would take--after you made the cut you would shoot it down. Take powder and shoot it down so you could load it. Load it into the cars and you pushed it out with your hands. Sometimes you had mules, if the ceiling was high enough. If you didn't you pushed it outside and dumped it in the tipper. You had a little tipper for to load it in wagons.

Q What was it like, inside the mines. Was it dark, was it cold, how long a day did you work?

A We usually worked about 10 hours. It would take you about 12 hours to make that. You had to leave early and come in

late. In the winter time you never see daylight. It was always in the mines, before daylight and it was dark when you would come out. That's in the winter time.

Q What was it like when you were in there?

A How was that?

Q What was it like when you were inside the mines?

A You had the same temperature in the mines as you do on the outside. It had the same temperature in there all the time. It don't get cold in the mines. Where you don't have much air. Now, then we didn't have much air. We'd have to build a furnace outside to pull the smoke out. You had two entry's. One was the intake for the air and one for the return. This old furnace would pull the coal through there.

Q What were some of the worst things you saw happen inside the mines?

A Explosions.

Q What would cause an explosion and what would happen?

A The gas would set the dust off. That would make an explosion Your fire sparks would set the gas off and the gas would takes out the dust and the dust is where the power is.

Q Did anybody you no ever die in an explosion?

A Yeah. In 1914 an echoed unit blowed up. And it blowed up in 1926. I was working there when it blowed up. I was a night boss. I had forgot my safety lamp and went back to get it. I was setting there hitting on the bell for the cage, that's what we would ride down in,

and when it blowed out it come out in #5 mine and I worked in #6. Then we would run up on the hill run up on the hill, we was on the outside. Everything fell in front of us. Some of the men got hurt, where the stuff was blown out of the mines. It blowed cars, motors, and everything.

Q How many folks died and what happened to their families?

A There was I think 27 got killed in that explosion. That was in 1926. But the first explosion in 1914 there was 188 killed.

Q Where there a lot of accidents in the old days?

A Not as many as there is now, because they didn't have the machinery then. They didn't have so many motors or machines. They used mules to pull the coal with instead of motors, they didn't have any then.

Q Did you know of people who had blacklung?

A Yeah, I got it myself.

Q What was it like, what are the symptoms.

A It was the breathing. See your lungs is all covered over. Lined inside and covered over. That's because of not having a disc controller. I drilled ~~sheet~~ I was a--shoot rock in the mines. To make tunnels and roadways and things. The drill--we had no air and nothing to protect ourselves with then. Just that old silicone from the rock. You know in your lungs. They call that silicones and the dust was from the coal and that was the blacklung. It is all lung trouble it works together.

Q How much were the minors paid and how were they paid?

A When I first started, or how?

Q When you first started, how much were you paid and how were you paid?

A They got paid by the car. They didn't have no tonnage then. The car would average maybe a ton and a half or two ton or three, you got paid according, you see. You got paid about 60¢ for a two ton car. It started at 40 and we would strike and get 10¢ and 5¢ and a raise.

Q How were you paid? In Script?

A No they had pay days. But you would get script in the meantime. They paid once a month and you got script in out of the company store to live on until you got a payday. You didn't get much then, of course, you didn't need much money. About 25 or 30 dollars a month is what you would generally draw. The mine boss would get about \$100 or the superintendent, some would 150 or 200dollars.

Q Did you have to pay for your equipment too.

A Yeah it was all yours. You didn't have nothing but a pick and shovel and _____ and something like that then. Yeah, you had to furnish it.

Q Did you live in a company town?

A No, I lived out in the country. But it was right close-- it was 2 or 3 miles to the company town. They had little towns, company stores.

Q What would the company store look like?

A Just like today. It was just the ordinary thing.

Q When did the fights begin for the union in WV?

A Well, that was about 1901. They had some that were union and then--they had some man killed down there. I had a cousin that had his leg shot off.

Q What do you remember about the Paint Creek strike? What caused it?

A Now, in Paint Creek there was two wars. There was Hat Willis Ranch, that's on Paint Creek. And--Paint Creek that's down in Kingston. Mosey, down in that way. It was about 10 miles apart.

Q Why did the miners want the union?

A There was a coal operator was robbing them. It was slavery then. If they wanted to pay you why if you worked 10 hours and said oh, you didn't work but 8, they paid you 8. You didn't have no protection. Then when you rented a house, you had to sign up a Red Dog Law. That you couldn't let none of your people or no body come in there that was a union, see. That's what you had to sign, they called it the Red Dog Law. You couldn't let none of your people come there because the company didn't want them. Not your father, your mother, or...

