

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of New Cumberland

New Cumberland: Past to Present

O.H. 58

MR. LESLIE CUPPY

Interviewed

by

Mr. Tom Hess

on

November 19, 1975

MR. LESLIE E. CUPPY

Mr. Leslie Earle Cuppy was born on May 26, 1892 in Suffolk, Virginia. He is the son of Mr. John and Wortley Holland Cuppy. On October 15, 1924, Leslie married the former Elizabeth Chapman and they presently have two children. Their names are, Iris V. Cuppy who is 50 years old, and Earle C. Cuppy, age 39.

Leslie never went to high school or college and completed only eight years of schooling. He went to work in the brickyard when he was 13, and by the age of 16, he was doing a man's job earning a man's pay.

Although now retired, Mr. Cuppy worked as a farmer and oil lease operator and owner for more than 40 years. During this time, he also worked as a Deputy Assessor of Hancock County, in West Virginia for 30 years

Mr. Cuppy is very active in his community of New Cumberland. Leslie involves himself in many social functions as well as church organizations. He is a member of the Historical Society of Hancock County and also a Trustee of Swaney Memorial Library in New Cumberland, West Virginia. He served as director of the Farm Bureau for several years and is presently a member of the Junior Order of the United American Mechanics. Mr. Cuppy belongs to the Christian Church of New Cumberland and is a trustee and an elder. He has also served on the church board for 65 years. In 1974, his church presented him with the honor of being chosen as a delégate to the World Christian Endeavor Convention in Essen, Germany.

Mr. Cuppy is very interested in the history of his family background and that of his home town. He has lengthy manuscripts of many details on the town of New Cumberland. Leslie likes to collect items of historical interest and assemble them in a scrapbook. Some of his other hobbies include collecting rocks, minerals, and stamps. These facts stated above, only bring you to the conclusion that for a man of 85 years of age, Mr. Cuppy is a very active and interesting person.

BECKY PAGAC  
September 21, 1977

## YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

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INTERVIEWEE: Mr. Leslie Cuppy  
INTERVIEWER: Mr. Thomas Hess  
SUBJECT: New Cumberland  
DATE: November 19, 1975

H: This is an interview with Mr. Leslie Cuppy taping at New Cumberland, West Virginia, the 19th of November 1975. Mr. Cuppy's ancestors were the first settlers in this part of the country, and his grandfather, was responsible for the starting of the village of New Cumberland. Mr. Cuppy has been encouraged to tell us about the history of the town since his family was so very close to it for so many years. Mr. Cuppy, you've told me about a great-great grandfather who was one of the first settlers in this area. Do you want to start with him and tell us how things have developed as you've discovered them?

C: My great-great grandfather came in town in either the late or early 1700's to build a cabin near New Cumberland on the Ohio River. He lived there for a little while and was attacked by Indians but managed to drive them off. They did kill two Indians, he and his neighbor. I never did know his neighbor's name. They got out and went to the fort of Wheeling. There my great-great grandfather enlisted as an Indian scout and for three years he never slept in a bed. He scouted all through this territory and then he went into the Tory Rebellion. He went out with companions to settle that. After he finished the war he came back to the cabin in New Cumberland and stayed there until his wife died. Then he left there and went to Indiana with his son-in-law. He lived there for a while and came back to Ohio, near Dayton; there he bought another farm. He died at the age of 100 years, 3 months, and 27 days. They said he passed away very quietly. I don't know about the exact date; I never looked it up.

At that time, my great-great grandfather was in Brook County, West Virginia and he came back to take up land which was between the two creeks: Deep Cut and Harding's Run. Back from the river near the cemetery road, he built a house along the riverbank, and he farmed it. In the early 1800's, the man by the name of John Gamble started a bank near Mudpoint.

H: A bank, what kind of bank?

C: A clay bank, near Mudpoint. Thomas Freeman helped mine the clay from his bank, and they took it into Pittsburgh to make brick. They got the idea that they better have the yards near their material, and they had clay, wood and coal to burn the bricks. James Porter, a young man then, went down near the Gamble bank and started a brickyard. About a year or two later, Thomas Freeman came back and built a brickyard down there, and it became known as Freeman's Landing. It was a very busy place on the river. Then, after that, different brickyards started up. They were from Kings Creek to what they called Black's Island. This area became kind of solid with brickyards, sewer pipe work, clay mines and places where they ground clay for the mills. There were no roads in this place at that time, and there were only old Indian trails from the river. These bricks were manufactured, placed into keel boats and floated down the river to Louisville, Cincinnati, New Orleans and Wheeling. From Wheeling, they used to bring some of the keel boats back. Most of the keel boats were made here in town - barges, we called them - and then they were sold for wood or whatever they wanted to do with them once they got them down there. They used to bring them with poles and tow lines with a mule from Wheeling to New Cumberland. They would bring some of them back that worked along the shore. It took them two days to do that.

Then in 1839, my grandfather saw that the brickyard looked like it was going to be a permanent business, and they got the idea to build a new town. In 1839, he laid out 40 lots and as the town started to sell them, he named the town Vernon. Sometimes it was called Cuppytown or Brick Bend. The first house was built in 1840. There were several plans made by several other men. A man by the name of John Chapman, who was a carpenter, built the first house, which is still standing. Then later, after my grandfather sold those 40 original lots, he made 50 more and began to sell them. Because of the preference of the people here, they changed the name to New Cumberland. The lower part is called the Town, and there is no connection between the two towns. The

two Campbell brothers owned back to the Black Horse. They got an idea and they started to lay out our town. They laid out about fifty lots, if I remember correctly, then they laid out the second edition to some men by the name of Gamble and Ball. I forget the name of the other man who laid out the back road. It was a town for about 5,000 people, but of course, she never got that big. They depended mostly on the brickyard then and they were flourishing very well.

