

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
WITH
JOE AND JORDAN MCELROY

28 SEPTEMBER 1995

MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE

INTERVIEWED BY REGINA FORSYTHE
FOR THE Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
INTERVIEW #QMS.109

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Albert Gore". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ALBERT GORE RESEARCH CENTER

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT



**ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH
JOE AND JORDAN MCELROY
Q. M. SMITH ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
INTERVIEW #QMS.001**

FORSYTHE: This tape is part of the Q. M. Smith collection designated as QMS.1995.109. This is Regina Forsythe. I am interviewing Joe and Jordan McElroy. Today is Thursday, September 28, 1995. The interview is being conducted in the Gore Research Center, room 111 of the Ned McWherter Learning Resources Center. The tape of this interview along with a transcription will become a part of the Quintin Miller Smith Collection and will be available to the public. Future researchers may include portions of this interview in their publications. Is that all right with both of you?

BOTH: Yes.

FORSYTHE: Why don't you introduce yourselves.

JOE: I am Joe McElroy.

JORDAN: I am Jordan McElroy.

FORSYTHE: What is your birth date Jordan?

JORDAN: November 4, 1925.

FORSYTHE: What is yours Joe?

JOE: April 28, 1930.

FORSYTHE: Your birth place?

BOTH: Rutherford County

FORSYTHE: What is your father's name?

JORDAN: Albert Dorian, he was a farmer.

FORSYTHE: What was your mother's name and occupation?

JORDAN: Edith Kyndness Keel, she was a housewife.

FORSYTHE: Do you have any other brothers or sisters?

JOE: There are twelve, my mother and dad had fourteen children and twelve survived. Jordan and I are down toward the bottom, I am the youngest. He is . . .

JORDAN: Third from the bottom. There are eight boys and four girls that survived, a set of twins younger than I am did not survive. They were born in 1933.

FORSYTHE: What are your brothers' and sisters' names?

JOE: Charles William, Keel, Mary, Eulla, Hilda, John, Fred, Sam, Jordan, Ruth, Jim, and Joe.

JORDAN: Eight boys and four girls survived and all were married and gone from home before mother or dad had passed away.

JOE: The oldest had gone from home and gotten a job before I was born. Mother would fix for a meal, she would have to cook for thirteen people. She would cook forty five biscuits for one meal. She had three biscuit pans and each would hold fifteen. She would put two in a stove and cook those and put them on the table, and then when we started eating she would put another one in the stove.

JORDAN: This was for three meals a day because we didn't run out to the little corner grocery store.

JOE: There was no McDonalds. We say if it hadn't been for mashed potatoes and sweet milk gravy we would have starved to death.

JORDAN: And a pig on the side. Meat in the smoke house every year. It was killed, put there, salted down, and it was used. The lard was always cooked out from these hogs.

JOE: We had fried chicken. You pick up a chicken, and wring his head off, and cut him up, and fry him in lard. But we didn't have any heart attacks, back then.

JORDAN: Didn't know what it was. Everybody survived.

FORSYTHE: Let's talk about Q. M. Smith, when did you move to his farm?

JOE: We moved to his farm in January of 1942. It was not his farm when we moved there, it belonged to the previous owner, W. T. Snell. My dad made a trade. If you were a tenant farmer, you would say that you would give him so much money and a certain percentage of the product. My dad made the trade with Mr. Snell at the beginning of 1942. Sometime shortly thereafter, I don't remember when, Mr. Smith bought the farm. He asked my dad if he was satisfied with his trade. My dad told him he was, and Mr. Smith never asked my dad what that trade was. At the end of the year, when the crops were taken in, Mr. Smith got his share Mr.

Smith never questioned how much that was. Mr. Smith was honest and my dad was honest. They never discussed it.

JORDAN: Mr. Snell ran a grocery store, where Woodfin's funeral home is now. He was the grocery man there at Woodfin's, that was in the early forties. I never pass there now but what I don't think of the grocery store.

FORSYTHE: How big was it?

