

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Close the tape a minute now.

Alex Byrd: No, I'm saying that—Let me pause—

Alex Byrd: [INTERRUPTION 00:00:05]

Alex Byrd: There we go.

Alex Byrd: If there were places that were dangerous in the camp, then were there places where folks would try to keep their children away from or—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Oh, yeah. We had a good time place called the Jingle. That's where you'd go dance, drink. But like I said, it was—Everything was dry, but people used to go there. You know, a guy would go out, bring it in, then they'd sell it. Something like a bootleg place, in a container. We had that same thing in Arlington. What's that place in Arlington? It was a park. Mr. Lou Dixon used to run. But you know what?

James T. "Red" Eaves: He had one of those houses that people would go to and drink. Then one time, it was somebody that wasn't long distance. A get together, something like a shoe fly.

Alex Byrd: Shoe Fly?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Shoe fly. And people would get there, go there and drink, gamble. And then the next week, it would be somebody else's house. We just rotated around. You see? When that played out, then somebody would just start selling it regular. There in Lisman. A lot of times, the police knew it.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. They used to be out. They paid those police off to keep them from coming and getting them. You paid them so much, they wouldn't bother you. Only thing they—

Alex Byrd: Were these things mostly organized—I mean, were like the Jingles or the park, or any shoe fly, from time to time, were those interracial things or was it just Blacks or—

James T. "Red" Eaves: No. Blacks.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No. Blacks.

Alex Byrd: Just Blacks?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm. Just Blacks.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Every once in a while, you might find—They might bring one White guy with him. You know? But most of it's always Blacks.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: It's mostly Blacks.

James T. "Red" Eaves: But you know, White and Black got along in Arlington and in Charleston. Better than many places in West Kentucky.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Sure did.

Alex Byrd: Some other places just didn't get along?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No. Uh-uh.

James T. "Red" Eaves: No. They just didn't associate period.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm. Yep. Sure didn't.

Alex Byrd: Do you think that might have been because—I mean, were there just Blacks in higher positions in those towns, or what?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah. You'd find some White guys, but just regular guys. You know? Pretty decent guys. Then you'd find some, you could look at their neck and tell that they were a redneck. You see? And they worked with you because they had to. They didn't have no other choice. And when they got through working, they'd go their way and you'd go there. And sometimes you'd see them on the street. By themselves, they'd speak. But if the wife was with them, they'd look the other direction. But now if your wife was with you, they'd always want to be up in your face, talking to you.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. They'd come to you as long as you were with your wife. They think you're supposed to talk to them. But when they're with their wives, they don't want you.

Alex Byrd: Did bands and stuff come through here then?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Oh, yes. Yes.

Alex Byrd: Bands and like, tent shows and that kind of stuff, that y'all were going to?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, we used to get—

James T. "Red" Eaves: I went to hear Ray Charles for 50 cents.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: B.B. King.

Alex Byrd: Ray Charles, B.B. King.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yep. Uh-huh.

James T. "Red" Eaves: B.B. King, I guess he was in Hopkinsville in [indistinct 00:03:45].

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Well now, he was here in—They were all at the park in Arlington.

Alex Byrd: Yeah, he came to their—

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: —He came to the park?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, in Arlington.

Alex Byrd: Weren't you just telling me that?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, Ray Charles and B.B. King, all of them. Yeah.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Bobby Blue Bland, all of them came to us. And Z.Z. Hill was in [indistinct 00:04:11].

Alex Byrd: This was back in the '50s?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Well, see here. See, they weren't popping then. But you couldn't get them here now.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, no. Shoot, ain't no way in the world you can get them here now.

James T. "Red" Eaves: They had a big park there in Arlington, and it was an extra large building. And they'd get all those popular bands in there.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Sure would. Cost you about a dollar.

James T. "Red" Eaves: The first time I heard Ray Charles, it was 50 cents.

Alex Byrd: Fifty cents. Well, did y'all listen to radio at all?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Oh, yes. We didn't have no TVs back then. That's all you listened to, the radio.

Alex Byrd: What shows would you get on the radio then? Did you get Ray Charles and B.B. King or anybody be—

James T. "Red" Eaves: No.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No. Uh-uh.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Well, here's the thing about it, shit, didn't but a few people have radios.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Sure didn't.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Uh-uh. It wasn't but a few people—

James T. "Red" Eaves: First TV I ever owned, I couldn't even see nothing on it.

Alex Byrd: You didn't get no stations?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No. Nothing but static. You might hearing them talking. You'd try to figure out what they're doing.

Alex Byrd: But you couldn't get no picture?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Well, I was sick too.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: They came out with these cable and stuff, and then it made it better.

Alex Byrd: Well what about all these—I mean, like now, in and around Muhlenberg County, you can't ride on any street, or anywhere around here really, without all these streets named after these country music singers or something. Bluegrass or—Did that music play? Did Black folks listen to that music? Moses Rager and—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, I—

Alex Byrd: —all those folks?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: —I didn't. Uh-uh.

James T. "Red" Eaves: No. Typically, this place always has been with the Blues and Jazz. Because I'd hear the guys say the fellows coming out of the south. Now see, those people grew up out down that way, like B.B. King. And said, "When I die, I decide."

