

JACK, ALIVE AND WELL ON BEECH MOUNTAIN IN WESTERN NORTH  
CAROLINA: THE CULTURAL TRADITIONS OF TED HICKS

A Thesis  
by  
LISA BALDWIN

Submitted to the Graduate School  
Appalachian State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS

May 2010  
Major Department: Appalachian Studies

JACK, ALIVE AND WELL ON BEECH MOUNTAIN IN WESTERN NORTH  
CAROLINA: THE CULTURAL TRADITIONS OF TED HICKS

A Thesis  
by  
LISA BALDWIN  
May 2010

APPROVED BY:

---

Fred J. Hay  
Chairperson, Thesis Committee

---

Patricia D. Beaver  
Member, Thesis Committee  
Director, Center for Appalachian Studies

---

Cecelia Conway  
Member, Thesis Committee

---

Susan E. Keefe  
Member, Thesis Committee

---

Edelma D. Huntley  
Dean, Research and Graduate Studies

Copyright by Lisa Baldwin 2010  
All Rights Reserved

## ABSTRACT

### JACK, ALIVE AND WELL ON BEECH MOUNTAIN IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA: THE CULTURAL TRADITIONS OF TED HICKS (May 2010)

Lisa Baldwin, B.S., Auburn University

M.A., Appalachian State University

Chairperson: Fred J. Hay

This thesis is the result of fieldwork, research, and time spent with Ted Hicks and other members of the Hicks family who reside on Beech Mountain in Watauga County in western North Carolina. Ted, who was born in 1954 in Avery County, has spent his entire life living with his mother, Rosa Harmon Hicks, and his father, Ray. He learned the Appalachian mountain traditions from his parents. Modernity has not substantially influenced the Hicks family. They have continued to live, work, and play in the “old ways.” Ted has been a subsistence farmer, woodsman, craftsman, carpenter, and herb gatherer. Only recently has he become an active bearer of the oral tradition of the Jack and Grandfather Tales.

Ted grew up in the house on Beech Mountain where his father was born and where Ray heard his grandfather, Benjamin Hicks, telling the tales that his relatives had passed down to him. In 1995, Ray received the National Storytelling Association’s first Lifetime Achievement Award, and he received numerous storytelling awards. He was also the only teller who was featured every year at the National Storytelling Festival that is held in

Jonesborough, Tennessee. Ted has been a passive participant in the oral traditions of the family. He was shy and spent more time alone in the woods and farming the family land than in public gatherings. It wasn't until after his father's death in 2003 that Ted became an active bearer of the tradition of the Jack and Grandfather Tales. Due to health challenges, he could no longer farm and gather herbs, and therefore he turned to the oral traditions he grew up hearing in his home. Ted continues private performances in the context of his and his mother's home, and he has transitioned to public performances in the past few years. His performance in October 2009 was his first delivery of a tale on the main stage in Jonesborough. He sat in the same center spot where his father had performed the tales year after year. The delivery of "Jack and the Doctor's Girl" transcribed in Appendix B was Ted's fourth public performance.

My research includes Ted Hicks's private performances and one public performance of the Jack Tales, a genre that has been recorded as a two hundred-year old tradition brought to western North Carolina by the Hicks, Harmon, and Ward families, who came from England and Germany and settled near Valle Crucis, North Carolina in the 1700s. Because of the Hicks family's long history of involvement with the Jack Tale tradition, there is a need for further documentation of this family, which has taken responsibility for keeping the cultural traditions alive in the Appalachian region. My thesis documents Ted Hicks's role in maintaining family traditions and his transition to being an active bearer of the Jack Tale tradition as he struggles with health issues and a changing community. A video recording and transcriptions of Ted's private and public performances accompany my thesis and are central to this project.

This thesis is dedicated to Ted Hicks.  
Also to Amy Michels, and Rosa, Leonard, Orville, and Rosa Jean Hicks,  
Kathy Hicks Tribble, Dorothy Jean Hicks Odom,  
Juanita Elizabeth Hicks Simerly and Eva Hicks,  
Shirley and Charlie Glenn,  
and  
in loving memory of Rosa Jane Hicks Presnell, Ray Hicks, and Stanley Hicks.  
Also, to those who take time and effort in passing family traditions to their children.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to Amy Michels who first introduced me to members of the Hicks, Harmon, Presnell, and Glenn families. Thank you for the adventures on Beech Mountain and for sharing your memories with me.

Special thanks to Ted, Rosa, and Leonard Hicks for allowing me to spend many days in your home and to share in the stories, tales, songs, and good food. Also, all of the Hicks women (Rosa Jean, Rosa Jane, Kathy, Jean, Nita, and Eva) who made me feel like I was part of their special family.

Special thanks to Orville Hicks for my first “real” introduction to the Jack Tales.

My sincere appreciation to those who agreed to individual interviews and helped to spark a thesis: Amy Michels; Ted, Rosa, Orville, and Rosa Jean Hicks; Rosa Jane Hicks Presnell; Kathy Tribble Hicks; and Shirley and Charlie Glenn.

At Appalachian State University, thanks to my thesis committee: Fred Hay for careful reading, input, expertise, and excellent and rigorous coursework; Pat Beaver for suggesting that I consider the Appalachian studies M.A. program, for support from day one until the present, and for my introduction to participatory research; Sue Keefe for expertise, organization, and guidance throughout my research and writing and for introducing me to ethnographic research; Cece Conway for careful reading and conversations about folklore studies and the Hicks family; Debbie Bauer for incredible patience and organization, and for keeping things running smoothly and on time; Thomas McGowan for expertise, careful reading, guidance, and for help with my article in the *North Carolina Folklore Journal*; Betsy Williams for careful reading, support, enthusiasm, and library assistance throughout my coursework and writing; Chip Arnold for guidance into the culture track, Sandy Ballard

for locating journal articles and giving me the opportunity to publish in the *Appalachian Journal*; Katherine Ledford and Ozzie Ostwalt for engaging coursework in Appalachian literature and religion; Georgia Rhoades, Joseph Bathanti, and Neva Specht for writing convincing letters of recommendation to the graduate school; Dean Williams for patience and library assistance; the writing center at Appalachian State University, especially Beth Carroll, Dennis Bohr, and Tonya Hassell; and Bill Lightfoot for wonderful conversation about the Hicks family. To all of you, I express my sincere appreciation for your encouragement and friendship. Also, I would like to acknowledge the W.L. Eury Appalachian Collection.

Thanks to those with whom I shared classes, discussions, and the Wales study abroad and who gave encouragement and advice, and to Billy Schumann and Ian Willms for patience and guidance during our visit to Wales, everyone at the Dulais Valley Partnership, and to those involved in making my stay and internship in Wales so enjoyable.

Thanks to the Graduate Student Association Senate (GSAS) and the Office of Student Research (OSR) for funding support.

To my parents, Dallas B. and Lucille Baldwin for passing along their singing tradition, their personal narratives about growing up in rural Appalachia, and for encouraging me in my pursuit of a teaching degree in 1975.

To Jim, for sharing a semester on campus with your mom and for your encouragement and enlightening conversation.

Special gratitude to Dave Haney for things that are too many to mention here. Thank you for your love, support, and the confidence you show in me each and every day. This would not have been possible without your friendship, patience, and encouragement.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction .....	2
Chapter 2: Review of Literature and Methodology: The Storytelling Tradition on Beech Mountain in Western North Carolina .....	21
Chapter 3: Ted Hicks: Jack of all Trades .....	44
Chapter 4: Conclusion.....	77
Works Cited .....	92
Appendix A: Private Performance Transcription of Ted Hicks: “Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack” .....	97
Appendix B: Public Performance Transcription of Ted Hicks: “Jack and the Doctor’s Girl” .....	107
Appendix C: Private Performance Transcription of Ted Hicks: “Jack and the Doctor’s Girl” .....	126
Appendix D: Public Performance Transcription of Orville Hicks: “Jack and the Heifer’s Hide” .....	146
Appendix E: Public Performance Transcription of Stanley Hicks: “Jack and the Heifer’s Hide” .....	160
Appendix F: Private Performance Transcription of Ted Hicks: “Jack and the Heifer’s Hide” .....	171
Vitae .....	190

## ILLUSTRATIONS

### Figures

1.	Ted Hicks at Home .....	1
2.	Amy Michels at Ted’s and Rosa’s Home .....	4
3.	Rosa Jean Hicks in Her Home .....	5
4.	Floyd Hicks .....	6
5.	Samuel Hicks III and Rebecca Harmon Hicks and Buna Vista Presnell Hicks with Banjo and Roby Hicks with Fiddle in Middle Photo on the Right .....	7
6.	Roby and Buna Hicks .....	8
7.	Stanley Hicks .....	9
8.	Rosa Jane Hicks Presnell .....	10
9.	View from Gravel Road near Ted and Rosa Hicks's Home .....	11
10.	Rosa Hicks and Her Wood Cookstove.....	12
11.	Rosa Hicks and Amy Michels.....	13
12.	Orville, Ted, and Leonard Hicks.....	14
13.	Hicks Home on Beech Mountain.....	16
14.	Ted Hicks at the Matney Community Center near Beech Mountain, North Carolina, April 3, 2010, His Sixth Public Performance .....	20
15.	Ted Hicks Arriving in Jonesborough, Tennessee, October 3, 2009 .....	42
16.	Matney Community Center near Beech Mountain, North Carolina, April 3, 2010, Rick Ward, Orville Hicks, Ted Hicks, Gurney Norman, and Tom Hansell during Ted’s Performance of “Jack and the Northwest Wind.” .....	43
17.	Ray Hicks.....	59

18.	Shirley Glenn in Her Home on Beech Mountain.....	62
19.	Charlie Glenn and Amy Michels in Charlie’s Woodworking Shop. Amy is Playing one of Charlie’s Dulcimers .....	63
20.	Kathy Hicks Tribble, Rosa Jean Hicks, Rosa Hicks, and Amy Michels at Rosa’s Home.....	64
21.	Ted and Rosa Leaving the Main Stage at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, October 3, 2009 .....	67
22.	Rosa Hicks in Her Kitchen .....	70
23.	Rosa and Her Daughter, Jean, Selling Baked Goods and Dahlia Bulbs at Jonesborough, Tennessee, October 3, 2009 .....	72
24.	Ted Hicks, Rosa Hicks, and Lisa Baldwin in Jonesborough, Tennessee .....	73
25.	Ted Hicks: Jack of All Trades .....	74
26.	Ted and Rosa at the Ray Hicks Festival at Glenn Bolick’s Farm (Photo Courtesy of Amy Michels.....	75
27.	Orville and Leonard Hicks.....	76
28.	A Poster of Rosa and Ray Hicks That Hangs in Their Home.....	89
29.	Ted Hicks and His Fans .....	90
30.	A Photograph of Ray Hicks Telling a Jack Tale.....	91
31.	Ted Hicks on the Main Stage, Jonesborough, Tennessee, October 3, 20009 .....	109
32.	Ted Hicks at the Close of His Performance on October 3, 2009 .....	125
33.	Ted Hicks in the Parlor of His Home.....	126
34.	Matney Community Center near Beech Mountain, North Carolina, April 3, 2010, Thomas McGowan, Orville Hicks, and Ted Hicks (left to right) .....	159

35.	Ted Hicks, Public Performance at the Matney Community Center on April 3, 2010 .....	188
36.	Lisa Baldwin and Amy Michels .....	189



**Figure 1: Ted Hicks in His Home on Beech Mountain, Photos by Lisa Baldwin, unless otherwise noted.**

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

Ted Hicks grew up hearing his father, mother, and other relatives playing music, singing mountain ballads, and telling tales. Until recently, he had little interest, if any, in telling the tales. This thesis concerns Ted's life on Beech Mountain and his transition from being an herb gatherer and subsistence farmer to his role as a tale teller. In past years, Ted has been characterized as extremely shy and private. Today, he has moved to a more active role as a teller of the Jack and Grandfather Tales.

It was seven months after my first visit, interviews, and video taping sessions with Ted and Rosa that Rosa made an important statement about Ted's desire to tell the Jack and Grandfather Tales. The comment took me by surprise. The three of us had shared days together discussing everything from tale telling, ballad singing, and cooking, to Ray Hicks, farming, and herb gathering. By this time, I had collected tales, jokes, ballads and personal narratives from Ted and Rosa and met and interviewed other family members and friends. In August of 2009, Rosa said, "I don't believe he'd be telling stories if he could do like he had been doin', you know, gatherin' wood, and in the woods." Ted nodded his head and agreed with his mother saying, "I probably wouldn't have" (personal conversation, August 4, 2009).

Ted and Rosa reminded me that Ted had not been an active teller of the Jack and Grandfather Tales until he developed health issues that hindered his passion for spending time in the forests and farming his parents' land. He has rarely ventured far from his family home. Folklorist Robert Isbell, who has documented the Hicks tradition, writes, "The farthest he [Ted] has ever strayed from this home "under the Beech" was to Spartanburg, not three

hours away and just south of the North Carolina line. For the most part his world extends no farther than he can see from the mountaintop” (1999: 3). Ted continued, “Like Mama said, I wouldn’t have done it probably back yonder, I’s shy too. Hospital or somethin’ got it out of me. That’ll get it out of you quick! You get sick you meet all these different people” (personal conversation, August 4, 2009).

People have traveled far distances to reach the Hicks home on Old Mountain Road to hear Rosa Hicks sing her ballads and to hear Ray Hicks tell the Jack Tales and play his harmonica and sing. *A Film about Ray Hicks: Beech Mountain, North Carolina* (2005) by Thomas Burton documents Ray’s knowledge of farming and plant lore and his connections to the mountain land. In the film, Ray talks about the lack of interest in the “old ways” and how things are changing. He talks about his desire for his children to “carry on the old ways.” The film includes clips of Ted and his older brother, Leonard, as they explore the land with their dad in search of herbs. Ray says, “They’s somethin’ about the woods that makes you feel good” (Burton, 2005). During my interviews with Ted, it has been obvious that he felt most comfortable when he was in the woods and working the land. He projects those same feelings expressed by his dad when he talks about the life he misses as an herb gatherer and woodsman and the way things used to be on “the Beech.”

As I ascended Old Mountain Road on Beech Mountain where Ted and Rosa still reside, I thought about the mountain values Orville Hicks had talked about in a colloquium course with Thomas McGowan in fall, 2009. I stopped several times along the way to take photographs in an attempt to capture the beauty of the surrounding mountains, valleys, and creeks. My traveling companion, Amy Michels, shared stories about her visits with the Hicks family members and how she came to know and admire them. We had conversations

about the Hicks home and how long the family members had lived in the area, and she shared photographs of the family members that she had collected. She commented on Ray's gift of telling the Jack Tales and how not only the locals and kinfolk showed up on their doorstep, but people traveled from all over the country and from across the sea to become participants in this particular storytelling, singing, and music-making setting. They also wanted to get a glimpse of this man who was almost seven feet tall.



**Figure 2: Amy Michels at Ted's and Rosa's Home**

During our first visit to meet the members of the Hicks family in January 2009, I was confused about which Rosa we were actually visiting. I have since learned that this has been a problem for other writers and scholars who have documented the Hicks family. On more than one occasion, mistakes have been made with a particular identity and incorrect name placement or spelling. Amy had spoken of two women in the family named Rosa other than



Ray's widow, Rosa Harmon Hicks. We visited with Rosa Jean Hicks, who is the daughter of Floyd Hicks. He was known for making dulcimers and telling Jack Tales on Beech Mountain. He was the son of Buna and Roby Hicks, who were well known for the Jack Tales and instrument and music making.



**Figure 3: Rosa Jean Hicks in Her Home**

Rosa Jean invited us to her home and agreed to an interview in March 2009. Her responses to my questions indicated that she knew about her father's [Floyd] Jack Tale tradition. She said that by the time she had come along, her father must have been tired of telling the tales because she didn't remember him sharing the Jack Tales with her. She showed Amy and me a dulcimer that her father had built. Rosa Jean said she loved to hear Orville and Ted tell the tales and that she was sad that very few people in the Hicks family were passing the Jack Tale tradition down to their children. She expressed some of the same views that others have shared with me. She feels that there are lessons and values to learn from the tales and that the stories bring family members together.



Figure 4: Floyd Hicks



**Figure 5: Samuel Hicks III and Rebecca Harmon Hicks and Buna Vista Prenell Hicks with Banjo and Roby Hicks with Fiddle in Middle Photo on the Right**



**Figure 6: Roby and Buna Hicks (Photo courtesy of Amy Michels)**

Floyd Hicks's sister was Rosa Jane Hicks Presnell. While we sat in front of the wood stove in Rosa Jane's living room, she talked about her mother and father, Buna and Roby Hicks, and her brother, Stanley, and their love of music and stories. Stanley became popular for making instruments and telling the Jack Tales. He performed publicly and was known to be quite the comedian.



**Figure 7: Stanley Hicks (Photo courtesy of Amy Michels)**

Rosa Jane allowed me to take photographs of her living room. A collection of old black and white photographs of her mother and father was hanging on the walls. There was one photograph that I had seen numerous times in books and magazine articles of Roby playing the fiddle and Buna holding a banjo he had built. Rosa Jane agreed to a taped interview. On return trips to her home, it became evident that her health was failing. She was eighty-five years old. I recently attended her funeral and recalled that it was less than one year ago that I had first met Rosa Jane. We had sung her favorite hymns, and she told stories of her younger days. After our first visit, she sent a letter to Amy and me thanking us for helping her with her wood pile. I cherish the letter. She was a charming and sweet lady.



**Figure 8: Rosa Jane Hicks Presnell in Her Home**

After leaving Rosa Jane's house, Amy and I drove up the mountain to Rosa Harmon Hicks's and Ted's home. The trip took much longer than I had anticipated. The roads were curvy and narrow, and the paved road turned to gravel long before we came to our destination. Finally, we veered to the right traveling downhill where a sign with red arrows was stuck in the ground on the left side of the gravel road. The Hicks name was printed on the sign. Amy said the family had always welcomed folks and wanted to be sure they knew how to get to the house. She instructed me to go beyond the house so that we could see the graveyard where Ray Hicks is buried. His name is inscribed on a marker that can be seen from the road, and flowers surround the grave site. Amy described the setting on the day that

Ray was buried and talked about the large number of people who had gathered there to pay tribute to the master storyteller.



**Figure 9: View from Gravel Road near Ted and Rosa Hicks's Home**

Dogs began barking and surrounding my truck, so we got out and Amy introduced me to Jack and Ray, the family pets. We unloaded the birdseed that Rosa had asked Amy to pick up at the feed store and gathered up the gifts we had brought for the family. The steep steps we used to get down to the house were obviously much newer than the house or any other surrounding structures. The outhouse was in the backyard, and an old ringer washing machine was sitting on the back porch. Wood piles were stacked on the front porch to the

sides of the front door. Amy yelled, “Anybody home?” A deep voice invited us to “Come on in.”

Amy introduced me to Ted, who was sitting on a bed in the living room. He was friendly and expressed that if I were a friend of Amy’s, then I was welcome at any time. Rosa was in the kitchen preparing food on an old wood cook stove, and she invited us to come in and pull up a chair. She acted as if she had known me for years. I told Rosa that I had met storyteller Orville Hicks a few years back when he came to my home with Tom McGowan to record a song that he had written for Ray. We talked about the upcoming semester and that Orville would be a guest lecturer in my class at Appalachian State University. Orville is Rosa’s cousin. Her father, McKellor, and Orville’s mother, Sarah, were brother and sister. Council Harmon was their father and was “a patriarch of Beech Mountain storytelling” (Ebel13).



**Figure 10: Rosa Hicks and Her Wood Cookstove**





**Figure 11: Rosa Hicks and Amy Michels**

Orville showed up that day for a visit, which is not an uncommon occurrence. I also met Rosa's oldest son, Leonard. He stays with Rosa and Ted during the week to farm and help out with chores. He came inside, and immediately the storytelling began. Leonard told about the time it snowed and school was cancelled for weeks. Leonard and Ted took turns telling stories about the helicopters dropping food on their property and the snow being in drifts so high that it covered their cellar.



**Figure 12: Orville, Ted, and Leonard Hicks (left to right)**

Ray Hicks died in 2003, and it was around that same time that Ted was diagnosed with kidney failure and diabetes. These health challenges prevented Ted from continuing his role as a woodsman, farmer, and gatherer of herbs. With time on his hands, he began recalling and telling the stories of Jack and the other tales he had put to memory. While traveling on the AppalCart bus service down the mountain to Boone, North Carolina for dialysis treatments three times weekly, Ted began sharing the tales with the bus drivers on those hour-long trips.

As people continue to visit Ted and his mother, Rosa, in their home on the mountain, Ted shares jokes, riddles, songs, personal narratives, and tales with their guests. He was asked in 2005 to tell the tales publicly at the Ray Hicks Festival at Glenn Bolick's farm in

Caldwell County where his father had performed regularly. Since that time, he has performed two times at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee. He has also performed in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee for the Remembering Ray Hicks Festival, the Founders' Day Celebration in Jonesborough, Tennessee, and a gathering of Jack Tale tellers at the Matney Community Center near his home on Beech Mountain.

