

Robert Jack Allen

Interviewer: Jack, when were you born?

Mr. Allen: 1929, January 2.

Interviewer: How did you and your family make a living during the great depression?

Mr. Allen: My dad he was a share cropper I was a kid and he raised a lot of tobacco and stuff like that. Years later when the old Iron Furnace opened back up he went to work there. By 1935, 1936 somewhere along in there he worked there about two years, then he bought a farm in 1940 raised a lot of tobacco back then you raised everything you ate.

Interviewer: Where was that at, in Cumberland Furnace?

Mr. Allen: Yes, general area.

Inter: Did your family have a radio?

Mr. Allen: My grandfather I remember he had the only radio the only battery operated radio that was in the country. And he lived back up Bell hollow you know back then batteries were quite expensive you had to have an A and a B battery and they didn't last too long and were quite expensive. The only time they would use the radio was on Saturday night. People would come out of the hills and hollows everywhere to hear the Grand Ole Opry.

Interviewer: What other kind of programs did you listen to?

Mr. Allen: We listened to the news program maybe once or twice a week and that was about it. But he was the only one in the country that had a radio.

Interviewer: Did you ever, before the war ever remember hearing the political tension that was mounting between Nazi Germany or any other country.

Mr. Allen: I was young at that time and didn't pay a lot of attention to it, didn't hear a lot. Of course with no newspaper, no radios, and no electricity.

Interviewer: Was that the same way about the Roosevelt administration; did you not keep up with it either, to young?

Mr. Allen: The only way I kept up with that is I knew times were getting better because we began to have a little bit more. Roosevelt he got the, what they called the CCC boys started, and that gave young people that opportunity to go out and earn a little. The work program of WPA started that and that gave some of the older people the chance to go out and earn some extra money.

Interviewer: Did your parents ever take advantage of those?

Mr. Allen: No I had some uncles that did. The CC Camp some of them worked for the WPA.

Interviewer: So you remember the furnace being in operation here. What kind of operation was that right about the time the war started?

Mr. Allen: It wasn't a full operation. I think the Warren Iron Company got a contract I forgot where it was they opened the furnace back up for a while and operated it. I remember coming out on the hilltop at night when they would pour that furnace and it would light up the whole country side. It would light up for two miles you might say it would light up this whole countryside. My dad worked in that period of time down there he was a master mechanic they called it. I don't think he had 30 or 40 people working the last time they fired it up.

Interviewer: Pretty small crew compared to what it would have been.

Mr. Allen: Oh compared to what it was years before.

Interviewer: Was there a big drive around this area for scrap metal for the war?

Mr. Allen: No

Interviewer: Do you remember hearing the news after Pearl Harbor had been bombed?

Mr. Allen: Oh absolutely.

Interviewer: What were your impressions on that?

Mr. Allen: Oh it scared me to death. In fact all the friends and neighbors everywhere almost go in hiding they go inside and just about wouldn't come out. When Fort Campbell started over here they had a lot of maneuvers around all thru the country here. Everyone was afraid to go out afraid they would get shot. It was quite a harry experience.

Interviewer: Did you get that news by radio or word of mouth, newspaper or what?

Mr. Allen: Word of mouth mostly. Back then it was when WWII started there was a few more people that had radios then than a few years past. People had begun to get electricity. I think I knew of three telephones in this general area.

Interviewer: Was your family one of those?

Mr. Allen: No

Interviewer: Did you ever think, after hearing this news that you would end up in the service at some point.

Mr. Allen: Well I kind of wondered about it because I was kind of young. Let's see I was about 11 or 12 years old when the war started. I figured I would be too young whenever it got over with. My daddy

was drafted along with all my uncles and they most of them served. My dad for some reason he failed the physical and didn't have to go.

Interviewer: Most of your uncles did go?

Mr. Allen: Oh yeh.

Interviewer: Did they have extensive service overseas?

Mr. Allen: Oh yes. Had one got killed in Germany during the last days of war.

Interviewer: Did you know him pretty well?

Mr. Allen: Yes

Interviewer: Do you remember anything rationing here in the country, food rationing?

Mr. Allen: Food rationing gas rationing I remember it all very well. I'll tell you a funny story. We had an old dude Staten Tennessee down here that ran an old store. You could go down there with enough money and buy anything as much as you ever want. Even candy, chewing gum and stuff like that was rationed sugar, cigarettes, oil everything was rationed but you could go down there to his store and you could buy anything you wanted. You couldn't buy gun shells or anything like that but you couldn't buy anything like that. Somewhere I've still got an old ration book, somewhere. His name was Penal Nicks.

Interviewer: Is he any relation to Nicks Hardware?

Mr. Allen: Oh they were some relation. Cindy Nicks, it was her uncle.

Interviewer: Do you remember what you had to do to cope with some of those situations? What you did to cope with the rationing?

Mr. Allen: It was pretty rough living if older people along with myself hadn't had the opportunity to go thru some of the hard times. Back then you just about grew everything you ate. Everybody had hogs that made their meat and their cooking oils and they call it lard and everybody raised a big big garden. My grandfather always raised about 2 acres of white beans. You'd get out and shell them and put them in maybe 100 pound sacks and he had an old steam engine and he had a Grison mill he called a grease mill he would grind mill and flower for everybody in the country. So we had meat and flower and on top of that my grandfather and dad would always have a big old sorghum mill and they would make sorghum molasses every fall you know.

Interviewer: That's where the sweets come in?

Mr. Allen: That's where the sweets come in and everybody, these women they knew how to use that sorghum molasses my grandmother used to make what she called sweet bread and used sorghum molasses and it was good I mean it was good.

Interviewer: Well with the gas rationing did your family own a vehicle?

Mr. Allen: One vehicle in our family and my dad owned it. Gas was you just couldn't hardly get no gas. About the only thing you used it for was the big part of the old truck when you go to church or someplace like that.

Interviewer: Where did you go to church?

Mr. Allen: Sweet home.

Interviewer: Just down the road?

Mr. Allen: Yeh

Interviewer: Did you ever get into Charlotte or Dickson?

Mr. Allen: Oh yes. Of course I went to high school in Charlotte.

Interviewer: Were you in school at that time?

Mr. Allen: Yes, but I was in elementary school at Sweet home. Sweet home school up there was a little one room school house. We had from first thru eighth grade there. When you got out of there you went to Charlotte. We had a hollow way up there and you had to walk sometimes two and a half to three miles just to catch the school bus. We had to go to school didn't matter if it was raining snowing sleeting or whatever you went.

Interviewer: Was the Railroad still running through Cumberland Furnace at that time?

Mr. Allen: I remember seeing the railroad when I was 4 or 5 years old seeing the train coming through here. So it must have shut down about 36 or 37 somewhere along in there.

Interviewer: Was the track still around?

Mr. Allen: They took the track up within a year or two after it closed down.

Interviewer: So there was no benefit that scrap metal went to the war effort?

Mr. Allen: Right they took that and used it somewhere else.

Interviewer: Did you ever hear anything about war bonds or wanting to buy any?

Mr. Allen: Yes, my family bought a few. They were a real good investment and seemed to help out during the war too you know. They were popular back then.

Interviewer: How much could you get one for?

Mr. Allen: Eighteen fifty or eighteen seventy five for a 25 dollar one which back then it was redeemable after 10 years. That was pretty good interest and if people had enough to buy two or three or four or five or whatever they thought that was better than having money in the back which it really was.

Interviewer: I imagine there was a patriot sense that went along with buying them too?

Mr. Allen: I remember back then when they first came out if you redeem them before five years all you got was face value, whatever you put in it that is all you got back. After five years it started going up a little bit. It didn't mature I believe until after 10 years.

Interviewer: What happened to radio, did you ever keep up with the news from the Pacific theatre over in France and Germany?

Mr. Allen: Oh yes.

Interviewer: What were your impressions?

Mr. Allen: With having a lot of family in the service and everything we kind of worried about them. Back then if you went as much as three or four weeks without hearing form them without a letter or something like that you began to wonder if they were still alive.

Interviewer: Would you just hear by letter? Would you ever hear by telegraph?

Mr. Allen: Yes. Of course when the uncle got killed the war sent a telegraph to the parents. There is so much history around here. I remember Staten down the road from here it's just a hop and skip from here. I remember back when they had a brass band up there I was a kid last I heard, I just barely remember it. But they had the uniforms and everything and a brass marching band. About once a month they would all dress up and march up and down the road in Staten. They had their marching music.

Interviewer: They never got out of Staten?

Mr. Allen: Seems like they went to Dickson a couple of times for a concert or something.

Interviewer: Was any of those concerts done for war benefits?

Mr. Allen: That was back before the war.

Interviewer: Did you know, other than your own family, did you know any other families that had family members that got wounded or killed in action?

Mr. Allen: Oh yes, we had a, in fact we had a real hero that was born in that house you can set here and see it on top of that hill his name was St. Daniel. St. was wounded after he was wounded he wiped out three or four German foxholes and I don't know what all. It's a funny thing he came back from war and settled down here and got a little farm up there and married Mable Rector, she's Mable Daniel, you probably know her. Anyway the war department came in here 10 or 12 years after he had gotten out of

the service they came down here and had a big ceremony at what's now is the community center. What was Sharps Grocery store and he won 2 or 3 important metals.

Interviewer: Did you attend that ceremony?

Mr. Allen: Was I in it, no I wasn't in it but I was one in the crowd that went down there and seen it.

Interviewer: So you saw it happen?

Mr. Allen: Yes

Interviewer: What were your impressions of watching that?

Mr. Allen: I thought it was the greatest thing that ever happened in Tennessee much less Cumberland Furnace.

Interviewer: So you're really proud of that?

Mr. Allen: Yes

Interviewer: Were there any other similar ceremonies that took place like that for any war veterans that had returned?

Mr. Allen: I don't know of any more similar I know there was several that died in the last few year serving in the military that went through some terrible time. One was Glenn D Wilson that lived up here he had some terrible time.

Interviewer: Do you ever talk to these guys.

Mr. Allen: I have in the past of course most of them are dead and gone. Saint is dead and gone and Wilson is dead and gone. They are about the only ones that lived right in this area here that had went through a lot of things.

Interviewer: Did they ever have a lot to say about it?

Jack: They wouldn't talk much when you go them started then they would talk about it, they just wouldn't sit around and make conversation. Seemed like they didn't want to talk about it.

Interviewer: Let's go back to something here real quick, we were talking about the transportation with the gas ration. Only having one vehicle how did your family deal with that. Was there another means of transportation that you would use?

Mr. Allen: Horse and wagon. That was the main transportation. I remember my grandmother used to live over in White Oaks Flat and of course that was my grandmother's mother and they liked to visit every once in awhile. The whole family would go at a time on wagon. It would be my father and mother and grandmother and maybe a couple of the uncles and maybe one aunt. You'd get up early in the

morning before daylight and hitch a team of mules up to a wagon and they'd throw a bunch of straw up on the wagon and put the quilts over that and we'd ride over there. We'd get over there about 11:00 in the morning and she was my great grandmother and she would have lunch ready by the time we got there and we'd all eat you know we'd eat at a big table outside under the shade tree. We'd all eat lunch then sit out and talk a little while and then we had to get on our wagon and head back and we'd get back about dark. That was our mode of transportation years ago.

Interviewer: So being raised on a farm in this area food was never a problem during the war?

Mr. Allen: Never a problem.

Interviewer: Do you remember hearing the news of VE-Day?

Mr. Allen: Yes, I don't remember much about it.

Interviewer: Do you remember was there any kind of celebration did word of mouth go around?