James T. "Red" Eaves: He first started off in Memphis, Tennessee. But if he made it to Kansas City and got through, he was ready for the world. That's meaning your trying out parts. Kansas City, that was a pretty popular back in those days—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: In those days.

James T. "Red" Eaves: —that Blacks were coming out to—I have a paper of this older guy that wrote those songs back in those—Old man Dawson. I don't know if you remember him or not, Bruce, but I have a paper from him and this woman, singing religious songs. Then if you made it through Kansas City, you were ready for the world. Mm-hmm.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: You were ready.

Alex Byrd: But were they local guys? Any local Black bands or—

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah. Yeah, we had a—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Jimmy Church.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah. We had now—

Alex Byrd: Jimmy Church?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah. We had a Black friend, a Burton Greene, about where you were staying. I guess that was before your grade.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Well, you know Danny Crowe them had one there?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, that's right. Danny Crowe them had [indistinct 00:07:16].

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Danny Crowe them, that's the same—Yep. Danny Crowe and—what's his—

James T. "Red" Eaves: And before then, they had one in [indistinct 00:07:22].

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Do you remember the Morton guy, when we come through today?

Alex Byrd: Yeah. I remember the town Morton guy.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And that big old fat guy that played the piano. And let me see, this guy played the saxophone. I don't know, it's been long ago. They made music. I remember one time, we had a hall up there [indistinct 00:07:46]. It was on a hill. And they took a wagon and mule, put this piano in the wagon, and took it out of the church.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: The church. Mm-hmm.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And carried it to this hall, man.

Alex Byrd: That's serious.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Huh?

Alex Byrd: That's serious. I get it. Were these guys, Jimmy Church and Danny Crowe and folks like that, were they just performers?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: Or did they have other jobs as well?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, they had other jobs.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Like Danny Crowe them, they were teaching school, but he was teaching music.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: And he played with that little band, him and—I'm trying to think of this—What was the man's name who played with Danny Crowe?

Alex Byrd: Who played with Danny Crowe?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I never did know too many of them, but I remember him pretty well.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, because he left here and went down to the Job Corps and made him up a band. He used to come around here and play all the time. Now what's his name? But Danny Crowe, I think Danny Crowe played the sax.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, he did play the sax.

Alex Byrd: Would this have been—Danny Crowe and Jimmy Church, is this in the '50s and '60s, or is this like—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Jimmy Church still has a nice band. His son has it now. Jimmy Church was from around Hopkinsville, down that way.

James T. "Red" Eaves: You know they used to have a band up there in Muhlenberg County, Burt Jones and—And one of the guys that played in that band, a little small White guy, and he died of—about six months ago. He got a big black lung surgery or something. I think he got way up there. He lived—Because he built a church and put it up under that thing, and right after that, he died. I just can't think of his name. But I remember Burt Young, well.

Alex Byrd: So his name was Burt Young?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Right.

Alex Byrd: He was in Muhlenberg County?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, Muhlenberg. He runs the cleaners up there too. He cleans clothes.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Well now see, Jimmy Church's band is still going, but his son has it now.

Alex Byrd: Okay. And that's in Hopkins—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Mm-hmm. His son has it now.

Alex Byrd: Well what would you do, coming up around here in the '40s and '50s, if you're going on a date? What were the different places you could go and what were the things you could do?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Movies.

James T. "Red" Eaves: No, it wasn't—

Alex Byrd: Movies?

James T. "Red" Eaves: —any place you could go.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: That's the only place you could go, really.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I mean, not really.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: But-

James T. "Red" Eaves: [indistinct 00:10:02].

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: If you weren't old enough to go to these bootleg joints, the only place you could take her is the movies. But then when you got old enough to go—You know, it's always three or four little houses, seven—

James T. "Red" Eaves: To go to the movies back then, you had to go upstairs.

Alex Byrd: So y'all had one movie theater?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, and you had to go upstairs.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: But not go downstairs.

Alex Byrd: You said, "You could not go downstairs"?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Uh-uh. You could go upstairs.

Alex Byrd: Did anybody ever try to go downstairs?

James T. "Red" Eaves: No.



Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No. That's one thing, if the—The Black people, if they didn't want you to go nowhere, they wouldn't go. That's just like now, you think—I could go out here to this American Legion, White American Legion, because I'm a soldier.

Alex Byrd: Right.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: You know? Or VFW, I could go to them.

Alex Byrd: Right.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: But do you think I want to go? I don't want to go nowhere I don't want to be. That doesn't want me. I just wouldn't go. I can join that VFW out there right now, because I'm a soldier, see?

Alex Byrd: Right.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: But I wouldn't. Don't want to. No, I don't want to go nowhere don't nobody want me. Where I can go—All they're going to do is go out there and drink.

James T. "Red" Eaves: You know what? I may be wrong, but I don't feel comfortable around those folks.

Alex Byrd: I'm having a little trouble picking you up, Mr. Eaves.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Huh?

Alex Byrd: I'm having a little trouble picking you up.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I ain't supposed to be in it no how, for that part.

Alex Byrd: No, but you're saying things, so I have to get you down. You've got to talk a little louder.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I don't feel comfortable around them now. Like if I'm—maybe even one or two, then with a bunch of them, I don't feel too comfortable.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: I don't either.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I'd rather be with my own race.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm. You take these White guys. I mean, they think they're nice, some of them do. But they will forget sometimes and want to go kicking on you. And they think that's funny, I think.

