

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Steel Mills in the 1920's

Personal Experience

O. H. 1082

GROVER MACE

Interviewed

by

Bernice Mercer

on

May 14, 1981

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Steel Mills in the 1920's

INTERVIEWEE: GROVER MACE

INTERVIEWER: Bernice Mercer

SUBJECT: Strikes, unions, Washington Monument, farming

DATE: May 14, 1981

BM: This is an interview with Grover Mace for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the Steel Mills in the 1920's, by Bernice Mercer, on May 14, 1981, at Mr. Mace's home, 5937 Western Reserve Road, at 2:30 p.m.

GM: The big shots called me in the office and said--then they were just laying around, laughing and having a good time--and they said they could still just as well put out another car load of pipe. But I said, "There is no pipe coming back. It was a big expense to roll that over, to make it over. We haven't got any of that at all." I said, "I looked in the record and we never did do that. This is the first time this mill has run this long and no pipe has come back." The men were satisfied. But, in a week or so, they called me in again. He said, "If you don't want to do it, we will get somebody else to do it."

BM: You didn't tell yet about how you found out about that pipe. You told me one time about how you found out about that pipe. You told me at one time about how you found out what was blowing that pipe.

GM: Yes.

BM: Okay, how about telling that?

GM: I watched these two men. One was a colored man and one was an Italian. The Italian wanted his brother-in-law in there. So, when he was just going off work he

turned the screw and threw the pipe out. The colored man got the blame for it. I caught him at it.

BM: First, the colored man was unhappy. Remember, you said that the colored man was unhappy, and you could see that he was unhappy?

GM: Yes, that is the reason I watched him. I found that the colored man was alright, and it was the Italian who was making the trouble. I told him, "Starting now, if you do the same thing, you might as well get out. I don't want you. I want you to work with that man the same as your brother." He didn't like it, but he did it.

BM: He didn't get fired? You didn't tell on him or anything?

GM: No, I didn't fire him because he quit. The pipe went out alright, no trouble. They were happy. But, this big shot kept calling me in there and just giving me the devil. I told him, I said, "I don't like this. I don't like it and everybody was happy, and no pipe was coming back, and you are making good money. Never before," I said. "It's on the record." He said, "You are doing alright. Just do a little more, another car load of pipe." I said, "I don't think so." "Well, if you don't," he said, "we are going to get somebody else in there." I said, "You might as well because I won't be here. Today is my last day, right now." I went over there, and called them men all there and told them why." I said, "I'm through. I have appreciated working with you, and you have done what I wanted you to do, and everybody is happy." So, I left there. The next day, I went up to Republic and got a job running an engine.

BM: Now, was the pay about the same?

GM: The pay was about the same.

BM: Seven days a week. . .

GM: Well, I got in trouble the first thing. The angle compound engine wouldn't work. The chief of the hired men told me that I wasn't to touch that engine. He said, "If you do, I will fire you. Every engine here makes trouble." He said he was sick of it. "I want you to understand," he said, "If you do anything to that engine, I will fire you." "Okay, okay." All the

wrenches and dirty plates, I cleaned them all up and hung them up where I could get them. I washed and cleaned them all up and hung them up where I could get them. I washed and cleaned everything out and got everything. The rods that came out of the mill crooked, it costs a lot of money to straighten them. So, I got the engine room all fixed up the way I wanted it. I took a wrench and started on the engine. I got it so that it chug, chug, chug. . . to suit me. Then I let out a yell and hollered. They quit working, and all of them came to the engine room to see what had happened. The rod was going up straight as a string because the engine was pulling. I told them what I had done. I said that I am through. "I'm sorry," the chief told me. If I did it, he would fire me. But, I just wanted to let him know that I knew what was the matter and could fix it. I said, "You fellows get the benefit of it." I'm the company. One of the rollers spoke up. He said, "My God, that saved the company a lot money." Well, I got my clothes all rolled up and got my license, and I was ready to go. Somebody called the chief engineer. He called me, and he was mad. He said, "I told you what would happen." I said, "You don't have to fire me, I have already quit." I told him it wasn't the money because I am already here. I quit you and the mill. I said, "I wouldn't give 5¢ for you anywhere. You are not fit to be among men. I would like to take my fist and smash your nose. Maybe I can teach you something that you need to know. You are not fit to be among men." He stood there and took every bit of that. He never said a word. He went over in the mill and talked to them. He said, "That man is going to leave here." They said, "Oh, no!" So, they all came over and got around me. They said, "We want you to stay." I said, "Well, he told me he would fire me. I knew it, and I am all ready to go." They begged me to stay. But, I took my clothes and went. The next day, I got on the train and went up to Ashtabula--Ashtabula County--and bought a farm. I didn't like being abused, but I didn't do anything unless I knew what I was doing. When you are cooking potatoes, you aren't going to put too much salt in them. (laughter)

BM: You haven't told me, do you remember about these Union organizers? How did this 43¢ an hour, these twelve hours, these seven days a week, how did that get changed?