### *The Context*

The Hicks home, the context for most of Ted's performances, has been photographed, painted, and celebrated by friends and relatives who have gathered for years to hear Ted's father, Ray, tell a tale. Bob Timberlake has captured the intriguing qualities of the Hicks homeplace in two of his paintings. One is entitled "Ray's Moon," and the other is "Ray's Place." The house, where Ray was born, is a cultural scene where this folklore was passed down to Ray by his grandfather, Benjamin Hicks. The home and the land surrounding it are the contexts where Ted learned many traditions from his father and mother.

In *Jack In Two Worlds*, folklorist Joseph Sobol explains why this special place on Beech Mountain lends itself to the passing of traditions, like the Jack Tales, from generation to generation:

The Hicks house is a traditional two-story frame farmhouse, one room deep with a kitchen ell in back. It was built by Ray's father in 1919. Ray was born in it three years later. He absorbed his stories in that house, or in others like it, not as performance events separated from the daily rhythms of life but as part of the imaginative ecology of his elders' world. Thus Ray Hicks's relationship to Jack is much more intimate than that between a reader and a character in a written story. The oral tales speak to Ray in the voices of his

grandfather and grandmother and of their grandfathers and grandmothers stretching back as far as their packed genealogies will take him.

(4)

Like Ray, Ted has a close connection to the character Jack. He, too, has spent his life working the land and using the resources he could find in the woods surrounding the Hicks house.



**Figure 13: Hicks Home on Beech Mountain**

### *Subsistence Farming and Herb Gathering on Beech Mountain*

Some of the Hicks, Harmon, and Ward family members were also subsistence farmers. They were herb gatherers, woodsmen, and skilled as makers of mountain crafts and

instruments. The family members continued passing these traditions down to their children, just as they did the tales. The women and men in these families were known for their abilities to live off the land and make do with what they could plant, hunt, dig, and gather. They were, for the most part, self-sufficient. Ted Hicks was celebrated for his knowledge of plant lore. In his book, *The Keepers*, Robert Isbell devotes a chapter entitled “Herb Gatherer” to Ted. Isbell observes that Ted

believes that, for all his decades of combing the woods, his father still knows more about the herbs and plants. ‘I learned from him. Learned how to find the plants, to pull them in the right season, to dry them, and to sell them.’ It was not long after his first trips with his father that he began to go “herbing” with his brother Leonard, five years his senior, who also learned herb gathering from his father. Leonard would pull witch hazel, and Ted would hold the bag. Later, when sickness began to curtail father Ray’s trips into the forests, Leonard and Ted took up the slack. (6-7)

Ted continued this tradition until, like his father, the challenges of poor health prevented him from doing so. It was at that point he turned to other traditions that had surrounded him for the most part of his life.

#### *Entertainment on Beech Mountain*

Entertainment for the Hicks, Harmon, and Ward family was telling stories and tales, dancing, and playing music. Ted Hicks sings the songs he grew up hearing on the radio and that he heard his mother and father and other family members singing and playing. He enjoys jokes and riddles, and he has fond memories of playing cards and chess and challenging Leonard and Orville to a horseshoe pitching contest.

In March 2009, as I was recording Ted in his home, he started his private performance with a joke: “Yeh, this here’s about a little boy, like you talkin’ about goin’ to school a learnin’. Well, his dad’s been tellin’ him he wanna see a good report card. Well, he come in, report card had straight Fs. He got him in the corner, give him a pep talk. Said, ‘Son, you orta be able to do better than this. When Abraham Lincoln was your age, he’s readin’ two books a night, makin’ straight As by candlelight.’ Little boy scratched his head, said, ‘Dad, that’s nothin’. When he was your age, he’s president!!!” (personal interview, March, 2009). It is not unusual for Ted to begin a performance with a joke, riddle, or an entertaining anecdote. He has also shared many songs with me. On several occasions, I have taken my guitar and we have sung “Long Black Veil,” “North To Alaska,” and “Will The Circle Be Unbroken.”

#### *Chapter Summaries*

Following the review of the literature in Chapter Two, there is an introduction to Ted Hicks, his family, and the cultural traditions he learned from his relatives in the third chapter. The information focuses on the Hicks family tradition of herb gathering, farming, music making, and tale telling. Following the conclusion in Chapter Four, Appendix A is a transcription of Ted’s private performance of “Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack,” one of the first tales Ted shared with me. Appendix B is the transcription of Ted’s public performance of “Jack and the Doctor’s Girl” in Jonesborough, Tennessee, and Appendix C is the private performance of the same tale at Ted’s home. Appendix D is the transcription of Orville Hicks’s delivery of “Jack and the Heifer Hide” for the colloquium at Appalachian State University in fall 2009. Appendix E is a transcription of Stanley Hicks’s version of this tale. Both Orville’s and Stanley’s performances of “Jack and the Heifer Hide” were delivered in a

public setting. Appendix F is Ted's private performance of this tale. I chose these three men because, like Ray Hicks, they are my favorite tellers of those I have seen live or heard on recordings. I also wanted to document the fact that even though the three Hicks men are traditional tellers from the Beech Mountain area, having learned the tales from family members who passed the tales down to them orally, each version of the same tale is different and the teller's style, speech, and other elements are his own. Although Ted has been a participant in tale-telling settings that included his father, Stanley, and Orville, and he has mentioned on more than one occasion that he has read Richard Chase's *Jack Tales*, he identifies with Jack in his own way.



**Figure 14: Ted Hicks at the Matney Community Center near Beech Mountain, North Carolina, April 3, 2010, His Sixth Public Performance**



## CHAPTER 2

### Review of Literature and Methodology

#### *The Storytelling Tradition on Beech Mountain in Western North Carolina*

Stories, rhymes, tall tales, myths, and legends have been part of oral tradition in cultures all over the world. Different genres have been shared in schools and at storytelling and music festivals. Stories have been told in churches, at corn shuckings, and for other community events. These stories and tales have been collected by folklorists and other collectors down through the years. Some of the storytellers have only told in their homes by lamplight, and others have become popular throughout the United States telling stories and tales to audiences at festivals and other venues.

When asked about tales that impressed them, people are often quick to talk about having heard ghost stories and tales around campfires and at sleepovers, yet stories were most often passed down in and around the home setting where parents and grandparents were interested in entertaining their children or keeping them engaged while they were doing field work and other chores. Robert H. Leonard notes the family connection to stories in the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*:

Storytelling originated as an intimate activity within families and close-knit congregations of neighbors who perpetuated old, even ancient, stories from across the seas and down through generations. These stories reveal the deep cultural roots of those telling them, preserving the extraordinary and celebrating the ordinary. Tall tales, lies, and elaborate accounts of commonly shared events are important elements in a folk tradition of unusual vitality.

(1226)

While these stories were being told to friends, relatives, and passersby on the front porches of farmhouses, around wood-burning stoves in the living rooms, and in local stores, not everyone believed the stories to be alive and well. Even in the early 1800s, there were concerns about the disappearance of the tales. Folklorist Carl Lindahl observes:

Yet, by 1824, when Doddridge published his recollections, he thought that the Jack tales had already disappeared. When ‘civilization’ entered the frontier, he explained, the settlers began reading novels and romances and stopped telling ‘those ancient tales.’ Doddridge was wrong. Although many Appalachian families and communities abandoned the Jack Tales, many others have continued telling them up to the present day. But because the storytellers generally did not share these tales outside of their family and neighborhood circles, and because folklorists were not looking for them, the stories did not surface. In 1922, nearly a century after Doddridge had declared the Jack tales dead, sociologist Isabel Gordon Carter found eleven of them alive and well on the lips of a celebrated ballad singer in Hot Springs,

North Carolina. The storyteller was Jane Hicks Gentry, daughter of Ransom Hicks and Emoline Harmon. (334)

Mrs. Jane Hicks Gentry passed the stories on to her daughter, Maud Long, just as Jane Gentry's grandfather, Council Harmon, had done for her. Folklorist Bill Ellis writes:

Long's mother, Jane Hicks Gentry, the daughter of Ransom and Emily Harmon Hicks, was born on 18 December 1863 in Watauga, County, North Carolina. Jane Gentry recalled hearing the tales from her grandfather, the legendary Council Harmon, ultimate source of the Ward family tradition recorded by Richard Chase and the Hicks family tradition documented by Barbara McDermitt. (95)

Barbara Rice Damron McDermitt's dissertation, *Comparison of a Scottish And American Storyteller And Their Märchen Repertoires* (1986), is a comparative study of Ray Hicks from Beech Mountain, North Carolina and Stanley Robertson, a traveler who lived in Aberdeenshire, Scotland. McDermitt's work also includes information and recordings of Stanley Hicks and other Beech Mountain storytellers, singers, and musicians. McDermitt provides useful information about defining folklore genres and discusses classification systems of folklorists and scholars such as Propp, Dundes, Georges, Bascom, and Baughman. She provides excellent background information about the Hicks, Ward, Presnell, Harmon and Proffitt families and discusses their migration from England and Germany to America. McDermitt writes, "It is unlikely just one individual brought the Jack Tales over from the 'old country.' The Hicks—Ward—Presnell—Harmon interlocking family line offers many possibilities for speculation about story origins. The most prominent name among the early storytellers was Council Harmon" (122).

During my interviews and discussions with the Hicks, Presnell, and Ward family members, Council's name came up often whenever there was mention of Jack Tales, singing and playing music, and dancing. My informants talked about how Council was often thrown out of the church because he couldn't resist "cutting the rug," singing, and telling tales that didn't come from the Bible. McDermitt goes on to say, "He was a focal point, having received the tales as a boy possibly from numerous sources and then having himself in turn spread the seeds of tale telling among his children and grandchildren, the results of which can still be seen on the Beech today" (122). At a gathering of storytellers at the Matney Community Center near Beech Mountain on April 3, 2009, Orville Hicks made the comment that Council fathered twenty two children. They and their children were exposed to the tradition in the home and work setting, as Council was known for his love of entertaining the children and adults alike.

Today, many children are not exposed to this oral tradition unless they hear stories at school, festivals, or other gatherings and celebrations. While there has been a demand for what some call "revivalist" storytellers who did not learn the tradition from their family members and only tell when they are compensated for their craft, there has been a decline in the sharing of personal narratives, stories, and tales of families within the home and the passing of this tradition to the next generation.

Entertaining, building community, educating, and passing on family values are some of the reasons that stories have been important through the years. We have much to gain from the local people in an area, and in his introduction to Donald Davis's *Jack Always Seeks His Fortune*, Joseph Sobol explains his opinion of the importance of the oral tradition: "If they are much luckier, they may even meet up with someone who is able to tell these stories,

with all the rich, personal nuance that flows from immersion in a particular local tradition” (11). This statement has been a constant reminder, throughout my research and writing, of how fortunate I am to have had the opportunity to be a participant in the Hicks family traditions.

Stories have brought families and neighbors, and children and adults together in many parts of Appalachia. Adults who listened to the stories were often as entertained as the children while listening to a friend or relative and watching their mannerisms throughout the telling of the tale. Author and storyteller Jack McGuire notes, “I generally refer to the participant in storytelling—listener or teller—as a ‘student’ rather than a ‘child.’ Although storytelling is inevitably associated with children, its pleasures and benefits are enjoyed by people of all ages” (6). The popularity of storytelling festivals today reinforces McGuire’s point.

Mountain folk would spend time telling and listening to the stories during the work day, and because they had cultural resources and enjoyed each other’s company, families would gather together in the evenings and push the chairs to the wall. They would proceed to play music, dance, and tell stories and tales to entertain themselves. Stories, dancing, and playing music went hand in hand for many Appalachian mountain people.

Parents and grandparents have used the stories to keep their children from wandering too far from home as they played in and around their homes in the Appalachian mountains. They taught them this and other lessons through the many adventures and characteristics of a boy named Jack. Gail E. Haley has written: “My search for stories and ways of telling them to children has carried me all over the world. Now I have returned to my roots in North Carolina, where the mountains abound with folktales of a character whom Joseph Campbell

calls *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. These Jack tales have their origins in England, Scotland, Wales, and Germany” (120). Haley’s *Mountain Jack Tales* is a good source for contrasting and comparing the Jack Tales.

Through the stories, children and adults alike have learned to appreciate their past and apply it to the present. They gain a special sense of place because of their connection to this oral tradition. The tales encourage creativity and imagination. Children have grown up learning the stories and then taking it upon themselves to recite and share them with others. Charlotte Ross, who was a part of the Yarnspinners Storytelling Guild in Watauga County, explains how story telling encourages this creative learning process:

Children born in Appalachia in the early twentieth century were surrounded by the sounds of many cultures .... In those days, men told tall tales, women told legends, family stories were wedded to the land in the Indian way.... In such ways, children learned from their elders both to collect and to create, coming to know the relationship of product with process. It is not uncommon for such children to have thousands of stories in their own repertoire by the time they reach their sixth decade. This kind of oral education is life defining. In some it fosters what can be described as a lifelong obsession with the Appalachian region, the mountains, the people, this special place, this storied land. (1268)

Ghost stories have been a big part of the storytelling tradition in Watauga, Avery and Ashe Counties. Bessie Eldreth is a popular teller of the ghost tale. Many of her stories—told as “truth” and set in Ashe County, North Carolina—are still being told today. There are those who have had concerns about the telling of “haint” tales and ghost stories because they

frighten and unnerve both children and adults, but others see the value of the tales in their direct connection to landscape, setting, and referencing of time. And as with fables, many believe that morals can be learned through these ghost stories. Patricia E. Sawin spent many years with Mrs. Bessie Eldreth, and her book, *Listening For Life: A Dialogic Ethnography of Bessie Eldreth Through Her Songs and Stories*, is an excellent introductory resource to ethnographic research and to Eldreth's repertoire of songs, ghost tales, and stories about the supernatural. Many of Sawin's statements about Eldreth could be written about any member of the Hicks family that I interviewed during my research. For example, she writes, "For a song to become part of any singer's repertoire, it must matter to her in some way. The particular collection of songs that Eldreth has chosen to retain in memory and to voice with regularity reveals many things about her beliefs, values, and sense of self" (157). Ted Hicks's repertoire of Jack Tales and other stories reveals a great deal about his character, his beliefs, and his morals. Ray Hicks made these connections as well. The tradition bearers in the Hicks family often explain the connections to one's values during the framing of their tales.

#### *The Jack Tales and Their Tellers*

In Brunvand's *American Folklore: An Encyclopedia*, William E. Lightfoot contributes a concise history of the Hicks-Harmon oral traditions: "Perhaps the most propitious event in the development of Hicks-Harmon family folklore occurred when Little Sammy's grandson Samuel III (1848-1929) married Old Counce's daughter Rebecca (1842-1919), once again crossbreeding the families' traditions" (368). Lightfoot also contributes information in the section entitled "Jack Tales" in Brunvand's encyclopedia, and his commentary in the film *Ray and Rosa Hicks: The Last of the Old-Time Storytellers* offers

important background information on the cultural traditions of the Hicks family. Lightfoot, a retired folklorist from Appalachian State University, spent time with Ray and Rosa on Beech Mountain, and in my personal interview with him he spoke of the importance of documenting more than the Hicks tradition of the Jack Tales. He said it was equally important to collect the many traditions of the family including herbal medicine, farming and gathering techniques, hunting and trapping, handicrafts, wives' tales, and other lore that the Hicks family has continued to embrace through the years.

Other important films about the Hicks, Harmon, Ward storytelling tradition include *Fixin' To Tell About Jack*, directed by Elizabeth Barret; *A Film About Ray Hicks: Beech Mountain, North Carolina* by Thomas Burton from East Tennessee State University; *Ray and Rosa Hicks: The Last of the Old-Time Storytellers* by Charles and Jane Hadley; and *The Jack Tales Festival 2002* by Dianne Hackworth. These films highlight the traditions on Beech Mountain including plant lore, herb gathering, subsistence farming, songs and ballads, and tale telling. An important source that includes these same topics as they relate to the Hicks family is the *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*. Good resources that document performances of the genre of the Jack and Grandfather Tales and songs from the tradition bearers in western North Carolina are the recordings *Ray Hicks: Live on the Mountain* and *Orville Hicks: Mule Egg Seller and Appalachian Storyteller*.

Richard Chase wrote three books that are important sources when studying the Jack and Grandfather Tales from Beech Mountain. Although Chase collected the tales from traditional tellers in the Hicks, Harmon, and Ward families, as noted earlier, he changed them to make them more entertaining. *American Folk Tales and Songs*, *Grandfather Tales:*



*American-English Folk Tales*, and *Jack Tales: Folk Tales from the Southern Appalachians* are helpful for comparisons of the tales.

*Perspectives on the Jack Tales and Other North American Märchen*, edited by Carl Lindahl, which was first published as a special issue of the *Journal of Folklore Research*, is an important work that contains tales that were collected in private settings. Charles L. Perdue contributes information in this publication on Richard Chase and his collecting of the tales in his essay entitled, “Is Old Jack Really Richard Chase?” Perdue writes, “Chase, by his own statements, was unaware of the Jack tales prior to his meeting with Marshall Ward in 1935, so he could not have had any preconceived ideas about the character of Jack as an American boy/hero. However, before *The Jack Tales* reached its final form in 1942, he had developed such a notion and he was shaping the tales—consciously and perhaps unconsciously—to fit it” (114). Narratives and their transcriptions are included in this publication. These highlight each teller’s skill in performing the tales, and the introductions to each narrative place the reader in the context in which the tales were collected.

Another good source for comparisons of the Jack Tales is *Outwitting the Devil: Jack Tales From Wise County Virginia*, edited by Perdue. In the introduction Perdue writes:

For the first time, these Wise County tales are presented here in their original form as collected by Adams and Hylton. They make an interesting comparison to the well-known, popular versions of Jack tales compiled by Richard Chase in *The Jack Tales* (Houghton-Mifflin, 1943). It was public performance that concerned Chase primarily, and he freely combined and altered the versions that he and others had collected in order to create forms that he felt would be more appealing to his audience. (3)

The literature that I have read throughout the course of my research has often contained the terms “original” and “changed.” The tellers that I have listened to, whether live or on a recording, often have significantly different approaches to the tales. What one would call “original” might be criticized as “changed” by another traditional teller. Where and how a teller learned a tale could be lost from one’s memory, and so the tellers themselves are unaware of how “original” or “altered” a story has become. Some traditional story tellers, for example, feel that genres of folklore can only be authentic if learned from a tradition bearer in the context of the home and community where the genres have been a part of the culture.

Others, like Stanley Hicks, differ. In her article entitled, “The Storyteller as Craftsman: Stanley Hicks Telling ‘Jack and the Bull,’” Cheryl Oxford writes, “This case study will describe Stanley Hicks as a folk authority, taking special notice of his narrative aesthetic—his conviction that the art of storytelling may be assumed by anyone so included, not just by persons born into a family tale-telling tradition; and that the best stories are those which quicken laughter” (73-74). In Appendix E of my thesis, I include a transcription of Stanley Hicks’s version of “Jack and the Heifer’s Hide.” It is clear that he enjoys a more humorous approach to the tales. I do not include his version of “Jack and the Giants” in my thesis, but while watching a video of Stanley’s performance of this tale that was filmed by Thomas McGowan, I transcribed “Jack and the Giants” and paused often because he is extremely funny and entertaining. He seems to be just as concerned with his role as a comedian as he is with being a storyteller. Bessie Eldreth is also included on the video, and her deliveries are much more serious as she tells the ghost stories and tales of the supernatural.

Betty N. Smith's book, *A Singer Among Singers: Jane Hicks Gentry*, is a wonderful resource that contains information on the Hicks and Harmon families and their history of the Jack Tale tradition. Chapter two gives a detailed family history of the Hicks and Harmon families, and chapter seven highlights Jane's maternal grandfather, "Old Counce," and the Jack Tale tradition that Jane learned from him.

*Ray and Orville Hicks: Tradition Bearers*

Ray became the most celebrated storyteller at the Jonesborough Festival in Tennessee. Joseph Sobol observes, "Only Ray Hicks's performances became an annual autumn ritual in Jonesborough. The figure he cut as a mountain man whose speech and folkways were a revelation to modern audiences elevated him to the status of an icon of the festival and of the storytelling revival enterprise as a whole" (1269).

Lynn Salsi was documenting Ray's life up until his death in 2003. In her most recent publication from 2008 she writes, "After eight years of talking with, singing with, and traveling with Ray, this story is the true story of Ray Hicks and his life and times. While Ray was alive, Jack was alive. This is the final tale of the real Jack" (xx).