Alex Byrd: When you say kicking on you, do you mean picking on you?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, they're kicking you—mines. Mm-hmm. Well, we saw a bunch of them at the mines do that, but—

Alex Byrd: It seems like there used to be a lot more kicking going on in the world then.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: I'm always hearing people talking about kicking people. We don't mostly kick people now, no matter what.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, not now.

Alex Byrd: But that was—I mean, you'd be walking—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Every White guy, they were good at that.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah. Yeah, they were. I remember I was out to that place right beside the mall. What's that little old eating place that's right beside the mall? The first one that's there.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-mm.

James T. "Red" Eaves: It's in Madisonville now, I think.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Oh, Jerry's? Are you talking about Jerry's?

James T. "Red" Eaves: No, across the road over there.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Oh. Okay. I can't—

James T. "Red" Eaves: It was that place in that corner.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. I can't think of the name of that place. Yeah, okay. I know what you're talking about.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I was in there one day and I wasn't feeling too well no ways. And a couple of them walked up there. I knew him. Been knowing him all my life. He's a little older than I am. He didn't kick me with his foot, but he kicked me with his knee. And I told him, "I'll smack your damn brains off. Don't you

never do that to me." He said, "I was just playing." I said, "No, you don't play with me."

James T. "Red" Eaves: And every time he sees me, he got that shitty ass look on his face. But see, Al Worther, they used to just kick him just because he could. Told him, "I was just playing, man." And no man ain't got no right to put his foot in my ass.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Now I had a brother. He'd get mad at me, sometimes he'd kick my ass, I'd be two feet—He was about six years older than I am. I couldn't do nothing with him.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: I know—

James T. "Red" Eaves: One day, he kicked me, then I fell on a wire and came back up. I just stole on him, but I didn't miss his eye. And he went home and told mama. Said, "Red hit me with a wire." See, he never did tell them what happened.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Tell them what happened. Mm-hmm.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And I was scared too. Then my old man whooped my ass about it. And I told Lolee, I said, "Next time, I'm going to get—" I got a shotgun. We had an old shotgun in the house, an old stock gun. I was going to have me a load put down there. I said, "And I'm going to get that and shoot you." He never did kick me no more.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: But we had an incident out there at Pleasant View.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, I remember that.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Remember Big Lee?

Alex Byrd: What happened?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Well, he didn't mind and a White fellow kicked him. Big Lee didn't—

Alex Byrd: Just kicked him in the butt?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Big Lee said, "That's all right." Well, Mannie Girth his word. "That's all right, Mannie Girth. I'll get you." He wouldn't bother him. Big Lee could have whooped the White guy. Big Lee said, "I ain't going to bother you. Just forget it. I ain't going to bother you." So went to the company store on payday, and this White fellow and his wife went to the window to get him some store books. And when this White fellow bent over to sign for his store books, Big Lee walked up there and pushed his wife back, and—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: I mean, it's a bunch of Whites and Blacks lined up in the line, to get the money. Big Lee pushed his wife back and kicked that White guy in the ass. Pow. You could have heard it all over that corner

store. But Big Lee was bigger than the White guy, and the White guy was scared of Big Lee. And when he turned around, he wouldn't bother the guy. He got scared. And he tried to have Big Lee arrested.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Because you know, Big Lee kicked him in front of his wife and everything. Sure did. And that stopped those White guys from kicking at Pleasant View. Sure did. Big Lee said, "I told you I would get you, Mannie Girth." Kicked him right there in the corner store. And I mean, you could have heard that all over the store. Pow. And the guy—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Like I said, Big Lee could have whooped him in the mines, but see, he had two or three White guys around there with him then. And was going to help him. See? They put him up to do it. That's just like they do in the mines. They White guys will get together. If ain't about two or three of you, you're working down there on the run, they'd get together and whoop you. Because I remember a kid named Flu Ellen. You remember him?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, I remember him.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Boy, they whooped him so bad, he got on disability.

Alex Byrd: In the mines, they did this?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. They whooped him, he got on disability. Now if he got better—They say the fool went back to work. And then after he got hurt again, he like not got on disability. But he's on now again. Sure did. They just whooped that boy so bad. And I was a supply man, I'd hear them.

Alex Byrd: This was after he came out of retirement or before?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Mm-hmm. I was supply man. And boy, before I'd get there, I'd hear them whooping him. He'd be hollering, and then soon as they'd see me come up with the supplies—Well, they could see me before I could get to them. They could see my light coming, and then they knew I was a Black guy. "Here comes the supply man." They'd quit whooping him. But I could hear him all up and down through there.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: And I told Flu Ellen then. I said, "Flu Ellen, you ought to go to the boss, man." And all he—"Go to the big man," that's what I told him. And the boss man, he's right with him. Flu Ellen, at lunchtime, he'd try to ease around there by himself and eat, to keep those guys from whooping him. He was the only Black down that run. And I mean, they took a cowboy, and you could hear them popping that man. Shoo.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Is that right? Okay, now. Over there around Butler County and Crescent, and right between—

Alex Byrd: Mr. Eaves was fixing to say something important, and you're looking over there again. Let me just—See, because I'm looking at this meter whenever he talks, and I'm not getting anything. So I'm going to

bring it right back after you say what you say.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I said, "Listen, when—" You can put it back on there. Up in Muhlenberg County, a lot of these mines didn't have but maybe one or two Blacks working in them. And they were rednecks. We wore coveralls, and I got a short nub .38 on a shoulder skivvy. I wouldn't change clothes up there. I'd put that gun up under this arm, and I when I made the mines, because you hear them make cracks—Because talking never did bother me. But I always said if one ever put his hands on me, that's where I was going to leave him.