Q What were the ways that the coal company's would keep the union from growing?

A Ha h.

Q How did the coal operators try to keep the union out of

WV?

A They hired these thugs. Baldwin detective agents they called them. They put them on the pay roll as guards they was murderers. That's all they was. They kicked the people out of their houses.

Q What did the mine guards look like. Tell me what they looked like, what kind of guns they carried, where they were during the day, if they were at the mines?

A The guards would stay around the mines. They was every where. They would visit their houses and they stayed around the stores, and they rode the trains to keep them off. In Logan County, they had that Logan March. On that Blair Mountain. The coal company's paid the sheriff, give him 10¢ on every ton of coal to keep the union out. They had it all blocked out where no body could go in there. You couldn't ride the trains if you was a union. See they had them guards on them trains.

Q What would they do if they thought you were union?

A They would knock you in the head, or kick you off.

Q Tell me about when they would kick miners out of their homes?

A Well, the operators would give the orders to go and throw them out. They would throw you out in the rain or snow or something, it didn't make no difference if you was sick o anything, you had to vacate that house , you they would just throw it out. Whether you had a way of picking it up or not.

Q What would those miners do?

A Well, they couldn't do nothing.

Q Where would they live?

A They lived in a tent. The union had some tents, they would put up when you would strike. They lived in tents or anyway you could then.

Q How did the miners feel about the Baldwin-Felts agents?

A They hated them. They hated one another. They was hired killers then. Back in the country we didn't take no stuff. Everybody could shoot then. They liked to shoot at them too.

Q Is that when the fighting started?

A Yeah. They was always throwing the people out of the houses.

Q How would the miners and the operators, how would the operators know what the miners were doing. Were there spys that they would hire?

A Yeah. Yeah. They had spies around. We had spies on there side too you see.

Q How would that work?

A Well they would just tell one another about everything to see what was happening or what was going to happen.

Q How would the operators spy on the miners, for example. What would they do?

A Well, these thugs and everything, they knowd everything. They would visit the houses and then they had people that would tell them things too you see, they had spy's over in

the union.

Q They would tell them for money?

A Hah.

Q They would tell on the miners for money?

A Yeah. Yeah.

Q What did you do when the miners were getting ready to go up on Blair?

A I was at Willis Branch then. We was in a ~~striggle~~ strike then, ourself. I was working at Ware Wood, it was a union mine, right across from the scab mine at Willis Branch. Willis Branch was a scab mine and we had bigger battles then Blair Mountain.

Q Did you go to Blair Mountain?

A I went to the foot of the hill. I had to take a machine gun there.

Q Tell me about how you got the machine gun? What did you do with it?

A We had taken it off of the--it was shipped into Willis Branch, American Express company and we had spies too, and they told us that it was on a train on #3 passenger train. We went up about 6 miles above Willis Branch and got in the express car and told the man when he come to Willis Branch not to put that gun off. We had guns on him, you had to hold him up, you see. He had taken it on by there and taken it to Pecks, that's about 2 miles above Willis Branch. Then there was a--this train was moving out and we unloaded it in a depot. There was a freight

train moving ~~this~~- up and we held him up. We put this machine gun and 33,000 rounds of amunition on it and taken it about six miles below there and made him stop and let us unload it. That's the one we had taken to Blair mountain. Thirty-three thousand rounds of amunition.

Q Did you use all the rounds of amunition?

A No, we turned it over to the Blair Mountain people, the ones that was fighting against the _____.

Q How many miners went up to Blair Mountain, do you think?

A They was from all over this country. They just could use so many up there you see. Just so much territory up on that mountain and they could use maybe 150 to 200 men at the time.

Q How did the miners organize there march on Blair? How did the word get out?

A They had--the miners they had people just out of the army too, they was good, just the same as the army. That's the way they used them. They had sergant's they had captains.

Q What did the miners dress like? What were they wearing?

A Well, you wore--miners then we wore mostly coveralls. We would get them about 2 sizes bigger--I wore about a 44 then so you could put your gun down the--your leg and strap it up your shoulder under your overalls. That's how we got on that train. We had the guns that way.

Q Where would you all get the guns?

A We would buy them. We used the same kind of guns that

the thugs used. Only we used them better, we could shoot better.

Q Why did you want to fight the operators?

A Well, they was kicking their people out of their homes. That's what started it. They would shoot anywhere. My mother come to see us and the thugs her and I had a little brother down there and they cussed her out and abused her she was on the rail road track. That made me mad, I was went to town and bought me two 30-30's and a 45. The next time the thugs was right across from where I was working. We opened up on them, six or seven of them. I don't know how many got shot or killed or -- but they jumped off of a bridge in a creek and it was about 100 yards from us. We laid down on the sides of the railroad tracks, that was a _____.

Q How many miners do you think died in the wars here.

When they started in the in 1910 through the--through Blair Mountain.

A Oh, I don't know. Wouldn't have no count of it.

Q What would the miners have done with the bodies, would they give them back to their families, did they bury² them in the hills?

A Oh, yeah. They would get the bodies and bury them.

The thugs, I don't know what was done with them. I know we killed some of them.

Q Do you remember what the men were like who led the miners?

What kind of men were they?

A Well, they was, some of them had been in the army, had been in the wars. We had a pretty, we was organized.

Q What else would you have. What kind of organization did you have. Did you have a command post did you have a meeting place?

A Oh, yeah. We would have union halls.

Q Could you tell me about how you would know were to go and what kind of places you would have to meet at?

A We would go--we would have the meetings once a month or twice a month or if anything would come up we would call a special meeting.

Q Where would you meet?

A We would have a special meeting place. A hall especially for that. A union hall. We would have a building in the coal camp for that. That's after we was organized. Then after that we come out on strike and we would have to meet in the country, at a private place. See the coal companies wouldn't let us have the building.

Q How did you know where everybody was going, how did you get the word about Blair Mountain?

A It was all in the papers, that was the news. It was wide open, everywhere.

Q How did the people who lived here feel about it. How did the wives and the families feel about the wars and the fights and the---

A Well, they knowed it was just tough. They was with the miners. They would even shoot, ^{too} through. They didn't care.

Most of the women, they could shoot back in those days.
Caused they were raised back out in the country.

Q Did they ever help the men, can you recall what the women did to help the men?

A Well, they done anything they could to help them. They would protect them anyway they could. They'd lie, misinform on the people to these thugs and to the hughes. They would tell them lies or just anything, the women would. Or hide their men from them or--it was pretty tough.

Q What would the men do when they were coming up the mountains, would they sing songs, or how would they get there?

A How is that?

Q How did all of these miners get to Blair?

A They was all organized, they had men on both sides and the unions and the--they was going back and forth, they'd knowed everything. See we raised guns for them and money and food and soldiers. From around here, I guess, before they stopped that war, I guess there was 25 or 1000 people and they was coming in from Ohio, Pennsylvania and Illinois. They was going to wipe Logan County away. The government had to stop it. They sent the troups in. If they hadn't Logan would have been gone.

Q What would the miners have done?

A They would have shot everything down there.

Q Why Logan County, why was logan ~~part-of-it?~~ targeted?

A It was a big, big coal operation. They had a whole-- I don't know just how--but they had hundreds of mines in

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there. They didn't want the union in there because they was, they wanted to pay you so much a car or a ton or if they didn't have no oons or cars they didn't pay you if they didn't want to pay you they didn't. Operators were millionaires then. Many of these other companies was helping these others states ~~what-ever~~ when they was running cheaper coal in morgantown, it was because they didn't pay no union wages. See Illinois and Pennsylvania was paying union wages and Logan County they was just paying what they wanted to. That's why these states, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Ohio -- they was sending big money in here. They sent money in here and guns and everything to help us, see. Because Logan County was hurting ~~in~~ ^{their} coal sales. We had a better grade of coal in wV then we did in these other states and they was mining it cheaper. Yeah, the operators from other states, union, they sent in I don't know how many 100's of thousands of dollæss and guns and things to us. How

Q How would they get the money and the guns here?

A Oh, they had there tricks everywhere. There was one time I remember one strike we had a field worker with a peg leg. He brung in \$70,000 dollars where he collected in Illinois and Pennsylvania, he brung it in his peg leg. His name was Peggy Dwarer, I believe it was.

Q How did the miners travel here.?

A Trains, or horses or go through the mountains and lots of times the miners couldn't ride it they had the thugs

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on there. They'd kick you off, knock you in the head or and sometimes we would get on the train and run the thugs off . Knock them off and they would run too.

Q Sounds like a real war?

A It was a war. They had machine guns and trenches at Willis Branch. They had trenches upon the hill and we would slip around and shoot on the end of them. We runned them out at Willis Branch. We put them all on a train, them thugs. That was the last of the thugs in this country. That was Baldwin-Felts. That is down in this country where we had unions. Of course, they've got them now, down in McDowell county and down in that country yet.²

Q How would you feel when you went over to get the machine gun and you were high jacking the machine gun, how did you feel, were you scared.