GM: How did the what?

BM: How did they get that changed?

GM: I would never vote on the strikes. I wouldn't vote with the Union. The Union wanted this, and I wouldn't vote for it. I belonged to it. They said, "Will you get the hell out of here?" I said, "Okay." So, I told the foreman to give me my money, that they don't want me here. So, he said, "We'll see about that." He went and talked to them. He didn't want me to leave. They agreed, finally, that I could stay. Well, I wouldn't have anything to do with the Union anymore than belonging to it. I had to belong in order to work.

BM: How do you think they could have gotten that change made? You don't think a twelve hour day was a good thing?

GM: A change in what?

BM: You don't think that twelve hour day was a good idea?

GM: Oh, no.

BM: Well, how do you think they should have changed it?

GM: I agreed with them there, that we should work eight hours. When eight hours came, I voted for that. I welcomed that because some of those jobs never should have been twelve hours.

BM: Do you think they could have gotten the change without a strike?

GM: Yes, I think so. It was generally all over the country. It was common. Those twelve hour days, nobody liked it. It would have come anyway. I think so.

BM: Without strikes?

GM: Without strikes, oh yes. I think so.

BM: Then what happened? Were you there when they had these. . . What did you do? Did you go to work when other people. . . Did you cross the picket lines and go into work?

GM: What?

BM: Did you go into work when they were on strike?

GM: Well, I will tell you what happened. The mill, the whole mill was. . . What do I want to say? They had to have forty pounds of water and lights to make their insurance good. While they are out or anytime, they had to have insurance on the mill. Well, then they went on strike, and of course, I went out. I wouldn't want to be in there when they are striking. They had to have somebody to go around to each engine room and see that it had oil and whatever they needed, to keep that forty pounds of water and light, to keep their insurance good. I don't know who suggested me. So, the big shots called me and then the union. They elected me to take that job. So, I had a great big badge on me, and I could go in and out anytime the union agreed to it and the company agreed to it. Well, I knew what was going on, and I saw that they had machine guns and men ready to shoot. I was in and out. The non-union men, when I came out, wanted to know what was going on in there. I said, "They have guns alright. They have a truck load of guns." That is why they were on strike. They didn't want guns, to work on guns. So, I went to the general foreman of the old Sheet and Tube. I went to him and had a talk with him. I said, "Sir, this is the best place I have ever worked and the best men. There are only a handful of men making the trouble about the guns. The whole majority of men working in there are good men. You don't need guns on them. Those guns ought to come out of there." He said, "Well, do it!" So, I called up the FBI. I told them to send two men down. They came. I said, "There are all kinds of guns in there and ammunition, and they are there to fight."

BM: Who were these people that were going to use the guns?

GM: What?

BM: Who were they, that were going to use the guns?

GM: Company men. They were company men. I was the one that told them it was wrong. The FBI arrested all the men using the guns or had them. They got a truck and hauled all of those machine guns and ammunition. It was a big truck load. They said, "Hey, Mace, what do we do with this?" I said, "Let's go up to the main office in the mill." That's where the big shot that was head of all of them was, and I talked to him.

BM: You don't remember his name?

GM: I don't remember his name.

BM: If you think about it awhile you might.

GM: I told him, I said, "Boss, come here and look at this." He knew what was in there. I said, "If this was all out of here, this would be a good place to work." There were a lot of good men in there that you could depend on and trust. He said, "Take the damn stuff up and put it in the open hearth." Not the open hearth but. . . Where they melt steal.

BM: The blast.

GM: The blast furnace. You ought to have heard the bang, bang, bang when they dumped the whole thing in. Guns, everything were dumped in there and burned up. The strike didn't last but a little while. There was peace.

BM: Did you know any of the men who had guns? Any of the workers?

GM: Did I know any of the workers?

BM: That had any guns?

GM: Well, most of them that I knew are dead.

BM: They didn't arm themselves? The workers.

GM: Oh, no. I wish I could remember the names.

BM: Don't worry about it now, but you might.