In 1840 my grandfather built another house in the upper Town and contracted with John Chapman to build a little brick house. That is where the disciples of Christ -or the Christian Church- was first organized in that same year. It was the first religious body ever to be organized in the City of New Cumberland. The Presbyterians came next, and then the Methodist Church. This little gem that they had up was a Methodist Church, but it was different from the United Methodist and they had school in there, too. This was the little church building which burnt down, and they built the new building on the Ridge in 1874. From that time on, there were people that came in and built houses, and other industries began to work on through. We had a glass house, a pottery and two foundries. We also had two clay mills, and years later we built a scientific building. There's an old Scott drugstore in the upper Town, turned into an electric lamp place, which is staffed mostly by women. It ran for years up there. Back then, we had the coal mines and a railroad. It went out Harding's Run and Blind Cove, then into town. The railroad train would bring it in back and forth from the mine and store them in what is our football field today. Then the train, as I remember was 75 car loads. Material would leave New Cumberland every night, six nights a week. It carried clay, pipe, pottery, coal and glassware.

H: Okay, before we get too far away from the beginning of the town, let's see if we can go back to great-great grandfather and think about the date of his coming here. He was scouting when the Revolutionary War started. Right?

C: This was before the Revolutionary War, but he did serve in the war one month.

H: So he built his cabin sometime before the Revolutionary War?

C: I don't have the right day. He probably got it from Virginia. You see, it wasn't settled in this end as quickly as in the southern part of our state. Of course, it was all Virginia then. They gradually worked

in, but they had to watch the Indians all the time. They would drop valuable trinkets on the ground and then they would hide and watch for the man to go pick them up so they could pounce on him and get his scalp. This was when it was mostly a wooded area. Now the Chapmans settled around here, too. Three families came to New Cumberland first. They were the Cuppys, the Chapmans, and the Gregorys. Now I don't know who took up this lower end, but I know the history I've got on it. It was the Campbell brothers.

- H: Okay. Do you or have you run across the name of the tribe of Indians that were here when your great-great grandfather was here scouting? What tribe was he scouting?
- C: I don't remember that. I've seen and read it, but there are several different tribes.
- H: Well, what I was thinking about was that we've got the village across the river called Mingo, and there was a tribe called the Mingos, and I just wondered...
- C: Yes, I've heard about the Mingos, but there were also Cuppys in the Steubenville Fort too. There were Cuppys in the Washington Fort also. I know of them, but I don't know what connection any of them are. I couldn't say that.
- H: You talked about the fort at Wheeling, and Steubenville roughly about half way between the fort and Wheeling. Was Fort Steubenville here when great grandfather had to run for his life from the Indians?
- C: I don't know. It might have been there. The only story on it that I know is that of the captain of the fort at Steubenville and his wife. She was in Washington, Pennsylvania, and on the road home when she met with some Indians. When she turned her horse to run, he threw her, she sprained her ankle and they caught her. They took her across the river near Wellsville.
- H: The Indians took her?
- C: Yes, the Indians took her, and the captain started following the trail. There were two Cuppys in the company at the Steubenville Fort. They were Abraham and his brother John Cuppy. The captain was killed, and after they got back up to Wellsville, they caught up with them. There they had a skirmish. Of course, they'd already killed her, and he was killed there, too. There were two Cuppys in that company that were scouts that went out there hunting them.

- H: You say that the fort captain was killed in an effort to rescue his wife?
- C: Yes.
- H: I was just curious why grandfather would go right past Fort Steuben to go to Fort Wheeling for safety there, if Fort Steuben existed then at that time. I think it did exist then.
- C: It must have existed, but I don't know why, maybe it was in West Virginia. Maybe that was part of the trouble.
- H: To get across the river would've been tough then, wouldn't it? Do you happen to know whether he made his escape by boat down the river?
- C: They don't say that. They just say that he got away. Now, they got John Cuppy in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. He was a scout and his father-in-law had the name of Jerome. They were scouting together one day because the Indians were getting to riding restlessly around here. Well, they came to Short Creek, and they camped for the night. The Indians surrounded them and they killed his father-in-law. He happened to see a big root of a tree where the creek had washed away the dirt under it. He crawled under there and the Indians couldn't find him, so they left. He got out, went back to the fort for help and they buried his father-in-law there. Now a grandson of his father-in-law came in, dug up the bones and took them to a cemetery. He had the bullet, and he also had the buttons off his uniform. I don't know much about them; that's vague to me.
- H: Well, in this very early time then, there was a fort at Little Washington, a fort at Wheeling and a fort at Steuben. I suppose Fort Pitt in the other direction would be close. Now, in what is now Ohio, that was Virginia too, wasn't it? Then at that time, up so far north until you got up into the Connecticut part of it. Were there forts up that way that you know of?
- C: There was one, I think a block house of some kind at Fort Chapman. They had a block house or a cabin on each end here somewhere that they used for a fort. They also had a fort on the hill there.
- H: Right here at New Cumberland?
- C: Right on the hill; it is still up there. You wouldn't know it because it has been covered, but that is Fort Chapman. George Chapman took up a thousand acres here years ago. This was in the early days of New

Cumberland, and that is where his marker comes from. George Chapman is also a great-great grandfather of mine.