Salsi collected the Jack Tales and personal narratives from Ray for eight years. These are also published in her previous books on the Hicks family. This book is different from Salsi's previous works because it doesn't focus on Ray's family tradition of Jack Tales. Instead, it presents narratives about Ray's life, which Salsi documented in a separate notebook while collecting Jack Tales from Ray. During the course of her collecting, Salsi decided that Ray's life story, like Jack's, was one that needed to be told. Salsi gives background information about the Hicks and Harmon families and their storytelling and singing traditions that were brought over from the British Isles two hundred years ago. We

learn about Ray's connections to the Jack Tales as he compares his own life experiences to those of the character, Jack. In the first chapter Ray remarks, "There I was, stuck to the ground, I couldn't move. Then, it struck me. I was like Jack. He was always a helpin' his mama. I couldn't remember a time he just off and left her. Right then, my heart turned. I knowed I was like Jack" (7). As I have interviewed and recorded Ted Hicks over the past year, I have come to believe that Ted identifies with Jack in many of the same ways that his father did. Ted always stayed at home to take care of the place when his father and mother would go off the mountain, and he remained in their home to be close to his mom and dad. Salsi's other publications about Ray Hicks and the Jack Tale tradition include *Appalachian Jack Tales: Told by Hicks, Ward, and Harmon Families* and *Young Ray Hicks Learns the Jack Tales*. Salsi includes information that supports Ted's ability to tell the Jack Tales in these publications.

Not only did Ray Hicks share stories with children in the local schools and those who traveled to hear him tell at festivals and at his home, but he mentored one of the most important tradition bearers of the tales who is still telling today, his second cousin Orville Hicks. At his death, Ray wasn't aware that his son, Ted, would also carry on the Jack Tale tradition that he and his brother and sisters grew up hearing.

Orville, an award winning storyteller like Ray, continues the tradition of the Jack Tales and Grandfather Tales that he learned from spending time with and listening to Ray. Orville credits Ray with giving him his first opportunity to tell his tales and take them to a public audience. Julia Ebel has written two books that offer important information about Orville Hicks and the family traditions. There stories include information about Orville's close relationship to Ray, Rosa, and Ted Hicks. In *Orville Hicks: Mountain Stories*,

*Mountain Roots*, Ebel documents the life of Orville and writes about the tradition bearers from whom he learned his craft. While working the land or preparing vegetables, children were often entertained by the tales to the point that they forgot about the work at hand. In this book, she writes: “For over two hundred years, Orville’s ancestors had settled on Beech Mountain and in nearby areas. Storytelling took root in these hills and hollows through at least six generations. The voices of storytellers have eased work, warmed cold nights, and strengthened family ties” (3). There is still evidence of this each time I am at the Hicks’s home and one or more family members visit, most often showing up unannounced.

Mountain wisdom has been passed down through the tradition of storytelling. For many families in Appalachia, the values and wisdom they learned are the same ones shared by the Hicks family of Beech Mountain. “Orville recalls gems of mountain wisdom that have guided life from childhood to the present: Respect, Being Yourself, Kindness and Caring, Sharing, Choosing Friends, Cooperation, Responsibility, Honesty, Neighborliness, Money, Work, Patience, Friends, Forgiveness, Conversation, and Independence” (135-138). Ebel’s latest publication, *Jack Tales and Mountain Yarns as told by Orville Hicks*, contains some of the songs, tales, stories, and riddles in Orville’s repertoire, and many of these are the same ones that I have collected from Ted.

In past years in the Beech Mountain area while mothers worked on the front porch shelling beans or bundling galax, they would tell stories to their children to keep them entertained. Orville Hicks celebrates his mother’s gift of telling stories often as he tells Jack Tales to students at Appalachian State University. He describes the setting in which he heard the tales and his mother’s way of making the tales, riddles, and stories special. In his article “Sort of like an Appalachian Journal Editor: Presenting and Playing with Identity in the

Storytelling of Orville Hicks,” Thomas McGowan writes, “Important parts of Orville’s presentation of self are his origins in the mountains and his open sharing of personal information with the audience. These are key elements in his performances that prove tremendously attractive to audiences both young and old, insider and outsider” (165). The important qualities that Orville possesses and shares with his audiences are similar to the ones that Ted displays in both private and public performances. His personal narratives about life in the mountains and growing up around the Hicks traditions establishes a special rapport with his audience.

Robert Isbells’ book *The Last Chivaree*, which was also published with the title *Ray Hicks: Master Storyteller of the Blue Ridge*, is an important book about Ray, his family, and his life on Beech Mountain. It includes information on Ray’s medicinal use of herbs and his mentoring of Orville Hicks. Isbell writes, “Obviously Orville is Ray’s anointed torchbearer, even though the shy son, Ted, knows all Ray’s stories. But Ted will succeed his father only as a hardworking heir in the potato fields and in gathering herbs. His chosen mission seems to be taking care of his parents, not speaking before crowds” (161-162). Isbell’s book, *The Keepers*, documents Ted Hicks’s herb gathering and plant lore and contains Ray’s comments as well as Ted’s. In this book, Isbell also includes Orville’s Beech Mountain connection and Ray’s influences on Orville’s Jack Tale tradition. David Cozzo’s article in the *Appalachian Journal* entitled “Beyond Tall Tales: Ray Hicks and Mountain Herbalism,” is a good source for information on Ray’s herb gathering and mountain remedies.

*Jack in Two Worlds: Contemporary North American Tales and Their Tellers*, edited by William Bernard McCarthy is an excellent companion for anyone who is transcribing tales and trying to represent accurately a teller’s performance. This book includes both

traditional tellers' and revivalists' versions of the tales which is why the "two worlds" appears in the title. For my research, I was most interested in the tales that were collected and transcribed from Ray Hicks, Frank Proffitt Jr., Marshall Ward, and Maud Gentry Ward. On the back cover a quote from *Come-All-Ye* appears: "All serious students of folklore, narrative and tale telling will find this volume an absolute MUST."

*The North Carolina Folklore Journal* has published issues that contain articles pertaining to the Jack Tales and their tellers. The authors of these articles include Paige Guitierrez, Barbara McDermitt, Thomas McGowan, Cheryl Oxford, Charles Thomas Davis III, and Gail Haley, among others.

As I point out in my methodology, my research topic changed from a focus on the women in the Hicks family to Ted Hicks. There are some good sources for learning about the women in the Hicks and Harmon families, and most of these women were influential in Ted's life on Beech Mountain. They passed traditions down to him that he shares with others today. Thomas Burton's *Some Ballad Folks*, for example, contains the singing traditions of Buna Hicks and Ted's grandmother, Rena Hicks.

The W.L. Eury Collection in the Belk Library at Appalachian State University contains large newspaper clipping files on the Hicks family and other storytelling families from Beech Mountain and the Jack Tale tradition.

## Methodology

When I first considered entering the Appalachian Studies Program at Appalachian State University, Edwin (Chip) Arnold encouraged me to consider stepping out of my comfort zone in Appalachian music. We discussed the possibility of the culture track in the M.A. program, and Chip recommended that I take on something completely unfamiliar. His insight led me to a topic I had only pondered occasionally while teaching language arts to fifth and sixth graders. I was discouraged to find that fewer and fewer families were sharing personal narratives, stories, songs, rhymes, and tales with their children. Parents are spending less time telling bedtime stories to their children, for example. It isn't as common to find families singing traditional songs on long excursions in the car. The family meals shared at the dining room table have been replaced by fast food from a drive-through window. In the classroom, I was noticing that my students were not familiar with the genres of literature that had once been so common. Years ago, students would have had many stories, tales, rhymes, and songs put to memory, but that is not so much the case in the past few years.

My first courses at Appalachian State University introduced me to participatory and ethnographic research. Patricia Beaver's course requirements involved work with the residents of Ashe County and the Riverview Community Center. Throughout the course, we were engaged in community work that was presented at the Appalachian Regional Commission in Washington, DC for the Appalachian Teaching Project.

In Susan Keefe's anthropology class, I was introduced to ethnographic research, and so began a trek that I would have never imagined. Dr. Keefe's course was instrumental in



providing the groundwork and organization for my fieldwork. Without the processes I learned in this course, I wouldn't have considered writing a thesis on my research.

Orville Hicks was a visiting lecturer in Thomas McGowan's colloquium that same semester. McGowan has spent years recording storytellers, and he has worked extensively with Orville in different settings down through the years. His class lectures and conversations with Orville during our course gave me background information and an education on folklore that were necessary for the task of writing this thesis. My original thought was to interview Orville, his wife, and children to find out if they were passing the tales on to their children. Orville had mentioned that he didn't think any of his children were interested in telling the tales. Unfortunately, Orville's sons and their children were not available for interviewing. I was talking to my friend, Amy Michels, who said that she knew other members of the Hicks family. She mentioned Ray Hicks and his home on Beech Mountain and that she had spent time with him, his wife, Rosa, and their children. She said it would be no problem for us to visit them. She also reminded me that Orville was mentored by Ray Hicks.

We traveled together up to Beech Mountain for my research over the course of a year. Initially, I interviewed seven Hicks family members and Amy Michels, who had become my key informant. I asked their opinions on storytelling and the Jack and Grandfather Tale traditions on Beech Mountain. After the interviews, I had decided to focus on women in the Hicks, Presnell, Harmon, and Ward families who had a close connection to the Jack and Grandfather Tale tradition. While their singing and music making tradition and song repertoire have been documented, their personal narratives about living on Beech Mountain, the Jack Tale tradition, and their contributions to keeping the mountain traditions and lore

alive have not been documented as thoroughly as have those of the men in the Hicks, Harmon, and Ward families.

As my trips to the Hicks homeplace became more frequent, however, I was often witnessing the swapping of tales among Orville, Ted, Rosa, and Amy, along with other visitors who showed up at the home. Rosa's daughters no longer live close by, so I would have had to travel farther distances for my research had I documented the Hicks women. I also knew that, like Orville's children, Rosa's and Ray's daughters were not as interested in telling the tales as Ted and Orville. Furthermore, it didn't seem likely that the women I initially interviewed would be available for lengthy interviews. Ted told me that Leonard remembers the tales by memory and had shared them with his buddies when he was in the army.

When I learned of Ted Hicks's transition from being a shy farmer and herb gatherer to his role as tale teller and his interest in sharing the Jack Tales, even with larger audiences like those at storytelling festivals, I felt that his story would fulfill my original plan of documenting those who had learned the lore in a traditional setting and who were active in keeping the tales "goin' on." Ted agreed to interviews and recordings and was always willing to talk about the traditions with which he grew up in western North Carolina. Rosa was always there as well, and Leonard and Orville would occasionally grace the room with their presence. Along with Amy, the six of us developed a friendship that went beyond my research. Occasionally, I recorded group sessions and visits with Ted and Rosa, but most often I chose to interview and record Ted without other participants in the room so as to get the most private performances possible.

On many occasions, Amy would take her banjo and I would take my guitar. The house would be filled with playing, singing, and tale telling. I took a digital recorder in the beginning of my field research. After transcribing five or six interviews, I understood the importance of the interview techniques provided in Bernard, H. Russell's *Research Methods in Anthropology*. Transcriptions take an extremely long time, and I learned to keep quiet so that my respondents did most of the talking. These were elements of field research that I had learned from Dr. Keefe's anthropology class, but it wasn't until I actually did the research and brought the tapes back for transcription that I learned how important these guidelines could be.

During my independent study with Cece Conway, she insisted that I become more comfortable with video taping and stressed the importance of documenting my trips to Beech Mountain in that medium. I began setting up a video camera on each visit. This didn't seem to bother the participants, since due to Ray and Rosa Hicks's popularity they have been recorded in the context of their home and at other gatherings on many occasions. Once the camera and digital recorder were rolling, the sharing of tales, personal narratives, and songs continued to flow throughout the course of my visits. This proved to be another good lesson. Had Dr. Conway not insisted that I begin my education with the video camera, I would not have been comfortable with the process. I would have missed the opportunity to video tape Ted's public performance in Jonesborough, Tennessee and the most recent gathering at the Matney Community Center, where Ted swapped tales with Orville, Rick Ward, Gurney Norman, and to my pleasant surprise, a young boy named Noah, who volunteered to share a tale by memory that he learned from a storybook that his great-grandfather had given him.

Fred Hay encouraged me to research the Hicks, Harmon, Presnell, and Ward families for the assignments in his *Bibliography and Research* course. This gave me an opportunity to locate important sources for my research. The bibliography and pathfinder assignments introduced me to the research and documentation that were available in the W.L. Eury Collection at Appalachian State University on the topics of Beech Mountain traditions and the bearers of those traditions.

In her course, *Appalachian Literature*, Katherine Ledford helped me connect the readings in the course to my research. Her responses to my paper on herbs and medicinal uses of plants in the literature and in the life of Ted Hicks were very helpful in making connections for my thesis. She and other professors in the Appalachian Studies program encourage students to incorporate their thesis topic into the coursework. These connections have made my learning experiences more valuable than they otherwise would have been.

From January through December of 2009, I interviewed and taped Ted and Rosa in the context of their home. In October of that same year, Ted and Rosa performed at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, and I received permission to tape their performances on that day. This opportunity provided me with a public performance of “Jack and the Doctor’s Girl” which I later taped in a private setting. As I watched Ted throughout the day at the gathering in Tennessee, I learned from the public performance that at the present time his personality and his delivery of the tales are much the same whether he is in the privacy of his home or on a large stage with 1,600 people watching his performance. I continued my visits and tapings in 2010, and although Ted was hospitalized and released on April 1, 2010, he kept his engagement at the Matney Community Center near his home on

April 3, 2010. I was given the opportunity to tape a second public performance. This was the first time I had heard Ted tell “Jack and the Northwest Wind.”

In her foreward to Betty N. Smith’s book, *A Singer Among Singers: Jane Hicks Gentry*, Cecelia Conway writes, “What is the significance of the parts of Gentry’s life story that remain understated or mysterious? What do these silences suggest about the greater hardships Jane lived with and the pain she endured but did not dwell upon or wish to express? What resonances and context do these silences provide for Gentry’s own self-characterization: ‘I have learnt how to feel badly and keep cheerful’” (vii). Like Jane Hicks Gentry’s, Ted’s life is filled with hardships and pain as he struggles daily with health problems and trips down the mountain for dialysis treatments three times weekly. He remains unusually optimistic for someone in this kind of situation. Like Gentry, he keeps cheerful while feeling badly. I have learned that there is a more important story waiting to be told about Ted Hicks.



**Figure 15: Ted Hicks Arriving in Jonesborough, Tennessee, October 9, 2009**



**Figure 16: Matney Community Center near Beech Mountain, North Carolina, April 3, 2010, Rick Ward, Orville Hicks, Ted Hicks, Gurney Norman, and Tom Hansell (left to right) During Ted's Performance of "Jack and the Northwest Wind."**

## CHAPTER 3

## Ted Hicks, A Jack of All Trades

Lisa: What stories and tales did you hear in school?

Ted: Jack and the Bean Tree. 'Bout everybody knowed that one. "Jack and the Bean Tree," "Jack and the Bean Stalk."

Lisa: Do you remember a little bit of that?

Ted: That's where Jack's young in it.

Some told it, uh, he took a cow and swapped it three beans, two beans. Magic beans.

Others said, he's, you know, in the house and his mama wantin' him to be quiet.

And she give him two beans to play with and go outside. Either tale's good, you know.

And he plants 'em and he sprouts 'em in no time.

He come in, "Mama, Mama, Mama. (!!!!) My beans has done sprouted, they two foot tall."

She said, "You lyin' rascal you," and boxed his ears.

He said, "Mama, no, look, go look."(!!!!) She come out and feel sorry for him.

Tried to pet him back up you, you know.

He go out again, say, "Got in the sky, above the house. Tree top."

She'd box his ears again then. Couldn't believe him, you know.

Ted continued, "He told some big 'ens before, yeh. Daddy might have told me that. That's one Daddy didn't tell much 'cause it was so well known. I know one would tell Jack Tales in schools, but that was before my time. Marshall Ward. He would always take a break and tell the class. They said. Said they came and got the songs, but said, 'they's tales in the mountains too'" (personal interview, 2009).



When Rosa Hicks told Amy Michels it was fine for the two of us to visit, it was unnerving for me, but I relaxed a bit when we arrived and Orville Hicks was there talking to Ted, Rosa, and Leonard. Orville and Ted have had a close relationship since they were very young. Robert Isbell observes: “Besides the companionship of brother, Leonard, Ted often roamed the woods with his best friend and cousin, Orville Hicks” (10). This positive relationship between Ted and Orville continues today. Rather than spending time in the woods, they are often found swapping tales in the front room of the Hicks home or talking about old times and the fun they had growing up in the mountains. Conversation in the Hicks home is as important, it seems, as eating or drinking. During each visit I made to Old Mountain Road on Beech Mountain I heard stories about the good times, and bad, and of days gone by. Most often, friends or relatives would stop by to visit with Ted and Rosa. These visitors would stay for dinner, which is their term for the midday meal. The dialogue during dinner is engaging. It is sometimes funny and sometimes sad, and when you sit down at the table in Rosa’s kitchen, you are there for at least an hour. The food is passed from one to the other, and the stories continue throughout the meal.

All of the informants from my research, as well as individuals who have been present when I have visited Ted and Rosa, have talked about the family dynamic in and around Beech Mountain and Watauga, Ashe, and Avery Counties in North Carolina. Ted said, “You know used to, they married a lot of kin. They couldn’t get out far. In the same briar patch, like Brer Rabbit. There’s that good tale again. I love that tale” (personal interview, 2009). Susan E. Keefe discusses these close family relationships in her chapter, “Appalachian Family Ties”: “Where the kindred is significant, as in Appalachia, we tend to find the cousin relationship important. First cousins especially tend to be close kin. . . . Individuals often

marry cousins, including first cousins, which strengthens the already strong ties between collateral kin” (29). This is the case with the Hicks family on Beech Mountain, and they say that they often married cousins because the families were isolated in the mountains and didn’t have transportation.

These strong ties have perpetuated the stories and tales that each family has in its repertoire, and even though they have their differences, the themes and basic elements are the same. The metanarration that frames the tales, songs, and stories is suggestive of how important this tradition is to these family members and how important the performance is to them. Their attention to the framing of their stories and easing the participants into and out of their tales is worthy of mention. Anthropologist and Folklorist Richard Bauman writes about the significance of framing: “‘Beginnings’ and ‘endings’ are of crucial importance in the formulation of systems of culture; in narrative they are one of the ways in which a narrator sets up an interpretative frame which tell us this is a play, this is performance, or more specifically, this is such and such type of story and should be understood and judged accordingly” (71). When watching and listening to videos and sound recordings of Marshall Ward, Ted, Ray, Stanley, and Orville Hicks, one finds that their framing is often similar for each tale they perform. For example, Ted will say, “Well, in this one here, Jack was livin’ there with his mom and dad.” Orville will begin his tales with “Waaayyyy back up in the mountains.” Most of the tellers I have listened to will end with a line similar to “And the last time I was down through there, Jack was doin’ fine, and he still hadn’t done a good day’s work.”

On the first day I visited Ted’s and Rosa’s home, Leonard, Rosa, Orville, Amy, Ted, and I enjoyed good food, songs, and tales. After more stories and much laughter, everyone

gathered in the kitchen and enjoyed eating biscuits, cabbage, green beans, “taters,” cheese, and corn. We washed it all down with a cup of instant Sanka coffee. Songs were sung and tales were told, and I was the only participant that day who did not perform. I watched and listened as each individual competed for the floor. The competition was friendly, but the participants were serious about the delivery of each performance. Each person seemed eager to share songs, personal narratives, Jack Tales, jokes, riddles, and even magic tricks. Orville performed the dish rag and matchstick trick for me, and it was obvious that this trick had been performed for more than one new visitor.

This home is a comfortable stage for these participants, and they treat this setting and scene as such. Each person who delivered a performance framed his or her tale, song, or joke by giving background information that connected it to past experiences or people who had influenced their telling or singing. This background enhances the performance in important ways that Bauman describes: “All of these, like the more extended metanarrational statements, have the effect of bridging the gap between the narrated event and the storytelling event by reaching out phatically to the audience, giving identificational and participatory immediacy to the story” (100). Ted’s exposure to his father’s dialogue has perhaps taught him this metanarrational technique. His ease with conversation and setting up his tales makes them even more engaging, exemplifying Bauman’s point. On every day that I visited, we all sat around the wood burning stove in the living room. I felt privileged to be a participant in this setting and scene where verbal art has been a tradition for many years. In his explanation of Dell Hymes’s SPEAKING model, Thomas McGowan points out: “The living room in the grandparents’ home might be a setting for a family story” (class lecture, fall 2009). It was difficult to determine the formality and seriousness of this setting. I felt

somewhat relaxed and very welcomed, but this living room, where Ray's chair is sitting in the same spot where he performed his tales, made me feel as if I was sitting in a church pew. I think the seriousness of the setting became clear because the framing for the tales included talk about Ray and Rosa and their past. The metanarrative throughout the day revolved around life-defining events that had occurred as the participants were growing up in the area. They talked about hearing the Jack and Grandfather Tales as they worked. They also discussed the important role that music played in their lives. The songs and tales were their entertainment. Bill Ellis writes in *Jack in Two Worlds*, "From Gentry and Ward, then, derives an image of the tales as part rustic leisure-time entertainment" (95). Ellis goes on to say, "however, tedious handwork, not leisure, originally called forth the Märchen. The wife of R.M. Ward recalled the tales' original function as 'keeping the kids on the job': 'We would all get down around a sheet full of dry beans and start in to shellin' 'em'" (95). Many of the Hicks children, including Ted and Orville, learned the tales in this work setting and scene. Rosa continues to sing as she peels apples, cans vegetables, and works in the kitchen or in the yard.

