

LETCHER DEATON
Upper Buffalo, Kentucky
15 April 1984

Dr. Garrett: What I would like to do is have you retell me about some of these people, the one thing I would like to know, as much as you can tell me about Calahan, Ned Calahan. I read a lot about him and you were telling me that your dad was a deputy under him.

Mr. Deaton: No, my granddaddy was.

Dr. Garrett: I want, if you will, for you to just tell me, you tell me about the Calahans. You were telling me some interesting stories that ought to be preserved. You tell me about that. First, Letcher, tell me, who was your mother and dad?

Mr. Deaton: My dad was Bod Deaton's son at Crockettville, Kentucky and my mother was Johnathan Turner's girl in Breathitt County. All I remember Ned Calahan Sr., I was six years old, goin on seven, and my daddy was a plowin two mules, young mules, and he was a right smart ways from the house and he did not want to fool with them mules. he was a breakin them to the plow. And, I'd go with him, he'd take me with him and we was, he was a plowin and he hear'd the guns down the creek. Daddy stopped his mules, he says, "Son", he says, "they's, I hear'd strange guns fire down the creek and I guess theyve tried Calahan another round." They had already lay-wayed him and shot him twice before that. He said, "I'm a goin down thar." Well, he took his mules loose from the plow and we come on out and asked him to go with him. He told me no use to you a goin. Well, I said you took me to the field and I said I want to go with you.

Well, I rode up in front of him and went down thar. When we got down thar, Calahan was a layin in the floor of the store and he had on a white shirt...

Dr. Garrett: That was near Morris Fork?

Mr. Deaton: That was at the forks of the Freeman Fork and the Burton Fork. And he was a layin there and he had on a white shirt and a little narr, dark looking tie, dark blue or green or something, and blood was on the side of his tie and his leg. He was shot through the leg. He was a layin thar dead. Well, they got the bloodhounds and my daddy, I don't remember who brought me back home, but daddy sent me back home and they called the bloodhounds from Lexington. And, he had to go with them, he volunteered, a bunch of them and he carried one of the bloodhounds back with him, from the railroad station. And, next mornin, they went over thar and they shot from a coal bank, a little coal bank across the creek, about a hundred yards or further. And, they followed him through until they went to the head of Squabble Creek and there was a tram road and an old tram car and he went down to old man Johnny Ingram's barn and he had two mules, work mules in thar, and they had got his mules out and rode them off. That was as fer as the dogs could track. Well, they got a bunch of men, the law, started trackin the mules and they met

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em on Order Creek a comin back. They come to find out who it was and went on for some little time and they put out rewards and everything but couldn't hear nothing. Well, my granddaddy had given Ned Calahan the lower end of the farm whar he lived if he'd come thar and build a store, you know, and he was a business man. He run for sheriff and granddaddy served as deputy under him. And, granddaddy, Bob Deaton, he went, he was purty smart, he, old man Fletch Deaton was in on it and he was relation to my granddaddy.

Granddaddy went and told him, said, they's enough proof come out on you, we think you're guilty and he said the best thing you can do, he said, was just confess, and I'll take you in. And he said just tell the whole thing and it will be lighter on you. Well, he confessed to my granddaddy and my granddaddy took him in and I was named after him. My name was Fletch. I was named after old Fletch Deaton until after he done that and my mother won't have it no longer and they changed to Letch. When I got my birth certificate, it was all messed up and everything else but I finally got it straightened out, you know.

Well, they penitenured Fletch. Fletch told on him and on old man Go-Around Smith. They told it on them and they just confessed and they got life. They come out a book about all them old feuds and stuff and whoever put it in thar, somebody had my granddaddy's name in it twice. They was tryin, they had it planned to kill him the last time, shoot him the last time, you know. They had it planned. I read the book and they weren't but very little of it that was true from what I hear'd my granddaddy and daddy and my people talk about it. They had my granddaddy's name in it twice that he was out a helpin round up guns to kill im with.

Dr. Garrett: What was the truth of it, how was he killed? Do you know?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, he was killed just like I said he was.

Dr. Garrett: I mean, was there a Curt Jett in on that?

Mr. Deaton: Well, they was a Curt Jett over at Jackson, little Curt Jett and they was a lot of them. I didn't know em, I jest hear'd them talk about them. But, I don't know who lay-wayed him the first two times. He was lay-wayed three times and shot.

Dr. Garrett: Why were they after him so much?

Mr. Deaton: Well, Old Black John Smith, a brother to _____. He took Ned Calahan's wife away from im, Ty Anne, Ty Mandy was her name. Well then he murried Sambo Deaton and Walter's sister Tymandy, little Tymanda they called her. She was named atter Ned Calahans old woman and he murried her and Black John was afraid of Ned. Ned had tried to get to kill him, you know and all and he couldn't get up with him. He run right out over thar at Big Buckhorn, right out in the middle of a big field and built him a big fine two story home and he stayed up stairs, never would come out and Ned couldn't get, nobody couldn't get inside to kill im.