James T. "Red" Eaves: But I never did have no trouble. You see nigger wrote up everywhere in the mines, and all that there. And buddy, I didn't give them no break. I'd shut one down in a minute. If I didn't shut the mine down, I'd shut a piece of machinery down. And I didn't have many trouble.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And Pistol, my buddy, he went out. Right out here at Ziegler Mine. And he told a guy to do something. Guy told him, he said, "I don't take orders from no nigger." Well, the safety man was with Pistol, and he told him, said, "Well, if you don't take orders from him—" Said, "You might as well go outside." When he got outside, they had his check. Paid him on. All the rest of them, that stopped them right there.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And then the general manager from Island Creek, told them guys over at Crescent—Told the superintendent, that's the man that runs the mine. Said, "If a fellow of mine, an inspector, comes out there and tells you to do something, then I don't give a damn if he's Black, White, blue or pink. If you don't do it, you ain't got no job here." See, and that eliminated it.

James T. "Red" Eaves: See, when the big White man speaks, these small ones, you ain't going to have no problem out of them. But see, if he doesn't speak out, you ain't going to have nothing but trouble. See? But then I'd go up there, and after I got to know them, I took my pistol off and started leaving it at home. Because I know a White man. If he gets the ups on you, he'll destroy you if he can.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yes, sir. Whites playing up there, right where I live. We had a hole. You know what I told you? When we're coming the back way, we used to go over there and swim?

Alex Byrd: Mm-hmm.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Well, every time we'd swim in there, if it was six or seven of us, we didn't have any problems with the White guys. But if it's one or two, you had problems. And one guy down there, he was bullheaded. He wouldn't run. And he picked up a stone and threw it there, and hit one of them on the arm. And it broke it. It broke it, and his daddy told him, said, "I know that boy's daddy and I know him." Said, "Y'all didn't have no business fooling with him in the first place." So that eliminated that. That stopped it. Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: You know any Drakes live over in Drakes live over in Madisonville?

Alex Byrd: No.

James T. "Red" Eaves: One of them lives out on Broadway. It was his daddy, and he's a—He was one of the loaders in the mines too. He worked down there in one of those camp mines.

Alex Byrd: I know Eula Drake.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Eula?

Alex Byrd: Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Well, that was Eula's half brother.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

James T. "Red" Eaves: So that's—Eula and Rosie. Yeah. And—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: That's Eula's brother.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, that's Eula's half brother.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Well I mean, when I was working out there at Pleasant View—

Alex Byrd: I'm going to have to bring a couple of mics.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: —out there at 5-9. I was working out there, and I was supply man. I used to have to go under some timbers, and it was so dangerous. Water and stuff. I was scared to pull under it. I used to go to the boss man and ask him about fixing it, and they wouldn't fix it. So me and Pistol—The one he just got through talking about, Pistol Pete, the inspector, I went over to his house and all. He was just staying right down the street from me. And I was telling him about it.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: I had told him, "Well next time you come out there, don't—" I wouldn't let them know that I had been to him. I said, "The next time you go out there, you go by and check that place and see if you can't get them to fix it, because I'm scared to pull on it." And I said, "The boss man been getting on me because I'm scared to pull on it, but it's going to fall."

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: So one day, Pistol came in and he went down on the run, and he wrote them up. But I told him, "Don't tell them now, that I—" But he wrote them up. And the next day—Then they—

James T. "Red" Eaves: It was fixed too, wasn't it?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: —It was fixed. And you know what? And my boss man asked me did I say anything, because they knew me and Pistol—Because we were just like sisters and brothers. We were all raised up together. My mother used to keep me, and his mother used to keep us. He asked me did I go to him, and I told him, "No." He said, "Why did he just happen to go out?" I said, "I don't know why he just go—" But I did. And if I would have told I did, they probably would have fired me.

Alex Byrd: They would have gotten rid of you?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, they would have gotten rid of me.

Alex Byrd: Y'all didn't come up—I mean, when were you made—You were inspector in the late '60s? Is that when they made you inspector?

James T. "Red" Eaves: I started early '70s.

Alex Byrd: Early '70s.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Were you the first one?

James T. "Red" Eaves: No, Pistol was about two months before me.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Okay, then. And then Ned. But Ned came up—was Ned a—No, Ned wasn't no—

James T. "Red" Eaves: No, Ned, he was foreman at that time.

Alex Byrd: No, he was a foreman.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: I mean, Sims.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Well, Sims wasn't in our squad then.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Okay.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Him and Dallas both weren't in our squad.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Okay.