On one of my return visits to Beech Mountain, Orville was visiting again. His new book (*Jack Tales and Mountain Yarns as told by Orville Hicks*, 2009) had just arrived, so we were all talking Jack Tales again that day. Ted and Orville once again took turns with tales, jokes, riddles, and personal narratives. The laughter in this setting is catching. Orville's humor and laughter were brought up by most of my respondents during their interviews. He is one of the most celebrated tellers of the Jack Tales. Orville credits Ray with giving him his first opportunity to tell his tales and take them to a public audience. But it is from his mother that Orville heard his first tales. Thomas McGowan writes in Julia Ebel's most recent

book, “A central figure in Orville’s early growing up was his mother, Sarah Ann Harmon Hicks. His romantic remembering of her provides a special frame for his own storytelling” (167). Similarly, Ted’s memories of his father’s telling provide the framing for some of his tales, and his memories of his father, mother, and grandmother provide framing for their songs and ballads. Ted and Orville also have fond memories of gathering around the radio and listening to their favorite artists sing the old songs.

Ted, like his family members, carefully constructs the tales and stories that he has learned from his father and other relatives and put to memory. Ted also mentions that he has read Richard Chase’s books, but says he prefers his father’s and Orville’s tellings to those in the books. Ted has never married or moved away from the old homeplace, so he was often present for Ray’s tales there in the home. He also said that his dad would tell the tales and stories as they worked the land, tended the gardens, and gathered herbs. In *The Keepers*, Robert Isbell interviews Ted Hicks for a chapter entitled “Herb Gatherer: Ted Hicks.” When asked about his occupation, Ted says, “I’ve done a little bit of everything. I’s like Jack, Jack of all trades.” Isbell goes on to ask Ted what work he would do, and Ted replied, “I’d gather herbs. Just like I do now. It’s what I like to do” (4).

The Hicks family members still share personal narratives about their days of subsistence farming and hunting and gathering herbs. Their stories convey the importance of growing what they need for food, and hunting, gathering, and selling the resources they found in the woods and on the land. Their insightfulness also gives new meaning to conserving and preserving the natural resources. Leonard continues farming the family land. The summer before I conducted these interviews there was an abundance of cabbage, potatoes (“taters”), and corn.

As a result of his interviews with Ted, Isbell writes, “So little Ted Hicks followed a line of herb gatherers—from Samuel to son Benjamin, to Benjamin’s son Nathan, and then to Ray and Ray’s children. But Ted thinks he may be the last of the herb gatherers in his family” (6). Ted goes on to talk about learning the lore from his father: “I learned from him. Learned how to find the plants, to pull them in the right season, to dry them, and to sell them” (6). Ted and other tradition bearers have learned the importance of protecting these valuable resources and how to preserve them so that they regenerate year after year. In the *Foxfire* series, herbs are discussed in several of the volumes. In the third book, Marie Mellinger writes:

The conservative sanger only dug roots in the fall of the year and carefully replanted the seeds, or the rhizome extension called a ‘quill’, or ‘bud.’ To keep ginseng from being completely killed out in an area, some were, however, those greedy individuals who gathered sang at any time of the year, and did not hesitate to rob a neighbor’s patch. Sang hunters would try to find out where their competitors had success, and in turn would keep their own finds a secret. (Wigginton 248)

Ted showed me how he would dig the root but always leave the site in such a way that he could return the following year to gather more of the “sang,” as he calls it. He shared his regrets about people he has known who took the entire plant, not caring if they left the buds. Ted, Leonard, and Orville talk about the mountain land in southern Appalachia and how it has been taken over by housing and tourist developers. They discuss the decline of the herbs and plants due to over-harvesting and improper gathering techniques. This family has gathered herbs on Beech Mountain for at least a century. They would drive down the

mountain to sell the herbs and roots they had gathered. Ted has talked about sitting on the back of the pickup truck in downtown Boone waiting for his dad to sell the herbs. After selling the herbs and other plants, they would then head out to buy the sugar, flour, and other necessities they could purchase after having sold the herbs.

Ted continued gathering herbs and other plants for his living before his health declined in 2003, and he sold his products in Boone. He and other Hicks family members were aware of the herbs and other plants that the Wilcox Company would buy at different times of the year. The company listed these plants on a price list. “‘The list’ refers to a sheet issued by Wilcox, an old company in Boone where Ted sells his gathered medicinal herbs and plants” (Isbell 5). ‘That’s what they did in my family long before I can remember,’ says Ted. ‘We gathered herbs and things. My great-great-granddaddy—Samuel was his name—was the first to enter this country. Homesteaded right over yander—can’t see from here—and paid for that old rocky land by selling herbs. Couldn’t have made it without herbs’” (Isbell 6). The Hicks family members have shared with me their stories about Samuel, Benjamin, and Nathan Hicks and how they farmed the land and found most all they needed on “the Beech.”

But changes began as early as the 1800s, as Ron Eller states: “As the forces of industrial capitalism reached out into the peripheral areas of American society, the natural wealth of Appalachia would become more and more attractive. With the effort to tap these resources after 1880 would come dramatic changes in the mountain social order” (106). Ted converses frequently about his observation of the changes on Beech Mountain and confirms the idea that housing developments have taken much of the land where he once hunted ginseng and other plants. “But it’s beginning to lose its wildness. Houses being built there

like at the Beech. Changed in the last ten years. Used to [be] you might meet maybe only one car over there; anymore you meet several of them. Civilization keeps on coming, which helps out, makes a lot of jobs and stuff, but you lost the other things” (Isbell 4).

When asked about his preference of occupations, Ted has told me that he would prefer being in the woods if his health allowed. He reiterated the words that he had said to Isbell and others who have interviewed him. He said, “I’ve done a little bit of everything. I’s like Jack, Jack of all trades. Herb gatherer. I go out in the woods. Ginseng was my favorite thing. “Sang,” galax, log moss. I’ve done mayapple, bloodroot, cherry bark, I enjoyed that. If you wanted to work, work. Enjoy God’s creation, animals, plants. I miss it, not being able. That was my life. I did some carpentry work. If I was able to work, I would still work” (personal interview, 2009). He suggests, however, that even if he could roam the woods once again, he assumes the land where he once gathered herbs has been sold or the herbs and roots have disappeared due to poor management and overzealous gatherers. This was not the case when Ray Hicks was teaching his sons about the tradition he had learned from his grandfather and father. Isbell states, “In those days herbs were the main source for medicines, but in the decades since, synthetics have come along and cut demand. Ted remembers the herb market was once so active that the drug company would send a truck around to pick up the harvest” (7).

For trucks to travel up to Beech Mountain on the very steep, curvy roads suggests that this was a valuable commodity. In an interview, Rosa said, “But then he [Leonard] got used to Ted. Then Ted got big enough to go with him. He’d go pull beadwood leaves. Did go by hisself, and I just really hadn’t give it no thought. He come back, he said, ‘Ted, if you go with me, hold the sack open, and I put beadwoods in it, I’ll give you half the money.’ And he



did what he said he was goin' to do" (personal interview, 2009). Ted told Isbell, "Me'n Leonard, we'd stack witch hazel leaves up there at the house and be waiting for the truck to come. They'd be there at a certain time, and they'd have scales—to weigh the herbs, you know. Pay us right there" (7). Ray had concerns about the loss of the plants before he died in 2003:

Back then, when Ted was a boy, there was ginseng above Whaley, way up on that wing yonder, what they called Buckeye Creek. All that was in there was in 'sang. There's still some there, but they won't let you gather it now—where they've got their homes, all that golf course. Yiah, when they built the homes up on the Beech, they pushed out big patches. Didn't know they was doing it, you know. (Isbell 9)

Ted would like to return to a time when hunters and gatherers were careful to leave the area in such a way that reproduction of the plant was almost guaranteed. He feels that there will always be a market for the herbs and that people should protect them and the area in which they grow to make sure future generations have access to this natural resource. In *Ginseng Dreams*, Kristin Johannsen writes:

Does ginseng have a future in America? This is my final question for all the people who share their stories with me. The answer is nearly always: Yes—maybe. Said Scott Persons, author of the most widely used manual for small-scale growers, when I ask him that. But obviously, if he's made the effort to produce an entirely new book, he thinks it will find an audience. (192)

While Ted feels that there will be a demand for the products, he isn't as positive about the survival of the plants and herbs that were once so abundant in his area.

Both Ted and Leonard reminisce often about their love for the mountains surrounding their home and the days when they would help their father plant and harvest potatoes, cabbage, beans, and corn. They talk about going to gather herbs in the forests and hunting game in the woods surrounding their home. Ted discusses his concern that the land is being taken over by outsiders who aren't conserving the natural resources as they build big homes on the mountains, and he worries that most people aren't taking the time to learn the old ways and teach their children responsibility. He remarked in one interview, "But now things are changin'. People need to slow down, raise a garden. A lot of 'em can't now in the big cities and towns. It's the way they are livin'. You have to work, so far in debt. Don't have any time, got a big fine home. The stories got a lot of every day livin' in 'em. The stories got a lot to teach 'em, like the way they need to live" (personal interview, 2009). When Ted completes a Jack or Grandfather Tale, he will sometimes talk about these morals and values that can be found in the tales. He will talk about conserving the land and its resources and how resourceful Jack is in each of the tales.

More documentation of the Hicks family herb gathering and their concerns for the plants is found in *Orville Hicks: Mountain Stories, Mountain Roots* by Julia Ebel. Ebel includes a photocopy of a cash price list for herbs, leaves, barks, etc., from July 15, 1958 from the Wilcox Drug Company in Boone, North Carolina (59). She writes:

Orville's mother, along with others in the family, gathered galax and log moss to sell to Sluder Floral Company in Newland. Their galax would go to florists to make funeral wreaths. Mama and the children also gathered life plant, mayapple, and pink and yellow lady slippers. They dug roots of ginseng, bloodroot, and angelica, and they gathered leaves and bark from beadwood

(witch hazel) and sassafras trees. They sold these roots, herbs, and barks to Mr. Wilcox at Wilcox Drug Company in Boone. In turn, he would resell the plant materials to companies that made medicines. (58)

Ebel shares Orville's stories about his experiences gathering herbs and makes mention of how this tradition brought families together in the mountains. Orville reminisces about his days with his mother as she taught him and the other children to gather and bundle galax. Sarah Hicks would have the children gathered around her on the front porch with the galax at their feet. She would tell Jack Tales to the children to keep them focused on their work. Orville talks about going to Boone to sell the herbs and what this income meant to his family.

Authors of Appalachian literature have been including plant lore in their novels as early as 1940 and as recently as 2008. In James Still's *River of Earth* (1940); Harriette Arnow's *The Dollmaker* (1954); Wilma Dykeman's *The Tall Woman* (1962), Gurney Norman's *Divine Right's Trip* (1971-72); Denise Giardina's *Storming Heaven* (1987); Ann Pancake's *Strange As This Weather Has Been* (2007); and Ron Rash's *Serena* (2008), the fictional characters, like the non-fictional Hicks family, depend on the land and its resources. They are all closely connected to the land. When taking plants from the forests, mountains, and river banks, they are cautious and conservative. They know that to ensure that these resources are available for future use, they must preserve what the land has to offer. As I read each of the novels above, the similarities to Ted's way of life came to mind immediately.

For the characters in the novels and for the Hicks men, we feel their losses as industrialization and modernity take away their freedom, traditions, folkways, self

sufficiency, and to some degree, their strength. We can envision a time in their lives when the herbs, roots, and other plant resources will no longer be available. We get a sense that the herbal remedies will be replaced with more modern cures. It is inevitable that some people will be displaced due to industrialization, and that modernity will affect the family dynamic to a large degree. In novels set in Appalachia, there is a sense of freedom as the characters sustain themselves with the herbs and other plants that connect them to the land and their traditional ways. This remains true for some members of the Hicks family.

Now that Ted is in poor health and can no longer gather herbs, hunt, and work the land, he is most interested in conversation and sharing stories with those who visit the Hicks home. Isbell writes about the frustrations the Hicks men had with the confines of the winter time: “For days that seemed like months frigid weather kept Ted and Leonard out of their beloved forests; they yearned to walk in the woods; they needed to ‘limber up’ their bodies, to shake off the torpid effects of being so long confined to the parlor, sitting close to an ancient stove” (8). On the days when Ted doesn’t travel to Boone for dialysis treatments, he can be found in the parlor near the wood burning stove. He rarely complains. His thoughts turn to those things that lift his spirits, and so he tells the tales of Jack and how he uses his resources and wit to make ends meet.

During the time that Ray Hicks was sick in early 2000, Ted was dealing with his own health problems. When we continued our conversation during our first meeting about the passing on of the Jack Tale tradition in public venues and not just the context of his and Rosa’s home, he said, referring to the difficulty he has committing to a public performance, “If I felt like it. My health. I ain’t promisin’ you nothin’. Call me on Saturday mornin’. I messed up first time I was on that dialysis. They came out, I said, I messed up.” They said,

‘That’s alright.’ Made me feel good. That’s just nature. When you’re out of control, you’re just out of control.” Ted transitioned back into performance mode by throwing in a joke that he has evidently shared with more than one listener, “You need to be like Old Faithful...REGULAR!!!” (personal interview, 2009).

When discussing possible public venues for storytelling, Ted is referring to the Ray Hicks Festival at Glenn Bolick’s farm and the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, where his father told year after year. Ray talks of being a storyteller since the age of four. He didn’t begin public appearances until the 1960s when, as Ray told Lynn Salsi,

the word got out and people from the outside wanted to hear me talk. That caused interestin’ things to happen when first one and then another come up and wanted me to go off the mountain and talk. Jenny Love was a teacher over to the Cove Creek School. She asked if I’d come and tell stories to her class. I’d never done that afore. But I said I thought I could. (187)

I never met Ray Hicks, but when I read a description of Ray, Ted immediately comes to mind. His image is that of a mountain man. His speech and dialect are at times difficult to understand. Ray’s speech was discussed and written about by many who heard him: Isbell writes:

Some say he is the last mountain man to speak Elizabethan English; but this is likely an uninformed notion. Rather, Ray might have harbored the rhetoric of grandparents and great-grandparents well past the time that other mountain people abandoned it. Elizabethan speech folded into an evolving language long ago, a language that changed gradually no matter how isolated the

speakers. But in the coves and hollows of Watauga, the old settlers retained many expressions of Anglo-Saxon pioneers.” (36)

When I first heard Ted speak, just as when I first heard a tape of Ray, the dialect was impressive. This is not a staged part of his performance. His speech patterns and gestures are his own. Cratis Williams writes about dialect in the *North Carolina Historical Review*. “However, almost all people of native stock, regardless of economic, social, or educational status, have traces of the older dialect in their speech. Most persistent are traditional pitch, intonation, melody patterns, inflection, and rhythms” (174). This is true of many of the storytellers from the Hicks, Harmon, Ward tradition that I recorded or watched on video. Each tradition bearer has those distinctive speech patterns that Williams mentions.

I asked Ted what stories impressed him because of his connection to Appalachia and his response was, “Daddy’s ghost tales. He had a lot of them. Witch tales...some I can’t explain” (personal interview, 2009).

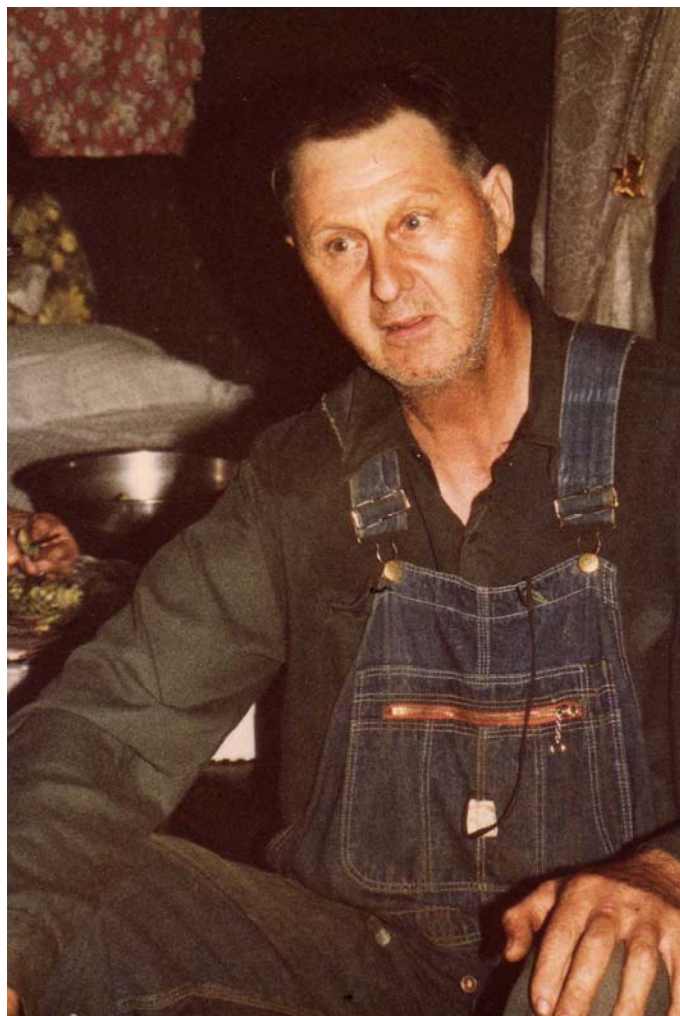


Figure 17: Ray Hicks

Ted told me about strange happenings in the woods around the property where he has spent his entire life. He laughed as he talked about going through the woods and recalling ghost tales that he had heard. Isbell notes, “Ray listened to Benjamin’s ghost stories and cradled them in his memory” (39). This land surrounding the Hicks home is very close to the family cemetery, and it isn’t unusual for families in the area to have a repertoire that includes ghost stories. Patricia Sawin makes this point during her recordings and research with Bessie Eldreth:

Hearing those stories over and over again, especially in the context of the geographical settings in which the uncanny events are supposed to have occurred, provided insights into their purpose. As will become clear, these localized ghost stories comment indirectly but pointedly on moral behavior and thus make the very place in which one lives a constant reminder of moral standards. (76)

Ted said, “We didn’t have a TV, so we’d walk to our uncle’s. He kept his TV runnin’ all the time. That thing lasted and lasted. He said that’s what ruint your TV, turnin’ it on and off. He just left it runnin.’ Then it goes fuzzy. We head out with a kerosene lantern. They’d put me up front. I’d say, ‘Well, the last one is the first to go.’ He said he was always trying to convince someone else to be first in line as they walked the dark paths on Beech Mountain. Mama said we would wear out our welcome, but he said, ‘no, come on, I enjoy it when you come.’ You should have heard him talk. He talked sloooooowwwwww!! His name was Samuel Hicks. We always had a Samuel in each generation” (personal interview, 2009). Ted, his sister Kathy, Amy, Rosa, Rosa Jean, and Shirley Glenn all shared personal



narratives during my visits that involved the supernatural and things they couldn't explain that had happened in and around their home. These stories were told as "truth."

On March 16, 2009 during my interview with Shirley Glenn, she told me that her great grandmother, Buna Hicks, would tell a story about a panther that hollered like a woman. She said Buna told it as "the truth to her" and how much it scared her (personal interview, 2009). She said that her grandma, Hattie, would tell the scary tale of the "Big Toe." Rosa Harmon Hicks had mentioned this tale on more than one occasion.

Shirley also talked about the day Ray came to visit her at her house. She said, "I heard Ray on a record, and he come here one day. They were going to buy a banjo, and my husband [Charlie] was gone to work. They spent the day with me. He told lots of stories. He said that one room was haunted in the house, and that the ghost couldn't cross water. It would run you down to the bridge, but he couldn't cross. His voice would make you listen" (personal conversation, March, 2009).

Shirley and others I spoke with about Ray, Stanley, Orville, and Ted commented on the men's voices, dialect, gesturing, and style. All of the tradition bearers, it seems, have developed their own relationship to the Jack Tale tradition and their delivery of this genre of folktales.



**Figure 18: Shirley Glenn in Her Home on Beech Mountain**



**Figure 19: Charlie Glenn and Amy Michels in Charlie's Woodworking Shop. Amy is Playing One of Charlie's Dulcimers**



**Figure 20: Kathy Hicks Tribble, Rosa Jean Hicks, Rosa Hicks, and Amy Michels at Rosa's Home**

For the Hicks family, superstitions are different from the unexplainable events that have occurred in their lives. The ghost or “haint” stories, jokes, riddles, the personal narratives, and the Jack and Grandfather Tales are all part of Ted Hicks’s repertoire. Like Bessie, Orville, and his father, Ray, Ted moves through a performance embracing this oral tradition he has been a part of for so many years. You can sense the excitement in his voice when Ted begins talking about these genres of story.