And, another thing, Ned Calahan would buy railroad ties, logs, any kind of livestock and he was one of the biggest merchants that they was and he sold so much cheaper. You see, he had his, sold his hardward, and everything boarded in on the back of Long Street. He had big bolts and everyone of them bolts had a yoke of oxen on it, trained for that. Whenever it would come to a show, just drive them oxen right down through it and go right on through it and load the oxen back up.

Dr. Garrett: A bolt, a sled you're talking about.

Dr. Deaton: No, it was a boat, a boat on the water. Them big oxens would just drive off, you know, and go right on through them shoals and pull the whole load and he sold so much cheaper than ...

Dr. Garrett: What did he do, bring it up from Beattyville or somewhere?

Mr. Deaton: I just don't know.

Dr. Garrett: It was on the Middle Fork River, wasn't it?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, I guess it was maybe Beattyville.

Dr. Garrett: So he undersold everybody.

Mr. Deaton: Everybody and he paid, where the most of them people would sell their logs, say at two dollars and a half a hundred, why he would pay three dollars for the same stuff you know and the railroad ties he paid ten cents or fifteen on the tie more than other people would you know.

Dr. Garrett: Wasn't he sheriff?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, he was sheriff.

Dr. Garrett: Didn't he kill several, according to the sign over there he killed seven or eight men himself.

Mr. Deaton: Naw, well, I tell you, I don't think that he did, now he might have, but...

Dr. Garrett: They had to ambush him finally to kill him, didn't they?

Mr. Deaton: Oh yeh.

Dr. Garrett: At his store there?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, he had a store and he had it boxed up from his storehouse to his kitchen door with big aisle lumber, you know, two by wides and crack stripped a walk pavement through there. Into his store and back thar.

Dr. Garrett: How'd they catch him?

Mr. Deaton: Well, they fixed it with some man, I forgot who he was. Oh, I think he was from Dade Creek. Goin to buy to build a wall off of him and he had wire and his hardware and stuff piled out up to here on each side in the driveway through it for wagons and they told him, these fellas that was going to ambush him that for him to go in and when he got the wire to come back out and when he went to load it that they would watch him, they was hopin they could see it all in that winder and whenever he got to make out like he couldn't find the kind of wire and holler at him and when he come to the winder to tell him, when got in front of the winder for him to point his arm over to where the wire was, that that would be the sign for them to shoot.

And old Fletch Deaton said that he told, he was a shootin a 32 Winchester and Smith was a shootin a box Winchester, high-powered rifle, that he would shoot right about where his tie was and when he was going forward for him to shoot through the wall in under the winder so he would hit him as he fell, you know. But they hit him right by the side of his tie and the box Winchester went through his thigh, through the wall and through the thigh.

Dr. Garrett: Who shot him through the tie?

Mr. Deaton: Fletch Deaton shot him in the chest.

Dr. Garrett: Fletch Deaton was the one who helped kill him then.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, old Fletch Deaton.

Dr. Garrett: And he had been a deputy. He had never been a deputy sheriff, Fletch Deaton had.

Mr. Deaton: No, oh no, not that I know of.

Dr. Garrett: Do you remember hearing much about Governor Goebel getting killed? I always heard that some people from Clay and Owsley and Breathitt Counties were involved. Did you ever hear anything about that?

Mr. Deaton: No.

Dr. Garrett: Now, you were telling me about an old man by the name of Big Jim Baker and I lost that story and I thought that was interesting.

Mr. Deaton: Well, the only, used to, I was a very small boy the last time I see'd Jim Baker. I was big enough to carry water to the field to a bunch of work-hands from the spring. And, daddy had a bunch of work-hands a helpin him and I was a carryin water in a little small bucket up hill from way down below the lower side of a big old coal field and they drank it as fast as I could, my little bucket they'd empty it and I'd go back and start in again.

I's was comin up the hill and old Big Jim Baker was comin up through thar in the walkin trail. "Hey son," he said. "I want a drink of that water." I said all right Uncle Jim. He had been at our house and I could remember him, I knowed him. He drunk my little bucket

of water up from me and I went back to the spring and got it again. Well, as I come back he had got under, daddy would leave a few shade trees about the field to stop his mules under to rest and the work hands, you know. This was a little poplar. He had set down under that tree. "Hey son, come here." "No", I said, "you ain't a gettin no more of my water, if you want water go back down to the spring and get it." I went on up and took the water and it was about two o'clock in the evenin and the shade was, the sun come up in that field due east and went down right over behind that hill of big timber and it was a shadin, a shade had come over, you know.

Old man Jim hollered up thar at my daddy, he said, "Lee, you had to go accordin to the Bible." Daddy said, "What's wrong about it, Uncle Jim?" He said, "My Bible says never let the sun go down on the Harlan head." Well daddy said, "I always let the work -hands rest an hour or two through the heat of the day and then we work late as the shade comes over." Uncle Jim stayed there and sat around until it come, all the work hands come out and they, my mother had supper ready and Jim eat supper when they come out. It weren't too late. He said, "Lee, I want me a side of meat." Daddy said, "Uncle Jim, I got work hands and I pay my, some of my work hands with meat sometimes when they want it and I ain't got it to let you have it, I don't think."