James T. "Red" Eaves: See, they went up in the eastern part of Kentucky.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm. Well Dallas dead, ain't it?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, Dallas dead.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: But Sims not, I don't think. But you don't know.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Sims not. Sims is retired.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, but you don't never see him much no more.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Well, you know his mother's dead.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, I know his mother's dead.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And Edmond stayed up there by himself.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. I ain't seen him since—

James T. "Red" Eaves: I don't think him and Edmond got along too well.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No. Uh-uh.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Because he always—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Sims older than Edmond. I believe.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, he is. Mm-hmm.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Because when—After Jay died, she had a pretty good insurance on him, and Edna wanted her to mix her money with his.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: His. Yeah. Uh-uh.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And she wouldn't do it. But—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Because I ain't seen Sims in I don't—You know Sims was married to my sister. That's his first wife.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I didn't know that.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Sure was. His first wife was my sister. They didn't stay married long. Sims went—Yeah, he did his week off, then he married her. I think Sims went in the Army, and him and my first sister got a divorce.



James T. "Red" Eaves: But is that the first time he was married?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Minnie Lee. Mm-hmm. That was my sister. Mm-hmm.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Now is she the one married to that—two brothers down there in [indistinct 00:24:46]?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, no. She's—My sister's dead now.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Oh.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No. After Minnie Lee and Sims got divorced, she married a Vandever, and they left here and went to Muncie, Indiana.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Oh, okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: And that's from way—They were young.

James T. "Red" Eaves: How many times Sims been married?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: About four or five times. He married Lou Della. Let me see who else it is. Yeah, he's been married four—Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And this other woman that he married, she lived in Providence and she worked out there at the [indistinct 00:25:16].

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. What's her—

James T. "Red" Eaves: Cathy.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm. That's her name.

James T. "Red" Eaves: General Electric, or what do you call it out there?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. What is her name? Him and Bernice-

James T. "Red" Eaves: Right.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: —Yeah, him and Bernice never was married, I don't think.

James T. "Red" Eaves: No.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: But Sims been married about four or five times.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I think he's been married to Bernice too, didn't he?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Mm-hmm. I think that's why he's staying up there now. Somebody said he was married to a White woman up there in Eastern Kentucky. I don't know, but I ain't seen Sims in I don't know when.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I had saw him over at clinic, probably about six, eight months ago. And the first time—I ain't seen him since his mother died.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: He done got fat.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, he got fat.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, I haven't seen Sims in I don't know when.

James T. "Red" Eaves: You know [indistinct 00:26:09] it wasn't clean. Told me, he said, "You know Number 9 and Number 11, they connect underground. They've got a loading point and everything under there." And he told me how nasty it was. I told him I'd check it out. I went over there and it was nasty, so I shut the whole area down. They gave him a shovel and told him to start cleaning it up.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, because he told it.

James T. "Red" Eaves: They didn't know he told it. But anyways, somebody had to clean it, and he was the only one there at the time because—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Oh, okay.

James T. "Red" Eaves: —And he told me, he said, "Yeah, man, I'll never tell you nothing else."

Alex Byrd: Before y'all came on, you and what's the other guy? Pistol?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: I mean, before y'all came on as mine inspectors, what would y'all do in the mines when you saw something that wasn't right, that you wanted to be fixed?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Well what I would do—I was on the safety committee at the mines. The union elected three safety committees and three pit committees. Your safety committees would look out for safety, and your pit committee would go about working out complaints. I worked out of district office, like Jim Dunlap, for about six, seven months. Then I worked up as a boss, part-time, so I had pretty good influence up there

where I worked because me and the superintendent are pretty good friends. I'd tell him something needed to be done and he would get it squared away.

James T. "Red" Eaves: He was a pretty decent type guy. He wanted coal. He wanted you to run coal, but he would give you something to work with. And he believed in safety. One time in particular—I don't know who the safety man was down in West Kentucky, but he worked for the company. The guy was bolting roofs, and your roof bolts are supposed to be four feet apart. Well, he was putting them six and seven feet apart so he could help them get out of the place.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I told him one day, I said, "You're not pinning this place right." Well, the safety man from West Kentucky went in there and inspected the place, and this boy didn't want to go back in there and re-pin it. The safety man told him, he said, "You go back in there and re-pin it or go home. Which one do you want to do?"

James T. "Red" Eaves: Then about two months after that, a small piece of rock, wasn't much bigger than this, fell on him and paralyzed him from the waist down. It was just the way he was bent over. He went in the hospital. And I didn't have nothing personal against him, because when I'm working in a mine, if it ain't safe, I'll make it safe—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Make it safe.

James T. "Red" Eaves: —myself. And every time I'd go to the hospital, he'd start crying. Well, that was his own fault.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Sure was.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And he died. I guess from the hospital, maybe—It wasn't about, a couple of—Three years after he got hurt, he dies. But see, when you're bolting that roof, that's for your own protection, as well as anybody else.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. It's for yours and the other men too.

James T. "Red" Eaves: That's right. Sure is right. But he—I had—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: A little mistake, that top will come in, but—

Alex Byrd: Yeah, it'll come down.

James T. "Red" Eaves: It doesn't care on who it falls on.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Doesn't care who it falls on. It ain't got no name or nothing, just comes down. So that's just like I'm telling you about the man I started with, Claiborne Woodridge. That's how he got hurt, a big

piece of rock fell on him. He didn't kill him, but he never did do no good after that. It helped kill him. Yeah, didn't do no good after that rockfall. But see, those times in the day, we weren't putting up any pins.

Alex Byrd: No? This in the '40s and '50s, no pins?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, you weren't putting up any pins. You weren't putting up 2x4's.

Alex Byrd: And just—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Then you had to go look for you one that's good and put it in—But see, timber nowadays is different from when I first started in the mines. We used old props. They'd go cutting. Those things would be crooked, you're trying to find a straight—You've got to go through the whole thing to find a straight one. But now, they make them. Yeah, they got a [indistinct 00:31:14]. They just cut regular timber now for you, man. They're just as square and pretty. Just like that post I got out here on my carport there.

Alex Byrd: And they're pinning them too?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, they're pinning—

Alex Byrd: Or pinning them—Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, wasn't no pins. No. See, when I went in the Army, I didn't know what no pin was. When I came back, that's when I found out what a pin was.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And see, a lot of these timber, they just used in the main—A certain area in the mine that's going to be there a long time, they use treated timber.

Alex Byrd: Okay. They did then?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: So we'd—

James T. "Red" Eaves: No, now.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, now.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And those treated timbers, buddy, they'll be there from now on.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mines are changing now. You don't even have to have no shooter, no drillers, now.

Alex Byrd: You didn't tell me that.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, I did.

Alex Byrd: You didn't tell me the shooters and drillers were gone. Are they gone?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Shooter, driller, machine—

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: I didn't hear you.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Because I told you—I remember telling you this too, that when I was in the mines, they turned cross cut, on an angle. But now they turn them on 45.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And they have a bell on to this loader. You don't use a shuttle car.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No shuttle car.

James T. "Red" Eaves: But I remember telling you that. They turn them 45. In other words, all your places just look like that. They're not going to turn out just like that. They turn them on a 45, just like that.

Alex Byrd: And just go through?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Just go through. On an angle, you have to make a short turn. Yeah.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, they've got a thing now, it's a—I forget what you call it, but it eliminates the driller, the machine man, and the—

James T. "Red" Eaves: The shooter.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: —the shooter. And then he don't even have to get on the thing.

Alex Byrd: Well what is he running from?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Don't know. He'd be sitting on another breakthrough, that thing be digging that coal out of there, but he need to be sitting on his—

Alex Byrd: [indistinct 00:33:24]?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Remote. But you don't see many Blacks running those things.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Now, they had a—Up there, they had those miners—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: That's what they call—

James T. "Red" Eaves: —with remote controls.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And it's something just like a big barrel on each side of the loader, and that thing just goes around, just like that. Just goes around and around. And has bits sticking up like that, all around it. And it just eats that coal down. It falls in a pan. That pan has a conveyor chain in it, and it dumps it into the car.

Alex Byrd: There's this car that takes that back?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: And you watch, sooner or later, they're going to eliminate that car. Yeah, they're going to eliminate them. Because see, when I first went in there, in the mine, we used to just—When I first went in, we used to build a ramp and you'd dump the coal on the belt. You'd lose—Half of it would go off on the ground.

Alex Byrd: Yeah, that's right.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: They'd have big boards behind it to keep it from falling, and half of it would fall on the ground. And then they had what you called then, a belt man. And that gentleman had to work, buddy.

Alex Byrd: Because he was putting on the—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Well, no. That's what them—Well, he's got to—

Alex Byrd: —[indistinct 00:34:33].

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: —shovel it and put it back up on there. Some of those foremen come out there and get mad at the car driver, because they want you to put coal in. If you pull 35 and 40 places a day, you're jumping. And all you've got—You'd go up there and we'd be spending coal and half of it—But when I got back in the mill, they had a thing that they put on the end of the barrel now. It doesn't spill much coal. They call it a—What you call that? A Roscoe.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, a Roscoe.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: That's what you call them now.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Well see, that Roscoe, you can load it from the end or on each side.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, each side. It don't spill nothing.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Because you have a conveyor chain in it. You can go up there and dump your coal all in one, and it will hold it and keep moving.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Keep moving.

James T. "Red" Eaves: But this, see this long war money now. They have a—In other words, you take this. If this is a block of coal, they will run some entries this way and over one—to come down this way. Then a loader, a machine, will go on the back side. Then that air will go through here and circle on around and come out. All right?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Now this is your loader. It's not a—I forget now what you call it. It's something similar to a loader. But this car starts here, and gets all this coal. When he gets to this end, he goes back there, and he gets through the back point until he gets all that coal. When he gets about halfway up here, he'll stop and set a row of [indistinct 00:36:20] right here and then let that top down. Let it break.

Alex Byrd: Just fall?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, just let it fall. That takes the weight off another tire. Then they'll start right back—

Alex Byrd: And pick up the coal.

James T. "Red" Eaves: —And they'd get that block of coal. They don't leave nothing.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Nothing.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Don't leave nothing.

Alex Byrd: They drop it as soon as they pick it all up.

James T. "Red" Eaves: That's right.

Alex Byrd: Soon as they pick the coal up.

James T. "Red" Eaves: They let the top down.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Just like—

James T. "Red" Eaves: And it breaks, just like you're talking now. That's right.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: —It's a lot of difference in just going in coal mining. You think of coal mine, you've got that air set up just right. Everything. And you've got to check for gas. You even have gas in a coal mine. You've got a gas in the coal mine, one of the deadliest gases it is. That's what you call black damp.