GM: There were two men who were armed and they were patrolling the sheet mills. One was peeking around and saw the other. They began to shoot at one another, around the corner of the building. They weren't sure. I came up and said, "Hey, why do you want to kill one another for?" They were shooting at one another. I shamed them and told them, "You dirty pups, I wouldn't believe you guys on oath." They went and took a sledge or something and smashed the guns, and they wouldn't have anything to do with it anymore.

BM: Did they think that the workers were going to smash the mill or something? Did they believe the workers. . . Why did they arm. . . This gun business. . . Had anybody threatened to smash the mill up or something?

GM: They thought that the strikers outside would break in and destroy the mill. They were watching them.

BM: You were in the middle of this whole thing, weren't you?

GM: That general foreman--I wish I could recall his name--but he told me, he said, "Mace, as long as I am boss here, you have a job. You're the one my life depends on. You don't get mad. You don't lose your head." That is something my wife taught me. You heard Dale and Paul talking not long ago and say that they have never seen their mother mad. She talked like we are talking. If you did something that she didn't like, she would take you and talk like we are talking and fix it up. She wouldn't abuse you, no. She told me that that don't pay. Never let anybody get you riled up so that you holler, swear and carry on. She said, "Don't do it." She was one of the most wonderful persons I ever knew. Oh, yes. I miss her.

BM: Now this business, it's history when the strike was over. Do you remember more than one strike?

GM: One strike?

BM: Were there several strikes?

GM: There were four or five strikes.

BM: This one you told about was the first one? Is that right? Or, do you remember?

GM: I couldn't tell you whether there were four or five strikes. I hadn't been there but just a little while before we went on strike. But it is so long ago. I had a stroke, and I can't remember to save me.

BM: Well, it isn't all that important. That sort of stuff can be found out anyway. The information you are giving is important. And, if you happen to think of some of it, alright and otherwise, not. The hope is that when you start thinking about this stuff, that some of it will come back to you. I have had that happen to me. But, it isn't that important anyway. Can you remember when the change came, when you didn't have to work twelve hours anymore?

GM: I can't remember. . .

BM: Did it go clear down to eight?

GM: I can't remember at all.

BM: In England, they fought for so many years for a ten hour day. Here they went from a twelve maybe down to eight, but I am not sure. But if you remember some of that...

GM: Well, when I first went to work, I worked twelve hours. It was a few years before we got eight hours. I can't remember.

BM: Meanwhile, there were strikes? There were strikes all of the time until the eight hours.

GM: Oh, yes. That strike never proved anything. There were so many. Like I told that general foreman, there were about so many there. "If you got rid of them. . . . Put them on their honor. If you won't behave, out you go!" Well, one of them did.

BM: At this point we continue with the interview with Mr. Mace on May 28 at his home.

GM: People thought it was strange that I could do what I did with no education.

BM: You had education.

GM: We are talking about the university. The head of that now was here to see me. He was head of the university for years. I forget his name. The last two years?

BM: Yes, right.

GM: Well, he said it was strange that I can accomplish and do what I wanted to do with no education. He wanted to know how I went about it. Well, I don't know how I can tell you. I'm sitting here talking about something that I could do. Something comes into my mind that I think I can do, I get up and start. How I do it I don't know, but I get it done.

BM: That is interesting. That is what I wanted to. . . . I think people can still do those things if they realised it. That is why I think I like this interview. Because I think the people will begin to realize they don't have to go to school for everything.

GM: Well, I'll tell you, you never know what you can do. You don't know what you can accomplish until you try. Once you try this, it will open up channels of thought that you never dreamed about. I don't see it any other way because it has been that way always with me. I like that. I enjoy doing something. I'm not happy unless I am doing something.

BM: Now, this question of doing new things that you don't . . . It makes me think of something somebody else said about the tools that you used. You talked about seeing a wooden plow in use.

GM: Yes.

BM: Did you ever use one yourself?

GM: Yes.

BM: Now, have you ever heard anyone say, was there ever any worry that a metal plow would poison the soil?

GM: No.

BM: You never heard that said?

GM: No, I never did.

BM: I think they were afraid. I think they were afraid they might fail, and they don't think they could afford to fail. That's part of it.