H: Now "marker", you are talking about the one right on Ridge Avenue?

C: Yes, he built the fort up there. John D. Herron, a Justice of the Peace, was born at that fort. The fort is still up there but in pretty bad shape. Unless you already knew about it, you probably wouldn't know that it was there. It is a log fort with four doors inside, and the outside is covered with Jusel brick.

H: About when was that fort built, just roughly?

C: Well, that was way back in the late 1700's.

H: And then you said that there was a fort to the north end of town and at the south end of town?

C: Block houses, not forts.

H: The early men built these for Indian protection?

C: Yes, they used to go there for protection.

H: Now, how late in the history of this area right around here was there Indian trouble? Say that by 1830, was the Indian trouble over?

C: I think; I would say somewhere about that time. I never heard much about my grandfather having any trouble. The Chapmans never had much trouble either. Although one time, George Chapman worked, and they had to go back by horseback over the mountains to get salt and other material. He had a hired man, and he left him there with his family. The hired man came in and said to Mrs. Chapman, "get the kids and get to the fort." He said that the Indians were coming. Well, she didn't believe him, and she got the gun down and pointed it at him and said, "now you get out of here; I think you are the Indians." He got scared and ran. I don't know his name, but when he came back, the Indians didn't bother them and never did after that. Anyhow, he was figuring on robbing them and then getting out. She was brave enough to get the gun down, point it at him and tell him to get out.

H: The hired man did this while George was away, right? Now you've told me you were related to the Chapmans as well as the Cuppys. Could you tie that relationship in here for us?

- C: Well, I married a Chapman. My wife is the great granddaughter of George Chapman.
- H: The man who built the fort on the hill?
- C: Yes. Her grandfather was Alfred Chapman, and her father's name was William. They joined farms on the hill. They both built one. . My grandfather built the Cuppy mansion in 1952, and it is still up there. The Chapmans built theirs in 1856, and it is still there, also. I don't know much about the exact date of a Chapman marrying a Cuppy, but a Jean Chapman married a John Cuppy. There are an awful lot of Johns in the Cuppy family and the same with the Chapmans.
- H: Both your father and grandfather were John Cuppys weren't they?
- C: Yes. I know a lady who came from Illinois College, and she thought I should have named my boy John when he was born. Instead, I named him Earl, or rather my wife named him Earl Chapman Cuppy. My middle name is Earl, and she was very much put out, because I didn't name him John. She had a boy, John Cuppy, I can't think of her name at the moment, but she was very put out that I didn't name him John.
- H: It seems as though there would be enough confusion with all the John Cuppys that are here. If we move forward just a little bit from the Indian time and the forts and so forth' we talked about the brickyards location. Could we actually locate the brickyards by some landmarks that are there? The first brickyard was built by whom?
- C: By James Porter. That is down by Mudpoint Garage.
- H: Okay. That is along Route 2, south of town about three to three-and-a-half miles. That is Mudpoint, the first clay mine.
- C: There was a pipe shop and two brickyards below that. They were between that and Kings Creek, right on the river bank.
- H: Okay. That is further south along Route 2, right along the river bank?
- C: Right up to the edge of New Cumberland, there was a clay mine. The Black Horse Yard had a clay mine down there, also. It was right where you go up to the gold course.
- H: That is about a mile south of the city limits?

C: Right in the lower end of town there was a man by the name of Jim Porter. He had a sewer pipe works right in the city limits. That would be south of the little league ball field now. It is right as you go down to the dip where they had it filled in. The America Sewer Pipe Company bought it and turned it into a brickyard. We have at the upper end of town a Clifton pipe shop within city limits, too. At first there were only two brickyards, Cresent was one of them. Then they had the Eagle, which was a pipe shop. Then came the Union and Rocky Side, which in later years belonged to John Porter. John went across Black's Island and built the Globe Brickwork. They changed hands many times. I had two uncles that were part owners at one time. One of them was a lawyer, and Graham had a brickyard. He also was in the House of Legislature. The other one was in with a man by the name of Truth. Somehow, John Porter got a hold of all of these brickyards above and below and sold out to the Mack Manufacturing Company. He sold out all but the Globe. Today, we only have one left, which is the Union, but has since changed its name to the Cresent Brick Company. One time they consolidated the brickyards and they became known as the West Virginia Fire Bricky Company. In the early years, everybody around here was either a Cullen, a Cuppy, a Moneypenny or a Porter. I just can't think right now of all of them that owned brickyards at that time. There were two brickyards at Holbert's Run. They never amounted to a whole lot because they were too far back from the river to get their products transported. Finally, they pulled up and mounted their machines somewhere else.

H: Now, let's get some dates on some of this. The first brickyard, about when did it appear?