Old Uncle Richard McIntosh said, "Lee, let the old fella have some meat, we can get by without it, some of it." Daddy run out and cut down a big side of meat in the smoke house that fell down in the floor. Uncle Jim had a big old walkin cane with a spear on the end of it like a spear, sharp piece of steel. He just took a knife and cut it into the skin and doubled it with the raw side out and run his spear through that and just layed it up on his back and I had to go cow huntin up a walkin trail goin to Buffalo, went up through another big field, a holler here. Well, I had to go back in thar to get some cows. I walked in behind Uncle Jim and when I left him he was a goin up hill, I guess he weighed 240 or 250 pounds. The grease was runnin plumb down into this tough hide shoes or brogans, whatever he had on, down his back. That was the last time I ever remember seein

Dr. Garrett: What did he do?

Mr. Deaton: Nothin. He was, if he ever done anything I'll never...

Dr. Garrett: How did they exist? How did some of those people exist, Letch, without working?

Mr. Deaton: Well, they was, he was a good man from what my granddaddy and old Uncle Robin Burton, that was the closest neighbor to us, and Jim, Big Jim Baker Mucker was Uncle Robin Burton's uncle. And, he wouldn't lie, he wouldn't steal, anybody get sick he was there til, no matter how long they stayed sick, he would visit them and he would do anything he could fer em, but people would give him and he'd just bum around.

Dr. Garrett: Did they have any slaves up here or blacks on this creek?

Mr. Deaton: No. Somebody, yeh they was one. I just hear'd my wife's mother taling about it. They was a colored boy, somebody had him out

here. They lived right here at the mouth of that holler. Anyhow, he, I believe he, yeh, they made him sleep in the barn and whoever it was must not a fed him good or something. Mother-in-law said he would come to their house out there in the morning before daylight or about daylight and ask for something to eat, I don't know.

Dr. Garrett: Letcher, there was some people who did not own much land and did not have much to raise, how did they get through a winter, how did they get through a year? Men, women and children, what did they have to eat? Game, hogs or what?

Mr. Deaton: Well, they weren't too many people like that, they was a few but, they was an old man by the name of John Adams raised a bit family up on the Steel Trap. He had been married two or three, he had two or three families and he was a bad rogue. He stoled, he come to Longs Creek to Jim Cornetts and stole a fat hog out of is hog pen, the only one he had up and took it through two rail fences and brought it to the Steel Trap. Jim Cornett was my, married my aunt the oldest one of the family. And, I remember daddy, they come to my daddy before daylight and my granddaddy and old man Robin Burton and Asberry Burton and Greenberry Burton and Uncle Robin Turner, they was 15 or 20 of em. My daddy went with them. They went to the Steel Trap and lay-wayed the house. Got there before daylight, just had to go up the ridge about a mile and half or two high. When it got daylight, John Adams old woman, she had come out to the little old kitchen door and went around the side of the hill and they see'd her go to where a big tree had been felled, right down the hill, they was a big beech or sugar tree one, I forget which. And, she went back to the house.

Well, they waited until she got breakfast ready and they went in, my granddaddy and old Uncle Robin Turner and they was eatin breakfast. Granddaddy said. "Looks like you got plenty of fresh meat." Said John, "Yeh, I have." And he told who he helped kill a hog, you know. My granddaddy said, "Well Jim Cornett lost the only one he had in the pen and said somebody had drove it out and we been a huntin fer it." Granddaddy jest stepped back out and told Robin to stay in thar and the rest of them hid around the place. By the time daddy went to walk around thar, theres where he see'd her go to that holler log, my daddy and some of them had already gone out thar and they had a big rock, well that stopped up you know and the meat was down in that holler log. Theres where she'd go to and she had a little walkin trail a goin to it.

Well, they arrested him, they didn't have no law with them, they took him on their own, took him to Jackson and put him, had him put in jail and they give him two year over it.

Dr. Garrett: Did you ever know anything about this Marcum that got killed in the courthouse, or killed over in Jackson Breathitt. Now you mentioned sugar tree, did you all make maple sugar in those days? Did you ever see maple sugar made?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, I helped make it.

Dr. Garrett: Helped make it. Did you make a lot of it?

Mr. Deaton: No, we didn't have enough sugar trees.

Dr. Garrett: Didn't have enough trees. What did you do with it? Did you just use it?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, it would

Dr. Garrett: Do a lot of trapping?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, I've done a lot of trappin.

Dr. Garrett: Did you ever have anything like beaver or anything up in here when you were young?

Mr. Deaton: No.

Dr. Garrett: Now you were telling me about some of the rifle makers. It sounded to me like that most of the people did a lot of hunting.

Mr. Deaton: Well, they did you know. People used to, they done a lot of huntin, squirrels, coons, and everything they was, you know, yeh. Wild turkeys.

Dr. Garrett: The depression years I guess were pretty bad, weren't they? They didn't get a big yield on their crops did they?

Mr. Deaton: From about 15 or 20 bushel to an acre.

Dr. Garrett: And, you were talking about your daddy cradling, that was work wasn't it? Hard work. There were wild turkeys here not too long ago, weren't there?

Mr. Deaton: They was wild turkeys here in 19 and 30. They was old original wild turkeys and they come a big sleet and stayed on the, the snow was about a foot deep and it just kinda mild rain on the top of it and it froze back and they come a sleet on it. It would carry men or anything that walked on it and it stayed on up in 40 days and it starved the wild turkeys to death and the old bob whites, we had plenty of them, you know, and they couldn't make it.

Dr. Garrett: Any turkeys back in here now?

Mr. Deaton: Well, they claim they been turnin some loose. Game outfit. They got plenty of them on Red Bird over here, Clay County.

Dr. Garrett: This was kind of a rough creek at one time wasn't it for living on, I mean they would shoot one another and so forth. Was it just plain out feuding or people just getting mad at one another and shooting one another. What was the trouble?

Mr. Deaton: Well, I had just, well, from what I know about it, it just started over just like Doc Gabbard up here. He was a young man, had a young family and was a merchant. He sold his goods cheaper, I been told now. That he sold his goods cheaper than the Rices' up here on the creek. Well, he paid ten cents a tie more for railroad ties put in the creek. They pulled them out.

They had a dam down here at the mouth of the Buffalo, what they would catch em, you know, and camped them down there and turn them loose on the water and you had men that would follow them on in. And, I guess they just started from that, all I know. And, they had been a lot of killin, just people get mad, you know, and start shootin, yeh, but they went, from what I found out, now I was talkin to Fred Gabbard and there was old man Harv Rice, he didn't have nothin to do with it. He was a merchant and had a pretty good education, Old Bryce got a good education, Fred Gabbard, Wils Gabbard, they got a good education, and I was talkin to Fred Gabbard, Fred said, "Letch, the (unintelligible) but no education, people are getting educated now, stoppin all these old feuds and stuff. Back when ever my daddy, a young man, Uncle Sid and Bill and Bud and all of them and the Rices. The only thing when they got mad or something was done, all the way their mind led to settle it was to get revenge was by killin."

He said, "People who is educated don't want to do that." I think he was right.

Dr. Garrett: I suspect you are correct. This is supposed to have been the first settled part of Owsley County. What do you know about that? Do you have any idea of when or who the first people were in here?

Mr. Deaton: All I know about anything like that is what old man Kenny Abner and Sid Gabbard and these old fellas told me.

Dr. Garrett: He's dead, I presume, isn't he? Sid Gabbard is dead isn't he ?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, that was my father-in-law. He was the one got killed up here at the lake.

Dr. Gabbard: I din't realize he got killed.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, he got killed. Well, the Pea Ridge back here is where the first settlers come and Courtland. They was Peterses and Abners...

Dr. Garrett: Bakers.

Mr. Deaton: Naw, they was Abners, and but now old Boston Bob and his family come down here to the Pruitt Branch, that's in Clay County up thar by the mouth of Buffalo, and old Pruitt was the first one that come thar and he owned that whole thing about it but them thar Bakers, them thar Bakers, they moved in thar, that was old Boston Bob. He moved in thar and that was his boy that got hung down thar. They couldn't get old Pruitt out and they decided they'd kill him and get what he had in thar and they killed him and they hung his boy over it.

Dr. Garrett: Boston must have been a pretty wild character from all I heard.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, he must have been.

Dr. Garrett: A lot of men up here, I guess, served in the Civil War, didn't they?

Mr. Deaton: Well, yeh. They was several of them I guess.

Dr. Garrett: Did any of the feuding go back to the Civil War because of the North and South sentiments? Did any of that cause any trouble?

Mr. Deaton: I don't think so. They was two of them, some of them old Bakers up here at Courtland, they captured two old men, I been told, and they brought em back up here with em and that's one of them thats buried up thar where that big slab. He never was married and one of them was a Riley and this old devil, whatever his name was. And, Riley, he married and raised a big family. His offsprings is this Lee Riley.

Dr. Garrett: Now, you say that the first people buried there where you showed me those rocks by those trees.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh. They said that was an old woman and her daughter and the old woman's granddaughter. they was three that was buried there.

Dr. Garrett: Do you know their names?

Mr. Deaton: No I don't.

Dr. Garrett: Next time I come up, I didn't have time this time, I am going to bring some steel posts to drive around there and we'll put a sign on it that it was the first burial place in Owsley County. When I come back down again, I want to go back up to Courtland with you and let you tell me some of those stories again about those people because everybody in there was closely related, weren't they? Now, you said Sid Gabbard, your father-in-law was killed, I didn't know that.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, he was killed up thar.

Dr. Garrett: Would that have been in the 1930s?

Mr. Deaton: 19 and 38.

Mr. Deaton: Who killed him?

Mr. Deaton: Albert McIntosh killed him.

