

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Coal Mining Project

Coal Mining

O. H. 234

JACK JARMAN

Interviewed

by

Ellen Daniels

on

June 6, 1978

JACK JARMAN

Jack was born on December 6, 1924 in Cleveland, Ohio, to Charles Jarman and Ruth Boslow Jarman. He spent his childhood in Cleveland, and graduated from Shaw High School which is located in Cleveland.

He was involved in the Army during World War II. He served in the Army Engineers from 1944 until he was discharged in 1946.

Jack married Helen on May 3, 1953. They have two daughters, Patty Steele, age 33, and Gloria Stivers, age 31.

During his lifetime, Jack has worked in feed mills, a Dairy, strip mines, and is now self-employed. He has owned Jarman's Pennzoil Service Station for about 16 years.

Jack belongs to the Boy Scouts and the Grange. He enjoys being with Boy Scouts, going canoeing, horseback riding, and farming. In the Boy Scouts, he is one of the two men who takes the boys, especially the younger ones, to Canada to fish, and learn about the outdoors. The older group usually, every two years, goes on a trip out West or to the Boy Scout Jamboree.

Jack is a member of the United Presbyterian Church of Lisbon. He is an active member of the Board of Trustees. On Sunday evenings he attends the Friends' Church which is on the outskirts of Lisbon.

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INTERVIEWEE: JACK JARMAN
INTERVIEWER: Ellen Daniels
SUBJECT: Depth of coal vein, type of coal mined
in this area, mode of transportation
DATE: June 6, 1978

D: This is an interview with Jack Jarman at 210 West Lincoln Way for the Youngstown State University Oral History Mine Project by Ellen Daniels on June 6, 1978, at approximately 4 o'clock p.m.

Jack would you tell me about the mines in your area?

J: There were a lot of old coal mines that the farmers dug out themselves. They might have sold a little to make a little cash. They were just crawl spaces back in the hills. They would take out a little of the roof, or a little of the clay underneath the coal to make enough room so they could just crawl in. They would work back in a way, and then they would start a new entrance when they got too far in. Most of the coal was only from 18 inches to 24 inches thick around here, which is not very much to work in.

When I worked in the strip mines, I would see a lot of these. We would uncover it, and we would see the strips going back into the hills. Water would come out of it, and all rusty water, usually. They would talk about black damp back in them. I suppose there was a lot of that in there. I wouldn't want to crawl back in those little holes.

D: You said you had some mines on your property?

J: Yes, there are three of them that I know of, that we internally stripped up there were the county home used to be on Breeman Road. It was before they built the

present county home. They mined all of that coal around our place. I know it has taken out about three or four acres there. The house across the valley from us is where the miners lived that worked that particular mine. It was there for quite a few years.

D: Do you know when it started, and when it closed up?

J: Back in the late 1800's, or early 1900's. It would have been quite a while ago.

I always found it sort of interesting to see some of the ties back in there. You would know that someone had been working back in there, that there had been cars back in there. Once in a while you would find an old pony rail that they used to run their cars on to haul the coal out. You would find them back in there once in a while. It was just interesting to know that somebody did crawl back in those holes.

That was far from what I would do. I was working on a strip mine one time when the boss wanted me to crawl back in one to see how far it went back. I told him I didn't lose anything back there, and I wasn't going to go back and look for it. He didn't say any more about it. He got another fellow that did go back in, I wouldn't.

D: What types of coal do we have around here?

J: Soft coal, number 6 vein or 8. There is a little 7, but not much. That is a vein that goes up and down the hill.

The neighbor has one inch of number 8. When you dig a fence post, you find one inch of coal, just as nice and black as can be. Of course, it is not feasible to do anything with it. There is not enough there to amount to anything.

D: You haven't found any air shafts, or anything on your property?

J: No, I have never run across an air shaft. They would have to be back in far enough.

When we were stripping, we ran into a well hole where somebody had a house above it at one time. That's about all. I never ran across any that we knew were air shafts.

D: In other words, this mine was a lot closer to the surface then?

J: Yes. When they got too far back in, they would just start a new opening someplace. They were not running out of coal at all. Those air shafts usually ran several miles back in the hills.

D: Do you know what they pulled their cars out with?

J: Their pony or mule, usually, in the bigger ones. The local ones here, most of them just pushed it out themselves because they were not high enough to get even a little mule or pony in. They would only be maybe 36 to 38 inches from top to bottom because they would only have 20 to 24 inches of coal. The extra, they would have to take out. It was all wasted work really because they would only take as little bit out as possible. They would have really low cars that would fit on the tracks that they could just push out with several bushels of coal on them. It was a lot of work.

D: Yes, I would say so. Did they use this coal basically for heating their homes, rather than anything else?

J: Yes, except up here where the Boy Scout camp is. They had some up there for that Rebecca Iron Works. Those were a little bigger lines. You can see some of them across the creek there from the Boy Scout camp. They mined some coal there. It was probably a little thicker in there. They went back in farther. The drag pile, what they drag out, the other stuff, was a fairly good size. You can judge how much they did by that usually.

D: Is that what you call red dog?

J: Yes, red dog is a by-product. It is usually underneath the coal. You will see it piled up where the coal mine was, or clay, or slate, or whatever they happen to be taking out. The slate helps hold the roof up a little if there isn't too much rock up there.

D: I didn't know that.

J: I don't know too much more about it. I worked in the strip mines a lot, as I said. It is different. You can see it anyplace today.

I had some old tools that old miners used, little picks, and hand augers that they would drill with when they wanted to shoot it with black powder to loosen

it up a little so they could get it out. They worked hard at it.

D: Which was probably, at that time, a better wage than some of the other things that they were getting.

J: They didn't need much money. They grew most of their crops. It was just for a little extra cash.

D: This was just basically a seasonal job?

J: Yes, they worked on it in the winter time when they couldn't be farming. They would sell a few loads in town. They worked at it, and hauled it on a horse and wagon. That is about all I know about them.

D: Okay. Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW