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## Interview with Audie Dennison (FA 98) - September 5, 1977

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INTERVIEW WITH AUDIE DENNISON, CUB RUN KENTUCKY  
9/5/77

Subject: LONG DISTANCE BASKET TRADE

Interviewer: Keith Ludden

IC DENNISON Leroy Alvey's got a shop up by Munfordville, now. On the Highway

K. LUDDEN Who was this?

DENNISON Alvey - Leroy Alvey,

LUDDEN Oh, yeah, I think Mr. Logsdon mentioned his name, too.

DENNISON Yeah, I guess he did, cause his - him and his father together - His father passed away, oh, I guess fifteen years ago or somethin' like that. He lives in this big house, up here on the right. The first one as you go back. You came through Cub Run, I guess.

LUDDEN Yes.

DENNISON -the first house on the right. 'Course I don't think he's at home now. Probably he's at Munfordville. He's got a brother-in-law (to go see?) over at the hospital that's pretty far along with cancer, too. Could be he's dying, I don't know. I been gone since Friday. I left Friday night. And he - of course this - he originally comes from over here at Wax. On over                     . And a lot of people around there made these baskets, see, he bought 'em and his dad used to peddle 'em. Go along in wagons (with?) big frames - take 'em clear over into Indiana, and back down into Tennessee, and be gone maybe for a month, y'know, at a time. Well, now what you want with me - you just kinda explain to me what you -

I K. LUDDEN Well, why don't we start by - can you tell me anything about the history of the trade - before your memory? Did your parents tell you anything about the trade?

DENNISON No, really - I - no. Of course, probably - I know they did - I suppose - but I don't remember when I was a child at home, ever seein' any made - when I was a child.

I, B, C I say when I was a child at home, I don't remember - with my parents, y'know before I left home, I don't remember them ever makin' any baskets or                     . I - originally I was born and raised about a mile and a half from Mammoth Cave, down there - you know, probably where that is .

K. LUDDEN Yeah.

II C DENNISON On Green River. And I don't remember, but - well I was - I lost my father when I was - before I was sixteen years old. And then when I married, I married - only I was twenty - and my wife was eighteen/ And we made baskets ourselves, there for several years. In the winter time

\*

\_\_\_\_\_, 'course I farmed, (helped us bring in?) a little extra income, anyway.

B. LUDDEN Right! That helps.

K. LUDDEN You both farmed and made baskets?

\* VI

DENNISON That's right. Yeah, I never did make 'em just - y'know - depend on that for a livin' at all. I just made it on the side like I said, y'know. But my wife's people, some of my wife's people actually made 'em just practically all their lives - from the young - young married couple, y'know - I'd say clear on - all - till they was old, really. 'Scuse me just a minute. .... .. What I can do, now, I can start at the beginning.

K. LUDDEN Okay.

II

DENNISON I make it - like I said, me and my wife, I could start at the first processes. Right from the beginning.

K. LUDDEN Okay.

IIA

DENNISON Yes sir, and now, of course the timber that we used, it was- in this country- of course you know in places they used cane. But we used white oak. And it's something like, oh, 4 - 6 inches in diameter. And of course, cut this. And didn't have no reg'lar length at all - just whatever would run good, y'know, (where?) it would rive splits, now we called 'em splits - we'd rive these out, y'know - to weave the baskets with. And I'll just tell ya - you want me to tell ya how they was made?

K. LUDDEN Okay, that's one of the things we wanna know, yeah.

IIC

DENNISON (noise on tape) ...that's the first thing you would do, of course, and then you would hunt you a good white oak, and then you would split that and rive that out for the hoops and ribs - hoops and ribs. I wish I just - you've saw 'em though haven't you?

Yeah, then, okay, you know then how they were made. Well, these hoops fastened (\_\_\_\_). that's the handle, y'know. It goes clear around, and then on the inside of that, the ribs go in, that you weave the bottom of the basket out, y'know. As far, now, as makin' baskets, that about it, actually. Of course, now, I'm talkin' about bushels and half bushel baskets. That's mostly what Walter made. Now he made a world - he taught school and made baskets, too, like I say, throught the winter, y'know, And he taught school for years. I suppose he was finally retired. If it's the one I'm thinkin' of. (Does he live over at Brownsville?)