Dr. Garrett: Albert, oh, Albert I?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh.

Dr. Garrett: Farming was done, did they farm with oxen here earlier? Did they come on horses first or mules? What did they have first?

Mr. Deaton: They had oxens and then they had, horses and mules. Most of them old fellars just kept a horse to ride, you know.

Dr. Garrett: Now, Court Day, there used to be a whole group come out of Buffalo into Booneville. That was always something. Wish I had a picture of Booneville during a Court Day. It was really something.

Mr. Deaton: I want to tell you somethin. I was down thar, on what they call the "sale" on Meadow Creek her a while back. I looked out thar and thar come a little fella up through thar dressed jest exactly like he was in the 20s and looked jest exactly like he did in the 20s and I knowed that gentleman. I walked up to him and I said ain't this Jockey Combs. He said yeh. I said, My God, you was an old man when I was jest a young fella back in the 20s, so he said I'm still a young man.

Now, he had silver dollars and in them silver frames on him and a big necktie hangin down here and tie pins and stuff all decorated around them coins and stuff you know and he had them big high top boots on, officer style, pom blank like and ridin fence jest like he did. I see'd him in the 20s and that old courthouse down there, first one got burned and had that old iron fence around it, he'd come in thar and he had one horse that he had that he rode, he wouldn't trade it and he would have one tied that its tail, another one tied to its tail and another one to its tail with old sea grass halters on and he'd have a string of em that would reach plum across town.

Dr. Garrett: I remember seeing that.

Mr. Deaton: And, he would go right out thar and he'd swap horses, mules, or anything he had and these little old, called em dollar watches to boot. Now, he was a swappin pocket knives.

Dr. Garrett: How old is he?

Mr. Deaton: I don't know, he won't tell you how old he is.

Dr. Garrett: What did people do for music down here? Did they ever play the dulcimer?

Mr. Deaton: No, all the music I ever knowed when I was growin up was a violin and five string banjos and then the guitars come in.

Dr. Garrett: Who played the fiddles and the banjos? A lot of people?

Mr. Deaton: A lot of people could play em, yeh. They was two Sizemores up here at the head of the street, Bill Sizemore adn Berry was, they could either one pick a banjo or either one could play the violin just as good as could be. And, Mertie Meyers over on long Street, the Meyers boys, and Lee Meyers. Mertie is still livin over thar. Now Lee is dead. They played fer, you know, banjo and fiddle.

Dr. Garrett: Did people weave up in here then at all?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, that's all the way they had to make their clothes and stuff.

Dr. Garrett: They had their own looms.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, spinnin wheels.

Dr. Garrett: And you saw them do a lot of that.

Mr. Deaton: Why, law, I set, come in from school, I'd set up with my mother of a night, her a spinnin and me a makin them thar, she called them rolls, that and that wool a makin them rolls and her a spinnin makin up yarn.

Dr. Garrett: You didn't have electricity or radio and television in those days, did you?

Mr. Deaton: Naw.

Dr. Garrett: Lots of times you needed to use coal oil lamp.

Mr. Deaton: Coal oil, lanterns, fire light.

Dr. Garrett: By firelight. How bad was it? Was it a homemade loom? And your mother spun out your own material, a lot of it.

Mr. Deaton: That's right. They was different men would make them looms. My mother would spin the yarn, you know, on a spinnin wheel and then when she'd make, you know, some kind of blankets or these coverlets and stuff, well, she'd take it to a neighbor and help her with that loom, you know. My mother didn't have nary loom.

Dr. Garrett: Who was you nearest neighbor who had a loom?

Mr. Deaton: Oh, Liz Helton. Liz Helton, lived over thar on the North Fork.

Dr. Garrett: My dad in the 30s would raise sheep on Sugar Camp, he would send the wool down to North Carolina and have it spun and dyed and then he would put it on horseback and ride it somewhere up here on the Perry County line and have it woven into blankets and coverlets and I found out those coverlets had patterns that go back 300 years ago in England. I've got some scraps of them at home. But, living was pretty plain, wasn't it? What did you do for Christmas when you were young? Did you have Christmas tree as such, I mean like in the house?

Mr. Deaton: No, we just had firecrackers and candy and we saved our own apples. Didn't buy no apples then.

Dr. Garrett: Tell me how you saved them.

Mr. Deaton: Well, we had apple trees, they was Black Ben Davids, and them striped Ben Davids. The striped Ben Davids was a big old striped appled and we'd dig a hole in the garden and daddy knowed pretty well where to dig them holes. He holed up his Irish potatoes

and such and we'd set boards in thar, in them holes by the side and then we would put a layer of straw right next to the outside of it and then we'd pour them apples in thar and fill em up with straw and then we'd make the dirt about 18 or 20 inches deep on top of that. Then, we'd have apples along towards Spring.

Dr. Garrett: Now, you said he knew where to build it. Was there a particular place, you didn't want a low wet place or what?

Mr. Deaton: You wanted a place where there was sandy, clay ground and slantin, so the water would drain ways from it.