JOE: It was just a little hole in the wall about the size of a Kwik-Sac. It had gas pumps out front. It was a little community grocery store like they were all over town. You could run down and pick up a loaf of bread and get potatoes and beans.

JORDAN: So many of the stores back then weren't big groceries like we have now.

FORSYTHE: Tell me about the farm, do you know what the trade was?

JOE: It consisted of some money, I think like one hundred and twenty five dollars in money. Then Mr. Smith would get a fourth of the product, whatever it was. It depended on what the crop was. The way my dad gathered the corn, he would put three wagon loads in his crib and one in Mr. Smith's. I think that was the way it came out.

FORSYTHE: Did you work on the farm too?

JOE: Yes, there were three of us boys, plus my dad. There was three of us left.

FORSYTHE: Tell me about working there.

JORDAN: We didn't have a tractor, all we had was mules. Each one had his mule and his plow. We would give this man five rows, then we would skip five. Then when he caught up, he would go ahead and give five rows for the fellow in front. We would go backwards and forward. This took a whole round to plow one row. We would go down one side and back up the other one. We would plow that way. Then I went into the service before Mr. Q. M. put a tractor on the place. The other brothers were gone, then dad couldn't do it.

JOE: We got the tractor in 1946. We got a little Ford Red Belly. It was a two row tractor. We could plow two rows of corn at one time, to where with a horse you could only plow half a row. We really thought we were something. We thought we were almost retired. The amusing thing that happened, we had worked horses for years and when we got ready to stop we hollered "woe" and the horse would stop. Here I come along one day with the tractor and I wanted to stop and I hollered "woe" at it. My dad saw me do it, and he laughed at me for the longest for hollering woe. One day he came to the house and he had been driving it, and there was a scratch down the hood of it. He had to tell me what happened. He

said when I got this thing stopped that pole that goes across the gap was all the way across the steering wheel. He had hollered "woe" at it, but it didn't stop. But I don't think that ever happened to Mr. Smith. He worked it on a come out and piddle type thing. He would come out and drive the tractor or cut off some pasture land, but as far as working the farm, he never did any while we were there.

JORDAN: He enjoyed coming out and in later years when we were there he would come out and work in his garden. He enjoyed that. He would have fresh vegetables and things. Later on in the years after dad died, I moved to the farm and stayed three years. I would have stayed longer, but things got to going. The first time we had any excitement, the neighbor, one night somebody come along and grabbed his wife on the porch. That was down the road. I was working twelve to eight at the VA and my wife got to where she didn't want to stay by herself. You could understand that, so we moved back to Murfreesboro. We had a house in Murfreesboro. Then my wife's mother and dad moved to the place and they stayed there. By that time, Mr. Smith was about ready to retire so he moved out to the farm.

FORSYTHE: So you lived at the house before he did?

JORDAN: We went there in '42, dad died in '53, I stayed until '56, then my wife's mother stayed a year. Then Mr. Smith moved out and stayed there. . Mrs. Smith was just as good as he was. She was always friendly and like him. I don't know that I ever heard him raise his voice at us, the whole time that he was there.

JOE: He had a speech problem, I don't know what caused it, especially in conversation. He could talk loud at a group of people and you could understand him, or if he talked over a microphone you could understand him; but just one on one, sometimes it was difficult to understand what he was trying to say. You had to listen carefully, but he was careful to say his words as plain as he could. I've heard my dad remark wonder what type of person he could have been if he could have talked plain, like a normal person. Sometimes he hesitated to do what he was thinking because of his speech. But he was a politician. He was back in the old days when a democrat was a democrat. He was a died-in-the-wool democrat. But he was a person that could be at home with the governor, as well as my dad. He could make my dad feel like he was the number one person. He was that kind of person. He said about my mother one time that she lived up to her name, kindness. When my dad died, one of my older sisters still remembers that my mother called Mr. Smith about three o'clock in the morning when he died, and Mr. Smith came out to the house. One of my sisters thinks that was an awfully nice gesture. Back then the neighbors did come when somebody died, and my mother called him and he came to the house to be with her until the family could get there. A little amusing story. When I got ready to build my house, after I came out of the army, I was looking for a place to build a house. I built it next door to the old farm house. It wasn't part of the old farm, it was part of the farm

next to it, but the dividing fence was right next to the old farm house. I bought the lot across the fence and built a house. I was talking with the Smiths and she said something to him about why he didn't carry groceries in like Joe did. He had seen me carry them in for my wife. He turned to his wife and said, "Why I would carry them in the wrong hand." I thought a lot about that, but he just said it so quick. One time we saw him and Mrs. Smith eating out. Something came up as to why they were eating out. He turned to my wife and said, "My wife's cook is on strike." He didn't say his wife was on strike, as if to say that he did some of the cooking too.

JORDAN: He would always come up with things like that. He would just say it and the way he said it, it didn't make anybody mad. He was just the kind of fellow that if he didn't agree with something, he wouldn't come out and say it, he would just come out with some gesture that would just go off as a joke.

JOE: We knew, because we were the hired help, exactly what he said; but it didn't offend us. He told us to get to work, but he could talk to you diplomatically, and let you know what you were supposed to do; but you didn't resent what he said because of the way he said it.

JORDAN: Dad had his cows and mules and horses there that they worked with. Then after dad died, the cows and things were all sold. Then when I moved there, Mr. Smith had just some cows there. He said, "If you will move here and take care of my cows, you can live here for nothing." It was the old saying that, "Well your rent is free, but you can look after my cows." That was my job to look after his red and white cows. Of course, if I had done any work on the side, like if one got out, or had to fence, he paid me for that time. If we were getting up some hay, or anything, of course that would all go back to him; he paid me for that. But I just looked out after his cows to stay there. We had a house in town on Murphy Avenue, but we rented it out and just moved there I thought that when I moved there, this looks like a pretty good thing. So that was how come us to move there. He had the place there and when we all went into service and came back, well, he was still the same Mr. Smith. He would ask dad when time came at the end of the year, "Well you want to stay another year?" "Yeah, yeah," and that was pretty much the trade.

JOE: That was the trade, right there. He's say, "You want to stay another year? My dad would say, "Yeah, I want to stay," and I don't know whether there was a handshake or not, but there probably was. That was the deal.

JORDAN: He never made a question on anything, whether he was getting his share. While I said a while ago, you put his corn in the crib, he took that, and never asked a question. Of course each one trusted the other one. It was a deal that you don't see everywhere you go.

JOE: When I graduated from high school in 1949, there was a couple of the neighbors ,that I thought a lot of, encouraged me to go to college along with the Smiths. When the time for registration came, Mr. Smith would see me in the hall because 99% of the registration procedure took place right outside of his office, in the Old Main. When he would see me going up the hall, he would say, "Mrs. McHenry has your check." What he meant was, that was my tuition. Tuition then was \$29 dollars. When I got registered, and knew exactly what my fee was , then I would go tell Mrs. McHenry, and she would write my check out and give it to me. He did that every quarter that I went to school. There were a few quarters when I didn't need any money to go but those times I did, Mr. McHenry always had a signed check for me. He always saw that I had tuition and that I got through school. I credit him with a whole lot of my schooling and the encouragement I got from him, the assistance I got from him is something I won't forget.

FORSYTHE: Did he talk you into going to school.

JOE: Yes a little bit. He almost talked me into playing football for Bubba Murphy, but one practice took care of that. I didn't know nothing about football, and I didn't know you got run over.

JORDAN: It is funny that you learn from one day to the next isn't it?

JOE: John Smith, he is a graduate of MTSU, and was head of the ROTC department at one time. He is dead now, but he was coming at me with the football and I was going to tackle him. I think I ended up twenty yards down the field, because he just ran right over me. I didn't know how to tackle. I told Mr. Murphy after that, that I thought I would just go back to milking cows. That was one of the things that Mr. Smith asked me to play. I told him that I thought I could play, but that took care of that.