IC

K. LUDDEN I believe so. He's about - oh - 84 years old. He used to teach elocution, I think.

DENNISON That's him - tall, slender.

K. LUDDEN Yeah.

DENNISON That's him. (one sentence low volume and obscured) He's made 'em all

his life. I believe two or three years ago I saw a picture in the Courier-Journal the day the Courier Journal was here  
 ...state fair. He was there, y'know, and he was weavin' a basket, showin' em how it was done. So actually that's about all.....

*II A*  
 K. LUDDEN Okay, when you went into the woods to get the splits, how could you tell good white oak from bad? How could you tell what was suitable?

DENNISON Well, just hafta - you judge it by the bark. \_\_\_\_\_  
 It's smooth. I wouldn't know how to describe the bark in words to ya, but - you have to have young timber, now - young.

K. LUDDEN It had to be green?

*II C*  
*II B*  
 DENNISON That's right. Yes sir, it had to be green. And these splits, if you didn't after you - splits, now I'm talkin' about - that's what you weave with to form the baskets out of, see, around these ribs. You said you saw 'em, y'know. You first - put them hoops together - two - slip one right inside the other. And you push this inside lip up to where it'll leave ya as much handle as ya want, y'see, to handle the basket with. Then you wrap them hoops to put your ribs in - ribs. And it goes around there, \_\_\_\_\_ and you just made you a awl, of course, y'know, (out of) something like a sixteen - number sixteen nail, or something like that. File it real sharp, on one end y'know, to punch these holes, through those splits, ready to put your ribs in.

K. LUDDEN Oh, you made yourself an awl?

DENNISON Uh huh.

K. LUDDEN You made it with a nail, you said?

DENNISON Yeah, that's what we'd use - sixteens or twentys. File that end off, y'know. Then just round it off, there, and make ya a wooden awl - or handle, I mean. Just let that (end?) \_\_\_\_\_ handle, on the end of it y'know. \_\_\_\_\_ just \_\_\_\_\_ your holes in there.

K. LUDDEN You punch a hole in your lashing, there, so you could.....

DENNISON That's right.

K. LUDDEN What other kinds of tools did you use?

*II C*  
 DENNISON Well, just - now these hoops, of course we used what we called a draw knife. It was a knife blade somethin' like that long (indicating size) and the handle come down \_\_\_\_\_. And you put them (the wood) in a vice, or somethin' liek that - a wood clamp - to hold it. (to shave them with) - shave your hoops. You make 'em smooth, y'know.

K. LUDDEN Did you make those?

*II A*  
 DENNISON And that's ...of course, now when you went to the woods to cut your timber, why most of us didn't take nothin' but just a plain old choppin' axe, y'know. to cop 'em down - or saw 'em down, with a cross cut saw.

\* VI, IIA

Of course in the winter time, lots of times, I took a team way back in the wagon. We didn't have no trucks back then. And drove to the woods, y'know, and cut maybe eight or ten - enough to make maybe fifty or seventy-five baskets. And then \_\_\_\_\_ you had to keep them in a damp place to keep from seasonin' out. If it ever season'ed out, why it was (ruined on ya?). You couldn't work with it. You couldn't rive these splits, y'see. (Keep 'em damp?) Then you had to work them up. Don't let them season after ya got 'em worked out, y'see. If ya did, of course you couldn't weave 'em, y'know. They'd break, and you couldn't do nothin' with 'em. That's just about all there is to it, \_\_\_\_\_ 'course, now, when you want to mekin' these splits, why you could just take a pocket knife. The best pocket knife - I guess anybody could make it with - I don't know - for that purpose. They're obsolete, now, and if you ever run across one, why I don't know what it would be worth. But it's a Barlow. That was the brand of the knife. Of course, you can still buy 'em, but they're not the original Barlow. They've got that "Barlow" on there, but - -- He's passed away, now, but Alvin \_\_\_\_\_ used to write articles in the Courier Journal daily paper \_\_\_\_\_ worked for the Courier-Journal and the Louisville Times. And collected these knives. And they got to be - well they just finally quit makin' 'em \_\_\_\_\_ But they - y'see these splits, you'd rive them out, and then you just take these knives, see, and scrape. Just pull - Start up on the end, y'know, just pull 'em (up here?), and keep pullin' from each side of 'em, and ya scrape 'em just smooth and slick, y'know - real smooth - And them knives was about the only kind you could get ahold of that had a temper in them enough so to (what?) (you?) could put an edge on them. You'd sharpen - you could sharpen most of 'em, and of course the Barlo would sharpen real sharp, and it'd hold that edge. You could scrape for two or three hours \_\_\_\_\_ (noise)

K. LUDDEN Did you make these draw knives, or were they purchased?

DENNISON No, no we bought them. We didn't make them.

K. LUDDEN So the only one of the tools that you really made was the awl.

IIA DENNISON That's right. Actually, after you got your timber cut, of course, you take a - if it was large enough, you'd take a pole ax, or an (iron wedge?) and split it \_\_\_\_\_ right down through the the center. Then quarter it. Well, of course, you could have - you could have \_\_\_\_\_ up at the top \_\_\_\_\_ knot, or hit a knot, you know, which isn't too advisable.

K. LUDDEN Did you ever use anything but white oak? Did you ever use - well, there isn't much cottonwood around here, is there?

DENNISON No, that wouldn't - you couldn't - You got ta have some soft wood, y'know, cottonwood- you couldn't rive it - for split, I mean. Now, I've - once in a while, I'd \_\_\_\_\_ find a maple that would be smooth enough, and that you could rive 'em out of. \_\_\_\_\_ Mos all - well, I'll just say all of 'em - 99%, anyway, would be white oak, young white oak. Something like maybe, four - six inches in diameter, was about as big as you would want for splits. Of course, now, these hoops, you could use hickory. Find you a \_\_\_\_\_ hickory that would rive good, y'know

IIC

You saw them baskets, they're not to (thick?) (mic noise) (And?) you have to have something that'll rive. \_\_\_\_\_ I don't really know whether you understand what I mean by rivin' or not.

K. LUDDEN No, could you...

DENNISON Well, that's splittin' 'em. Splittin' 'em open.

K. LUDDEN You said you'd ride them? Is that what...

DENNISON Rive. R-I-V-E.

K. LUDDEN O, Okay.

DENNISON That's nothin -- just simply splittin' 'em open, y'see - down to the size you want your hoop. You first quarter 'em out, and then you square 'em, y'know. Get you a square - piece of timber. Then, (whichever way?) you want your hoop \_\_\_\_\_ - inch and a half, or two inches, whatever it might be, then you split that out in slabs, and shave 'em down with a drawknife. (Down to whatever?) thickness you want to. Whatever thickness you might like.

K. LUDDEN Did you ever go on any of these trips to sell the baskets?

DENNISON No, I never did. We sold all we ever made at all - we sold 'em locally.

K. LUDDEN In gift shops, or...

DENNISON No, back - actually when - Well I guess - I been - I got a daughter-in-law that's been at me, watin' me to make her a basket. She just wants it, y'know - for - to keep, and I've not got around to it. I guess it's been - I'd say it's been about thirty-five years since I made a basket. - me and my wife. My wife passed away - It'll be three years \_\_\_\_\_ And my daughter-in-law over there - lives on the other side of Mumfordsville, has got a half a bushel basket that (Clorie?) made - the last one she made. I worked the (timber out?), but she done the rest, (puttin' all the basket together \_\_\_\_\_) There was a lot of difference in these baskets and basket makers, just like everything else.

K. LUDDEN You said you just made bushel baskets, though.

DENNISON Mostly bushel baskets and half bushel. And of course some of 'em have made different kinds, different designs, y'know, and - called 'em fruit baskets, and like that. I guess this old lady - I don't even know whether (she's livin'). I tell you what - what would help you more than anything, though - if you could talk to Leroy Alvey. Now last time I saw (her?) picture in the Courier-Journal, I said " \_\_\_\_\_ And I think she was about eighty some year old, and made baskets all her life, and this - (can't recall his name?) reporter come out of Louisville. The Courier-Journal sent him down to interview her. And she was makin' baskets at that time, and had her picture in the paper, when he was there, y'know. She's a (Lush?) women - that's her name - her last name. That's about all I could... you just keep askin' me questions \_\_\_\_\_ I'm willing to help ya, I'll be glad to, if it'd help ya at all. You want this to use down there in college, now?

K. LUDDEN Yeah, we're working on it basically as a class project. Each person in the class will bring back information from a particular person and...

DENNISON Yeah, I know what you're talkin' about. I got a neighbor over here, this is his first year of school \_\_\_\_\_ last year in High School. He graduated from Munfordville \_\_\_\_\_ County High. And I make tobacco stakes a lot. He wanted to do that, y'know he come out and he watched me - well, actually he did that, and \_\_\_\_\_ 'Cause I make 'em every winter, and spring, I have for several years. He took some pictures out there.

K. LUDDEN You said you cut the timber in the spring? Is that what you were just saying?

IIA DENNISON The tobacco sticks we do, now this basket - we cut it anytime.

K. LUDDEN It doesn't matter what time of year?

DENNISON No, it don't make a bit of difference.

K. LUDDEN As long as it's green.

DENNISON As long as it's green, and you don't let it season out on ya - get dry - well that's all right. Any time of year. Well of course in the wintertime - the dead of winter. It's really too cold, and the timber will freeze, y'know. The small timber, of course will freeze quicker than the large timber will, and if it's frozen, why you got to wait'll it thaws out - or thaw it out before you can do anything with it - work it. But anytime of the year you...

K. LUDDEN Can you tell me anything about some of the other people that made baskets. Were there any ---O ---I guess...

IC DENNISON Now I - No, sir, I won't be able to - Now Leroy, down here - because as far as I know, around this community - for several years, there's not been anybody that I know of that makes any baskets, hardly. It's just about (vanished,) gone. I'm pretty sure they still do over here in Grayson, though - where Leroy come from. (He's a?) - 'Course it's not - that's not been over five or six years since I saw her (Mrs. Alvey - KJL) over there in the -.... Leroy still handles baskets. Now, I wouldn't care to go down there with ya, if he's at home, and I know (usually there's?) some baskets around there \_\_\_\_\_. But I don't know whether he's at home. I very much doubt it, 'cause late this afternoon, \_\_\_\_\_. But he might could tell ya. Now, I'll tell ya what really would be, if you could just find somebody close, y'know - not too far away that was still makin' 'em - like that lady was over there, that reporter, that he covered (her) on. If you could just find someone makin' 'em \_\_\_\_\_.

IIA K. LUDDEN When you went to get the timber, where did you go to get the timber? Was the timber all on your own land, or...

DENNISON When we made 'em, me and my wife, we made 'em off my own land. But - now that's another thing - you take land around here - even in the woods, (where it was virgin timber) why it's too high. It don't

work good. Now you find your best timber on lowland - on creeks, rivers, bottoms - like that, y'know - where it has more of a tendency to stay - oh we might say tender, y'know - easier worked. It don't get tough and hard to work, like everything sittin' up on high ground, (like this up here?) \_\_\_\_\_ . Now you go back down here - well I've got 55 acres of land on \_\_\_\_\_ (name) reservoir yet - on the reservoir came in down there, see it covered a lot of land. Well, I've got 55 acres left down there. Of course that was on the creek. (There's two creeks down there \_\_\_\_\_ . Have you ever been down there?

K. LUDDEN No, I haven't.

IC

DENNISON It's (by?) Wax. That's where Leroy's from. Leroy's - he's got a farm, or something like that. He's been in business all of his life \_\_\_\_\_ . He's a good businessman, and everything. Leroy..... \_\_\_\_\_ (noise) \_\_\_\_\_ antique shop (out on the highway?) The road that (leads in?) from Cave City.

K. LUDDEN Which highway is that? 31W?

DENNISON It's out on 31W. Just before you get to I-65.

I VIII B

K. LUDDEN Why did the people around here start making baskets? Do you know that?

DENNISON Why did you say?

K. LUDDEN Yeah. As opposed to - why didn't they simply make their living farming - like where I come from.....

DENNISON Most all the \_\_\_\_\_, like, I told ya that made baskets, they did farm, too. But it was just some extra money, ya see.....

K. LUDDEN I see.

DENNISON .....extra income. There's no one that I know of that just solely depended on makin' baskets for a living. There might have been a few, now my wife had a great uncle, that him and his wife - just the two of 'em - they lived to be really old (made?) baskets all their lives, and they (made themselves a name?) \_\_\_\_\_ (noise) \_\_\_\_\_ nicest, softest (birch?) baskets. Actually they'd just almost stand out in a big load of baskets - when you saw that load - and of course they'd sell 'em higher, too, because they got.....

K. LUDDEN Who was this?

IC VI

DENNISON They was Waddels. Ben - Ben (M?) Waddel. (We always?) called him "Uncle Ben" \_\_\_\_\_ . And they got to be real old, y'know, and they still made these baskets. He had a little farm, but most of the time, he just rented it out, y'know. \_\_\_\_\_ 'Course one thing you all know as well as I do now - back - you take - well, you've heard talk of the Depression.....

K. LUDDEN Yesh.



DENNISON ... in the thirties. Then, even before that, why, most all this country through here was mostly just almost (pioneer?), you might say, y'know. They just - most everything they used - their tools, and like that most everything was made, (and all horse drawn vehicles?). Now, of course farmers, they've done pretty well, in the last several years. Of course this economy - no income - everybody's..... 'course you all aren't old enough to ever experience anything like I have - or even people that's not maybe - fifty-five - sixty year old people through this country. I know it has been - You said Nebraska was where you come from?

K. LUDDEN Yeah.

DENNISON ...How it was there, but (in other words, people who were livin' all their lives (are now afraid of livin'?) now the way they was when they was makin' these baskets.

VIII K. LUDDEN You think then, that because people are more successful at farming now, that they don't feel the need to make baskets anymore?

DENNISON That's right. That's the gist of it.

V K. LUDDEN What kind of role in the community did the people who made baskets have? Were they active citizens, taking part in the government of the community?

DENNISON Well, \_\_\_\_\_ They did as far as it went. Let's put it that way. Back, you take forty years ago, right here in this community, Cub Run, and where I (farmed?), they got me down all \_\_\_\_\_ as bein' there. Well about all in politics - government affairs, or anything like that, it was just voting, is about all - just go to the polls and vote, y'know for the (six candidates?), and that, and maybe the president. (We? They?) elected - three weeks before we ever found out back then, y'know - communication - no phones, no daily papers, no radio - news was just - we had a weekly paper, mostly back then - a week, y'know was about all the news you could get. \_\_\_\_\_ 'Course this daily paper I'm takin', the daily Courier-Journal. I've taken it for, I guess close to forty years. - Every day, and of course y'got TV's, now, y'know, and just about every body knows what's goin' on from one day to the next - lot of times from one hour to the next what's goin' on. It didn't used to be that way. And of course - actually - I don't know - most of the people here in this community, and all over Kentucky as far as that part's concerned - why - mostly just make their livin'; y'know - all these luxuries - even when you got to foodstuffs we have now - we didn't have that. It was mostly bread and meat and milk. Keep your own milk cows, y'know. Everybody'd keep their cows. And grow their own wheat, bread, and corn meal, corn bread. I don't know whether you ever ate any or not. Corn bread - corn meal.

K. LUDDEN Did the communities that these craftsmen worked in - were they well liked in these communities?

DENNISON Well liked?

K. LUDDEN Were the craftsmen who made these baskets, were they considered by the community to be.....

DENNISON Oh, yeah, sure, yeah - yes sir.. Yeah, they was - as far as - maybe take a community - 25 - 30 - 35 miles goin' each way, y'know, why a lot of - well there was nobody wealthy, as far as - I wouldn't put it that way, but I mean \_\_\_\_\_ - some of them, they'd make baskets - yeah, they was respectable citizens.

K. LUDDEN So nobody was looking down their noses at the basket weavers?

DENNISON O, No, no.

B. LUDDEN It was probably enjoyable for them.

III A5 DENNISON It was. Like I said, most all basket makers that I ever knew anything about. They didn't depend on that alone for a livin'. That was just extra income. They could make baskets, y'know, and well, the merchant's store, and all around there, they'd take a lot of these baskets and - well they used 'em y'know, in place of money lots of times. They didn't have money to take and buy their groceries and stuff like that.

K. LUDDEN Yeah, that brings up another thing we need to talk about. There was a barter system going here, then, right?

DENNISON Bargain, system, yes.

K. LUDDEN What kind of things did they use to bargain with, to barter with?

DENNISON Well, actually, there wouldn't be too much bargaining, as far as bargaining goes. These country stores, merchants, they'd buy produce, too, y'see. They'd buy (a case?) of eggs - take the eggs, y'know. Now some of the merchants \_\_\_\_\_. In other words, say you had five or ten dollars worth of eggs, or chickens \_\_\_\_\_. Well, you had to trade that all out, they wouldn't pay no money. And some of 'em (would?). They'd pay maybe the same amount of groceries at the same figure, y'know. In other words, if they was payin' (50¢) a dozen for eggs, or sixty, whatever it was, why.....

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE 2

IV DENNISON She made baskets like that. Only these bottoms would be woven like that is, too. Course, now she didn't make this. This is..... But a lot of 'em was made like that, and made round, y'know, or oval. And a lot of 'em would put handles on 'em, up here. And a lot of the times, they'd - of course - larger, I've seen 'em make 'em nearly that long, and their splits they use. - Now that's cane, right there. That's not been riven out. - them splits, y'know - been split out, and worked out. But different designs, as I said, a lot of 'em would be round, lot of 'em long, and they put handles on 'em, some would, on each side, y'know for them to carry it with. Of course, lots of times, these big stores - down around Bowling Green - Houchen's, and these big stores, y'know, they've got - they call 'em egg baskets - they've got 'em in there to sell, y'know - a lot of 'em, or a lot of farmers' wives, 'll use them, y'know, to carry eggs in, and groceries, and stuff like that. But now that's - 'Course these others that we was talkin' about, now - they use them mostly, these bushel baskets, and half a bushel - bushels especially for grain and stuff like that. Farmers keep 'em around their barns, y'know, and their granaries, and stuff like that. And a real good basket, like I told ya - they'd finish 'em plum up, now, on account account of the seasoning, like I told ya, they'd have to work 'em green. Then they'd let them pretty well season out, then push these all back real close apart, y'know, and lots of times it'd make 'em tight enough to hold wheat, and grain like that - small grain, y'know.

K. LUDDEN The ribs would pull tight in with the splits?

DENNISON Yeah. I though I had a basket here, but -- I wish I had that one here that \_\_\_\_\_'s got.

II D K. LUDDEN Did you ever dye any parts of your baskets? Put a stripe in it, or...

DENNISON Oh yeah, yes sir

K. LUDDEN What did you use?

DENNISON (noise) Well we used dye, different colors, y'know, for makin' whatever they wanted to, (what they thought'd?) look the best. Maybe some red splits, yellow. I have seen black. They (was?) not just all one color, y'know, they'd mix 'em - they'd weave them.

B. LUDDEN That'd be pretty.

DENNISON (They'd go around) y'know with one color, and then you'd change to the next, every other one, y'know, and work 'em. I don't see (that one?) out here, either. I was going to show you a chair I bought (at the barn?) - split bottom, they call it. Made out of splits, just like the bottom of this chair. the bottom of this is like you would weave a basket. I mean the same kind of (thing, with?) the splits, y'know.

K. LUDDEN Did you make the dyes yourself? The colors that used to dye the... .

DENNISON Yeah, we used to make that, they say.

K. LUDDEN What did they make them out of?

DENNISON Well, I know, I guess what they used to call polkberries - that's

p-o-l-k, is the name of it. Those berries, y'know, and -(they'd use them?) And then of course, I guess - well - way back they couldn't buy this dye, too, at the stores, y'know - different colors, but I've known - even my wife has used them berries.

K. LUDDEN What kind of berries?

DENNISON Polk - p-o-l-k - polkberries

K. LUDDEN Oh, Okay

DENNISON Yeah, they grow wild. And they have berries \_\_\_\_\_ - like a (tame?) grape a lot. These grape clusters, that will hang. (kinde like tame grapes?) \_\_\_\_\_ ... grow around here, lots, y'know.

K. LUDDEN Do you think it's possible that some of the people that moved into this country very early might have learned some of these basket weaving and dying techniques from Indians?

VI  
VIIA

DENNISON Well, it could be possible, I really wouldn't know. I'm seventy-seven years old, last June. And I told ya as far back as I can remember, now. I never saw any Indians in this country, that I know of. They are in Kentucky \_\_\_\_\_ - I mean through the country, I don't know. Of course, now, this is just - I'm just supposin', now, - that it's just been handed down from on generation to another. (low volume) ... It's just been handed down. Of course now, I've got four children, and I've only got one of 'em that's farming, and neither one of the know a thing in the world about makin' baskets. They don't know a thing about it, because they didn't, - after they grew up, y' see, why - my youngest boy is vice president of the Hart County \_\_\_\_\_ Bank, there at Sunfordville, and he's been there. My oldest boy farms, and (I lost one?), he was (forty-five or fifty?) years old. (One sentence about another son obscured-KJL) Y' see that's what they've - they've all been in public work. (They got?) education through the high school. \_\_\_\_\_ (sent to Western) \_\_\_\_\_ bank over there, now. But he don't know a thing (about?) baskets, see. But you know how this thing progressed. \_\_\_\_\_ You hardly ever see, now, an eighteen-year-old young man, or girl but what at least don't have a high school education. Back when I was growin' up, it was very seldom that you had anything above - about the eighth grade \_\_\_\_\_ back then. I did take, well two different semesters, they called it. - of high school. And then they claimed that was equivalent to college, now - back then, y' know. What I mean - It put you up on - (maybe then you could teach). In fact I can remember back when they had first, second, or third class schools. First class \_\_\_\_\_ that was the best, ya see \_\_\_\_\_ third. They had these third grade schools, y'know \_\_\_\_\_ Actually, - now I was explaining a while ago about \_\_\_\_\_ They grow a lot of leaf tobacco. And all the farms, of course have to have tobacco sticks

K. LUDDEN Pardon? All the farmers have to have.....

DENNISON As long as you grow tobacco, you got to have what we call a tobacco stick, about four and a half feet long, to hang this tobacco on, and put it up in the barn for curin', see. And I've made them, (but?) there's lots of people 35 - 40 - 45 years old, never saw a tobacco stick made. I've had 'em tell me that, y'know. No things is changin', y'sec.

Now, one reason, I make 'em, and I've got a good sale for 'em. I rive 'em out. these sawmills- they make 'em ( \_\_\_\_\_ Of 'em. They saw 'em out, it's an easy way, y'know ) \_\_\_\_\_ and people that don't have 'em, -but there's nobody that can make 'em. You got to find somebody about my age that knows anything about that. It's kind of like them baskets, y'know . These (younger farmers) - of course we got young farmers, but as (after? ) he gets a degree in agriculture, and like that, and farms, but they buy - they buy these things, y'see, they don't - they don't know nothin' about 'em. they can't find nobody \_\_\_\_\_ . Now I don't know whether you know anything about molasses, sorghum molasses.

K. LUDDEN No, I've seen photographs of it being made. But that's about as close as it comes

DENNISON Now, I don't know but one other person besides myself - and my own son - ' course he farmed all his life. He grew up here - that can make molasses. That's just one thing that's gone. Of course, it's gone modern, now I - we ( use the juice) out of this cane - we get the juice out of there - syrup, y'know, to make the sorghum with \_\_\_\_\_ You may have seen a picture of that. I don't know whether you did or not ( one sentence obscured - KJL) But any more, now, we've got. We could do that with a tractor. And (we've got?) your labor saving devices, y'know, your labor is so scarce"..... ( A friend of Mr. Dennison arrives -KJL)

END OF INTERVIEW