GM: Well, right here forty years ago--and today is a world of difference in people. a world of difference -- forty years ago, I wouldn't think of locking the doors. I wouldn't think about anybody stealing anything. We raised everything we wanted to eat. We divided the food. If you didn't have anything, I would give you some. I would go down to a sale and buy a cow, maybe \$.02 a pound. I would put her in the barn, fatten her and give her to Pat the butcher, and everybody in the neighborhood would get a piece. We didn't think of anything else. The Bible says to love your neighbor, and do good to those that hate you, and say all evil against you and persecute you. For my sake, rejoice and be exceedingly glad. I believe that. Well, there is a world of difference today, now. There are very few gardens raised around in our neighborhood compared to years ago. Very few people butcher anymore. They want to get in the car and go somewhere. I don't know why. I don't understand it. Today, I have lettuce and onions out in the garden for dinner. It tastes good; new lettuce, new onions.

BM: There is something that I don't want to miss before we get on with this. Your attitude about these unions, I am interested in that.

GM: In what?

BM: In the unions. Back when you were in the mill, you didn't originally join the unions, but then you had to join the union . . .

GM: I had to join the union in order to have a job.

BM: Now, did you attend the meetings?

GM: When they asked me to. When they asked me to attend the meetings, I did. I took part in them. When they asked me my opinion, I gave it to them.

BM: You knew some of the leaders?

GM: Oh yes, I knew all the leaders in that section where I worked, but I never voted to strike. I didn't believe in that.

BM: Now, here's the point. You had other ideas. You thought perhaps other things could be done besides strike.

GM: Yes.

BM: Now, what good were those, then? What do you think you could have done without striking?

GM: Well, I thought we ought to be in the mill like we are in the neighborhood; love one another, help one another.

BM: What about \$.43 an hour, twelve hours a day, seven days a week? Do you think you could have done anything about that?

GM: Well, about what now?

BM: Could you have accomplished the eight-hour day and the higher wages some other way besides striking?

GM: Oh, I wanted the eight-hour day to come.

BM: What would your plan have been?

GM: We worked twelve hours a day, seven days a week for \$.43 an hour. I thought we ought to get eight hours and then whatever they could afford to pay. I didn't set any price. A lot of people agreed with me, and

then they began to get strong. Then, they demanded eight hours. Well, I went along with it. I thought it was better. A man who only works eight hours is a better workman for eight hours than he is for twelve. You get tire, and you get hurt once in a while when you are tired. Eight hours, you can stay pretty good and take care of yourself. That is the way I look at it.

BM: What do you think the workers could have done without a strike, to get the company to do something?

GM: Well, I thought when they went out on strike, the company should have seen this and give them eight hours without a strike.

BM: Did they go and talk to the company ever?

GM: Oh yes. They elected me the speaker to go and talk to the big shot. I did. I told him that these were the best bunch of men that I have ever worked with in my life! "They are good men. You couldn't find men any better." I said, "He'll do more work in eight hours than he would do in ten or twelve. He's more alert. He is better prepared. Twelve hours is too much." And you know, the boss himself agreed with me! He said, "I think that's right." But, there were always some that would hang back and fight. It didn't matter what it was. It seemed that there were about so many that would rather fight than eat. But, I told him and a bunch of them, I said, "You guys ought to be put out somewhere with a ball and chain on your leg, and make you dig ditches twenty-four hours a day until you wake up. I wanted to be a human among humans. I was never in for strikes. I thought they should do this. My dad would tell me to do something, and I didn't know why. He had to whip me to get me to do it, but he would. I hated my father and my mother. Oh, I hated them. They wouldn't be human. They wanted it now, now. Do this now! Be human. Be yourself. Do unto others as other do unto you. That is one thing that I did do, is read the Bible. I believed in the Bible.

BM: Do you remember the names of any of those union leaders?

GM: No, I can't.

BM: Or any of the bosses?

GM: I can't.

BM: Wasn't there one man named Brenner or something like that?

GM: There was one, Brenner.

BM: You knew him?

GM: I used to name dozens of them, but I . . .

BM: That's alright.

GM: But, after the stroke, I can't.

BM: I am interested in your feelings about it, your policy, what you believed about it. There is some place we can go to get the names and dates and all of that? While you were in the mill, there was more than one strike?

GM: Oh, I think they had six or seven strikes while I was in the mill.

BM: It was always the same thing. Now, you wouldn't vote for the strike, but you didn't cross their picket line either. You did not go into the mill, and the rest of them stayed out.

GM: There were a few big shots in the mill overpowered the lesser ones who wouldn't have guns in the mill, and they ordered these guns in the mill. At the gates, when people would come to work, they had a row of bags piled up with a hole through them. There would be a man, laying on his stomach, with a machine gun pointed through that hole to shoot the people who would come in. I saw all of that. I was there.

BM: Had you heard any threats of trying to take the mill over?

GM: Oh, I heard everything. One there and then another. But, there were a few of the big heads in the mill overruled the lesser who wouldn't do it. The men kept asking me, "Why don't you go and talk to the big shots?" Well, I did. I went and talked to them. I told them there is such a good bunch of men here, and there is only a few trouble makers.

BM: There was ones that you had to go in and help them keep their insurance enforced.

GM: They elected me. The union and the company both of

them agreed. They said, "Mace would make a good man for that job. He is a powerhouse man, and he understands the pumps and lights." They elected me, both sides now, and put a big badge on me. I could go in and out of the mill. Then, I had to, in order to inspect it to see if they had what they needed to keep the mill going. I had to see that they had forty pounds of water and lights to keep their insurance good. So, I knew what was going on the inside and out. I was in and out. I would come out, and they would nail me and want to know what is going on in there. I said, "They have the guns at the entrances ready to shoot you. There were about a thousand men." They caught me one day and wanted to know what I would suggest. "Well," I said. "If you men would all do what I told you to do, I would like to do something. No violence. Let's be peaceful and not hurt one another and not be ashamed of what we do after." "Okay." So, I called two FBI men. I explained to them what my job was, in and out. I said, "I am here everyday. I see all of this, and there are only just of a few of the company with the guns. If we can control those few men, this would be a wonderful place to work. We wouldn't be working under guns." "What do you propose to do," they asked. "Get a truck and go in there, and load those guns all in the truck." "I know where they are at. I will show you." So, I took them in there, and I said, "There are some lockers down there." We burned the locks off, opened them up. We had a big truck load of ammunition and guns. A big truck load! "Now, what do you want to do with it?" "Take it up to headquarters there in the mill to the big shots." They said, "Well, you do the talking." I said, "Alright." I said, "Boss, here are the guns that you had in the mill, ready to shoot the men. We have them all in this truck, and it's full with a big load. What do you want us to do with those guns and the ammunition?" He said, "What would you do with it?" I said, "I would put it in the open hearth." He said, "Put it in." I said, "You ordered it." And, they did it. He told some men to go with these guys and put it all in there. You never heard such bang, bang, bang! The explosions! They burned them up.

The strike didn't last but a little while. It was over right away. The man that was head of the mill at that time told me. "Mace," he said. "I will never forget this." He said, "You were right." I said, Well, out in the country in the churches or wherever there is a congregation, if they believe in the Bible and do unto others as they would have others do unto them, why

wouldn't it work in the mill? We are human beings." I couldn't see it any other way. He said, "You are right. You're right."

I worked until I was seventy years old. They wanted to know why I was leaving. I said, "I'll tell you the truth. I'm married to my boyhood sweetheart girl," and I said, "I have never seen her mad. We have never had an argument." And I said, "I would rather be with her than anybody else. When my day's work is done here, I like to go home. That is why I don't stop to drink or this or that. I go home. I'd rather be with her than anybody else. Now," I said, "I am seventy two years old, and I want to stay with her all of the time." You know that boss, after I retired, came to see me a few times and talked to my wife. He said, "For a man who had no education . . ." He couldn't understand me. "Why everybody that I ever had anything to do with, how can you do what you do or believe the way you believe with no education?" "Well," I told him, "I think I was ten or twelve years old, I could read good. My mother made me read the Bible. When I read it through, I got interested in it. I said, 'Mother what will I do?' She said, 'Read it again.' I read it through again. 'Now, what should I do?' She said, 'Read it again.' I read that Bible through maybe eight or ten times. I believed it. I studied it. I got interested in it more than any other thing. I lived it or tried to, and I believe today that there is nothing better. Oh, there is nothing better. What's better in your neighborhood to do unto others as you would have them do unto you? If people know you are sick, they would come in and do something for you."

BM: Now, at this point, I want the rest of this to be about medicine, about the practice of medicine. If you can, start in from when you were a child. The doctors, were there doctors in your neighborhood? Did you have a doctor?

GM: Oh, yes.

BM: One doctor?

GM: There were doctors everywhere.

BM: Their methods were much different?

GM: They are so different today, as day and night. Oh yes.

BM: In particular, for example, when babies were born, it was mostly mid-wives in your area?

GM: Yes, they didn't think of taking them to the hospital. Very seldom, if they had to they would, otherwise no.

BM: But, there was a hospital?

GM: Yes.

BM: Early, when you were a child?

GM: Yes. But, I will tell you what there wasn't. If there was one anywhere, I never knew it, was a home for old people.

BM: There never was?