JORDAN: Mr. Smith was the same every day, whether he was on the farm, or if you would go to his office, or anything; he was the same. He treated everybody pretty much that way. He didn't change, he was a level fellow. He didn't get excited. Things may have bothered him but he didn't show it. He was just an everyday fellow, the kind that you liked to be around, and deal with.

JOE: He made you feel at home.

JORDAN: If you were working on the farm and he came along he wouldn't say, "Hey, you are doing that wrong." He might come suggest an alternative, but he wouldn't tell you you're doing it wrong. From what I knew of him here at the college, he was the same way.

FORSYTHE: What did your dad think of Mr. Smith?

JOE: Probably the best friend he ever had. Of course my dad had a lot of friends, but Mr. Smith and my dad would sit down and talk. My dad respected him, as an employer, and he respected my dad as the employee.

JORDAN: I never heard a cross word about him.

FORSYTHE: Did your father have any stories he liked to tell on Mr. Smith?

JOE: I'm sure my dad would have some stories, if he was still living, about the good things. He would have a lot of good things to say about him.

JORDAN: He always liked to joke. He would joke with Mrs. Smith.

JOE: There was an old wood stove in the house. We had electricity but we didn't have an electric stove, we had a wood stove. Water was in the house but it was only cold water. In the old wood stove there was a section up above that we always called the warming closet. It was a place that you put food that you wanted to store for the next meal. My mother always kept biscuit up there for us to eat. She only made them once a day and keep them over for the next meal. Nancy Jean and Bill would come with Mr. Smith when he was working in the garden, but they more or less played around the farm. My mother would always fix them a biscuit and jelly. Then in the later years, they began to come and ask for a biscuit and jelly. Mr. Smith would always send them to the house, for a biscuit and jelly, because he knew she had it for them. My mother always made an awful lot of jelly and jam and had it for us. She was always free to give it to anyone who wanted a can, especially children who wanted a biscuit and jelly.

FORSYTHE: Who decided what was grown on the farm?

JOE: Well it was kind of mutual. I imagine my dad decided most of it. Most of the time you had a hay field, a corn field, a cotton field, and they remained, year after year, close to the same. We did make some changes after the two older brothers went into the service as we switched from row crops to hay. Alfalfa was the big thing along about then. We could sell alfalfa to dairies that were down south, especially all the way down to Florida. We would bale it. That's when the hay baler came in. Before WWII there weren't any hay balers much, but during WWII and after WWII the hay baler came in. So, we would bale alfalfa hay and truckers would come by and buy it. That was a decision that was probably worked out between the two of them as to how much of the place would be put in alfalfa.

JORDAN: When they were baling the hay, it wasn't done the fancy way in the early 40's. You had a hay baler and one man sat on each side of it, and it was tied with wire. One man sat on one side and jabbed the wire through, the baler keeps running, and when it got to the other man it tripped and he tied the wires on the other side. This is something that goes back and carries on through the years.

JOE: Now that is hard work. Those bales came through about one a minute, but you had to punch four wires through, reset the needles, and put it in to trip the next time to make the next bale. That was hard work. One a minute doesn't sound like too many but you do that a whole hour, all day long, starting as early as you could in the morning, and we produced over three thousand bales in a year's time on that place. We didn't pick it up and put it on the trucks, we put it in a barn. In the fall the trucks would come pick up the hay, so we had to handle it twice; put it in the barn and take it back out of the barn.

FORSYTHE: What was the size of these bales?

JOE: About seventy five pounds.

JORDAN: About eighty. In the afternoon they got about a hundred.

JOE: I tell people about my dad and that hay we put in the barn. We'd be working in the fields and it would come up a shower of rain and we'd have to go to the house. About the time you'd get settled back to get a good nap, my daddy would say, "You know boys, while it's cool in that barn, we ought to go down and stack that hay up a little higher." Stack it up high so the next crop could come in.