A No, no. We didn't care for nothing then. We wanted to kill them thugs. We liked to shoot at them. We got some of them too.

Q Why did you hate the thugs so?

A They was--wouldn't let us have a union. They was hard to break the union up and not have any union. They was the ones that kicked the people out of the houses. The operators would tell them to get--that if it was union men to throw his stuff out. Then the courts, you owned the courts. They owned all of the courts, this state was operated--they owned it. They had one man, a coal operator, was Bill McCalley, and he was had him a--on the

Republican ticket he had a chairman and on the democrat ticket he had a ticket. He owned it. What they agreed on, they done. They had no law. The governer he wasn't nothing. He was just a slave like--he had to do what the operator would tell him. That was the law they had. You'd come to court, they would pick the jury and you would have no chance at all. We had to swear lies and everything against them you see, trying to buck them. Because we knowed they had everything set, against you.

Q What stopped the miners at Blair Mountain?

A The government come in, sent troup in. That's all that kept it f rmm being blowed away.

Q What do you remember about the troup? How did they come in? What did they do when they got here?

A They flew in in planes, at first, then we didn't want to fight against the government. They promised i us that they would clean it up, you see. Before you couldn't go up in Logan County on the train. They had the guards on there and they had it--nobody could do nothing about it. The union men, they had some men in there working for the union but they couldn't come out, it was the same as Russia. The working men had no chance then. There wasn't no difference in the democrates and the republicans they was had them on both sides, operators had them bought off. If you raised any fuss about how the miners was treated why somebody would shoot him. Them thugs would shoot him. If he was a judge or justice of the peace or goveenment

worker, it didn't make no difference.

Q How did the miners feel about the federal troupes coming in?

A Well, they was glad they come in then. Because the government promised them protection. They would clean up all of this mess.

Q Did they?

A Yeah. Yeah. That gave you the right then to organize.

Q What did the troupes do when they got here?

A They put everything in the Marshall Law. They had controll of everything and then that taken it out of the hands of the operators, unions and everything. It was Marshall Law it was the governmers law, that's all it was. Nothing moved that they didn't want moved or , that's the only thing that stopped it..

Q Was there anything that could have--was a straw that broke the camels back. Charlie said he was talking to you about that?

A Now, what?

Q Was there a straw that broke the camels back, was there anything that...

(Interupt) Tell her what you told me. Discussed with me about how large the confrontation would have been and what stimulated all of these people to get together. The government finally stepped in.

A Well, we was--I don't know there was thousands from around here, but they was coming in from Illinois, Pennsylvania,

and Ohio, the miners was. They told the government if they didn't open up Logan county that they was going to open it up theirselves. And blow it away. That's how the government had to send in troupes. The governors of those states would tell them. They come on just like it stopped in WV. That's how come they stopped. That was in this logan march. In paint Creek in 1912 they had a senatorial investigation come in. They come in from Bob Layfayette and, I remember, and Seantor Norse and Senator from Oaklahoma and governor Hatfield was Governor. They come in and told them to turn these people out of prison. He said he was oging to a certain time. He said your going to now or we will our self. That's how come they turned out all of the people turned out ofer the union. That was 1912.

Q What was the march on Blair Mountain like?

A Well, I was just at the foot of it, you see, I wasn't up on their. It was in the night. I never did see it. We just worked through the unions and they--we had taken this machine gun to the foot of the hill, at the bottom of the hill. We had a place at where we brung these rifles and food and stuf in too. That was up on the mountain, some distance from where we had taken this machine gun.

Q Was it like a war?

A Well, naturally. They had people that worked on the same system as the was. Yeah it wasn't just down to shooot some--

you knowed what you was doing. You were taking advantage of one another. We had people in the union who had been in the wars, you see. We had the captains, and sergants, corporals, they knowed how to battle and they liked to shoot too, they was raised back in these mountains and they knowed all about it. Yeah, we used the same system. It was like a way it wasn't no -- See at Willis Branch they had trenches and put machine guns in them. But we would slip around and shoot from the ends of them you see..

Q What do you remember most about that time?

A When the governor come in and we had a passenger train in there and we loaded them on there and made them _____ and kicked them out and after we had that battle, why, we-had they went through the mountains and tried to escape and what didn't come they sent a passenger train in. We loaded them on there and kicked them and everything. That was the last that the Baldwin thugs come around this country.

Q What did the mine wars accomplish? What did the mine wars do?

A That got us a rightful union, when you run the Baldwin thugs out then we could organize. You wouldn't have nobody fighting against you. Of course own we couldn't own coal company property but we had private property on it in these little country towns and everythigg. We would have meetings out there.