James T. "Red" Eaves: When I was working as an inspector, I'd go up on a unit. I'd go up the way the air is going on the unit. And I'd walk across the face air where they're working. When I'd get over to the last open crosscut, I'd take an air rating and see how much air was going through the unit. Well, when I'd do that, sometimes I won't cross the place, depending on how it looks. I've got my methane monitor in my bosom. It's a little old thing, about like a, what you turn a TV on with.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I can press a button and it tells you how much gas is in a place. Then a loader, if he's in gag, he's got 1.5%. That loader kicks on, kick off.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Kick off.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Kick on.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: kick off.

James T. "Red" Eaves: When they get to 2%, that loader was going to go off. Machine or nothing won't run.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Won't run.

James T. "Red" Eaves: It's got too much gas in it.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: It's too much gas.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And I have been going up on a unit and our unit would kick on and off, I'd know what it was, but the mine foreman, he didn't know what it was. He said, "I can't understand why that loader's kicking on and off." I knew exactly what it was that.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, you did it. Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: So I went up there and I got 2% again, and I shut him down. And he fired the man that was in the union of mine. And I told him that he had mine foreman papers, that he had worked another mine for several years. If he took him out, [indistinct 00:38:48]. And put him on the loader. And no sooner than I



shut that unit down, he sent him out to the mine. [indistinct 00:38:56].

James T. "Red" Eaves: But see, if a man—Now if a roof falls, that's something you can't prevent. But most of the things in a coal mine is the human error.

Alex Byrd: That's what causes most of the trouble? Human error?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, human error. We had a fellow—Now, remember I told you. We had a fellow been working in the mines I don't know how long. Snoop Brown. He'd been working in the mines all his life, long as I'd known him. And he knew it was wrong. I don't know what made him do it. He was getting ready to retire, and he said, "I'm going to work about four or five more months and then I'm going to retire."

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, that's right.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: And he went up there—But he knew it was wrong. On a cutter, got a long blade on it. He's cold. Laid down on it, trying to warm up, and it—His holster went back and hit a button. Started that loader and that thing cut both of his legs off. It's a wonder he hadn't died.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Just like I told them, if the mine rescue hadn't been as good as they are today, he would have died that day.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Sure would have. That boy that was teaching one of those boys that first aid stuff, and he stuck his finger in his—

James T. "Red" Eaves: Artery—

Alex Byrd: Yeah, I remember you—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: —on the other one, and he rode with him all the way to the hospital, and held it. White guy. Now this was a White guy. Wasn't no Black one, this was a White guy. That's his buddy-buddy. He held him, and that's what kept him.

Alex Byrd: Yeah, I remember that.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm. And he was getting ready to—

Alex Byrd: This wasn't that long ago neither, right?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: And he was getting ready to retire. But it was his fault. But it was clearly his. Wasn't it though, Mr. Eaves?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah. He liked to hunt, he liked to play ball.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Played base—Now he was a big baseball player.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, he was a good baseball player.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: He was the best home run hitter around here.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And he could have made it to the pros.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: He could have made it to the pros if he could—

James T. "Red" Eaves: [indistinct 00:40:35] legs.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Because he tried to get me. You know, I played with some baseball teams around here, down in Mayfield. And because I was Black, they wouldn't let the team play. Sure did. I played with a baseball team there in Mayfield, Kentucky. And because they were Black, they wouldn't let me play.

Alex Byrd: This is when you were coming up or here recently?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, back in the '50s. Yeah.

Alex Byrd: When you were coming up?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. And they wouldn't let me play. And see, I played with the Memphis All Stars, down here from Nashville. We played the Harlem Globetrotters, up in Hopkinsville. I remember that just as good. Yep, sure did.

Alex Byrd: You played basketball and baseball?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, I played basketball. I wasn't no good in basketball.

Alex Byrd: Right.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: I didn't get to playing any basketball until after I went in the Army. I wasn't no good in it.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I'll tell you something else too. Down there in Mayfield where you're talking, Clothiers.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Used to go down there and play baseball. And I was playing with Clothiers at that time. And that grand stand would be full of Whites.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Sure would.

Alex Byrd: To watch the Black folks play or—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Yep.

Alex Byrd: [indistinct 00:41:31]?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm. Sure was.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Mayfield had a pretty good ball club themselves down there.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Sure did.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Called the Blacksmiths.

Alex Byrd: So this was a Black semi-pro team?

James T. "Red" Eaves: No, it was just—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No, it was just a team. Uh-uh, just a team.

James T. "Red" Eaves: At this time, because I was working in the mines, we just played on weekends.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Weekends. Mm-hmm.

Alex Byrd: So this was one of the things that y'all—or one of the [indistinct 00:41:49]—

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Irvine and Carrollton used to play. If you didn't have enough players, they'd get a player from Irvine and Carrollton, and we'd play together, and go. See like, Big Bend and Crawford, on the 8th of August. Oh, man, we'd have some ball games up there. We used to go everywhere and play baseball.

James T. "Red" Eaves: You couldn't walk up there the 8th of August, it'd be so many people.

Alex Byrd: That many folks?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm. We had a good team. It was a bunch of people down here, because I mean if you could—if you could in those days, but you couldn't.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And I'll tell you what, they had some Black guys would come back home.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Come home. Right.