JORDAN: Of course, Mr. Smith understood this. He knew that with some of us leaving for the service dad couldn't do what he had been doing. You didn't get much done with one fellow working the row crop. This brought on some of the changes too. Mr. Smith understood this.

FORSYTHE: When he retired and went out there did he keep doing the hay, or did he do something else?

JOE: He didn't do any hay after that, other than what you did, did he?

JORDAN: No, and maybe if he did some of the neighbors would come by and do it for him.

JOE: There were people around, like there are now, that would cut your hay and put it in a barn for you.

JORDAN: He did that to a small extent.

JOE: But, he switched mostly to beef cattle.

JORDAN: They didn't require as much, like dairy cows. If you didn't see them everyday they would be alright, something he could do himself.

FORSYTHE: Who was J.W?

JOE: J.W. Jennings, he was a neighbor who owned quite a bit of equipment. He owned a baler so he would do custom baling. He would come, bring his own crew, and bale your hay for you. We had enough help that we picked it up and put it in the barn. He did some custom work for the neighbors. He owned the only baler in the neighborhood. We swapped work. We called it swapping work. We would go to the neighboring farms and work for them and they would come over and work for us.

JORDAN: I don't know about this swapping work. I know when we swapped with them one time we was going to tromp his silo. Tromping a silo is when it's going in the top and you've got three or four fellows in there, going around, tromping it down to get more in. We tromped his silo and I said I don't know if I want to swap anymore hay and silage work.

JOE: Working in a silo is dusty, it was dirty, and it was hot. There was no air in there. But you had to pack it down in there. The thing I never could understand was.....you could work all day long, fill it all the way to the top, and you went out there the next morning and it was six feet from the top. It would settle its own self down. No matter how much you worked in there, it settled down the same amount.

JORDAN: Back then it was just like everything else, it's got to be done a certain way and that's the only way. Just like plowing your corn. You had to plow it four or five times. Today they might plow it just once or they might not plow it, just spray it and kill the weeds. The times have changed. Mr. Smith was a good fellow, that's just all there was to it.

JOE: He was good. No doubt about it.

JORDAN: So many times you hear of people renting a place, and the people don't get along and they'll move, won't stay there a year. But I thought that looked good on dad's part and Mr. Smith's that they could stay together that long.

JOE: When I grew up I remember back to 1936 that we moved every couple or three years to another farm, for what reason I have no idea. It may have been that my dad thought he could make a little more money.

JORDAN: Do better and he had to do better with more children.

JOE: Maybe he thought he could do better, or there might have been some disagreement along the way, but we moved every couple of years. I don't remember staying anyplace more than three years. But when we moved to Mr. Smith's place, my dad died there after staying there thirteen years. So that says something about Mr. Smith. There never was any disagreement between the two of them.

FORSYTHE: What years did you leave?

JOE: I left in 1953.

FORSYTHE: And you Jordan.

JORDAN: I left in 1944 when I went in the service.

FORSYTHE: And you came back when?

JORDAN: I came back in '46 and then in six months or so I married and we moved to town.

FORSYTHE: And you moved back when?

JORDAN: After dad died. Then in '53 me and Virginia went back to the farm and stayed three years.

FORSYTHE: What has happened to the farm today?

JOE: It is being developed into North Woods subdivision, a portion of it. I still have cows on about fifty acres that are left. The deal is now, Bill and I made a trade, he told me to look after it and keep it in the green belt which reduces the taxes and if I use it for farming purposes, I can have it for nothing. It doesn't cost me any rent, and I have got fifty acres that I pasture.

JORDAN: You bush hog it a little bit and make it look normal.

JOE: Leave it like a farm. That's the idea I got from Bill that he wanted it left like a farm. The old farm house was torn down two years ago. Dr. Wayne Murphy and his wife, they are both physicians, and they tore the old house and barn down and built a real nice house out there in place of the old farm house.

JORDAN: The morning that we knew that it was going to be torn down, we made a special trip to see them come in and tear it down.

JOE: They tore it down with a big old bulldozer. A lot of memories went with it.

JORDAN: A big old boon that would swing off, knock it down, and go back. The first thing you knew, it was down.

FORSYTHE: It must have been sad.

JOE: Yeah. We video taped it.

FORSYTHE: You talked about the green belt. What is that?

JOE: The green belt is a designated area in Tennessee that is farming. It's evaluated for tax purposes at a lot less than what commercial property is evaluated at. That would be now to most people considered commercial property. It's being held for sale later on, but since I pasture it and earn money off it, it remains in the green belt. It reduces Bill's taxes to some extent and I get the benefit of still having the cows over there.

JORDAN: The cows on it keep it from growing up.

JOE: When I started with it a few years ago, there were places you couldn't even get into with a tractor. I've got a big bush hog on the back of the tractor and those big old wild rose bushes had grown up and I've got it cleaned up now.

JORDAN: You know where those rose bushes came from?

JOE: Yeah, I know. They planted them years ago for the birds.

JORDAN: That was back in the '40s. They gave those rose bushes out, just wild roses, little bitty things, and they gave them out. They would give you so many to plant to keep the land from washing. They got to planting them out there. Of course, I helped dad plant some of them. After the years come they just got to be what they will be.

JOE: The birds scatter the seeds and they come up everywhere. You can get around a rose bush but you won't be around it long until you get stuck. These things are a thousand times worse than that because they grow up as tall as a house and come out like an umbrella. You can't get around them or under them to cut them down because they are hanging down. I can take my tractor and back up to them, push them down, and cut them off. That gets rid of them. They were brought there originally for sanctuaries for birds.

JORDAN: And to keep your land from washing.

JOE: It was an environmental thing to start with.

FORSYTHE: Mr. Smith did environmental.....

JOE: Yeah, Mr. Smith conserved the land. One time we planted Bermuda grass in a waterway, where the water wouldn't wash the land away. They found out pretty quick that wasn't what you ought to do because that Bermuda grass scattered all over the place. It took over some of it. He did do things like that, modern farming methods.

FORSYTHE: Tell me some more about this environmental thing. What else did he do?

JOE: Well we planted our crops to where the water wouldn't wash. We didn't plant up and down hills. We planted around the side of the hill so the water wouldn't wash. We planted with the lay of the land.

JORDAN: Years ago we didn't think about that. You always went the longest way of the land. You put your long rows because it was convenient, you didn't have to turn around so much. You went with what was more convenient. Mr. Smith sort of changed things like that.

FORSYTHE: What did other farmers think about that.?

JORDAN: Well, maybe if they saw something that looked pretty good on that slope, they'd say why don't I do that over here. You don't have to get into it yourself till you see somebody else do it. You'll say, "Hey, that looks pretty good. Could I do it."

FORSYTHE: Can you remember any other stories?

JOE: I can remember that when Sputnik went up we watched that at night. We lived next door to the Smiths and frequently they would be out in their front yard watching it. He was very much interested. He kept up with what was going on nationwide, locally, and worldwide, and was a very good conversationalist on things like that. You could talk to him, and it wasn't guess work what he was saying, he knew what he was talking about. Frequently we would talk about Sputnik when it was going around. He would explain how things worked, he had a good working knowledge of space.

I was trying to think who was governor then, I don't remember who it was, Browning,....I don't remember; but I talked to him with Mr. Smith. He took my dad and me to the state fair. My dad wanted to see the livestock. The governor was there, and they knew each other personally. I listened to them in a conversation, and he never had my dad stand aside because he was the employee, the hired hand. He was right in the conversation with Mr. Smith and the governor. I remember how easy it was for him to talk to the governor, it kind of made you feel good about it.

JORDAN: I have a gold wedding band in Mr. Smith's crib out there, I have looked for that thing all of my life and I can't find it. One day me and dad was gathering corn and all of a sudden I noticed it was gone. I know me and dad went back in the crib and threw corn out for the longest, but could never could find it. So Mr. Smith has got one of my gold wedding bands in his corn. because it was never found.