As was the case when Ray was living, if you drive to Beech Mountain where Ted and Rosa continue to live on the old home place, you will always be invited to pull up a chair, eat dinner (lunch), and listen to some tales and songs. Isbell observed, “When people ask if Ted will succeed him Ray shakes his head: ‘Ted knows the stories, but he ain’t going to follow me; he can not stand that many people’” (11). After Ray’s death, Ted was invited to tell the

Jack Tales at the Ray Hicks Festival at Glenn Bolick's farm, and in 2009 he told tales at the Jonesborough Festival and in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. Ted has already performed publicly on two occasions in 2010.

Despite those who have said Ted was too shy to perform for crowds of people, he has taken on the role of active tradition bearer of the Jack Tales. Whether it is because of health issues or other reasons that are unknown to Ted, he has now entered the world of public performance. In my own experience of stepping on the stage for the first time after becoming an adult, I found that the positive reactions of the audience can catapult an individual into an unexpected desire to move from private to public performance. I believe Ted has already had these feelings. Ted told me about a time when his dad was scheduled to tell at a festival after he became ill. Ted said, "You could see he would feel rugged. If you wanted him to go, don't tell him. It was gettin' on his nerves. If they come, he didn't want to turn them down. He'd come back [home] and say, 'that was the best one ever was'" (personal interview, 2009). Likewise, Ted seems to feel better after telling a tale. He gets excited as he talks about the tale he has delivered. This leads him to offer another tale as he makes comparisons to the many Jack and Grandfather Tales that he has in his repertoire. He has mentioned on several occasions that when his set ended at the Jonesborough gathering, he was "just gettin' started."

I asked Orville Hicks if he would share some thoughts about Ted since they have had a close relationship through the years. Orville feels that Ted heard the tales more than anyone, other than maybe Rosa, since he was always at home and in close proximity to Ray. "Ted heard them over and over, but I don't think he is as interested in telling them full time like Ray did" (personal interview, 2009). Orville said that Ted would tell short tales when

they were growing up, but he was more interested in hunting, gathering, and pitching horseshoes. Orville believes that Ted tells the tales now because he enjoys the company during this time when he isn't well enough to be outdoors and work in the fields and gather herbs. Patrick Mullen explains how traditions are used to cope with the present in his book *Listening to Old Voices: Folklore, Life Stories, and the Elderly*:

Not all old people are active tradition-bearers, though; some passively carry on traditions, but the active ones value the past, maintain a connection with it, and often identify themselves as traditional performers and crafts-people.

This does not mean that they live in the past; they keep traditions alive by using them as resources for coping with the present. (2)

Ted's transition from passive to active tradition bearer, as he tell the tales both privately and publicly, seems to be helping him get through the days and nights as he copes with his current health issues, acknowledging Mullen's point.

Ted's health and how it affects his ability to tell the tales publicly has been a topic of conversation on more than one occasion. He worries that he will make a commitment to tell the Jack Tales at a festival or gathering and that he won't feel up to traveling. In October 2009 I called Ted to see if he was planning to keep his engagement at Jonesborough. He repeated what he had said several times before, "If I feel up to it in the morning" (phone conversation, October 3, 2009).

I called the next morning and he said he was planning on it. He talked for a few minutes about wishing he was already there at the festival. I drove to Jonesborough and set up the camera. Ted showed up in the early afternoon. He walked up on the stage where his dad had told tales year after year. Connie Ragen-Blake introduced Ted and said, "Everyone

here is a lucky duck.” Ted proceeded to tell “Jack and the Doctor’s Daughter.” He enjoyed the crowd, and the 1,600 people in the audience showed their appreciation for Ted’s ability to perform for them at the festival. The attendees talked to Ted and Rosa about how much they miss hearing Ray at the festival and how nice it is that Ted is following in his dad’s footsteps. We all left the festival that day knowing that Ted and Rosa were proud of their performances, and it was apparent that Ted would like to continue telling his tales to a public audience.



**Figure 21: Ted and Rosa Leaving the Main Stage at the National Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, October 3, 2009**

Ray Hicks was a tradition bearer who was sought out for his family's tradition. Local journalist, Thompson writes of the significance of Ray's storytelling:

And he became first the star, and then the Grand Old Man, a living treasure, among storytellers. The reasons were obvious to those who knew Ray. Most modern storytellers are essentially part-timers. They live in the mainstream world, stepping out of it temporarily to bring to life old stories learned from living tradition bearers or, sometimes, books. And then they return to a regular life, the performance over. None of that ever described Ray Hicks. His stories were as much a part of him as his arm or leg. He did not perform them; rather, people simply came near him and they heard him speak and share. A stranger coming to his farm would soon find himself settled in on bench on the front porch while Ray spun stories of the mountain past, Jack Tales, or Grandfather Tales. (51)

In much the same setting, the traditions continue. Ted and Rosa have shared many wonderful stories with me about the good times on Beech Mountain, and some of those same stories are captured by Julia Ebel:

Conversation is peppered with personal stories. Laughter comes easily—from Rosa, from Orville, from Juanita, from Ted. Leonard stops by the porch after unloading a truck full of firewood. He tells about the blizzard of 1960, when a helicopter dropped relief supplies and sent the chickens fluttering every which way from the henhouse. Orville and Ted speak of fishing, and Orville slips in a short tale of the catfish that followed him home—meowing. Conversation leads to story, so Orville tells the tale of “Jack and the Devil”



and the story of how the man in the moon got there. Orville and Ted recall how they used to throw a crowbar to see how far it would go. (2005: 131)

This is the daily routine at Ted's and Rosa's home. The swapping and telling of tales continues on the porch, at the kitchen table, and in the parlor. Banjos and voices ring and the cool breeze takes those sounds down the Old Mountain and Andy Hicks Roads down to where Rosa's old homeplace is still standing. That is where she told me she remembers hearing the tales and songs. She talks about Floyd Hicks telling the Jack Tales to her and other family members. Floyd is Stanley's brother and learned, like Stanley, from his mother, Buna, and father Roby.

Rosa said she only remembers telling the tales to Leonard. In my first interview, she recalled, "I had to entertain him 'cause he's the only one, and of course, he wanted attention and everythin'. He's always hollerin' he'd like to hear a story. 'Mama tell me that one.' I said, "You can tell it to me by now 'cause I've told it so many times." I start tellin', my mind go off was a doin' and he'd look, 'Mama, hurly [hurry] up, hurly up.'" I said, "Now you finish up to me" (personal interview, 2009). During some of my visits, Leonard and I had conversations, but he is not interested in being interviewed. He still farms, cuts firewood, and performs other chores around the place. He, like Ted and Jack, is dedicated to his mom and dad and the homeplace, but he has no interest in actively telling the Jack Tales. He is, however, interested in continuing the farming traditions he learned from his dad, and each spring he is busy preparing the ground for planting.

Rosa's passion for singing the old songs and ballads has not diminished. She talked about her love for singing while she planted flowers, tended the garden, and "put up" vegetables. When Amy and I took Rosa to her doctor appointments or to the grocery store

she would sing in the car. In the films documenting Rosa and Ray and their traditions, she often sings “New River Train,” “Barbara Allen” or “Little Black Train.” As is the case with Ted’s and Orville’s tales, a day at the Hicks home would not be complete without a ballad or song from Rosa.



**Figure 22: Rosa Hicks in Her Kitchen**

For her thesis, *“A Whistling Girl and A Crowing Hen Always Come To Some Bad End” The Singing Traditions of Three Western North Carolina Women: Hazel Rhymer,*

*Pearl Hicks and Zora Walker*, Susan Pepper interviewed Rosa on October 11, 2007 and asked her why she believes people sing in the mountains. Rosa replied,

Because they are happy and they got something to sing about [laughs], everybody in the mountain really were. They got that feeling in it, that—well, I wouldn't know how anybody would feel [who] couldn't sing. How they would feel. Look like they'd lost something somewhere or another. I can't say much about it but I try. I love to sing and I love to hear singing. And it would be a sad world if there wasn't no singing and music playing.

(210)

On one of my visits, Rosa told me one of the same stories that she had shared with Susan about how her father would ask her and her siblings to sing along with him, and Rosa said she would say, “Papa, we don't know the songs you know” (personal interview, 2009).

Whenever I would take my guitar and Amy would take her banjo up to the Hicks home, Rosa would chime in. Ted never failed to join in on the singing. He would tell tales for me to record, and he would sing songs with the same enthusiasm he showed when performing the tales. Both Ted and Rosa would join in on the traditional and country songs that Amy and I would play and sing.

Today, besides actively sharing the tales and songs, Ted continues building bird houses, walking canes, and crafts. This is another tradition that his father passed down to the Hicks children. Ted's handiwork can be purchased in stores in and around Boone, North Carolina. Whenever attending a festival, Ted sells his crafts, and Rosa, her daughter Jean, and Rosa Jean sell their dahlia bulbs, fried pies and other baked goods. Ted tells his tales,

Rosa sings a ballad, and the two sing a song together. The traditions continue in the Hicks family.



**Figure 23: Rosa and Her Daughter, Jean, Selling Baked Goods and Dahlia Bulbs at Jonesborough, Tennessee, October 3, 2009**



Figure 24: Ted Hicks, Rosa Hicks, and Lisa Baldwin in Jonesborough, Tennessee



Figure 25: Ted Hicks: Jack of All Trades



Figure 26: Ted and Rosa at the Ray Hicks Festival at Glenn Bolick's Farm (Photo courtesy of Amy Michels)



Figure 27: Orville and Leonard Hicks



## Chapter 4

### Conclusion

The tradition of storytelling has been a part of everyday life for a number of families in Watauga, Avery, and Ashe Counties. The Hicks, Harmon, and Ward families, “sometimes known as the Harmon-Hicks-Ward-Gentry-Long tradition” (Lindahl 72), have been telling tales in this part of western North Carolina for many years. These families have been documented and sought out for their stories and ability to give life to the characters and settings in their tales. The tradition began long before the arrival of these families in America. The Harmons and Wards came from Germany and the Hicks family came from England. Both families settled in Watauga County, North Carolina by the end of the 1700s. When they migrated from Europe, they brought the tales “that they nurtured from generation to generation with at least as much care as they devoted to their most important material possessions” (Lindahl 331). That care is now displayed by Ted Hicks when he tells a Jack Tale and shares his personal narratives about growing up in the presence of tradition bearers.

Richard Chase came to the region and learned of the tales. He remembers, “My own first knowledge of the Jack Tales came in the spring of 1935 through Marshall Ward, a young fellow from western North Carolina,” (viii). Chase collected the tales from Marshall Ward and others on Beech Mountain, including Roby, Stanley, and Ben Hicks, to all of whom Ted Hicks is related. Chase popularized the tales he collected in his book, *The Jack Tales: Folk Tales from the Southern Appalachians Collected and Retold by Richard Chase*. In a controversial strategy, he changed the tales from their original telling to make them more entertaining and appealing to a wider audience.

Unlike Chase, the Hicks, Harmon, and Ward family members have continued the oral transmission of the tales rather than writing them down. They pride themselves on repeating the tales that were passed down from their parents, grandparents, and great grandparents as they share them in private as well as public settings. They are “traditional tellers” because they continue sharing the family tradition of tale telling in their homes and community. Ray, Stanley, and Orville Hicks have received numerous awards for their tale telling. Ted Hicks has heard the stories all of his life, and like Ray, Stanley, and Orville he tells the Jack and Grandfather Tales by memory. He and other family members I interviewed during my research acknowledge that they have read Chase’s versions of the Jack Tales. For the most part, they all had positive things to say about his versions of the tales.

Stories and tales have been an important part of every daily life on Beech Mountain in western North Carolina for over a century. During my interviews with the members of the Hicks family on Beech Mountain, I learned that many of the younger generations of this famous tale telling family are not interested in continuing the narrative traditions. My respondents told me that their children and grandchildren have been affected by modernity and that they enjoy the modern conveniences and technological advances offered in today’s society. They stressed that everyone is in a hurry with little time to sit down and share the older traditions. Individuals in the Hicks family also told me that they enjoy hearing the tales and stories, but they have no interest in telling them. In their publication *Folklife*, editors Glenn Hinson and William Ferris include William E. Lightfoot’s article on the Jack Tales. Lightfoot describes the “recontextualization” of Jack Tales into a modern art of performance:

Indeed, in recent years the telling of Jack tales has undergone a process that folklorists call recontextualization, in which the physical and social contexts

of narration have shifted dramatically. Whereas tale-telling was once a spontaneous, organic, and everyday event—unfolding when tellers and listeners gathered to shuck corn, snap beans, grade tobacco, skim sorghum, rock by the fire before bedtime, or cool off on the front porch after supper—It now happens most frequently (or at least most publicly) at such formally scheduled occasions as school functions, county fairs, regional celebrations, storytelling festivals, church gatherings, library socials, and children’s theater productions. In these contemporary settings, semiprofessional artists tell Jack tales to (sometimes quite large) groups of complete strangers; their narrative style, in turn, is often closer to modern performance art than to the older, traditional ways of telling. (308)

Lightfoot’s comment indicates the importance of Ted’s transition from a skilled tradition bearer of subsistence farming, carpentry, and herb gathering to an active bearer of the Jack Tales. He is telling the tales in the same context where his great grandfather, Benjamin, told the tales to his father Ray, and Ray passed them down to Ted and other family members, friends, and scholars. It is reassuring to know that individuals still gather in this setting to hear the oral traditions. I am grateful that Ted and Orville were willing to share the tales and their personal narratives with me. I was unable to locate other Hicks family members who are actively telling the Jack Tales. On the campus of Appalachian State University I was introduced to members of the Hicks family who commented on Orville’s talents. Some of these individuals said they did not know Jack Tales by memory. Those who said they did know them by memory had no interest in sharing them with others.

Ted Nathan Hicks has had a view of the Southern Appalachian Mountains his entire life. He was born in Banner Elk, North Carolina in Avery County in western North Carolina on March 2, 1954, and was raised on Beech Mountain in the home where his father, Ray Hicks was born in Watauga County. Ted is named for Ray's father, Nathan Hicks. Throughout his lifetime, Ted has also had a panoramic view of Appalachian mountain traditions, including herb gathering, subsistence farming, handicraft building, dancing, ballad singing, instrument and music making, and the Jack and Grandfather Tales.

For the most part, folks made the pilgrimage to Beech Mountain to hear Ray Hicks tell a Jack Tale. This home has been the context for the transmission of a genre of folklore that could have easily disappeared in the mountains of southern Appalachia had it not been for a handful of family members who enjoyed sharing the tales and/or who realized the importance of the tradition.

After Ray's death, Ted was invited to tell the Jack Tales at the Ray Hicks Festival at Glenn Bolick's Farm, and in 2008 and 2009 he performed at the Jonesborough Festival. In June of 2009, Ted and Rosa were invited to a festival in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee entitled "Remembering Ray Hicks." Rosa sang "The New River Train," and Ted told "Jack and the Giants." Other than these and a recent performance of "Jack and the Heifer's Hide" at the Founder's Day Celebration in Jonesborough, Tennessee, and a gathering of Jack Tale tellers at the Matney Community Center near Beech Mountain, where Ted shared "Jack and the Northwest Wind," Ted's tales have only been told in his and his mother's home.

Although Ted Hicks shares tales and stories in his home on Beech Mountain and rarely has had public performances, he tells the Jack and Grandfather Tales along with personal narratives with similar detail, conviction, and sincerity that his father Ray Hicks did.

As I have talked with people about Ray Hicks, they have said that Ray would sit in the chair around the wood stove and tell tales as if he was on a stage and telling the tales to thousands of people. In some situations, however, there were only one or two people present to hear a tale there in the living room of the Hicks home. Ted continues this tradition in the same context. Even though most of Ted's telling of the Jack and Grandfather Tales is in the privacy of his and Rosa's home, he tells the tales as if he is in front of a large audience. It was argued by many, including Ray and Rosa Hicks, that Ted was too shy to share tales with visitors and that he had little or no interest in the oral traditions. It is possible that had Ted's health not affected his outdoor work, he would not be telling tales and stories, but at the present time he is following in his father's footsteps

In a conversation in August 2009, I asked Ted if he felt that it was important that he continue telling stories and tales to keep the family tradition passed down to other generations, he replied, "Yeh, it could be. I hadn't thought of it that way, keep it goin' on." When I mentioned that he is a tradition bearer, he responded, "I heard it from the master. Daddy's shoes are big to fill." Ted takes great pride and also shows an important sense of responsibility when he tells the Jack and Grandfather Tales that he learned from his father and other sources. On the day that I requested that he tell "Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack," he said, "Yeh, I can tell it. I know it." Before some tales he will often make disclaimers. He has said, "I might not remember it exactly," or "I might forget some of the words." Bauman argues that disclaimers can be a way to signal performance: "We must note that the conventional means used to announce performance may amount to a surface denial of any real competence at all, a kind of disclaimer of performance" (22). Ted will also make corrections if he feels he has made a mistake or left out an important element of the tale.

This occurred in his telling of “Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack.” He takes responsibility for the characters and their actions in his tales. Ted will occasionally pause for a moment to make sure he hasn’t left out an important detail in his performance. When he has completed a tale, he will often continue with his disclaimers. These comments offer insight into how he felt about his performance. Ted also elaborates about each tale upon its completion and continues to explain what the tale means to him.

When I ask him to tell a tale, he is quick to accept the invitation. The stories and tales carry value for Ted and his family members. He feels that morals and lessons are learned from every tale, and he wants his tales to be serious with only a bit of humor thrown in now and then, but he enjoys the wit in the tales, demonstrating folklorist and anthropologist William Bascom’s point that, “Folklore is a pedagogic device which reinforces morals and values and builds wit” (1954: 67). Ted makes these connections when he is framing his tales before a performance. During an interview with Ted, he told me some reasons why he wants to keep the tales less humorous, noting that the tales are important for teaching about the more traditional ways of living.

Ted told me, “Daddy’s favorite is “Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack” because it had a little Bible in it, he said. ‘Eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth.’” According to my class notes from the Appalachian Studies colloquium, Orville had made this same comment. This is not surprising, since both Orville and Ted were mentored by Ray Hicks. Ted said, “I never did go to church much. I ain’t been maybe one or two times and that’s probly a funeral. I’s taught (he points to his heart) right here is where it needed to be at” (personal interview, March, 2009).

Before Ted began his private performance of “Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack,” he said, “This tale, they’s two Jacks in this one. One’s called Lucky Jack and the other’s called Unlucky Jack. In the book, Chase got it ‘Big Jack and Little Jack.’” Ted has spoken on several occasions about Richard Chase, and most of his comments have been positive. He didn’t celebrate Chase necessarily, but he feels that it was good that he collected the tales and kept them alive by publishing them in *The Jack Tale* book in 1943. Ted said, “Richard Chase changed ’em. He put ’em in a book. He told ’em. He made a good storyteller, but see, he wasn’t raised in the mountains. He didn’t have the speech. They said he learned to be a botanist. Somethin’ with plants. He knowed his plants” (personal interview, March, 2009).

Ted is impressed with Chase’s knowledge of plants. This is most likely because Ted learned about plant lore and spent a great deal of time in past years gathering the herbs and plants in the mountains around his home. Ted said, “He got in on the stories. Yeh, he done good. At least he got ’em down in the book. Some people threw off on him. He didn’t pay for ’em. He might give the kids a little treat. I remember him comin’ here. He had a patch on one eye. Somethin’ must have happened. He had somebody drive him. He said, ‘Go to Ray Hicks’s and getchu a cup. Have you a cup of cold cow’s milk and a jelly biscuit’” (personal interview, March, 2009).