C: In 1832 was when the first brickyard was built by a man by the name of James Porter down at the Point. He was the man who started it. Then a year later, I think it was, Freeman came in. He was the man that was taking the clay into Pittsburgh. He also built a works there, which became known as Freeman's Landing. I remember one works, the Rocky Side, it went down to the boats and the rest of them, I just can't seem to recall. There was a coal incline that came over the hill and went out where the dam used to be. They brought the cars down with coal and loaded boats from up on top of what we call New Cumberland Heights. That's a good many years ago. It has changed hands since then and was one of the most profitable big businesses here, because a man by the name of Prentice bought it. The two Chapman brothers opened the mine, built it, ran coal down there and built this first

incline. Then they sold out to the man by the name of Prentice. He bought a steamboat and fixed it all up. At that time, the towboats began to come in, also. He built a coalyard in Cincinnati and just about the time when he got a good start, he died suddenly and there were a lot of men out of work. As a matter of fact, it was several years before anybody took it up again.

- H: When would you say was the real heyday of the brickyard, the pipe works and so forth?
- C: Well, along about the 1900's would be the heyday, I think. They had their ups and downs, but they had a hard time getting their stuff delivered. They couldn't make as many bricks as they can today. Back in those days, 3,200 bricks was a good days work. Now, they make much more. When I worked, we would make between 50,000 and 60,000 a day. Then a man who belonged to our church invented the paving brick. His name was Young. The company got a hold of his brick and patented it.
- H: What was his name again?
- C: Gil Young invented the Mack block.
- H: What would make the Mack block different from just the brick?
- C: Well, it's large, and it burns harder. It also has grooves or ridges in it. In burning brick they take about 7 or 8 rows of wire cut, as they used in those days in the mill. They don't use them anymore. They are different brick because the brick in the bottom didn't burn as hard as they did up above. The Mack block is a bigger brick, they'd be twice as big as these wire cuts and they burn them to test these bricks. They would take ten bricks out and put them in the machine with iron brick. They took them out and weighed them to see how much of a loss there was. That is the way they ran the test. A lot of cities had a certain test that they wanted the brick to pass. They would ship the brick out in cars everyday for the pavement in Philadelphia and other cities. The first pavement in the United States was in New Cumberland. Charleston claims the first commercial pavement. In West Virginia, they had a book out that states all of these facts. I think it was John Porter -I'm not sure- who made the first pavement on Ridge Avenue. We have the brick pavement in front of the Courthouse, which is on Court Street. They gave them the brick, but they had to send the men down here to pave it. Now the road used to come up right in front of the Pres-

byterian Christian Church. Then they moved it out there and did away with it. You could almost step out of the buggy into the church door.

H: Besides the brick, you've mentioned pipe. Some people might not know about pipe as you are thinking about it, so would you explain it for us?

C: Well, the sewer pipe was used to make the sewers in the town. Whenever you needed a sewer they made these pipes. They are made out of clay. They are still making them and using them around town, but not as much as they used to.

H: What type of price did these men give you on these pipes?

C: I don't know what price, but the price was pretty cheap. The labor, got ten dollars a month and board, or sixteen dollars a month and you board yourself. Those were the wages back in the early days. Of course, then you could buy pork for three or four cents a pound and beef was about three or four cents more than pork.

H: The men didn't make too much, and the brick didn't cost as much as it does today. Do you have any recollection of the price of the lots when your grandfather was selling lots?

C: No. I doubt if the lots were that high.

H: It is interesting to note how prices change from time to time. You said that your grandfather took up the land from the river front back up to Ridge Road. Were some of these brickyards built on your grandfather's land?

C: No. They were above him. He had one of the first dams where 99 was. Now, I don't know what was there. It was a shack and was torn down years ago. That is right in town. Where those town houses are now was supposed to be for a brickyard, but it never developed into one. The Crescent mine, which is right up over the hill from where the dam was, is where they hauled it by mule trains around the hill. There is something built there. I don't know what it was, but there was never a brickyard there.

H: Now to go along with the town, the business, and so forth, there had to be some stores and places like that. Can you tell us something about the beginning of the commerce and the stores?

- C: A lot of these brickyards had their own stores. When this Prentice fellow started up and bought the cabin, he bought a lot of good stores. A man named Crafton had a store uptown where John Herron's office is now. I think the first post office was there at that time. Some people by the name of McConnell had a store then. It was down here in the lower part of town. Then the Stewart brothers had a store. The Scott brothers had a drug store in later years. Ed Shanley had a store, too.
- H: What kind of stores were these?
- C: Well, these were mostly dry goods and grocery stores.
- H: Sort of a general store?
- C: Yes, a lot of them had their own blacksmith's shop and their own shoemakers. One of the big brickyards had a saw mill. They had a planing mill there, also. A man had a tin shop there and a patent for a flour bin. They said he loaded it up right out of his back door onto the barges and shipped it down the river. His name was Philson. I was told that there was a Moneypenny who had a store in Philson's building at one time. Stewart had a hotel at the upper end of town. A man by the name of Robb had a hotel here in town. Finally, they built a bridge up here, and they called it the Dump Bridge. They built the bridge, raised it about three times, and then filled it in. They said in the wintertime it got pretty muddy and they had to cinder the path. That is where Upper and Lower got its name. and Lower stuck to this day.
- H: The "Upper" indicates upstream?
- C: No. The upper town where my grandfather and the Campbells first laid out was from down below there. That is where it got its name. They called this Lower town and that Upper town. Now, the people's store wasn't like it is now. It was built by the Mack brothers. I have the date at home, but I don't have it with me. The oil excitement put a boom to this town.
- H: About what time was this?
- C: Along towards 1880 and 1890 somewhere in between there because the railroad was put in here then. It was built here in 1886. When it came into New Cumberland, they donated the ground. A lot of them did work for the railroad and the station was a skating rink here, and they gave them the station. Then the oil boom came in and Hoods garage was torn down. The Hoods

garage used to be the oil well supply down on the other corner, right alongside of the railroad. It belonged to the church. In later years, John Sweeney gave it to us boys to play basketball. Then Hood bought it and moved it up to where the filling station is now. They started a garage.