Dr. Garrett: You didn't live in a brick house in those days, did you?

Mr. Deaton: No.

Dr. Garrett: Who built your house? I mean you didn't have a builder come in and build it.

Mr. Deaton: No, no, no.

Dr. Garrett: Did everybody, anybody ever see anybody come in and take an axe and a saw and go to work cutting logs and making a cabin?

Mr. Deaton: Why yeh, I've done that myself.

Dr. Garrett: That's what I want you to tell me about. Who laid your chimney?

Mr. Deaton: They was different people layed chimleys, but I made my own chimley myself.

Dr. Garrett: Have you ever built a log cabin?

Mr. Deaton: I have built them. I never did build one for myself any more than I've built log buildings for myself. I built a big broodin house up here out of logs.

Dr. Garrett: But meals and all were kind of hard, weren't they, in those days. Didn't have the stuff we eat today. What did you eat mainly? Like say, in the dead of winter. How did you get through the winter?

Mr. Deaton: Well, people had, they had, them that worked, had about anything they wanted. Seed was good every year until 19 and 30, after I was married, was a dry season but where I was raised they was some people had a hard place, you know, about all the time.

Dr. Garrett: Just corn, chicken and hogs to a great extent, wasn't it?

Mr. Deaton: Well, we had our own meat, we had our own beef, we had our own mutton, we had turkey, we had geese, we had chicken, and we had milk cows, and generally had ten or 12 head of yearlings.

Dr. Garrett: Now you lived awful good compared to a lot of them, didn't you?

Mr. Deaton: Oh, yeh. But, back then, when I was a growin up, if they was a family got in a hard place on Long Creek, I don't know whether it was that a way everyplace or not, but where I was raised, if anything happened to a family or if they had bad luck or something or nother, they, but felt like they was, but the neighbors wouldn't let them, wouldn't let em starve or need for something.

Dr. Garrett: What did you do for a doctor?

Mr. Deaton: Well, Doc Absher, as long back as I can remember, Doc Absher, he doctored the ...

Dr. Garrett: He was from over Buckhorn way.

Mr. Deaton: And, old Doc Glass, he'd come through. A lot of people wanted him. He would come through from Booneville, Doc Glass would. I remember Doc Gibson, he got to comin over thar. Old Doc Glass.

Dr. Garrett: That was over on Buffalo, I mean over on Long Creek.

Mr. Deaton: And Doc Turner, a young doctor, he got, he lived on Long Creek. He'd come in.

Dr. Garrett: Did people die of appendicitis and infectious diseases in those days pretty readily?

Mr. Deaton: Well, something killed a lot of people but I guess they didn't know what it was. They'd, people would have, what they called a stroke, you know, paralyzed is what they called it. And, I guess a lot of people died of appendicitis and didn't know what was the matter, you know.

Dr. Garrett: Never was any moonshine made in this part of the country?

Mr. Deaton: They ain't a branch anywhere in this part of Long Creek or anywhere else that they ain't been moonshine stills.

Dr. Garrett: There was a lot of it, wasn't there? Ah me, I used to know one or two who'd bring it into Booneville every Court Day. Yeh, and other times too. Logging in this country was work, wasn't it?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh. I was, Jim Sheppard was the sheriff down there and Charlie ~~Fields~~ ^{Seales}. Well, I bought me one of these, a big genuine horse-hide mackinows with a big heavy blanket lining it and a sheepskin collar, now it was in January. I took a pocket knife and I split it right in the center of that lining down, you know, a hole back there and it was so stiff, the cold weather, I'd set me a row of pint bottles plum around it, you know, it held a lot of em and I'd go down on Jockey Street with that ..

Dr. Garrett: You mean you would ride all the way into Booneville on a horse with that on?

Mr. Deaton: No, I would do that after I got into Booneville, and well, I loaded myself up out thar. To the barber shop over thar, old barber shop had a coal house to it.

Dr. Garrett: Yeh, know that well, Leonard ^{Well/Nell} ~~Bateman~~ and ...

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, them fellas, you know, they'd drink, you know, and I always had, would give them old fellas a pint, just take the likker up thar in that coal house. All the time that old bunch was a sitting in that barber shop a gabbin. Well, I got lined up and I was going down on Jockey Street and just as I walked down through by the jail to go down to Jockey Street, thar come Judge Seales and Jim Sheppard. Well, they see'd me a comin and they just stepped apart, kinda, so that I had to walk right in between them and as I walked between em, I spoke. You know, both of em wheeled around and throwed their arms right around me, they was pretty smart, they knowed they was something that I, Jim Sheppard, if he had ever tried to catch me, I never knowed it. They got a lot of fellas. Them bottles, I thought they broke every bottle in my coat, you know. I said, look out, you'll break my likker. Jim Sheppard said, Letch, I want to tell you somethin. I said, "What is it?" He said, "Now get shed of what you got here today and go home and you be damned sure that I don't catch you back down here bootleggin no more." I said I'll do that very thing, so I did.