GM: Not where I was born and raised. I never heard of one. Their children or somebody took care of the old people when they got old. Always, always, I never knew of anything else. But right here, people don't agree with me. Even some of my own people, daughter-in-laws, said "You just didn't get around and didn't know." They said, "You didn't know." Well, I was around. Things were settled where I lived, but I never knew of a home for old people. I never heard of one. There was a home for crazy people.

BM: Now, were there many? Were there very many insane people that you knew of?

GM: There were quite a few crazy people at that time, yes. Quite a few.

BM: You don't remember of any yourself, that you knew personally?

GM: Personally? Oh, yes. One of my neighbors, he was going around like this. His wife wanted to know what he was doing, and he said he was winding the world up. Getting ready to go.

BM: He was walking around in a circle?

GM: He was walking circles, and he would take his hand, winding. He died that way. He was always winding the world up. Winding the world up.

BM: He was alright as a young person?

GM: Oh, yes.

BM: He became this way during middle age?

GM: Oh, as he was getting older he got something . . .

BM: Did you know of any young people that became insane?

GM: A few, very few young people went crazy. Very few of them. People in those days were busy.

BM: They didn't have time to go crazy?

GM: They were busy doing something. Where I lived was all farms, cattle, sheep, farms. They mowed by hand. There was no thrash machines, no lawn machines. People were busy.

BM: This matter that you mentioned, when you had that typhoid fever and you had trouble with your stomach afterwards caused by the high fever.

GM: Well, the doctor said the fever, typhoid fever eats the lining of my mouth and bowels. The lining was gone. There was just blood running through me, and I would throw up anything I would eat. They said there was no help for me. He couldn't help me. He said, "There was a doctor in Washington, D.C. that can cure you." "Well," I said to my wife. "Should we go?" "Yes," she said. "Let's go." Well, we went and found him. He gave me a thorough examination. And, he said, "You are in bad shape. The lining of your bowels and stomach is all gone." He said, "You can get well in about a year, but it will be up to you." He said, "I can't do it. You have to do it yourself." He wanted to know if I was willing. I said, "Yes." He said, "Will you take an oath?" I said, "Yes." So, I raised my hand and took an oath that I would do what he told me to do.

The first thing he told me to do is to quit eating. He said, "You don't eat anything at all. When I say nothing, I mean nothing." He said, "You can have buttermilk. You can have all the butter milk you want. You will need a little salt in it, that's all. No medicine." So, I started. In about three months, I begin to feel better. He wanted to know if I broke my oath at any time and ate something. I said, "No." I told him, "I took an oath, and I am going to live by it." Then, he said that he wanted me to study. I told him that I had no education, that I didn't even finish

the seventh grade, but I had studied water, electric and iron, things that I needed to know. "Well," he said, "that's interesting," but he told me to go down to the municipal building. He said, "I will tell them you are coming, and they will know what to do with you." I went down there, and there were thirty-five of us taking Civil Service examinations. I was shocked. I said, "How do you want me to take this Civil Service examination without my education? I might as well go home." But, I took an oath, and I had to obey it. So, I stayed.

I never forgot the example they gave. The first one, if a pipe is thirteen feet long, four inches in diameter, how many gallons of water will it hold? Well, I took the circumference, which is round and squared, that and multiplied that by the number of feet in length. Another thing you needed to know when you buy pipe is it is all measured inside, not outside. Well, I got the circumference squared and multiplied it by the length. I said, "It is two hundred and some cubic inches in a gallon of water." Seems to me, it is 234. I multiplied that and got the answer. I was the only man out of thirty-four that got the answer. Then, they bought a steer, had so many dollars, been in so long and sold it for so much. They wanted to know how much percentage they made on their money. Well, that was easy. I got that. I was one of three out of thirty-five that passed. I was shocked. I had told my wife that I wouldn't have believed that no matter who told me. "Well," she said. "Be thankful." She said, "Just be thankful, and do what he has told you." I said, "I am thankful." He kept on until he got me on the police force. There, I got into trouble. A man tried to climb the monument down at the . . . What do they call that public hall . . . five hundred and 555 feet high?

BM: Washington Monument?