- H: Okay, we've got the railroad in here now finally, but I noticed before we brought the railroad to town that your references continually went back to the river. Even the man who had made the flour bin shipped out by the river. The coal was taken out by an incline to the barges and on the river. Has New Cumberland, other than needing the river for a way to get rid of it's produce, has it been involved in river commerce? Was there a barge company stationed here?
- C: No. They made the barges here at first, to ship the brick. That was the only outlet they had, the river. There was no roads, nothing but Indian paths to go through the woods. Ridge Avenue was all sawed timber at one time. In fact, the whole town was nothing but big trees.
- H: What kind of trees? What varieties?
- C: Well, they had Chestnut, Oak, Walnut, they had all kinds of trees.
- H: All kinds of hard woods?
- C: Yes. That is the only shipment they had on the river. When the town first started they used Keel boats. The men had to have a pretty good idea of what they were doing because there were two Keel boat captains here at that time. I can't remember their names, but I have it written down. Some of the people even owned boats. At one time, the people did their banking in Steubenville. There was a man who had a little boat that ran daily between Steubenville and New Cumberland. This was every day except Sundays. They brought the produce in that way. The butcher over at the McCoy's Station brought meat in twice a week peddling it.
- H: When did New Cumberland get its own bank?
- C: Well, I don't remember. I remember seeing a building, but it used to be that some houses burned down where the bank's parking lot is now. I have the dates down, probably at home. I just can't remember.
- H: You say you remember when the bank was built?
- C: The new bank that just went under was where Graham's store is now. That was the bank and the post office.

- H: In your lifetime, that building was built, is that correct?
- C: Yes, I used to wonder and I was just a kid, why they were laying the brick along on top of it all the same way. I couldn't understand why they weren't tying them in. Course I had been around a brickyard and had worked in them. I started in a brickyard when I was 13 years old. It was my first work and I worked 10 hours a day for 50 cents. When I was 16 years old, I was doing a man's job, earning a man's pay. I got \$1.45 a day. I remember about 10 years ago, I went into a doctor's office and met a fellow who did the same job I did. I said to him, "how much are you getting a day now?" He was working for the Globe Brick Company. He says, "we just got a raise, I'm making \$3.10 a hour now." He's getting twice as much as I was for ten hours when I was 16 years old.
- H: And he is working an 8 hour day and you were working 10 hours a day. Okay, now what about school here in New Cumberland?
- C: Well, back then the schools didn't get very much. The school met in church, and later they built the school on the Ridge. Then they built the two wings later, that is the one that burned. I have a little story, where some people fought the school and the superintendent that designed the school. It was made of hand-made brick and they fought it until after he had it done. Now they like him and in later years they put two more wings on and made a high school out of it.
- H: Was this new building over here built in your lifetime?
- C: I can't remember. We didn't live right in town for a while. My dad went to Virginia for some time and then came back. My uncle had a brickyard up there and we lived with them. We also worked for them.
- H: Where did you go to school before then?
- C: The only school I went to was Rocky Side. A little town that is up along the river. In fact there were houses all along the hill clear up to Mosco.
- H: Okay, you have referred to Mosco a couple of times, I looked for it but I can't find it. Where is Mosco?
- C: Well, on Route 2, where the lakes and the river are, there are crossroads after you go down that long hill. Then you come across a bridge, this side of Connell's farm. You turn left and that little town out on the bank is Mosco. The houses are right on the river bank.

You'll find a marker there. The fight between the Poe brothers and the Bigfoot Indians took place there. If you go up you can see the marker, that is where the fight took place.

H: That is supposed to be one of the last battles with the Indians in this area. Where the Indians Chief Bigfoot was killed.

C: Then you go up to where the sand company is located. That is where the Logan Massacre was. There is supposed to be a marker there because some members of the Historical Society took one up there. They were going to put a marker on the road about ten years ago, but no marker has ever shown up yet.

H: What was the Logan Massacre?

C: Well, there was a man who owned the Daniel Baker Inn and he used to sell liquor. One night about 30 blood thirsty men under the direction of Daniel Greathouse, went up to where Logan lived. He lived with a friend over at Yellow Creek. Well, they came over back and forth and they got along fine. Logan was a chief, and they came over there and got these fellows drunk. These 30 men under his command went in and murdered them. There is one story that I wouldn't want to tell on tape, but that turned Logan against the whites.

H: It was the whites though, that murdered the Indians?

C: Yes, they got them drunk and massacred them. It was too bad what they did because they caused a stir-up again. No longer were they on friendly terms with the Indians.

H: Now, New Cumberland isn't a big and bustling town as we have pictured it with all the pipe works. What has brought about the death of New Cumberland, or the loss of all the industry and so forth?