Well, I guess it had been about three or four weeks or a month or something, I went back to town and I went in the sheriff's office and he was a sittin thar. I said, Jim. He said, what do you want? I said, Jim, when can I go back to bootleggin? Well, he said, I tell you what, he said, you can bring you some in two weeks, I'll let you and then he said you'll have to quit again. He said it's a gettin out of hand and if you bootleggers don't get you some badges, he said, you'll be a sellin to each other, he said. Well, he never did bother me.

Dr. Garrett: Did you make your own in those days?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, yep. I generally made me two and three hundred gallons whenother people was housed up.

Dr. Garrett: Was that corn, corn liquor?

Mr. Deaton: No, I made corn likker but you never can come out by nothin.

Dr. Garrett: What kind of liquor did you make?

Mr. Deaton: I made sugar liquor.

Dr. Garrett: Just get sugar and ferment it.

Mr. Deaton: Well, I used, you know, I would use a bushel of meal and about a peck of malt, corn, 40 or 50 pounds of sugar. I guess

a man could make...

Dr. Garrett: How long did it take that to work?

Mr. Deaton: About seven or eight days, if its in cold weather, it takes about four if its in the hot weather.

Dr. Garrett: You ever use a still at all?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh.

Dr. Garrett: Did you have a still in the house or did you have a still in the creek?

Mr. Deaton: No, in these branches.

Dr. Garrett: In your branches.

Mr. Deaton: Back in the holler you know.

Dr. Garrett: How long did it take it to run off one batch, I mean distill it off.

Mr. Deaton: Well, I had a two-inch worm and it would run, it wouldn't take but a short time. Where you had a little small worm, you would have to slow your fire down to keep from MELTING your worm, you know. But, I had a two-inch worm and I would lay the water to it in the fire and it would come out, well, it would run a stream about like a penny pencil.

Dr. Garret: How did you ever determine the proof of the liquor, or did you worry about it at all?

Mr. Deaton: Oh, I had, you, I didn't have nary, you, a lot of people had gauges you know, they'd gauge it out, you know. I didn't have nary un and I just used a little bottle, I could tell by the bead what it was.

Dr. Garrett: Just shake the bead. When you get a bead it's about 100 proof, isn't it? Is that right, am I right?

Mr. Deaton: About 80 proof is just little fine beads that won't hold but when it gets 100 proof up to 110, a bead gets bigger and holds longer and will double up. The stronger, them beads will double up.

Dr. Garrett: Now you say you shake it.

Mr. Deaton: Set back down here and let me show you. Now this is a hundred proof. This whiskey is less than one month old, distilled in Kentucky and corn whiskey, 100 proof. Now you see how clear that is? Now, I don't know what but the corn likker, thw whiskey that I made was just a little shady yellar and all ever I see'd was moonshine was that way. But that don't taste like corn likker, it don't smell like it. Now, you see how that is? Now you watch it. See, just watch it.

Dr. Garrett: Now it's holding the bead, foaming up and holding it, isn't it? Those are big bubbles.

Mr. Deaton: Now if it was 110, 105 or 110, they would be bigger and be doubled, they would be some a ridin others, you see, right here now. Now, watch this now.

Dr. Garrett: Yeh, it's holding the bubbles isn't it?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, some bigger. That's the way bootleggers do with liquor, if its weak, you shake it like that you know and it will hold, but you hit it this way.

Dr. Garrett: If you shake it, it holds the bead, but if you smack it that way, it ...

Mr. Deaton: Now see there, look a there. See what it comes down to? Now, watch this now.

Dr. Garrett: A big difference.

Mr. Deaton: That's the way bootleggers do?

Dr. Garrett: Shake it, I always saw them shake it, so it looked like it had more proof.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, but if you hit it three times.

Dr. Garrett: Now what does that look like, 100 proof or ... That looks like about 100 proof then. Now, weaker than that, you say, it doesn't get as big a bubble.

Mr. Deaton: Now, the weaker it is, it will be just little fine, foamy stuff. If you hit it this a way, about three times, that knocks em off, you see, but if you got weak likker, after we bootleg, had weak stuff you know, and they just do it like that, you know and ...

Dr. Garrett: I've seen them shak it but I never saw them hit the bottle before, bottom before.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh.

Dr. Garrett: You said the corn liquor. How much difference would you have had to been to make what you had with a bushel of meal or what would have been the difference between that and so-called corn liquor?

Mr. Deaton: Well, on a sweet mash, that's the first mash, you see, when you first put it up, on a sweet mash, you'll get about three quarts to a bushel of corn and a half a bushel of malt, you'll get about three, sometimes maybe a gallon. But, then if you put it back, make a sour mash and double back, then you can use that there mash that you had, you see, it is already _____ and you put new meal in it and everything and you'll get about two gallons to the...

but if you use about 40 or 50 pounds of granulated sugar with your bushel of meal and about a peck of malt or a half a bushel to the barrel, why you'll get you about six gallons on sweet mash and then you'll go anywhere from seven to nine on a sour mash, of the sugar likker.