Mr. Allen: Word of mouth. Our mode of storytelling and first one thing back then was one person hollered from one hillside to the other hillside. That was our mode of communication back then.

Interviewer: Pre-day telephones?

Mr. Allen: No telephone. It was hard for people, especially young people. I have a daughter that enjoys me talking about it, the old times and all that stuff but it's hard for young people to comprehend how we lived and all that stuff and how enjoyment was. I had made quite a study about Indians; in fact I'm fixing to write an article about Indians in this area here. I can tell people that we used to borrow fire, go to our neighbors and borrow some fire you know. They think what in the world are you talking about borrowing fire. Back then there was no electricity and a fire used for heat wood for heat and wood for cooking and it was a necessity. I know being a kid my dad after being out in the field working all day we'd come home in the evening and the fire'd be out and no matches to build a fire. Well you could learn how to make fire like the Indians did but it was more convenient to send one of the kids down the road a mile and a half with an old bucket and get it full of hot coals and ashes cover it with ashes and bring it in and start a fire from that. I have done it many of times. My dad or mom would send me somewhere to borrow some fire.

Interviewer: So there was no electricity anywhere in Cumberland Furnace at that time.

Mr. Allen: Oh no.

Interviewer: When you look back on those days and the news from WWII, what are your overall thoughts? About the times.

Mr. Allen: The times were hard but they were good. The families back then were closer. Seemed like the families they cherished their children more back then, they had time to do things with them. We sat around at night with no TV no radio no telephone and we set around at night and we'd talk just like you

and I are talking. We just had plenty of time to communicate. I think that's what's wrong with the world today people don't communicate enough and the parents don't have time to listen to their children's problems and all that stuff. I hate to see people especially young people right now have to go through this some of the things I went through because they couldn't survive a lot of them couldn't but after thinking about it, it was probably the most enjoyable time of my whole life.

Interviewer: Well talking about the accountable people you had back then how did you feel about the service members that you knew that left this community and went to fight? Did you feel good about the type people they were and the expertise they had?

Mr. Allen: You know that was the saddest time in my life to see a loved one leave and to go off and not know if they would ever come back or what. And most of the time when they left they left walking with an old suitcase or an old pillowcase or something with their belongings on their shoulder to see them walking off and walking off down the road knowing they were going to a train or something knowing they were going off to war it was a sad time.

Interviewer: Did most of them go to Fort Campbell?

Mr. Allen: No, most of them went to Georgia, Fort Bragg North Carolina and I don't know just other places. Hardly any of them went to Fort Campbell.

Interviewer: Where would they have caught the train at?

Mr. Allen: Probably in Georgia or North Carolina.

Interviewer: Out of Nashville? Did they catch that train from Nashville?

Mr. Allen: They caught a train in Dickson and then went to Nashville or whatever from there.

Interviewer: Did you ever get to Nashville in those days?

Mr. Allen: I got to Nashville when I was 17 years old.

Interviewer: First time?

Mr. Allen: First time, I couldn't believe it I couldn't believe anything in the world was that big.

Interviewer: Now what year was that?

Mr. Allen: It would be in about 42 or 43 the war was going on.

Interviewer: Was there any hustle and bustle going on associated with war time activities going on in Nashville?

Mr. Allen: Oh yes.

Interviewer: What were some of those activities?



Mr. Allen: Most or all women worked back then. The women you seen had on work uniforms or whatever, they weren't all dressed like they are today. Most women I seen back then I'll say from 20 to 50 was all in some kind of work uniform on they were going to work or getting off from work or whatever.

Interviewer: A lot of service members moving back and forth in Nashville?

Mr. Allen: Oh yes. It was hard times but it was good times. I wouldn't take a million for some of my memories that I had back then of course a lot of kids I grew up with back then especially those that are maybe five or ten years older than me are gone or dying. It's kind of sad to lose some of your lifelong friends.