During the interview for the *Appalachian Journal* conducted by the students in the colloquium with Thomas McGowan and Orville Hicks in fall of 2009, Orville talked about Richard Chase and his collecting tales on Beech Mountain:

I remember Richard Chase, the one who wrote the Jack Tale book—I don’t remember this, but I know my brothers and sisters told me about it. He come

through in '42 when he wrote the book. He hearded that Mama knowed the tales, and he come down there, and Daddy said, 'Nope, you ain't recording it from Mama, my wife. You ain't putting her in your ol' book, so just get out of here.' Finally, Mamma's daddy, Kell Harmon, would tell him to let him talk to her. Daddy said, 'All right, come on down here and record her and get a few tales.' He come in the wintertime, and he recorded three or four tales from Mama, and the kids were running through the house making racket. He said, 'You kids go outside till I get done.' Daddy got up and said, 'Buddy, buddy, nobody tells my kids to go out in the cold but me.' He opened the door, and he literally throwed him [Chase] out the door by the seat of his britches and told him not to come back, and he didn't come back. I think Richard Chase got a few tales before he got throwed out though. (64)

Whether it is a revivalist teller who learned the tales in Richard Chase's book or a traditional teller who learned the tales from family members in the context of their grandfather's and father's home, the elements of the tales, the performance styles, and each delivery of a tale is their own. It might be one person listening or thousands, as was the case with Ray Hicks at the Jonesborough gathering, but each performance is different and interpreted differently. Christine Pavesic writes in her dissertation, *Ray Hicks and the Jack Tales of Appalachia: Their Origins and Significance*,

This capacity of the teller to adapt and transform his or her tale based on audience participation during each storytelling event may be represented as a dialogue between story and interpretation. Consider, first, that a story is always subject to interpretation. Stories begin as interpretation of



experiences, events, natural phenomena, or cultural mores and taboos. Stories operate not simply in the realm of the mind as ideas, but to be convincing they also must have a basis in experience or social practice. Storytellers face the task of creating convincing tales for their audience without losing the integrity of the experiences. And once that story is formed and passed from one teller to the next, the same practice of interpretation can occur. This leads to a central question of composition in performance—if the narrative is adapted with each retelling, then how much adaptation can occur before the story is no longer acknowledged as being the same? In part, this is a question of perspective, for either continuity or discontinuity can be stressed; the practice of deliberate, conscious, narrative revision can be highlighted or down-played. What seems reasonable, however, is the proposition that there will always be some built-in interpretations. (52)

Perhaps changes have been made as tradition bearers passed the tales down to their children as they worked the land, snapped beans, or bundled galax years ago. After telling the same story to her children over and over again, a mother might make changes in order to make it more exciting for herself or her children during her delivery. Rosa Harmon Hicks pointed out to me that she got tired of telling the stories over and over again. For whatever reason, the Jack Tales that have been passed down in the Hicks, Harmon, Ward families often have subtle differences and some have extreme differences. What is important is that the members of these families continue the transmission of this tradition to their children and that students, folklorists, and other interested persons record and transcribe them for future generations to hear and read.

Without tradition bearers, like Benjamin, Ray, Stanley, Orville, and Ted Hicks, who have actively shared this particular genre of folktale, audiences would not have the same opportunity to make connections to family, land, and, community in this part of Appalachia. The metanarration and framing for the tales are different for revivalist tellers as their connections to the tales are quite different from those of the Hicks family.

A tradition that was brought across the seas to Watauga County in western North Carolina is still surviving there today, and anyone can drive up to Beech Mountain and have a face to face conversation with the bearers of this genre of folklore. Recordings of Ray, Stanley, and other Hicks, Harmon, and Ward family members are available, but to have an opportunity to sit in the Hicks's living room with Ted and Orville and watch them swapping tales and sharing the stories of their youth growing up in the mountains of Appalachia is a lesson that cannot be learned in any classroom or from any recording.

It is my hope that families will once again find time to tell a bedtime story, sing songs while driving to the relative's house, and share personal stories around the dinner table. Maybe people will gather at grandma's house and push the chairs to the wall to make room for music making and dancing. Perhaps the children will learn some of their family traditions that they can pass down to their own children.

To my knowledge, no one has collected and transcribed Ted's versions of the tales. I have tried to capture some of Ted's dialect by spelling words phonetically in the transcriptions. Ted's delivery of "Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack" was one of the first tales I recorded. I have listened to other tellers' versions of this tale. One distinct difference in Ted's telling is that he replaces the king and queen with a farmer and his wife. Ted's private and public performances of "Jack and the Doctor's Girl" are included in Appendix B and C.

The two performances are remarkably similar even though one is recorded in Ted's home and the other is on the main stage at the National Storytelling Festival.

"Jack and the Heifer's Hide" is told differently by Ted, Orville, and Stanley Hicks, illustrating the point that each teller brings his own interpretations to his telling and that audiences can and do often dictate a specific rendering of a tale. Orville's inclusion of the mothers-in-law, for example, has been a topic of conversation on many occasions. In the *Appalachian Journal*, Thomas McGowan writes, "Orville sometimes adds on a whole new set of two additional episodes. He occasionally apologizes that the content of these actions is 'rough,' but that oldtimers, namely his uncle Adie Harmon, who ran a country store, told this different and much expanded tale" (175-176). Rosa has told me several times that she doesn't like the mothers-in-law version. She has also said that she got tired of "Jack and the Heifer's Hide" because Ray told it so often. Ted does not include the mothers-in-law in his telling and says that he prefers the tale without that element. Stanley's telling of the tale is much shorter, and as in most of his tales he offers a more comical delivery.

During the period of my research (2009-2010), Rosa and Ted shared stories with me about the many strangers who have driven across the country to reach their home. Ted says that these visitors would knock on the door and Ray wouldn't ask who was at the door. He would invite everyone to come on in, and he would commence to tell a tale or sing a song. Some of these strangers became friends and still correspond with Rosa and Ted. As they continue coming from near and far, Ted continues his father's tradition of saying, "Come on in." If asked, he will proceed to tell a tale or sing a song. It is not unusual for Ted to ask if anyone would like to hear a tale. This role of assuming responsibility for carrying on the tradition, as Rosa and others have pointed out, is a new one for Ted. On every day that I

visited with Ted from January 2009 to April 2010, he seemed eager to share his gift. He always sat on the edge of the bed in the front room of his house when he told stories, riddles, jokes, and tales and sang songs.

Students from Appalachian State University, folklorists, and other visitors often make their way up to Beech Mountain to hear Ted and Rosa share tales and ballads and to learn about subsistence farming, plant lore, and herb gathering. They also learn about the ways of living before modernity affected the Beech Mountain area; they learn about the ways in which Jack lived. Ted's performances of the Jack Tales are keeping a Beech Mountain tradition alive. I believe they are nurturing the teller as well as the listeners. Jack is alive and well in western North Carolina, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to document members of the Hicks family who live "waaaaay back up in the mountains."



Figure 28: A Poster of Rosa and Ray Hicks That Hangs in Their Home



**Figure 29: Ted Hicks and His Fans**



**Figure 30: A Photograph of Ray Hicks Telling a Jack Tale**

## Works Cited

- Baldwin, Lisa, et al. "Waaaaay Back Up in the Mountains": An Interview with Storyteller Orville Hicks. *Appalachian Journal: A Regional Studies Review* 37. 1-2 (Fall 2009/Winter 2010): 44-75. Print.
- Bascom, William. "Four Functions of Folklore." *Journal of American Folklore* 67. (1954): 333-349. Print.
- Bauman, Richard. *Story, Performance, and Event, Contextual Studies of Oral Narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1986. Print.
- . *Verbal Art as Performance*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press: 1977. Print.
- Burton, Thomas G. *Some Ballad Folks*. Boone: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1978.
- Chase, Richard. *American Folk Tales and Songs*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956. Print.
- . *Grandfather Tales: American-English Folk Tales*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948. Print.
- . *The Jack Tales; Folk Tales from the Southern Appalachians Collected and Retold by Richard Chase*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1943. Print.
- Conway, Cecelia. Foreward to Betty N. Smith's *A Singer Among Singer: Jane Hicks Gentry*. The University Press of Kentucky, 1998, vii. Print.
- Cozzo, David. "Beyond Tall Tales: Ray Hicks and Mountain Herbalism." *Appalachian Journal* 30.4. (2003): 284-301. Print.
- Davis, Donald. *Jack Always Seeks His Fortune*. Little Rock, Arkansas: August House Publishers, 1992. Print.
- Ebel, Julia Taylor. *Jack Tales and Mountain Yarns as Told by Orville Hicks*. Boone, North Carolina: Parkway Publishers, 2009. Print.
- . *Orville Hicks, Mountain Stories, Mountain Roots*. Boone, North Carolina: Parkway Publishers, 2005. Print.
- Eller, Ronald D. *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945*. The University Press of Kentucky, 2008. Print.



- Ellis, Bill. "The Gentry-Long Tradition and Roots of Revivalism." *Jack in Two Worlds: Contemporary North American Tales and Their Tellers*. Ed. William Bernard McCarthy. Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1994. 93-122. Print.
- Haley, Gail. "From the Ananse Stories to the Jack Tales: My Work with Folktales." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 11 (1986): 118-121. Print.
- . *Mountain Jack Tales*. Boone, North Carolina: Parkway Publishers, 2002. Print.
- Isbell, Robert. *Ray Hicks: Master Storyteller of the Blue Ridge*. Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1996. Print.
- . *The Keepers*. Winston-Salem, North Carolina: John E. Blair, Publisher, 1999. Print.
- Johannsen, Kristin. *Ginseng Dreams*. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 2006. Print.
- Keefe, Susan Emley, "Appalachian Family Ties." *Appalachian Mental Health*. Ed. Susan Emley Keefe. Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1988. 24-35. Print.
- Leonard, Robert H. "Performing Arts." *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*. Ed. Rudy Abramson and Jean Haskill. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press 2006. 1225-28. Print.
- Lightfoot, William E. "Jack Tales." *Folklife*. Ed. Glenn Hinson and William Ferris. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009. 307-308. Print.
- . "Hicks-Harmon Families." *American Folklore: An Encyclopedia*. Ed. Jan Harold Brunvand. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1996. 367-369. Print
- Lindhahl, Carl. *Perspectives on the Jack Tales and Other North American Märchen*. Bloomington: The Folklore Institute/Indiana University, 2001. Print.
- . "The Nation's Most Celebrated Storytelling Family." *American Folktales: From the Collection of the Library of Congress*. Ed. Carl Lindahl. 2004. 331-337. Print.
- . "Sounding a Shy Tradition: Oral and Written Styles of American Mountain Märchen." *Journal of Folklore Research* 38. (2001): 68-98. Print.
- McBride, Ray. "Stanley Hicks." *Foxfire* 3. Ed. Eliot Wigginton. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1975. 139-157. Print.
- McCarthy, William Bernard. Ed. *Jack in Two Worlds*. Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994. Print.

- McDermitt, Barbara Rice Damron McDermitt. *A Comparison Of a Scottish and American Storyteller and Their Märchen Repertoires*. Ph.D. University of Edinburgh, School of Scottish Studies. Print.
- McGowan, Thomas. "Sort of like an Appalachian Journal Editor: Presenting and Playing with Identity in the Storytelling of Orville Hicks." *Appalachian Journal* 29 (2002): 164-179. Print.
- . "Orville Hicks and Jack Tales and Mountain Yarns: A Scholar's (and Friend's) Afterword." Julia Taylor Ebel. *Jack Tales and Mountain Yarns as Told by Orville Hicks*. Boone, North Carolina: Parkway Publishers, 2009. Print.
- McGuire, Jack. "Sounds and Sensibilities: Storytelling as an Educational Process." *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* 13 (1988): 6-9. Print.
- Mellinger, Marie B. "Ginseng." *Foxfire* 3. Ed. Eliot Wigginton. Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1975. 245-273. Print.
- Mullen, Patrick B. *Listening to Old Voices, Folklore, Life Stories, and the Elderly*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992. Print.
- Oxford, Cheryl. "The Storyteller as Craftsman: Stanley Hicks Telling 'Jack and the Bull.'" *North Carolina Folklore Journal* 36 (1989): 73-120. Print.
- Pavesic, Christine Lynn. *Ray Hicks and the Jack Tales of Appalachia: Their Origins and Significance*. Northern Illinois University, August, 2002. Dekalb, Illinois. UMI Dissertation Services, Ann Arbor Michigan. Print.
- Pepper, Susan. "A Whistling Girl And A Crowing Hen Always Come To Some Bad End" *The Singing Traditions of Three Western North Carolina Women: Hazel Rhymer, Pearl Hicks and Zora Walker*. Thesis, Appalachian State University, 2008. Print.
- Perdue, Charles L. Jr. "Is Old Jack Really Richard Chase?" *Perspectives on the Jack Tales and Other North American Märchen*. Ed. Carl Lindahl. Bloomington: Indiana University 2001. 111-138. Print.
- . "Old Jack and the New Deal." *Appalachian Journal* 14 (1987): 108-152. Print.
- . *Outwitting the Devil: Jack Tales From Wise County Virginia*. Ed. Charles L. Perdue. Santa Fe, New Mexico: Ancient City Press, 1987. Print.
- Ross, Charlotte. "History of Storytelling." *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*. Ed. In Rudy Abramson and Jean Haskill. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006. 1267-1268. Print.

- Bernard, H. Russell. *Research Methods In Anthropology*. Lanham, New York, Toronto, Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2006. Print.
- Salsi, Lynn. *Appalachian Jack Tales Told by Hicks, Harmon, and Ward Families*. Brown Summit, North Carolina: Forza Renea Editions, 2008. Print.
- . *The Jack Tales: Stories by Ray Hicks as Told to Lynn Salsi*. New York, New York: Callaway Editions, 2000. Print.
- . *The Life and Times of Ray Hicks*. Knoxville, Tennessee: University of Tennessee Press, 2009. Print.
- . *Young Ray Hicks Learns the Jack Tales*. Brown Summit, North Carolina: Forza Renea Editions, 2004. Print.
- Sawin, Patricia E. "Inscribing Morality on the Landscape: Deviant Mountain Woman in Bessie Eldreth's Ghost Stories." *North Carolina Folklore Journal* 42 (1995): 75-90. Print.
- . *Listening For a Life: A Dialogic Ethnography of Bessie Eldreth Through Her Songs and Stories*. Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2004. Print.
- Smith, Betty N. *A Singer Among Singer: Jane Hicks Gentry*. The University Press of Kentucky, 1998. Print.
- Sobol, Joseph. "Storytelling in the Twentieth Century, Renaissance of." *Encyclopedia of Appalachia*. Ed. Rudy Abramson and Jean Haskill. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2006. 1268-1270. Print.
- . "Jack in the Raw: Ray Hicks." *Jack In Two Worlds*. Ed. William Bernard McCarthy. Chapel Hill, & London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994. 3-26. Print.
- Thompson, Jim. "New Book Captures Life of Ray Hicks." *High Country Magazine* 4 Oct. 2008: 43-51. Print.
- Williams, Cratis. "Appalachian Speech." *The North Carolina Historical Review* 55 (1978): 174-179. Print.

## Films and Recordings

Barret, Elizabeth. *Fixin' To Tell About Jack*, Whitesburg, Kentucky: Appalshop, 1974. Video.

Burton, Thomas G., and Jack Schrader. *A Film About Ray Hicks*, Johnson, Tennessee: East Tennessee State University, 2005. Video.

Drury, Jack. *The Jack Tales Festival 2002*. Blowing Rock, North Carolina: Self produced, 2002. Video.

Seymour, Ben. *Ray Hicks: Live on the Mountain*. Tryon, North Carolina: Kudzu Patch Productions, 1998. Video cassette.

Hadley, Charles and Jane. *Ray and Rosa Hicks: The Last of the Old-Time Storytellers*. Charlotte, North Carolina: Queens College, 2000. Video

Hicks, Orville. *Orville Hicks: Mule Egg Seller & Appalachian Storyteller*. Boone, North Carolina: Self Produced, 1998. Compact Disc.

## Field Recordings and Unpublished Materials

Baldwin, Lisa. Field recordings, personal conversations, interviews, and notes, 2009-2010, of Shirley Glenn, Orville, Rosa, and Ted Hicks, William E. Lightfoot, Thomas McGowan, Amy Michels, Rosa Jane Hicks Presnell, and Kathy Hicks Tribble.

## APPENDIX A

## Private Performance by Ted Hicks

## “Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack”

Digitally recorded interview and performance by Lisa Baldwin on March 22, 2009 at Rosa’s and Ted’s home on Old Mountain Road.

Ted: Daddy’s favorite is “Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack” ’cause it had a little Bible in it. He said. Eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth. Well, this tale, they’s two Jacks in this ’en. One’s called Lucky Jack and the other’s Unlucky Jack. In the book, Chase got it “Big Jack and Little Jack.”

Well, anyway, in this ’en, Unlucky Jack’s out lookin’ for him a job. Like Amy sayin’ a while ago, you know, need some clothes, shoes for the winter. Well, he goes out askin’.

He asked people and they say, “We got plenty of work, but nothin’ to pay you with.”

Well, he keeps goin’ on askin’, inquiren’ around, you know. He finally asked one man. He said, “You gettin’ pretty close. There’s a farmer over yonder that always hires people, you know, do jobs like ’iss.”

Well, he keeps a goin’. Finally, come across the ridge down the holler. He sees a pretty good size house. He’s walkin’ on down to it, and the farmer’s wife is out in the yard. She sees Unlucky Jack a comin’.

She runs in the house. Say, “Hey, we got another sucker a comin’.” So, Unlucky Jack comes on up.

Farmer come out said, “Why be you here?”

Unlucky Jack said, “I’m lookin’ for work. I heard from others fellers that you might be a hirin’.”

He said, "Can you herd, herd sheep?"

Unlucky Jack said, "Never done it, but that don't seem like too hard a job. I be you show me what ye want done, I believe I could do it."

Well, the farmer said, "I always write out a contract."

Well, Unlucky Jack said, "ok."

Well, the farmer gets it, writes it out in it, give him nothin' to eat. And the first that gets mad, the other'n lay that 'en over a barrel, whip him, and take his pocket knife, cut out enough hide to make a pair of shoe strings.

Well, he reaches it to Unlucky Jack. Unlucky Jack couldn't read or write. He didn't know beef from bull. He's ashamed of it. He just thinks, "Oh, that's ok with me."

Well, it was gettin' late in the evenin'. The farmer said, "Ye bed's ready." Didn't offer him no supper to eat nor nothin'. Well, he went to bed upstairs, went to bed.

Next mornin', "Hey, ye sheeps ready." Offer him no breakfast. See, it wasn't in the contract, you know.

Well, he counts out ninety nine ewes, and one buck, hunderd head of sheep. They take out in the pasture, farmer showed him what he wants done, you know. Well, he stays there all day.

Come in that evenin', farmer went, "96, 97, 98, 99, one hunderd!!! You've not lost a one today. You the best sheep herder I've hired." Said, "Ye bed's ready."

Well, Unlucky Jack done that for three days. He's gettin' hungry, you know. He come in the third day. Hadn't lost another sheep. "96, 97, 98, 99, one hundred!!!"

He said, "Gosh, you the best sheep herder I've hired."

Unlucky Jack said, "Yeh, but," said, "Ain't you goin' to feed me nothin'?"

He said, "It's not in the contract. Are you mad?"

Unlucky Jack gettin' pretty weak. He said, "Yeh, I'm mad, and good and mad." You treat me like 'iss. Said, "You worse than animals."

Well, he's already weak. The farmer laid him across that barrel, whipped him, took his pocket knife, and cut out enough hide in his back make a pair of shoe strings.

Well, Unlucky Jack takes off a wobbly weak, tryin' to get back home. He goes a staggerin' along, holdin' bushes, and he finally gets out in the woods. And he tries to find water. He gettin' thirsty too, you know. He makes it down into like a hole like and there might be water in it, and there was a spring. He goes unconscious there, layin' there, you know.

Well, next mornin', here come Lucky Jack along a whistlin', out lookin' for what he can get in to. He come along that patch of woods or forest, and he looks in the leaves and there's blood. He reaches down and smells of it. Said, "That's not animal blood. That's human blood."

Well, he goes trekkin' it. He treks down in that hole, and there lays Unlucky Jack unconscious.

Well, Lucky Jack takes that cool water, and he starts bathin' his face. Finally brings him back uh to. He said, "Who done you 'iss way?"

Unlucky Jack said, "Uh, I's out lookin' for work, and I hired out to herd sheep for a farmer, and he wrote out a contract. And he put in it not give me nothin' to eat, and the first 'en got mad, other'n was to lay the other'n across a barrel, and whip him, and take his knife and cut out enough hide to make a pair of shoe strings. Put salt in it. I missed that a while ago. Said, "He done me this way."

Well, Lucky Jack kept gettin' him some water and got him where he could hold him up, and, and took him to one of these family doctors rode horses back 'en.

He said, "Doc, I've got a wounded man." Said, "If you'd take him in and see if you can heal him up," said, "I'll be back through and pay you for it."

So, he takes out to see if he can find that farmer. He keeps a askin'. Unlucky Jack told him a lot, you know. He finally comes and goin' down the ridge. His wife was out in the yard doin' somethin', run in and told her husband, said, "We got another sucker a comin'."

But, thank God, Lucky Jack was no man's sucker. He come on up.

He said, "Why be you here?"

He said, "I'm lookin' for work, and I heard tell you might be a hirin'."

Farmer said, "Can you herd sheep?"

Lucky Jack said, "Gosh! I can do anythin' you put me on. I'm Jack of all trades, but master of none."

Well, farmer said, "I always sign out a contract. Well, write out one, you know." He wrote it out and reach it Lucky Jack.

He could read. He read that. He said, "Mister, "I love the way you wrote this. Are you up to this?"

Farmer said, "I'm up to it. I'm the one who wrote it in there."

Well, Lucky Jack said, "I'll take the job."

They told him his bed was ready. He went upstairs, and went to bed. About two o'clock that night when they was asleep, the farmer and his wife, Lucky Jack snuck back down the stairs, went in the kitchen, the cupboard. He found some salt and some ol' corn, left over cornbread, you know. He went back upstairs.



Next mornin', farmer said, "Hey, ye sheeps ready. Ask him name though. "Jack." "Jack ye sheeps ready." He come down, and he had the 99 ewes, and the buck, and a hunderd head of sheep. Took him out to pasture where he wanted 'em herded at.