JOE: That kind of pays you back for finding one before we ever moved to Smith's place.

JORDAN: Right, I found one. It was more gold than what I had. Mother wore it a long time, and then it got to where she couldn't get it off an on. I took it and had this one made out of it. I have worn it ever since.

JOE: That was found over near Walter Hill, the place we moved before we moved to the Smith place. He found it plowing corn, where an old house had been.

JORDAN: So me and that old mule was going awfully slow for me to find it.

JOE: Another thing about Mr. Smith, when his dad died or when they disposed of the property down in Humphreys county, Mr. Smith had a desk that he brought up to our place. He was wanting to store it. I used it while I was going to college, to keep my paper work in it. After Mr. and Mrs. Smith died, Bill and Nancy Jean gave me that desk. I still have it. It was the desk that Mr. Smith's dad used when he was Chairman of the Board of Education in Humphreys County before 1900.

FORSYTHE: So his dad was chairman.....

JOE: As I remember he did some work in education. It was the desk he used and kept his paperwork in and they gave it to me after Mr. Smith died.

FORSYTHE: Did Mr. Smith ever talk about his parents, the family farm?

JOE: When he built onto the old family farm house out here, he built a living room on to it and he got some of the rock from the chimney at his old home place and brought it up here. When the Murphy's tore it down, I wished I had saved some of the rock out of it, but I only saved three or four. We have them in a flower bed.

FORSYTHE: During the war, he was coordinator of civil defense, do you know anything about that?

JOE: He was in charge of some of the bond drives. I remember him telling that they went to a bond drive and some of the people with money, they would see who could buy the most bonds. I remember Mr. Smith saying that he was sitting out on the edge of his chair until some local person spoke up and said how much he would buy. Mr. Smith said he just eased back in his chair. He was planning on buying several bonds, but when this fellow said how many he would buy. . . . It was kind of like an auction, so whoever bought the most bonds would get some type of recognition. I remember him speaking at MTSU. They had a demonstration on the football field. They had an Army unit that came. They used blank ammunition. They had a speaker describing how mortar would work. They would drop the shell in a tube and it went way up and would come back down. They had all kinds of explosions there. They must have set off a half a ton of dynamite. I never heard such a racket. Mr. Smith made a speech about the necessity of buying war bonds, He was involved with bringing the Japanese

submarine to town. It traveled all over the county, you could go inside and look if you had bought a bond.

JORDAN: You could buy just a few stamps and first thing you know you could make enough to make a bond in the early '40s.

JOE: They had a little book similar to a bank book, like the ones with checks in them. You could stick your postage-like stamp, stamps that you purchased, they were ten cents each, but when you filled it up you could trade it for a bond. You didn't have to have \$18.75 to buy all at one time. They did that for school children. They had days you could buy stamps. That's the way they got children buying bonds.

JORDAN: I can remember going down to Mr. Smith's and Mrs. Smith would be around. She never did forget to ask, "You want a cup of coffee or something to drink?" And back then people didn't do that much. I would say she is just a kind woman, that is all I can say about her. I told Mr. Smith, "You really turned out when you got her."

FORSYTHE: What did he say to that?

JORDAN: He just grinned. He wouldn't say much, he would just grin. He might have said something to her later. That's one of the things I remember about her and him.

FORSYTHE: Did Mr. Smith talk a lot?

JOE: No, he didn't talk a lot. I think he would have talked more could he have talked plain.

JORDAN: After you were around a while, you got used to it, and you didn't have to question what he was saying. He said it plain enough that you would know what he was saying.

JOE: If he walked into this room right now and just started talking, we would listen real close to him and know what he was saying, if we knew the subject he was talking about. But if he abruptly changed the subject, you would have to catch up. You would have to listen to know what he was talking about. But generally you knew what he was saying. Strangers would think more about it.

JORDAN: Well it's just like talking about the North and the South. We notice that all of a sudden, but then after awhile you get used to it and think nothing about it.