C: Well first, the concrete took the place of the brick paving business. Now the black top has taken place over the concrete paving. Then the mill got dry-pressed bricks and they did away with the mill brick. Of course, that was a downfall then because there was no sale of brick and the pipe was done away with by sewer pipes. Of course, they are still using them, there is several works still working. Mostly now, it is your building brick that they make in the brickyards. Now this brickyard, the only one left here, is making the dry-press brick. There is very little moisture in it. It is pressed into a brick instead of being molded

into a dye. Before you ground the clay, it comes out, and the wire cutter cuts it off. Back then the pavement block went through a 3 or 4 ton press. That is how I got my fingers cut off, making hillside brick. Now in hillside brick, there was a knife to press the side off. We also used a horse on the hill to pull a load. He wouldn't slip back because the shoe was caught there and it would hold him. They have done away with that now and the blacktop is taking place of the concrete. Although brick lasts longer than any of them, concrete is better than the blacktop, it lasts longer and is cheaper.

H: Is there still a good supply of clay around the hills here?

C: There is a good bit, as far as I know. We have a roll that goes through here and it took them seven years to go through it. It is solid rock, but it drops when you come down to New Cumberland. Below New Cumberland, it drops down to the railroad, below the clay. They drilled wells to find if there was clay back in there. This new works is right behind that road and the trucks would haul the clay to the works. That is where they are getting their clay out now. There is a lot of clay around there, but it is getting expensive to get out.

H: It is just getting back further all the time and more expensive to get all the time.

C: Yes, and of course, they don't use the men either. Take me for instance; I worked in the mine a couple winters. We had eight and ten crews with two men to a crew hauling out the clay. One person rode on the mule train, hauling the caly out and dumping it. We used to dump the clay out in big piles all winter and let it air out. Now they don't want aired clay brick, they want green clay that is brought right to the mines, made, and burned. In the brickyard, before they got track cars, about eight or nine men wheeled the clay to the mine. There is only this mine here now. This new mine has maybe 20 to 25 men working in a mine getting the clay up. Now they only have about five men. They got loaders, they go in and shoot it and load it by electricity. They haul it to a certain belt and it falls out. I went in one once, and it was very interesting. There is a big difference, without all those men working and no mule trains.

H: Technology has made a big difference then. Mules have been used several times in your dissertation of the life in New Cumberland. There must have been

somebody around here that groomed mules or bred mules to survive them for the companies. Or did the companies have their own farms like they had their own stores?

- C: The Mack Company had their own stables and I don't know where they got their mules. They either bought them or bred them up in Harden's Run. There used to be a man by the name of Tope, who raised horses. In the upper end of town, they had a stable. It was located just as you went up the hill going out around New Cumberland. They had the place fenced in and Saturday nights they took the horses up there and put them in the pasture. Then Sunday afternoon the man who took care of the stables went and got them and brought them back. They never left them; they drove them right back to the stables. I've seen them do that on Sunday afternoon, sometimes this man would stay up there all day. He'd gather them up and start them back down the road. Of course he didn't have a car in those days. Buggies were used to come back into town. The drivers on Monday morning picked them up and took them to the mine and they would bring them back in the evening. This man took care of them down at the stables.
- H: I am interested in how many mules it would take to run the kind of enterprise that you had going there?
- C: One mule a mine. There is one mine that might have used two mules per mine. They brought them out and they needed two of them. They had to go clear around the hill, it was a long ride. The mine I worked in, we used only one mule. I worked in two different ones. We didn't even drive him. We hooked him on and started him. He went right in and when he got in to the passway, he had his place to go. Here they unhooked him, and let him stay until he was ready to start back.
- H: They sort of got trained to do it?
- C: Yes, they were trained to do it. We never drove them. We had to break the chains or he would run over them. To get them started going in, he had to pull the cart forward. Most of the way out there was enough clay. All he had to do was start them and watch that they didn't run over him.
- H: That is what you mean by breaking?
- C: Yes.
- H: Do you know why they used a mule, instead of a small horse?

- C: Well, they were stouter and seemed to adhere to it in some way better than horses. They always used mules. We had a nice little mule, but sometimes the driver would abuse him. Then they got mean. One mine had them where they were all mean. You could not get behind them because they would kick their traces. They had to slip in and unhook them. When the mule started in the mine, they would kick the cars until he went into the mine. From the time they were hooked up, they had to just jump in and be ready to go. The one we had was nice, he used to nip my shoulder.
- H: How big of an animal are we talking about? A thousand pound one?
- C: Well, about that.
- H: Twelve hand size?
- C: I don't know much about the size, just a nice size mule. I never did know his height. I never paid that much attention.
- H: I was just wondering if there was some reason because of their size that they were mean? Do you think it was more temperment or what?
- C: This mule could pull; sometimes mules can be stubborn. This was just a nice little mule. He really got out there and stopped the cars. You just unhook him and he went around and put the chain over. Sometimes we'd feed him a little bit there, while he was waiting. Then we would dump the cars, hook him up and go on. He would start right back in. We got to the passway, just trip over and put the brake on and that is the way he stayed until it was ready to start up.
- H: You didn't have to tie him? Was it dark in there?
- C: No, we didn't have to tie him. We had two regular mine lamps in there and we had two on the mule, one on each side of the collar.
- H: How far back from daylight would you go?
- C: More than a mile back. You see, they branched off everywhere.
- H: You had different rooms?
- C: Yes, they brought the cars out to the passway and they hooked them up. Then we brought the empties in and we had to shovel them up into the empty side. When we got those shoveled in we hauled eight cars at a time.

This was on a track.

H: Did they have ties, cross ties?