Farmer went back to the house. Soon as he left, Lucky Jack took a pine knot, hit the best sheep in the head and killed it. Built him up a fire, cut him out some ham, roasted. He eat on it all day. Left the rest for the varmints to eat, yeh.

He come in that evenin'. The farmer went, "96, 97, 98, 99." Said, "You've lost one, Jack!"

Lucky Jack said, "Yeh, I lost one. Are you mad??"

He said, "No, no, I'm not mad. One ain't that bad." Said, "Ye sheeps, I meant ye bed's ready."

He went to bed again that night. Snuck back down, got him some cornbread and salt again.

Next mornin', his sheeps ready. He took 'em out and got out. Knocked another good one in the head. Eat on it all day. He's gettin' fat. (laugh) Left the rest for the varmints to eat.

Come in that evenin'. Farmer went, "96, 97, 98." Said, "Jack you've lost another 'en today.

Lucky Jack said, "Yeh, I lost another 'en. Are you mad?"

He said, "No, two's not that bad. Bed's ready."

Well, that night got him some more salt and cornbread. Next mornin', he went out, knocked another 'en in the head. Come in that evenin'.

"96, 97, Gosh, Jack, you've lost another 'en today."

Lucky Jack said, "Yeh, I lost another 'en. Are you mad??"

He said, No, no, three ain't that bad," but said, "If you herd my sheep a hunderd days, I won't have none left. (laugh) Are you any good at plowin'?"

He said, "I told you, I'm Jack of all trades. I can do anythin' you want me to."

Well, they went to the barn, went to the field, he had two big fine horses, went to the barn, got the harness, put on it, bells on it. Gah!!! He took him out to a big forty acre field. Showed him how he wanted to plow it.

Well, Lucky Jack was plowin' pretty good.

Farmer went back to the house, and he just throwed the line down in. Let the horses pick and plow when they wanted to. Gah!! It looked like where sow hog been a rootin', you know.

Farmer shot back about an hour. "Jack, I thought you said you could plow." (laugh)

Lucky Jack, "I can. This is the way we do back at home. Are you mad?"

He said, "No, no, I'm not mad," said, "Maybe you just didn't understand the way I showed you to do."

Well, he showed Lucky Jack again, and left again.

Well, Jack was doin' pretty good there, and here come a feller on a little burrow or dunkey. Had his corn on, take it to mill to get it ground, you know, for corn meal.

And Lucky Jack looked up and said, "Hey, whoever you are, what's that thang you ridin'?"

He said, "It's a little ol' pull dunkey. Are you makin' fun it?"

Lucky Jack said, "No, gosh, no. I've gotta have that thang. I like the way it looks!!"

Man said, "Gah!! I better keep my dunkey. I've had it so many year, you know. I'd be lost without it, ye know."

Well, Lucky Jack said, "I've gotta have it, one way or the other." He said, "How 'bout you swap it with one of these big fine horses?"

Man said, "You makin' a fool out of me, young feller?"

He said, "No, no, I've gotta have that."

Well, they swapped, you know. Jack took the horse out of the, the harness, put his little ol' saddle on it. Had to take some lines and make it come around his belly. What they called that the cinch. That holds the saddle on.

And, that guy went off. He's feelin' good. He made a trade, you know.

Well, Jack put the little ol' dunkey back in the swingletree with that big horse and called on it to pull. And it was so light and that big horse pulled it. It just set the dunkey up and plowed it. Well, Jack kick it out. He tried it three times. Hit it in the head with a swingletree and killed it. Poor little dunkey. And hooked the big horse to it, draggin' it out over that bad ground where he'd plowed it.

That farmer shot in, said, "Jack, what'd you do with my horses, (laugh) my fine horses?"

He said, "Man come by ridin' this little ol' dunkey, and I figured you'd like it, so I swapped if for this little ol' dunkey. Said, "I put it in the swingletree to plow and said it's so light it kept settin' it up in the handle and flew back and killed it. I believe it's spread over this ground to stay buried. Are you mad???"

He said, "No, no, I'm not that mad, but said, "Gollee, I thought you said you could plow?" (laugh)

He said, "I told you that's the way done it at home."

He said, "Can you pick apples?" He's sorta, havin' it plowed in the fall of the year, you know, apple bearin' time.

Jack said, "I told ye," Lucky Jack said, "I told ye, I can do you any, anythin' you put me to."

Well, they went back. Put the horses in the field and the harness and plow back in the barn. Got out a big ladder. He took it up to his apple orchard. Put it up in the tree, run up, showin' Jack how to pick, you know. Well, he went back to the house.

Well, Jack he didn't climb that ladder. He run to his tool shed. Got out a big ol' axe. Went back up there and cut down three of his best loaded apple trees.

Farmer shot back up and he's there pickin' 'em on the ground.

He said, "God, Jack, I thought you said you could pick apples."

He said, "I do. This is the way we pick back at home."

Well, he said, "If you cut all my trees down, I won't have no apples another year." (laugh)

Lucky Jack said, "Are you mad?"

He said, "I'm not really that mad." But said, "Maybe you just didn't understand me. Let me show you again." He shot back up that ladder, and he just got his hand on a limb. Lucky Jack jerked the ladder out from under him. Here he was a hangin', grabbed with his other hand, caught it with both.

He said, "Jack, put the ladder back under me."

Lucky Jack said, "I'll put the ladder back under you when you holler and down tell your wife to fix me somethin' to eat. I'm gettin' hungry. Sort of gettin' in the evenin', you know.

He said, "Well, run on down there, and tell her." Said, "I can't hang here too long."

Well, Jack runned down and told his wife that her husband told her to kiss him.

She hollered back up, "I ain't gonna do it."

He hollered back down, said, "You do it. If you don't, if I ever get down, kill ye."

So, she kisses Jack right on the lips.

Jack runs back up and his wife behind him. He set the ladder under him. He gets down.

She said, "You rascal you. I wouldn't of kissed that feller for a thousand dollars laid in my hand."

He said, "Jack, did you tell her to kiss you in place of fixin' you somethin' to eat?"

Lucky Jack said, "Yeh, are you mad?"

He said, "I'm mad, and good and mad." He's a big ol' man, he took at Jack. Jack was young and catty, dodged him out, wearin' him down, you know, and gettin' close to that barrel while he's doin' it, you know.

He got him close to that barrel, and farmer, there, "Huh, huh, huh, huh," wore out. Lucky Jack just threw him over that barrel, whipped him, took his pocket knife out and guessed the same length of hide he cut out Unlucky Jack's back, poured salt in the gashes, and took off.

He got back where he left Unlucky Jack with the doc.

Come in said, "Doc, how's Unlucky Jack a doin'?"

He said, "I've got him healed up pretty good. I believe he can walk maybe if you might hold him up a little bit."

Well, he said, "Doc, I been where I didn't make no money, but said, if we live, I'll be back through to pay ye for doin' this."

Well, he gets Unlucky Jack, hold him up some, gets him out, headin' back home, you know.

Get so fur down the road, and he reaches in his overhaul pocket. He brings out them shoe strings.

He said, "Here, Unlucky Jack, the same hide I got out of his back is close as I guess he cut out of yours." Said, "Take 'em and remember it."

And the last time I was down through there, Unlucky Jack was healed up pretty good, out workin'.

And Lucky Jack was out helpin' people out. Goin' along a whistlin'. Uh, what ye call it, no care in the world.

That's Lucky Jack and Unlucky Jack

## APPENDIX B

Public Performance by Ted Hicks

“Jack and the Doctor’s Girl”

International Storytelling Festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee

Public Performance-October 3, 2009

The video of the public and private performances are attached to the back cover of this thesis.

Ray Hicks’s version of “Jack and the Doctor’s Girl” is published in Lynn Salsi’s book, *Appalachian Jack Tales Told by Hicks, Ward & Harmon Families*. Salsi writes, “This is everyone’s favorite Ray Hicks story. In the first part, the reader will think Jack is at his optimum cleverness. As the story goes on, Jack rises to the occasion in ways that will make readers think, ‘How did Ray Hicks come up with this?’ Ray said he learned this from his granddaddy, John Benjamin Hicks” (2008:119).

A live performance of “Jack and the Doctor’s Girl” by Orville Hicks can be found on the VHS film entitled *The Jack Tales Festival 2002*.

Ted’s private performance of this same tale came after his public performance and he was not aware that I wanted to collect this tale on the day I visited in January of 2010. The deliveries are remarkably similar. One distinct difference I noticed during transcribing is that Ted seemed hesitant at first to stop for the audience’s laughter during his public performance. He does begin pausing for their responses, and he seems to enjoy their enthusiasm.

Connie Regan-Blake's introduction of Ted

How many people here ever heard Ray Hicks tell stories?

Aahhh, double lucky ducks.

For everyone else, though, and for all of you too, Ted is in this lineage of storytellers. He was raised in the same house where Ray was born. Where Rosa and Ray spent their married life together, and that's where he's been his whole life, living there, helping his mom and dad.

He'd go out with his dad and pick ginseng, and pick angelica and spignet and all the different herbs. He knows about all of those things like his dad. He has the wisdom like his dad, too, and the stories. When his dad was alive, Ted was more of joke-tale teller. But now in these last years since 2003, when Ray passed, he passed along that gift right to Ted. So, Ted's moved from being a listener into being a teller.

And always, you know, the Hicks family has never had a lock on their door. So, whenever some of the family left, Rosa and Ray would come down here to this festival all these years, Ted always stayed home to watch the homeplace, 'cause that's what his dad had asked him to do. So this is the very first time for Ted Hicks to be on the stage at the National Storytelling Festival, Yeh! (Applause)





**Figure 31: Ted Hicks on the Main Stage, Jonesborough, Tennessee, October 3, 2009**

Ted: Good evenin' everybody! How y'all doin'? Glad to be here.

They say they want me to tell ya a Jack Tale. Anybody have a favorite one or just me tell one?

I'll tell you'uns "Jack and the Doctor's Girl."

In this one, startin' out Jack stayin' down with his mom and dad in a little ol' log cabin, sorta down in the holler, next to the spring.

One of these horseback ridin' doctors moved to build a log cabin right above him, and the doctor had a pretty daughter, and Jack was sorta intersted in her. Goin' up, tryin' to talk with her and stuff.

So one day the doctor seen Jack and the daughter together, and he went and told Jack's dad, said, "I been a noticin' your son Jack's been tryin' to get around my daughter." Said, "You tell Jack, any boy that gets my daughter, has got to be worth a thousand guineas." That was a gold coin back 'en.

Well anyway, Jack's dad went and told Jack, said, "Gosh Jack, old man Doc said you goin' to have to be worth a thousand guineas to get to be with his daughter," and said, "they ain't no way you can be worth a thousand guineas."

Well, Jack says, "Dad, all I know, I gotta try."

So he heads off tryin' to find him some work. He goes on askin' people. Lot of 'em has work for him to do, but nobody, nothin' to pay him with.

He'd say, "B'dad I'll be on my way." Said, "Pardon, thank you for takin' up time with me." He kept a goin' on, a walkin'.

Directly, he gets out the settlement where he's raised at, 'bout don't know where he's at. He gets in a big deep forest, virgin timber growth. He's lost, he don't know how he got there or what. And to beat all, it's 'bout dark, dusty dark on him, and it starts rainin' on him.

Directly, it starts rainin' cats and dogs, they always said. He's soaked. Ain't a dry thread on him. He goes through there stumblin'. Sometimes, his knees a crawlin', and one time he's gettin' up, and he thought he seen a little dim light, light down there in the holler. He keeps lookin' don't see it no more. Thought he might a been fooled. But he keeps goin' towards that way down the holler. Gets a little closter and he sees the light again, and he finally keeps a crawlin'. He gets down there and it's a log cabin in there, out in the forest there, and the rain's still comin' down on him.

He finally gets in the yard, and gets up to the door and pecks. He don't hear nothin', figurin' nobody not be at home. But he knowed the kerosene lamp a burnin' 'cause seen the light.

He pecks again and, and woman opens the door. She looks at him, "Why be you here, son?" Said, "Gah, you at the highway robbers' house."

And Jack's still standin' out there in the rain.

She said, "You better leave, son, what's ye name?"

Said, "My name's Jack."

She said, "You better leave." Said, "They always say dead people tells no tales."

And Jack said, "I'd just about soon be killed as drowned out here." (laughter)

So, she said, "Put it that way, come on in if you want to. But they will kill ye when they come in."

Well, Jack comes on in. She got a fire burnin' in the fireplace. They's a little straw layin' there where a cat or dog mighta layed. He lays down on it and him wet. That fire heat puts him off to sleep.

Well, about three o'clock or four that mornin', three robbers comes in. The rain stopped, and they put all their stuff they'd stole that day on the table with a pistol layin' there, divide it out, gone keep it fair, you know.

Well, they's there dividin' out what they'd stoled, and one of 'em dropped a cup, or tin cup, or maybe a silver coin or somethin'. It made a racket on the floor. It made Jack, he made a little fuss.

One of 'em grabbed the pistol. Said, "Hey ol' woman, what made that racket?"

She said, "I forgot to tell ye. They's a little boy come here while ago, said his name was Jack, and the rain was comin' down. And I told 'em you'uns would kill him, said, dead people tells no tales. Said he'd just soon to be killed as drown out there. I told him to come on in."

Well, one of 'em grabbed the big pistol off the table and started towards him.

She said, "At least wake him up 'fore you shoot him. (laughter) I never did like to see nobody shot in his sleep." (laughter)

So he punched him with that big pistol. Jack sorta made a little fuss. He punched him a little harder. Jack come awake and looked up and that big pistol stuck between his eyes.

He said, "Get up son. What's ye name?"

Jack said, "My name's Jack."

Said, "We gotta kill ye. Dead people tells no tales."

Well, Jack just looked up at him, you know. Said, "Well, you can kill me, but you won't get nothin' but my raggedy clothes and my shoes."

And, the robber felt a little sorry for him, the way he looked. He hadn't dried plumb out yet with his clothes, just where the fire didn't hit him, you know.

And, he looked, said, "Son, are ye a good hand to steal?"

Jack said, "I wanna be, if it'd save my life." (laughter)

Well, he said, "Maybe it will save your life."

Said, "That ol' farmer stays 'bout ten miles below us and he's got three steers. And we've tried every way in the world to steal 'em, but we ain't had no luck." Said, "If you can get them three steers for us, we'll pay you three hunderd guineas a piece and spare your life not to say nothin' about us."

Well, Jack said, "What choice have I got? I'll take you up on the deal."

Well, they give him a little bunk to stay, you know 'til mornin' come, to sleep in. Well, Jack got in that bunk, he couldn't sleep. He's figurin', "How in the world can I get them steers and they couldn't?" He was a rackin' his brain out tryin' to figure out a plan.

They hollered told him breakfast was ready. Got up and eat a little bit.

Let's see, before he got up to eat, he's puttin' his shoes on. Underneath the bunk somethin' shinin' there, red. He looked down and pulled it out and it was a red woman's slipper. Well, the way Jack was, he just stuck it in his overhaul pocket.

They give him a little breakfast to eat and told him where to go down the path. There's a haul road. Farmer'd be goin' to the market with his steer that mornin'.

Jack took down the path, and there's little fence there where the robbers, when they stole a calf or cow or horse, put in it. And they's about a three foot long rope hangin' on the post there. He just picked it up and went on walkin' down the path, sorta playin' with the rope, you know. Tryin' to study out how was he goin' to get that first steer.

Well he got down past the haul road. He sat down, still thinkin'. "How in the world am I goin' to get it?"

He heard the ol' farmer a comin'. "Soup buck, saw buck, let's get to town, soup buck, saw buck, let's get to town."

He had to think of somethin'. Well, he seen that rope in his hand. He looked, and there was a tree side of the haul road and a limb goin' out over it.

Well, Jack was young and catty. He skimmed up that tree, got out in that limb, and tied the rope around his neck, and tied it around the limb, like he was hung, you know. And he had his left hand sort of hid where you couldn't really tell.

Here come the farmer 'round the curve, "Soup buck, saw buck, let's get to town, soup buck, saw buck, let's get to town."

He seen Jack, the boy, hangin' there. "Law me!! Somebody's hung a young man here." Said, "He might be outa my settlement." Said, "No way I'll get to town today." Said, "I'm gonna tie my steer right here, run back and get three or four of my neighbors, come back and cut him down, 'cause we goin' to have a funeral today."

So he ties his steer, and, and, soon as he gets around the curve there. Jack just unties himself of that rope, climb down the tree, unties the steer, and back to the robbers' house he went. (laugh)

He gets, he gets back there, and they said, "Gah, steal," said "you beaten hand, the beatenest hand we've ever seen, you've got us beat."

Well, the ol' farmer, in the mean time went back to, got two or three of his neighbors, got back with 'em. Said, "Yonder's the tree where the boy was a hangin'. There's where I tied my steer. But, where's it at?" He run them men 'bout two or three hours. Their tongues stickin' out. They called him a old fool. Went back home.

They said he run there 'til dark 'fore he give up and went back.

Well, Jack went to sleep that night.

They told him, robbers told him next mornin', farmer'd be goin' to town with his steer that mornin', ye know. He didn't get a bit of sleep that night. Said, "I fooled him once, got one, but how am I gonna get the second one?"

Well, they hollered breakfast ready next mornin'. He got up, still hadn't thought no way to get it. He eat, went down the path studyin'. He got down to the haul road and set down.

Heard the farmer comin', the second steer. "Soup buck saw buck let's get to town, soup buck saw buck let's get to town."

He had to think of somethin'. He started to get up to hide in the bushes side the haul road. When he started to get up his hand hit that red slipper. It give him a idea. Said, "I fooled him once. Maybe I can fool him again." He set that slipper back down the middle of the haul road so he'd see it.

Up come the farmer, "Sawbuck!!! Gollee!! There's a brand new woman's slipper. The way it looks, it'd fit my ol' lady." But said, "One, ain't no good, we need two."

He throwed it back down, didn't know which foot it went on. "Sawbuck, let's get to town."

He go around the curve. Jack shot outa the bushes. He grabbed that slipper up. Took a near cut through the woods. Set it front of him again. (laughter)

Here comes the ol' farmer. "Sawbuck, Law me! There's the mate to that other slipper I had back yonder. Ain't I a fool." Said, "Bein' they cost \$3.00 in town, I'm gonna tie my steer, go back and get that other slipper."

He tied his steer, and gets round the curve in the haul road.

Jack just sneaks out, gets the steer, and back to the robbers' house he went. He had two of 'em.

They said that farmer got back there, "Here's where that slipper's layin'. No maybe down yonder, no here." Said he run hisself nearly dark again. 'Bout wore out, give out, and went back home.

Jack got back to the robbers' house, Said, "Jack you is the beatenest hand to steal we've ever seen." Yeh. "You got two. Said tomorrow mornin', get the third, and we'll pay ye off."

Well, Jack went to bed that night, and he couldn't sleep again. Said he fooled 'em twiced. This 'en here, savin' ye life and you couldn't think of no way to get the third one.

Anyway, they hollered, told him breakfast ready again. He got up and eatin', and he still tryin' to figure out, "How'm I gonna get the third one? Got this close, gonna lose my life and the money I done made."

Anyway, he takes down the path, gets down to the haul road. He's settin' there. "How'm I gonna get the third one? This close now, I'm gonna lose it all," he said.

Hears the ol' farmer comin' again. "Soup buck saw buck let's get to town, soup buck saw buck let's get to town."

He's 'bout a curve from seein' Jack.

Jack's gotta think of somethin' and he gotta think of it quick, quick.

All at once, he jumps up takes out to the woods, "Mooooo! Baaaa! Mooooo! Baaaa!!!"

(laughter)

Farmer hears it. "Sawbuck, just as I expected. Other two got loose, (laughter) I'll tie this 'en. I'll tie this 'en, and I'll get out in the woods and catch the other two, and take 'em all three to town today."

Well, he gets up in the woods after Jack. Jack goin' on, reachin the other'n. "Mooo! Baaa! Moooo! Baaa!!!" (laughter) He's just an inch, gettin' closter. Jack messes around, he's young and catty. He gets the ol' farmer tangled up in a green briar patch. Darts like a rabbit.



Out and got that steer, you know. By the time the farmer got out, he was about to get back to the robbers' house.

He gets there and the robbers said, "Jack, you did it, now you got the three." Said, "Here's ye nine hunderd guineas, and beins you done such a good and quick job, we gonna give you a hunderd guineas to boot."

There's his thousand guineas!! (laughter)

So, he thanks 'em. He gets back out in that deep forest. He's lost when he fount there. He's still lost, he can't figure out how to get back home. He keeps makin' big circles, and he finally gets out where he sorta remembers. And he finally gets back home 'en.

He gets there. He says, "Dad, here's the thousand dollars Doc wanted. Take it up and tell him I want to come see his daughter now."

And Jack's dad get up 'ere. "Hey Doc, Jack brought that thousand guineas in this mornin'. He wants to come up and see ye daughter."

Doc said, "How did Jack get that money?"

Jack's dad said, "I think he become a highway robber!!"