James T. "Red" Eaves: One they called Shotgun Wales.

Alex Byrd: Shotgun Wales?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Shotgun Wales, and another one called Big Red. He was an [indistinct 00:42:28]. Boy, he could hurl that ball.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Old Big Jim.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I had to bat at it.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Old Big Jim would bump it.

James T. "Red" Eaves: I had to—Yeah. I always had to bat at that.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Gripper Daniels.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: What was the team?

James T. "Red" Eaves: John Malbert.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Old Gripper Daniels them would—John Elvis. John Elvis threw so slow, you looked like you swung about three or four times before the ball gets to the plate.

James T. "Red" Eaves: That ball looked like it humped up in the back.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. You'd be swinging and it—

James T. "Red" Eaves: You'd swing over it or under it one.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: And Gripper would throw so hard. And his first ball, he'd throw it right at your head.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah. You know, Gripper, he was dirty balling then.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. And you better not go out there. He might have his pistol on him, and he'd shoot you. But that first ball, right at your head.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And smack you in a minute, when you'd come sliding in.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. He was dirty. Yeah, he'd throw that first ball right at your head, and then you'd be scared to swing. Because the rest of them, you're trying to get out the way. That's what he was, Big Jim, the Bumper. Because Big Jim was bumping every time. Jimmy Hughes was a big hitter, but he was scared. Jimmy, Big Jim Bumper, and his feet—He wore about a 12, 14. Boy, when he'd kick that leg up, you couldn't see nothing but the feet.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah. He had a big foot too.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Boy, when he'd come down there—And could throw. I bet he threw about 95 or 100 miles per hour. And that first ball was right at you.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah. Because you know sometimes the game would get tight, 1-1 or one and nothing, you could hear that ball hit that wrist. Pow. Boy, those guys, soon as all them out—And the coal company backed them. Got them all brand new suits.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, suits and—Yeah. Bats and things.

James T. "Red" Eaves: The suits we wore had William's Powerful Coal in the back of it.

Alex Byrd: That's what the baseball suit said?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: What did it say again?

James T. "Red" Eaves: William's Powerful Coal.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, they got—

Alex Byrd: Can you say that into the mic so I can make sure I got it?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: William's Powerful Coal.

Alex Byrd: All right. Just want to make sure.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. They look out for you. Mm-hmm.

Alex Byrd: Were all these guys miners, who played on the team?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yep.

James T. "Red" Eaves: The mines, on the 8th of August, they would shut down for that day.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Shut down.

James T. "Red" Eaves: The mines wouldn't operate.

Alex Byrd: Wow. And then you were saying, you'd go and the grand stand would be full of Whites, watching you?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, it'd be full of Whites. Of course, for the 8th of August, it would be Blacks all over West Kentucky. They'd celebrate that day like you do now for the 4th of July.

Alex Byrd: What was the day again? Eighth—

James T. "Red" Eaves: Eighth of August.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Eighth of August.

Alex Byrd: Eighth of August?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Mm-hmm.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: Why did they celebrate 8th of August again?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Well see, the 4th of July was the White man's day, so they adopted the 8th of August for the Black man's day.

Alex Byrd: They still [indistinct 00:45:01]—

James T. "Red" Eaves: And all in West Kentucky, Paducah. Country Kentucky.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah. Up in a little old town, I think they call Waverly, all through there.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, and Allensville.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Ours around here, most, we go to Carrollton. That's what we—

Alex Byrd: For the 8th of August?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, 8th of August.

Alex Byrd: So the mines shut down?

James T. "Red" Eaves: Yeah, the mines shut down.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yep.

Alex Byrd: And y'all would play baseball and have picnics and all kind of stuff back then?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: But see, now you know what? Nowadays, it be a bunch of Whites up in there now, 8th of August. Up in the park.

James T. "Red" Eaves: Oh, yeah.

Alex Byrd: Blacks folks around here still celebrate 8th of August?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah.

Alex Byrd: Okay.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Shit.

James T. "Red" Eaves: But see, I go through down there because I can't cope with the youngsters now. See, I'm an old man. I may go down there during the day and get me a sandwich and keep moving, but now they got this music so loud, they give me the headaches.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: And they don't play no baseball or nothing up there no more.

Alex Byrd: They don't play baseball?

James T. "Red" Eaves: No.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Don't do nothing but drink and eat. And fight.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And fight.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: And gamble. Usually somebody gets to fighting up there just about every time, it seems, every 8th of August. When we came up, we didn't fight much. Played baseball and ate all of our good barbecue and drank beer.

James T. "Red" Eaves: My son had a party. Had a birthday party in Lexington the other night, and I went up there this past Friday. And about 200 people there. Where he lives, they have a place in there where people live there can have a party. And it was about 200 people, Black and White. I guess it was about as many of one as it was the other one. I didn't hear a cross word, Black and White was there. They were drinking and having a good time. No disturbing or nothing.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And I saw the times when something like that couldn't happen.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: No. You get rid of all these old White people.

James T. "Red" Eaves: And tech people. Yeah, that's right. Yeah.

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: You get rid of all these old White people, things would be a lot different.

Alex Byrd: So what was wrong?

Sidney Gilmore Jr.: Yeah, you take now, these—