C: Yes.

H: The mule would have to walk on the ties?

C: Well, they kept it filled. We had trouble when a couple of the ties broke. They had trouble jumping the track then. I worked with one fellow who was a driver and I was on the last car. He was in there when we hit that brace. The front car jumped the rest of them and he cracked his leg in two places. I had to go get the miners and help me get him out. We had to put on new ties.

H: Bringing up an interesting subject, which is very much in the front pages of West Virginia now is mine safety. Were there many accidents or tragedies? You just mentioned one.

C: Well, the Stealy boy's dad that came to our church was killed in this mine where I worked. The next day there was a man hurt. One time, we were going back in with empties and all at once the mule jumped to one side and there was a stone that came right out of the roof. It scraped the skin off one of his front legs and it took three cars to load it when they broke up the stone. If that would have fell on anyone else we would have never known what might have happened. If we would have been two seconds or more earlier, one of us would have gotten it.

H: Well, was this roof bridged up at all?

C: Oh, they had posts. It is mostly posts when you go back there.

H: Well, this was past the crib where this happened right?

C: Oh yes, this was way back in the mine. We were in the dark and it was daylight. Then, one time there was a bunch that came down on us, but it didn't hurt us. When we were coming out, we didn't know how much, but when we came out we could hear a lot more coming down. They went back and cleaned it all. That is the only near accident that we had outside this one boy getting his leg cut. He was just a young fellow, and he never worked again after that. He went back to the old country, he was a Polish boy. He came to this country and was driving a mule train, I was raking at the time.

- H: Now, this was about what year Mr. Cuppy?
- C: These fingers were cut off when I was 17 years old. That was back in 1911 or 1912, very early in the 1900's. There is a funny this about this; I had these fingers cut off in October. I never worked any and I had a dream. I dreamed I worked in the mine, one night and the next night I dreamt the same thing. Well, around three o'clock in the afternoon I was going around to the coal house for coal and here comes the mine boss. He said, "do you want to go and break off the mule train up there?" That is how I got in the mine.
- H: You had better be careful with your dreams. There were no unions then were there?
- C: Oh no, either you worked or you didn't work.
- H: Any state supervision of the mines, such as an inspector or anything like that?
- C: I never knew of any or if they had any at that time. Of course, the clay mine is a little different than the coal mine was. Some places had shaft foremen. When we go up on the hill, you go across the river and the clay goes that way. They had to pump some of those mines on the other side of the river.
- H: When you say that way, you mean it goes down rather rapidly. Where over here, the mule pulled into the mine it would pull them up hill wouldn't it? And when she brought the cars out, she would be running up on her heels right?
- C: Yes, but we tried to keep it down some so it wouldn't run on her. Then she would be able to see pretty good, better than we could.
- H: The mule could see in the dark real well?
- C: Yes, a little bit better than we could.
- H: We were just investigating tragedies, there and you mentioned that a man was killed in the clay mine. You also said something about the near miss with a rock coming down out of the ceiling. Has New Cumberland had any tragedies, like a fire that wiped out a big part of it or anything at all like that?
- C: There was the Steel Foundry in upper town that burned down. We had two brickyards that were burned down also but were rebuilt. I have worked at the Union and it also burned down one night. The Etna burned down during a flood. No one knows what caused that. They claimed

that the river went up on the line, but I don't believe that.

H: Was there insurance back then to cover these things?

C: The Mack Company, as I understand, never kept any insurance. They put enough money on interest to build the works and when they lost the works, they had that money to fall back on. Now the rest of them, I can't tell you whether they had insurance or not for disasters in the early days. I do remember these two fires. I was told that about the company I worked for.

H: About what years were these losses?

C. The Foundry was in later years, I guess about the 1940's. I don't remember the exact date of any of these fires. We had a bad fire here in town. There was a story written on that. It burned the telephones out, the restaurant, the store, even the Junior Order of Mechanics. There were a couple of fires around here, but that was one of the bad fires. The pottery burned one time, and the Chelsea China Co. Well, that was in the early days of the history of New Cumberland. They just rebuilt that. The China Company was in lower town, right above the stack. It has changed hands several times. First it was known as the Chelsea China Company and they made dishes. It was rebuilt after the fire and then it was shut down. It has been a porcelain factory since that and also a pottery. The Cronin brothers were the ones who rebuilt it. Part of it was torn down and during the war they made shells in the part that was left. It burned down here one Sunday morning during church time.

There was a gas drill in upper town. During the great oil excitement of 1862, the stock company sunk a well 20 yards away from where it entered into the Ohio River on the land of Joseph Stewart. They failed to strike oil, but did strike a supply of gas. This gas, for its and pureness has never been equalled in the world. They didn't know what to do with the well, and for a long time it flowed out freely. Once a boy set it on fire. I don't know if it was an accident or intentional. Anyhow, they set it on fire and they didn't know how to get it out. The fire lit up the whole upper town. The people didn't know what to do and they got worried. They thought they would start a submarine down at the bottom and maybe they would have an earthquake, or maybe blow it up and start a volcano. They tried everyway, they used blankets, packs, and stones. They tried everyway to put it out. It went on for a while and some eastern men who had

heard about it came in there and tested it. They built a sut factory. They plugged the well and made sut. It was shipped into Philadelphia and made into ink. Some periodicals and magazines used that ink. For example, a couple of magazines were, Ladies Home Journal and Saturday Evening Post. In the mean time, they started to build a bigger one. They had it about ready to run, but I have no idea or information about what they did after that. Finally some piped it into the brickyard and they burnt the brick with the natural gas. They had been burning it with coal and wood until this time. They burnt this brick and the statement I have says that they fired the engines with it. Well, I don't think they did that. They made steam with it because back in those days they had a boiler fireman which in later years was called a firing engine. So I think, what they meant was that there was no gas engines in those days. That was before the gas engine was thought of or invented. I think they made the steam with gas. They called it firing the engine. What makes me think that is, in 1862, it caused a lot of excitement here.