GM: Yes, Washington Monument. A man tried to climb that outside. He got up so far, and I persuaded him to come down. They sent me down there to keep him out of it. There was a crowd gathered there. Up at the depot, the depot up there would hold 50,000 people standing at the big building. How many trains go in and out there every day underneath the ground. Out in front here, men had carved out stone-like monuments, and they were about twenty-five feet long and weighed about two tons, like monuments. I don't know how many

of them were up there. Abraham Lincoln was one I remember. They sent me down there. They had holes punched in the ground that were brick. A bar was in there with a rope around to keep people away. I was to patrol it to keep people from getting hurt. They took one man down at a time and repolished that monument, clean as a pin. After work, I had to report back to the police headquarters and make a report of what I had done that day. Those big shots in the police department were all Catholics. I didn't know it at that time. They wanted to know, if the men were teasing me. They wanted to know why they took Abraham Lincoln down. I said, "Well, he has been up there for fifteen years and hadn't been to the toilet!" Boy, did they get after me. He said, "You stay in here." Everybody else went out. Boy, did they get after me. He was Catholic. If it hadn't have been for the representative from each state that goes to Washington . . .

BM: Senator, Representative?

GM: Yes. They would have fired me. Oh, yes. I called in and told him I was in trouble. Boy, he straightened them out. I had to have a little fun and laugh all the time. You know, in a year's time I was well again. He told me to get a steak, two or three pounds. Take a dull knife and scrape, scrape, scrape for an hour or two until you get a piece as big as a silver dollar. You put it in a skillet with a little butter and turn it over and turn it over and turn it over. Don't leave it until you think it is done through, and then, just one bite. Don't swallow it. Just chew it, like gum. Don't ever swallow it. I swallowed a little bit of it. I had a great experience at that time, but I became well again.

BM: Didn't you get weak? Didn't it make you awfully weak?

GM: Oh, I was weak for a while, but you would be surprised at how strong I got again, just on buttermilk.

BM: That is quite an insight about medicine of that time and also the story about your mother's asthma. I was interested in that.

GM: Well, she came from down there up to the lake. She got over it all and never took any medicine or anything. Just the change, the water, the air, or whatever cured her. She got well. That is the reason why we were up

- there. Oh, yes. I never wanted to go up there.
- BM: Was it a doctor that advised that? Was that a young doctor that advised that she go . . .
- GM: It was a young doctor that moved in down there, his first job. He heard about my mother, and made a trip to see her and didn't charge her anything. Doctors used to be different than they are today. He told her that she should go up along Lake Erie and, "you will get well." So, Dad took her up there for six weeks. She was just about well in six weeks. He came back, sold the farm, and moved up there. I didn't want to go up there. I wanted to stay in West Virginia.
- BM: Were all your brothers and sisters still at home at the time, or did some stay down there?
- GM: There was one that died down there, and one got married and stayed down there. The rest of them came up here.
- BM: Then, they all settled around in this area.
- GM: Yes, some went all over. My youngest brother went to Florida and died there. One went to California and died. One, I don't know what became of him. He went to Indiana, got married, and had two children. They both died. His wife died. He went to California and bought a hardware store. I don't know how many years that was, but he sold that and went to Australia. I never did know what became of him. I never did hear a thing from him.
- BM: Now, this part about the doctors, these two things about your mother's asthma and about the typhoid fever, and the experience you had with that were the things that I wanted to be sure and get. In my other tape--I lost it somehow--so, that is the reason I really came today.
- GM: From what I . . . [my mother] she taught me to read the Bible. She was German. She spoke German. She was a music teacher. She taught music in German. She said, "I'm going to teach you music." She started on me. I didn't like that. I could count pretty well in German. I could get a few notes, but I didn't like it. I said, "Mother please, I will do anything!" She said, "Go and read the Bible." I read the Bible. I kept reading the Bible, and I got interested in it. I stuck to it, and I read it through. "Now, what do I do?" "Read it

again." I just kept reading it. Do you know Mickey Myers? She lives down near me.

BM: You talked about her before, but I don't know her. I don't know who that could have been.

GM: I have know her for forty years. She has a little girl twenty years old. Didn't I tell you about her?

BM: Yes, but I can't think who . . . Has she got a married name that I would recognize.

GM: Myers. That is her married name. Mickey Myers. She goes to the Methodist Church here.

BM: I don't know why I wouldn't recognize the name, but I don't. I don't know everybody around here.

GM: About that little girl, I was talking to her mother, and the mother couldn't answer the phone. This time, the girl could. I couldn't tell her from her mother. That is how I got acquainted with the girl. How many times I have talked to her, I don't know. She passed herself off as her mother. One day--I don't know what was said--I realized that that wasn't her mother. I told her. I said, "That's not your mother." Then, she went and got chicken, sweet potatoes and I don't know what else, and drove over here and had dinner with me. We laughed and laughed and laughed about how she fooled me for over a year. Once, she said she loved her father beyond all reason. "Dad has meant so much to me." She said, "I know if Dad would have lived--he had been dead for two years--you remind me of him. The way you speak and in every way you remind me of him." She asked me to write her love letters like her Daddy would write her in college. What was I to do? I told her, "Karen, if I can help you, I will help you." So, I wrote her two or three letters. She came over to see me. She hugged me and just said, "To see you is so good. You are just like Daddy was. You make me think of him in every way." Now, I can't write. I haven't wrote to her about ten months now. I can't write.

BM: Well, you do so well on the telephone.

GM: What?

BM: You communicate well on the telephone. You must get quite a few calls.

GM: She helps, talks to me on the phone when she comes home, and comes to see me. She is just so nice. Her mother, once in a while, would come with her. I have known her mother for years. I thought I was talking to her. We had a lot of fun over it. Karen said to me, "If you knew how much that means to me, to know you, you wouldn't object." I said, "Well, I don't. If you say I'm helping you, then it's okay. Well," I said, "I am ninety-five years old, and you are twenty." She said, "What difference does it make?" I said, "If it doesn't to you, then it doesn't for me." So, when we get together, we laugh and talk. We have a good time.

BM: So many people are so happy to live in their own home, even if they are alone. You like to live in your own home, even when you are alone? You wouldn't enjoy any play else any better?

GM: Oh, yes. I am getting ready to leave here.

BM: You are?

GM: Yes.

BM: Is that why you are . . . ?

GM: Exactly. Maybe you didn't know, but Carbon Limestone over here . . .

BM: You said something about it that first time . . .

GM: They bought all around me, the land all around. They bought 300 or 400 acres all around me. Then, they were going to make me sell. I had four acres and a half and this house. They offered me \$7,000 for it. I said, "I don't want to sell it to anybody. Me and my wife liked it here, and we want to stay here. Later, you will get it anyway. Leave us alone. We like the neighborhood." He kept coming back and coming back. One day, I told him, "Would you please go away, and don't come back anymore? Leave me alone. You will get this, by and by, when we are gone." Well, they went away, and about three weeks, came back. He said, "Would you sell this at your price? Write out what you want." I said, "Yes. I will do that. I will stay here as long as we want to." So, I wrote out what I would do. I would stay here as though I haven't sold it. We would stay here just the same, until the rocks begin to come down and get dangerous. Then, we would go. I would want \$25,000. Oh, he left here mad! I said to my wife, "Maybe that will give us

peace."

In about a month, he was back. He said, "Would you still sell out?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Make me a deed for it." I made him a deed for it. One day, he came with the check. He handed me the check, and I said, "This check isn't any good. It isn't worth \$.50!" Oh, he started to swear. I said, "Wait! I don't allow anybody to swear in my home. I never did." I threw him out. He told me he forgot. He told me, "We [the company] are worth millions of dollars," he said, "We can't afford to make mistakes. We can't afford to make a mistake of \$25,000." I said, "Well you have." "Oh no," he said. "You take this check over to the bank, and they will give you the money." I said, "Okay." He left. I said to my wife, "Let's just show him that he is human and makes mistakes." She said, "Alright." we went over there, and the manager of the bank happened to be in there. He said, "Mace, this check isn't any good." I said, "That is what I told him, but he said you would give me the money. And, I said it wasn't worth \$.50!" I pulled a card out of my pocket, one of his. I said, "You just might get ahold of him." He used the phone and, sure enough, did get ahold of him. He said, "Mace is here with a check for \$25,000. That check isn't worth the paper it is written on. What do you want to do?" He said, "You tell Mace to bring that check home, and I will be waiting over there for him." So he gave me the check, and I went home. He was sitting there in the driveway, and I didn't pay any attention to him. We drove up the driveway, and went into the house and he came in. "Let me see that check," he said. He looked at it and said, "It doesn't even have my name on it." I said, "I'll tell you something. You told me so many times that you couldn't afford to make a mistake. I claim everybody makes mistakes regardless of who he is or where he is. I don't care who he is. he can't do business without making some little mistake sometime. He wouldn't be human if he didn't." He sat there and took that and never said a word.

BM: He didn't put your name on it?

GM: He got up and went. I don't believe he was gone over an hour, and he came back. And, he had a good check. I said, "Don't you feel better now?" He said, "Why should I?" I said, "You thought about your mistake, and you had to admit it."

BM: This ends the interview I had inadvertently erased. I thanked Mr. Mace for his cooperation, and there was further conversation that had nothing to do with the material.

END OF INTERVIEW