Interviewer: Did your family ever do anything to contribute to the war effort other than buying war bonds? Did they ever go to a USO dance or anything like that?

Mr. Allen: No, nothing like that. They, again they very seldom ever used their coupon books, stamp books I believe they were called, because they felt my grandfather he felt we could help more ways than any buy raising everything we eat rather than going to the store and buying it and taking away from the service people. Just about everything we had to eat we raised.

Interviewer: Did you live in the same house along with your grandfather?

Mr. Allen: No, we had our own separate house. My mother and dad, I couldn't have been over ten years old, maybe eight years old, we built our own little house.

Interviewer: What kind of house was it?

Mr. Allen: It was a one boarded house. Made it, the siding out of tie siding and stripped it you know like a lot of the old houses were back then. Two bedrooms a big living room and kitchen. Of course nobody had a bath back then.

Interviewer: And how old were you when your family built that house?

Mr. Allen: How old was I, I was probably about 6 or 7 when we started. I was about 8 when we moved in. It took us about a year and a half to build it.

Interviewer: That's quite a bit of time.

Mr. Allen: Yes you my dad was trying to raise a crop of tobacco and I'm sure mother was helping him too and we just did it in our spare time.

Interviewer: Now did you still grow tobacco during the war years?

Mr. Allen: Yes, well they grew a lot of corn and vegetables and stuff like that and of course any excess we had if we could sell it we'd sell it but if we couldn't we'd give it away. I remember a lot of time there would be families around that were having a little bit of hard time or whatever and we'd hitch up the

whole team of mules and load the old wagon down with meat and white beans and eardrum molasses and meal and flower and stuff like that and we'd deliver it just give it to them. That went on a lot.

Interviewer: Do you remember if a person's family had someone killed in the service they had a gold star in their window do you remember seeing any of those around Cumberland Furnace?

Mr. Allen: No

Interviewer: Nothing like that?

Mr. Allen: No

Interviewer: Well it's probably a small community and everybody probably knew anyway. I asked you about Europe, do you remember when the war ended in Japan?

Mr. Allen: Vaguely. Back then I was still in school and just getting out of high school and kids that age don't of course communication back then still wasn't very good. A few newspapers circulating and still no electricity or radios. I think my mother and dad finally after a few years bought their own little battery operated radio. Of course those radios back then only about one or two stations that picked up.

Interviewer: WSM was probably one of them.

Mr. Allen: Yes, that was it then sometimes you would have to put your ear right up to it to hear it.

Interviewer: Do you remember any classroom discussion while you were in school from your teachers or your peers about things going on overseas?

Mr. Allen: It was not talked about. I thought about that a lot it wasn't discussed in school.

Interviewer: Why do you think that was?

Mr. Allen: I don't know if they thought that if they got in a discussion like that it might upset the students or whatever or put them in the wrong frame of mind or what. It just was not discussed or talked about for some reason.

Interviewer: Did they do everything they could to make sure school was as normal as it would have been if there hadn't been a war?

Mr. Allen: Yes, absolutely. I know when the war started all sport activities were done away with, county high schools. I played football two year and they shut it down all over the county might have been all over the state I don't know.

Interviewer: Was that because of transportation problems? Rationing and getting back and forth to games?

Mr. Allen: That was one of them the other things is they feared for everyone's safety I guess.

Interviewer: So there was actually a perceived threat even here in a small community like this just by that war taking place in Europe or the Pacific.

Mr. Allen: Used to be when Fort Campbell first opened up over there, I forgot what year it was now, we had one old man right out here and they would fly they were training a lot of pilots you know and they'd come over with these little single engine planes maybe 15 or 20 at a time that old man would hear them coming and run and go in the house and get under the bed. He'd holler out Hitler's coming everybody run.

Interviewer: Thought Hitler had landed right in middle Tennessee.

Mr. Allen: Oh yes.

Interviewer: I was always under the impression that Cumberland Furnace had been a big supplier of scrap metal during the war and that that had been used to aid the war effort. The old furnace had been torn down for that purpose.