Dr. Garrett: I didn't realize that.

Mr. Deaton: They weren't but just a, back in the 30s and early 40s, up in the early 40s, they weren't but just a, lets see, they was Charlie Seales and old Colonel Ike Wilder and old J.T. Gabbard, they weren't but just about five of them old fellars up at Booneville that drunk corn likker. And, you know, they learnt me something. Old J. T. was county attorney, you know. He'd pour out a little in his hand that a way.

Dr. Garrett: Pour it right in the palm of his hand.

Mr. Deaton: Right in the palm of his hand that a way, and then he'd commence to rubbin it just like that, and he'd just keep a rubbin that and rub it and rub it and rub it and rub it and rub it and talk as hard as he could and he'd rub that until his hand would get hot and that would dry that up.

Dr. Garrett: I can smell that right now, that's good.

Mr. Deaton: Well, that's the way he would do and I couldn't figure out what he was a doin until he showed me and told me and I've tried it and it works every time. Now, I want you to smell this.

Dr. Garrett: Yeh.

Mr. Deaton: Now if that was adulterated with a sugar likker and stuff, you rub that until it gets hot, it smells pine blank like old human dung.

Dr. Garrett: No.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh and you couldn't sell them old fellars that sugar likker when they would test it with their hands. I never made nary a thing after June.

Dr. Garrett: Have any idea why. No sour wood or honey, neither one.

Mr. Deaton: Nary a dab and I put new _____ on. I got, sent to Hazard and got me a 100, over \$100 worth of combs and I put new _____ on and everything and I was a..... Up here, _____ Barrett and her boys got about, they got about 60 or 70 hives up thar. Well, I sat more, I said Earl, how'd your bees do this... He said they never made nary a bit and you know they was good I had about a acre or acre and a half of buckwheat sold as fine as that was and I sowed it all at once, yhou know they never made nary a bite of honey off of that.

Dr. Garrett: You have any idea why not.

Mr. Deaton: They was no honey over something that I don't know what.

Dr. Garrett: Was it too wet? or too dry?

Mr. Deaton: If it don't rain whenever, ever once in a while on a bloom, it don't have no honey.. There weren't a dab of honey and hit never ...

Dr. Garrett: How many hives do you have?

Mr. Deaton: I believe theys, I guess about 16. I give ...

Dr. Garret: You going to have bees again next year.

Mr. Deaton: Well, I got em.

Dr. Garrett: You get Lynn or sour wood honey next year, I would like to have some of it.

Mr. Deaton: I been havin the finest stuff you ever layed your eyes on up till this year and...

Dr. Garrett: When I come back up to put those fences around that cemetery, around those little graves, I want you to go with me. Now, I had a sign made, I think I'll get a sign made that this is the first burial place in Owsley County and ask the people to please leave it alone. Maybe they will, maybe they won't tear it up because I've been up there many times and I didn't know that was there. And not a person in that wagon train knew where that cemetery was and I pointed it out to them the other day.

Mr. Deaton: Well, you know, they used to be a school house right up on top of that.

Dr. Garrett: A school house up on that cemetery ridge?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, up thar where that grave is at.

Dr. Garrett: Where the grave is at.

Mr. Deaton: Old big Jim Mucker, I been told.

Dr. Garrett: Mucker Jim they call him. Was that a nickname, Mucker?

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, he was one of the first school teachers that taught school I been told in Owsley County.

Dr. Garrett: Mucker Jim Baker.

Mr. Deaton: Yeh, and built his own school house for the neighbors up there at Courtland, a little log school house up thar and he taught for four dollars a month.

Dr. Garrett: For each student?

Mr. Deaton: No, for the whole school.

Dr. Garrett: You mean he taught the whole school and he only got fourdollars a month.

Mr. Deaton: He wanted to teach em and he never went to school a day in his life.

Dr. Garrett: How did he live on four dollars a month?

Mr. Deaton: Well, he didn't live on it, the neighbors fed him and you know, that lived nearby.

Dr. Garrett: That might have been the first school in the County, you say.

Mr. Deaton: I'll tell you who, old Black Bob Baker's, Millard, that lives in _____, you may have knowed him. He married a Wilson over there. He told me that he went to school in that little school house thar and I don'r remember whether he said he went to or not.

Dr. Garrett: When did you move to Buffalo?

Mr. Deaton: 19 and 30.

Dr. Garrett: You didn't have much roads up here in those days, did you?

Mr. Deaton: Just a creek.

Dr. Garrett: Just the creek. There was a lot of fish in the creek at that time, wasn't there?

Mr. Deaton: You could find yourself a good mess of bass and red eye. You could go up there and catch em in big holes of water.

Dr. Garrett: Big holes of water, deep. I've seen those. And, the creeks, people find it hard to believe that we followed creeks across the head of a mountain and over to another creek and sat down.

Dr. Garrett: Now the last time I was up here you were telling me the names of all the creeks on Buffalo and I am going to change this tape in a minute and I wonder if you will do that for me again. I like those names. Yeh, I want you to tell me.