H: That well was actually drilled in 1862?

C: That was during the great oil excitement in 1862. The first well was discovered on my place right above my house and it grossed about a hundred barrels a day. Some of the other farms had as high as 250 barrels a day. I had the first well that the Norris and Peterson oil field had and that is where I live right now.

In later years, the Carson oil field was discovered by a man by the name of Murray. He was drilling that well and he had been drilling in different places. He never did make a success, and he was broke. He went to the men and told them, "if I get oil, I'll pay you if you go ahead and drill it." He said, "I don't have any money to pay you, it is up to you men as to whether this well gets drilled or not." So they decided they would go ahead and drill into the sand and see what would come of it and that started the Carson oil field in later years. Murry, not only paid those men but gave them a bonus besides when he got his money. They say he even sold his wife's jewelry to get the money.

H: Where was that field located? Was it on your land?

C: Carson's oil field is right up at the head of Harden's Run. Before you go into Pennsylvania, you find Canton oil field also. This oil streak goes from Kendale, Pennsylvania straight through to Holiday's Cove.

It goes across the river along this side of Falen's West Virginia and then up in back of Mingo, Ohio. Actually that whole streak went through there. There was another streak up above Mosco, but it wasn't a very long one. It was up there around Brownsdale, across from Porthomer, Ohio. It is just a small streak.

H: Now this is a streak of oil bearing sand. It is impossible to live so close to the river and not have had some trouble with floods and high water. Has your study on the history of New Cumberland revealed a lot of flooding or not so much?

C: We had a flood almost every year until the last few years. Way back in my younger years, you could count on one flood and maybe two in every spring. Now, I don't know what happened, they don't have as many as they used to. In 1852, they had a very bad flood here. One of the big floods happened in the year 1884. In 1913, it was bigger than all of them. It took up that big building across from People's store. I think that was the first time any flood had ever been in that building. People stored their furniture in there in 1913, then the water came up and spoiled all of it. They knew there had never been a flood in there and they figured it would be safe.

H: How about all of these potteries right out on the river bank, did they just get flooded every spring?

C: They got flooded, everything did, brickyards, everything. You just counted on it to happen. Then in 1913, there was a long stretch there that we didn't have a flood. We began to build dams and that might have had something to do with it, I don't know. We missed a flood last year.

H: Is 1936 considered a big flood or was 1913 bigger?

C: 1936 was bigger than 1913. In 1907 ice from the river came up and the ice stayed up here until after summertime, in great big chunks. 1936 was the one where the railroad station was destroyed. It was the worst.

H: When were the dams started Mr. Cuppy?

C: They were started before the war. The New Cumberland Dam was started in 1913. We lived in upper town when they built the dam.

H: With the locks and so forth on the dam did that bring in any commerce or interesting people into New Cumberland?

- C: It didn't make much change in New Cumberland. Back in the early days, the showboats stopped here all the time. This was the biggest and best place in town for them to show all along the river.
- H: What were the showboats?
- C: It was a showboat pushing another boat that had a theater in it. They would land down here at the landing. They carried a band with them and had a parade. They played as they came in and they would go from town to town. There were actors on the boat and they would put on a play.
- H: Did you ever visit one?
- C: I never did. I didn't think they were right at the time. I often wish I had gone to one.
- H: You have seen the showboats on the river right?
- C: Oh yes. They always stopped in New Cumberland, coming and going.
- H: Where was the landing?
- C: Straight down here by the church, right out there on the river bank.
- H: Was it built up differently then?
- C: No, not too different.
- H: They just pulled up to the shore there, and tied on to a tree?
- C: They would come up and throw the gangplank down.
- H: Is that Main Street that runs out to the river?
- C: No, that is the street that goes clear down over to Hill Street. It is right here from the courthouse. The steps are right on the street by the Christian Church.
- H: We can look later and find out, but that is where the landing was. What else came to New Cumberland on the river?
- C: Well, Graham's Store, James and Henry, they came here with a store on a boat. They showed their goods and they both started a store here in town. James started a grocery store, and Henry started a clothing store.

- H: Graham, were they related to the Grahams that are in the history?
- C: Yes, these boys are the sons of Jim Graham, who started the grocery store. Now the store was right there where that filling station burned down. He built another store down by the drugstore, that was a feed and grocery store combined. Then they moved that house down here and it is on the left corner on the river bank. That is where he had the store, he made a house out of it.
- When the local bank went under, the building was up for sale and he bought it. That is when they started the clothing store that they have now. They still ran their grocery and feed store there for a long while. Finally, after he died, the boys did away with the groceries and they don't have them anymore.
- H: Is there anything else that you can think of that might be real interesting to us about New Cumberland or the history of New Cumberland?
- C: No, not at this time.

END OF INTERVIEW