Mr. Allen: Yes, I think it was I've heard a lot of talk about that and I think that's why it was torn down and sold as scrap metal for the war purposes. I know it was tore down, in other words it didn't take a long time to get it down dismantle they dismantled that thing and was out of her in two or three months.

Interviewer: Well your family members that were employed there what did they do after that?

Mr. Allen: After it shut down everybody, people that had just relied on that lonely for their welfare they just moved out and just started moving everywhere. I remember this fellow good friend of mine Turner Long, of course he was a lot older than me he was superintendant over the manse when they were going so big and shut down he left and went to Old Hickory Tennessee him and Nolly Peter, Nolly Pete I think let's see he was a job superintendent and when they shut down they left and went to Old Hickory and went to work for DuPont Company.

Interviewer: It shut down in 1943 is that right?

Mr. Allen: That's right.

Interviewer: So there must have been a flux of people moving in and out of the community because of the furnace.

Mr. Allen: I remember back when I was a kid let's see we had 1, 2, 3, 4 grocery stores and one doctors office which was unheard of in a community. Had barber shop a rest mill and a pool hall and a little furniture place and a tobacco warehouse. I remember when all that was her, it was kind of a booming little place. You go to town on Saturday down here and you might see the whole neighborhood down there.

Interviewer: What would you guess the population of Cumberland Furnace was during the war at any given time?

Mr. Allen: During the war, I don't know. At Spirit Peek at one time they estimated over 2200 people and that's the liberty. Of course they started moving out real fast after the war broke out and tore the old furnace down. People thought well there's nothing else to do here so we might as well move on. So I suppose the population went down to seven or eight hundred people.

Interviewer: Did that decrease in population have any negative effects on the economy of the community?

Mr. Allen: No, not really.

Interviewer: All the stores stayed in operation? The doctor's office?

Mr. Allen: No, now the stores started closing down one at a time they had to. Mr. Starve down here and Mr. Daniel stayed open longer than anybody after the war was over. But their business was very very limited. Very very limited.

Interviewer: What type of products right before the furnace closed down, what type of products were they producing?

Mr. Allen: Cumberland Furnace? Well uh the Warren Iron Company they made a lot of cookware, iron cookware. I was talking to a fellow the other day and he said he seen some of it as far away as California. We've got some down there in our museum, I don't know if you've seen it or not but it was made by Warren Iron Company it was stamped on the lid made by Warren Iron Company.

Interviewer: Did any of the find its way to the military for their use overseas?

Mr. Allen: I don't know, I don't know it probably did cause back then cast iron cookware was very popular. It's even popular in some families today. Unfortunately I don't have any, kind of wish I did. There's still people that's got it. There used to be an old store right up the road of course back then the highway wasn't out here the road came out over the top of the hill but anyway there used to be an old store up the called Gray's store and they'd have a little promotion up there about once a year and they'd give away a big old ceramic plates, beautiful, I mean real beautiful. We've got two of them now down in that museum. But I tried to get my hands on one of those, they are hard to come by I understand that they gave away three or four hundred of them so there is probably some of them still in existence.

Interviewer: What else were they producing other than cookware?

Mr. Allen: These old iron big old iron kettles they produced hundreds of them.

Interviewer: What were they used for?

Mr. Allen: People used them for their plumbing. When they'd wash they'd have a wash day once a week and I mean it was an all day affair. And they'd take all the dirty clothes and put them in this kettle and build a fire around it and boil their clothes I mean in lie soap you know your clothes were germ free when they came out of there.

Interviewer: Is that how you washed your clothes and things like that during the war or would you use the creek?

Mr. Allen: Well they'd most of the time have a kettle set up near the water a stream of water like a spring or something like that and you know. And it would be right close and they'd boil it in this lie soap and they'd pour that out and they'd get another kettle of hot water going to boil the lie soap and all that stuff out of the clothes. Anyway that was one of the biggest things Warren Iron Company made was kettles. Kettles and cookware I think was their biggest thing.

Interviewer: What happened after the railroad came through here was this right out here on the road that was where the railroad came through right? When did the road go over that?

Mr. Allen: They started building that road in the 50s the middle 50s of whatever. It was a gravel road for quite a while then there was a lot of traffic on it and everything. Somehow they got money from the state and they paved it of course it wasn't a very good road. As the years passed the county kind of took over and they a little extra money and they made it the road it is today. Right on top of the hill up there the old road came through there they called it Palmyra road, you've probably hear of it. I think it ended up over at Palmyra at Montgomery County and went from there to Palmyra over in East Tennessee. They called it Old Palmyra Road. There used to be an old Stagecoach Road years ago. I don't remember that but I remember talk about it and I owned that barn over there one time and I kept noticing on the hill there was a foundation to an old building up there. And I got to looking and digging around up there and it was a huge building I never known a building like that before. Well I found out years later after doing a little research that it was an Inn for the travelers that would stop there.

Interviewer: Coming in and out of Cumberland Furnace?

Mr. Allen: People on Palmyra Road wherever they were traveling. And they would stop their and spend the night.

Interviewer: Was that open during the war?

Mr. Allen: No, that was long before the war. All I know about it was what little information I could pick up about it here and there about it of course I got a little information from my mother before she died. That's really where I made my mistake if I'd have done something like you're doing here I'd have more history than anybody would know about.

Interviewer: That's why I enjoy doing it.

Mr. Allen: For example people around here today don't really believe it the younger people especially but up here on Sweet home Road as you go up about a quarter of a mile it turns and goes across the creek, across the creek there's a big old spring right next to a bluff over there. Well I remember seeing it there when I was a kid growing up, the foundation to some old building but didn't think much about it but my mother remembers when there was a school there they called it Buckeye Valley School and she was the only one living around here when people began to get interested about this place that knew about it. But anyway I've got it documented where she wrote it herself when the Buckeye School was built and when it was operated along with the old Sweet home school up there.

Interviewer: During the war you were going to the Sweet home school is that right?

Mr. Allen: Right.

Interviewer: So that school was provably long gone.

Mr. Allen: Oh yes. It was. It was built I believe she said in 1870 or 72 something like that. First school in the whole country and it was, it was that land was donated by the owners of the Furnace at that time. I don't know who it was seems like maybe the Vanleers or somebody. And they even furnished a little money to build the school. I think they had at one time they had as many as 23 or 24 students there.

Interviewer: Is the school that the Drillyard family had built there beside the church was that in operation during the war still.

Mr. Allen: Yes

Interviewer: The now, over where the caves are where the Maratext Corporation is now what did they serve any purpose during the war?

Mr. Allen: No

Interviewer: No purpose at all.

Mr. Allen: No, no purpose.

Interviewer: Were they just empty then, were the caves just empty?

Mr. Allen: Wasn't no caves there.

Interviewer: Oh okay so that's a post war thing.

Mr. Allen: That's a man made cave all the way.

Interviewer: I always thought that was pre-war.

Mr. Allen: No that's post-war. Now you know they used a lot of limestone in the operation manufacturing or iron pig iron and they got that just before you get to 48 down there you see all the bluffs on the left there, all the limestone come from there.

Interviewer: Was the furnace operation, the last furnace that was here in the 40s was it producing pig iron and did that process use limestone?

Mr. Allen: Yes. Limestone I think was one of the biggest ingredients.

Interviewer: I knew it was on the original I didn't know if it was on this last furnace. I had read that it was a different type of furnace but I didn't know if it still used limestone.

Mr. Allen: They didn't use as much limestone as they did previously but they used a lot of limestone in their mix.

Interviewer: Well Mr. Jack I appreciate talking to you, I've enjoyed it.

Mr. Allen: We'll do it again sometime.

Interviewer: I look forward to it.