Well, Doc said, "You tell Jack, if he's that good to steal, he's got to come up tonight and steal my three race horses (laughter) with me with three men a ridin' inside the fence, and the gate locked."

And Jack's dad goes back said, "Jack, you may as well give that girl up. It's gettin' harder by the day, you know."

Jack says, "Dad, all I can do is try."

He studies awhile. He goes out to the pen and gets a big sow hog, let's see. No, he goes to the, back up 'ere, now, yeh, gettin' ahead of myself! (laughter)

He goes to a bootlegger and buys him a gallon of moonshine, and goes to the little drug store and gets him a bottle of chlor, chlor, chloroform. And gets him three small bottles. And he puts the liquor in it, moonshine in it and chloroform. Dresses up like a beggar. He goes there 'bout dusty dark. Gettin' little chilly, you know, fall of the year. He lays down side the fence, act like he goes off to sleep.

He wakes up, and reaches in his overcoat pocket. Brings out one of them little bottles. He pulls the cork, like he took a sip, or a dram of it. Corks it back, lays it down beside of him.

The lead guard said, looked at it, said, "It's gettin' chilly." Said, "That one's mine."

He rides his horse around, gets off his horse and gets that little bottle, and just killed it. Drinks it down. Gets back on his horse and goes back with his other two horses.

Well, Jack acts like he wakes up, reaches for his bottle. It's gone. He reaches this side of his overcoat, overcoat pulls out another bottle. Act like he took a dram of it, corks it back, lays it down side of him.

Well, the other one said, "You right. It is gettin' chilly." Said, "That one's mine."

He rides his horse around, gets off his horse, and gets it, drinks it. Gets back on his horse.

Well Jack acted like he wakes up again, reaches for that bottle, hit's gone. He reaches in pulls out the third bottle. Acted like he drunk some of it, corks it back, lays it down.

Third guard said, "You boys is right. It is gettin' chilly." Said, "That one's mine."

He goes around, rides around, gets off the horse, and gets that one, drinks it, gets back on.

They ride around there maybe five minutes, and all at once they just fall asleep on the horseback.

Jack slides under the lowest rail fence there, the rail. Goes out there, pulls 'em off the horse, and crosses 'em up. One on top the other'n, the guards. (laughter) He reaches one of

'ems pockets and checks it out and finds the keys to the gate. He unlocks the gate, takes the horses out, locks it back. Goes back through under the rail. Puts the key back in that 'en's pocket. Takes the race horses down to his dad's barn, to put 'em in it.

Well, next mornin' Jack tells his dad, he said, "Go up there and tell Doc I got his, well, I got my horses last night!!!" (laughter) 'Cause dad, Jack's dad had asked him if Jack steal 'em would they be his horses. And Doc said, "Yeh," you know.

So Jack just stoled his own horses, you know.

So, Jack's dad get up there. Said, "Jack got his horses last night."

Doc said, "His horses? Them was my race horses."

Jack's dad said, "Well, I asked ye 'fore I left if Jack stoled 'em would they be his. You said, yeh. Said he wants to come visit ye daughter now."

Doc said, "They ain't no way. Said you tell Jack, if he wants to come visit my daughter, he's got to come up to my house tomorrow, not a walkin', not a runnin', not a skippin', not a jumpin', and not a ridin'. And when he gets here he can't come in and he can't stay out."

Jack's dad went back down and said, "Jack, it's gettin' harder and harder." (laughter) Said, "You might as well give that girl up, find ye another one."

Jack said, "Dad, all I can do is try."

So he thinks about it awhile. He goes out to the hog pen. Gets him out a sow hog. He drives it nearer to Doc's house. Then he gets on it, and he goes from one side of the hog to the other'n, hitten', you know. He's not a walkin', he's not a runnin', he's not a skippin', he's not a jumpin', and he's not a ridin' it.

He gets there and Doc says, "Come in Jack."

Jack gets off the hog, gets straddle of the pen and gate. Half in and half out.

He said, "Doc, I done what ye told me. I come here not a walkin', not a jumpin', not a runnin', and not a skippin', and not a ridin', and I didn't come in and I didn't stay out. I wanna see, visit ye daughter now."

Doc said, "No, no, no. They ain't no way." (sighs and laughter) Said, "You've gotta come here tomorrow evenin', and steal a rabbit a cookin' in the pot over the fireplace, with me, my wife, and daughter watchin' it."

Well, Jack thinks about that awhile. He goes out that night, sets three box traps. Catches him three rabbits, wild rabbits. One happened to be a big 'en, and a medium one, and a small one. Well, he puts 'em in a sack.

He gets up 'ere at Doc's house about dusty dark, and it's, it's hot with them a cookin' a rabbit, you know. And they've got the door open, screen doors, standin' there, to keep the flies out. He looks through in the livin' room, and in the kitchen. In there sets Doc, his wife, and daughter a watchin' the rabbit cookin' in the pot. One of them black three legged pots.

Well, he gets the little rabbit out. Sorta thumps the house a little bit, like gets their attention. He turns that little rabbit loose in the yard.

Daughter said, "Hey Doc, there run a rabbit through the yard 'bout as big as the one in the pot."

He said, "Daughter, keep your eyes on the one in the pot a cookin'. Forget all them rabbits goin' through the yard."

Well, Jack let it sorta settle down a little. He gets the medium size rabbit out. Turns hit loose across the porch.

Well, he bumps the house and make a little racket, you know. It hit the screen door, rubbed it and gone.

Doc's wife said, "Hey Doc, there run a rabbit across the porch. Hit the screen door big as the one we got in the pot."

He said, "Ol' woman, like I told the daughter, keep your mind and eyes on the rabbit in the pot." Said, "Forget all them rabbits in the yard and goin' across the porch." Said, "If we don't, Jack'll have this one in the pot and gone with it."

Well, Jack lets it settle down again. He sneaks it up on the porch, opened screen door, and turned that biggest rabbit in the house. It goes through the livin' room, in the kitchen, and it hits Jack, Doc right in the chest and scratches him a little bit, and goes under the cupboard.

Well, gosh, Doc forgets about the one in the pot. He grabs the broom handle down. He's tryin' to gouge it out, and got his wife and daughter gonna catch it when it comes out. He's over there gougin' in there, and they forgot about the one in the pot.

Jack just eases the screen door open. Walks through the livin' room. Goes through the kitchen. Goes to the pot, lifts the lid off, and gets the rabbit out, puts the lid back on, and goes back out through the kitchen, through the livin' room. Out the screen door and gone, you know.

Well, Doc keeps a pokin' that rabbit. He finally hits it. Hit scares the rabbit, comes out from under the carp, cupboard, and his wife and daughter miss it. It run through the kitchen, out through the livin' room, hits the screen door, knocks it open and gone, you know.

Well they get back, in the chairs sittin' there, and directly Doc says, "Hey, check the rabbit in the pot, it should be done by now."

His wife goes over lifts the lid. "Ain't no rabbit in here."

Doc goes, "Well, ah grave, Jack's done got the rabbit and gone." (laughter)

Well, the next mornin', Jack tells his dad to take the rabbit up to Doc show him he had it.

Said he wants to go up 'ere and talk with his daughter, you know, visit with her, you know.

Jack's dad got up 'ere. Said, "Hey Doc, Jack's got the rabbit. He wants to come visit ye daughter."

Doc said, "You go back and tell Jack, if he wants to visit my daughter, he's gotta come up here tonight, and steal my wife's shimme, with her in bed with it on and me a layin' beside of her, (laughter) all doors locked, all winders locked, and we stay upstairs, the second floor. And I've got a pistol, tell him, It's got six bullets in it. And if I see him, I'll shoot to kill."

Well, Jack's dad went back and said, "Jack, you gonna have to forget that girl. (laughter) It's gettin' worse and worse and worse."

Well, Jack said, "What did he say?"

"He said you gotta come up 'ere tonight and steal his wife's shimme, her with it on in bed and him a layin' aside of it, all doors locked, all winders locked. And said he had a pistol and six bullets in it. Said he'd shoot to kill, if he seen ye."

Well, Jack said, "Dad, all I know to do, I went this fur, all I can do is try."

He studied a while on it. He goes out and kills him a sheep. Gets him a bladder of blood. He makes him a scarecrow and his clothes on it, and puts his hat on top of it. He ties it to a big long pole.

He gets up there at about ten thirty or eleven o'clock 'at night. He gets him a big rock beside of him, and he raises that scarecrow up to that upstairs winder, on that stick he had, and he bumps the winder.

All at once, Doc hollars, "Jack's, that you? If you break my window, I'll shoot ye for sure."

Well, Jack, like, settled down a little bit. He takes that scarecrow back up. He lets it go to the winder. He comes back, and kapow, he knocks winders out, sash and all. 'Bout that time, Doc's pistol went off...Bam, Bam, Bam, Bam, Bam, Bam!!!

Jack just let the scarecrow drop on the pole. Got that big rock lets it drop, make a big thumpin' racket. Poors that blood all over it, and layin' in there and Doc had got quiet and his wife said, "Doc, you killed Jack." Said, "I heard his body hit the ground." Said, "You better get up and get a few of your friends and bury him. You'll be hung for this."

That scares Doc. He jumps outta bed, puts his pants on, and his shirt. Heads down the stairs, out his front door. Leaves it wide open. He's excited, you know. He takes off to get two or three of his neighbors to help.

And 'bout twenty minutes Jack slips side the house. He comes around, the front door's open. He goes up the stairs. He gets up 'ere and said, "We got him buried." Gets in bed with Doc's wife. (laughter) Jack says, "Gah, I forgot, I got blood all over my hands. Buryin' Jack." Said, "Forgot and never washed my hands." Said, "I've got blood all over your shimmee."

She said, "That's ok. I've got a clean one over there in the bureau." Said, "Get up and reach it to me and I'll change," you know.

Well, it's dark. Jack, he didn't know where the bureau's at. He finds it, reaches Doc, reaches Doc's wife the shimmee. She changes, and thowed the other one out. She thought it had blood on it, but it didn't.

Jack grabbed it, down the stairs he goes, out the front door, back home, you know.

Well, 'bout ten or fifteen minutes atter that, Doc comes in. He comes up the stairs a laughin', gets close to his wife.

She said, "What are you laughin' about?"

He said, "Gosh, it wasn't nothin' but a ol' scarecrow." Said, "I made a fool of myself. I went and got two of my neighbors to help bury him, and it just an ol' scarecrow. Made a fool outta myself."

She said, "What?? Didn't you come in here about twenty minutes ago or somethin', (laughter) and said you got blood all over my shimme, forgot and hadn't washed ye hands."

He said, "Ah grave. Jack's got the shimme." (laughter)

Well, Jack give his dad the shimme next mornin'. Said, "Go up and tell Doc I got his wife's shimme."

And, Jack's dad went up and said, "Doc, Jack done what you said to do last night. Got ye wife's shimme. He said he wants to come up and visit ye daughter now."

Doc said, "No, No, No!!!" (laughter)

Jack's dad said, "Well, Jack told me if you didn't agree this time, he said he had six bullet holes in his hat where you tried to kill him last night."

Well, that scared ol' Doc. He lets Jack come up and visit his daughter. They courted for about maybe three or four months. Went and found a preacher and got married.

And the last time I was down through that way, Jack and that girl was doin' good.

He said he made buddies with ol' Doc.

And that was "Jack and the Doctor's Girl".





**Figure 32: Ted Hicks at the Close of His Performance on October 3, 2009**

## APPENDIX C

## Private Performance by Ted Hicks

## “Jack and the Doctor’s Girl”

Performance recorded in Ted’s and Rosa’s home on December 29, 2009



Figure 33: Ted Hicks in the Parlor of His Home

Ted: You wont me to tell the date? Lisa: Yeh

This here is December the 29<sup>th</sup>. Gettin' close to New Year.

I'm 'on fixin' tell you'uns "Jack and the Doctor's Girl."

Well, in this 'en, starts out, Jack was still there with his, stayin' with his mama and daddy, his brother Will and Tom, and, married, or whatever, they wasn't stayin' there no more.

Anyways, the doctor moved up close by and up above 'em in a log cabin. They had a beautiful daughter, 'bout Jack's age, Jack sorta got struck on her. Had a crush on her. Every chance he got, you know, he'd be up tryin' to talk with her.

Well, one day, the doctor seen Jack and his daughter talkin'. He went down and told Jack's dad, said, "Uh, I been a noticin' your son Jack been tryin' to stay around my daughter, you know." Said, "I want you to tell your son Jack, that any boy that gets to marry my daughter, gotta be worth a thousand guineas."

Well, he left, and, Jack's dad come, said "Jack, ol' man Doc said you been a, seein' you messin' around with his daughter. He told me to tell you, any boy gets to marry his daughter, gotta be worth a thousand guineas." He said, "Son, they ain't no way you gonna be worth a thousand guineas."

"Well," Jack said, "Dad, all I can do is try."

So he heads out tryin' to find work, you know.

Well, he askes a lot of people and they say, "Oh gah, yeh, we got plenty of work, but we don't have nothin' to pay ye with."

"Well," Jack would say, "Beg my pardon. I'll be on my way."

Well, he keeps goin' on, askin' ye know. Directly, it was late one evenin'. Gettin' 'bout dusty dark, it starts rainin' on him. He gets, he got out further you know, then where he'd always been, his settlement. He's sorta lost.

Then, he gets in a big, deep forest, big virgin timber in it. And the rain seemed like, gets comin' down, like they always said rainin' cats and dogs.

Well, he lost and get, can't hardly see, gets plumb dark on him, it a rainin' on him, you know.

So, he gets in a big, deep holler. He's sorta goin' along and seem like he sorta staggers, and through the underbrush, seem like he thought he seen a dim light way down at the bottom of that holler.

Well, he sorta picks hisself back up. Goes on a little further, and look and say, "I musta just seen that."

Directly wind a blowin' limbs somethin', see it again.

He said, "That's got to be a light."

Well, he keeps a goin' on takes his time a crawlin'. He's soaked. Ain't got a dry thread on him.

He gets on down there, and sure 'nough, they's a little log cabin there got, look like a kerosene lamp burnin' through the winder.

Well, little yard around it, not much, 'bout all woods, you know. Uh, he comes up, gets the door, and he pecks the door, he don't hear nothin', and thanks to hisself they gotta be somebody in there, seen the light. He pecks again, he thought he hears rustle, like maybe foot steps a comin' to it.

Door opens, there stood a woman. She went, "Gollee! Son, what's ye name?"

He said, "My name's Jack."

She said, "Well Jack, you better get away from here, 'cause this is the house of the highway robbers, and they'll kill ye. They said dead men tales no tales."

Well, Jack looks at her. Directly say, "Mam, I 'bout soon as be killed as drowned out here." (laugh)

"Well," she said, "Put it that way, it's your life, you young, but I'll tell you, they'll kill ye, come on in if you want to."

Well, he comes on in, she closes the door, and, she got a fire burnin' in the fireplace 'cause it's damp, you know. He goes over to it, and there lays some straw like where maybe a dog, cat layed in it.

Well, Jack lays down next to it, next to that fire heat, you know. Him wet like that, it puts him off to sleep.

Well, he's layin' there and 'bout three o'clock in the night, three robbers comes in. The rain had quit, and, what all they stolen that day layed in the table. Gonna divide it out, and they pulled their pistols out layin' side of it. Gonna keep it honest, (laughs) you know.

Well, they's there dividin' it out.

Directly, one of 'em dropped a metal cup or silver coin, as it makes a racket. It rouses Jack in his sleep, he goes, "ughhhhh," and, the main robber grabs his pistol, says, "Hey, ol' woman what made that racket?"

She said, "I forgot to tell ye. 'Bout dusty dark, this little ol' boy come, rainin' cats and dogs." Said, "I told him you'd kill him," but, said "You said dead people tells no tales, or dead men tells no tales." Said, "I told him."

Says, "'Bout soon's be killed as drowned out there."

“So I told him, ‘Come on in if you want to.’ It’s his life not mine. Said he’s over there asleep.”

Well, he grabs his pistol, goin’ toward Jack, gonna shoot him, you know.

She said, holler, “Hey, least wake him up, I never could stand nobody be shot in his sleep.”

Well, he punches Jack with that big ol’ pistol.

Jack goes, “Grrrrr.”

He punches him a little harder.

Jack comin’ to, and, that pistol stickin’ like ’iss.

He said, “Son get up, we got to kill ye. Dead men tells no tales.”

Well, Jack was pretty well dried out in this side. But, you know, he’s still wet where the heat wouldn’t hit him.

He looks at him, way he looks some way or ’nother. He said, “You can kill me or whatever, but you won’t get nothin’ but my raggedy clothes and my shoes.”

Well, the way he looked, somehow or ’nother him wet, you know, the robber felt a little sorry for him.

He said, “Whatche name?”

Jack said, “My name’s Jack.”

He said, “Are you a good hand to steal?”

Jack said, “B’dad, a man orta be if it could save my life.”

Well he said, “It might save your life.” Said, “They’s a ol’ farmer stay way down below us.” And said, “He’s got three steers, and we’ve tried ever way to steal ’em, we ain’t had no

luck. I'll tell you what we'll do, you steal them three steers for us, we'll give you three hunderd dollars a piece, and save ye life. We'll let you go, just not say nothin' 'bout us."

Well, Jack thought a minute said, "Might as well take ye up. Ain't got no choice." He said, "Uh, I take you up on that."

Well, he fix little, got all the stuff divided out, fixed a little supper. Give Jack a bunk to sleep in. He went back there and got in that bunk. No way he could sleep. He's figure them robbers and can't get the steers. How in the world am I gonna get 'em? He laid all night over, three o'clock wasn't long in the mornin', you know.

He couldn't study no way to get them steers, you know when they couldn't.

Well, the woman hollered, "Breakfast ready."

Jack got up and puttin' his boots on. And he's puttin' 'em on and he noticed somethin' red layin' under the bunk. He looked down looked at it. It's a red woman's slipper.

Well, like Jack was, he just fetched it up and put it in his back overhaul pocket. Eat him a little breakfast.

They told him where to go down the path that went to the haul road.

Said the ol' farmer be goin' to market today. Gonna sell the first 'en.

As, as Jack went down they had a little corral, fence there, like where might catch a cow, steal a cow, horse put in it. They's 'bout a three foot piece rope a hangin' on the post there.

Well, Jack just grabbed it, got it sorta tiein' knots, or you know playin' with it, workin' with it as he went on down the path.

He got down to the haul road, he sat down. He's still a studyin'. How am I gonna get the first steer? I've gotta do it, save my life, you know. He heered the ol' farmer a comin'.

"Soup buck saw buck let's get to town. Soup buck saw buck let's get to town."

He's gettin' close to Jack. Jack had to think of somethin', think of it quick.

He look, seen that rope he had in his hand. He looked and had a big tree 'side the haul road.

They's a big limb come out over the haul road. Like, Jack just thought that quick.

He shimmied up that tree, good, young, catty, cloomb good. He got out 'n that limb, tied that rope around his neck. Act like he's hung, and tied it 'round the limb, and he had his left hand where the farmer couldn't see it hangin' there, you know. Act like he's hung you know.

Here come the farmer 'round the curve.

"Soup buck saw buck let's get to town. Sawbuck!!! Gollee!! There's a young man bein' hung, young boy, looks like."

And said, "He might be out of my settlement. Not get to town today. I'll just tie my steer right here, run back, get two or three of my neighbors, and we'll come back, and cut this young boy down, and have a funeral today."

Well, he tied his steer, back down the haul road he went. Got out of sight.

Jack just undone the rope, come back down and shimmied down the tree, untied the steer, and back to the robbers' house he went.

He got back, and they said, "Gosh, hand to steal, Jack." Said, "You the beatenest hand we've ever seen. (laugh) How did you do it?"

Jack said, "B'dad, it won't do to tell."

Well, in the meantime, the farmer got back to his neighborhood or settlement there. Got three or four of his neighbors.

Got back, they said, "Where's the boy a hangin' at?"



He said, "There's the tree, there's the limb, here's where I tied my steer.

Ah, maybe it's down yonder." Said he run them men for 'bout two hours and they said, "You ol' fool you," and they went back.

They said that farmer run there 'til nearly dark 'fore he give up.

Well, that evenin' Jack messed around, robbers left out you know.

Anyway, that evenin' they give him some supper. He got back in the bunk.

Said, "You got one now. He'd be goin' to town for the second one tomorrow."

Well, Jack eat the supper, got in his bunk, he couldn't study no way, got one. Couldn't pull him up again with rope, you know. Couldn't even sleep much that night.

Next mornin', woman hollered, "Breakfast ready."

He got up and still, couldn't think of nothin'. How's he gonna get the second one?

Well anyway, he eat the breakfast. Got down the path still studyin'. Got down to the haul road sittin' there.

"Gosh, how'm, how am I goin' get the second one?"

Heard the farmer comin' with the second one, "Soup buck saw buck let's get to town, soup buck saw buck let's get to town."

Well, Jack was there again. He started to get up, get in, hide in the undergrowth side of the haul road. As he got up his right hand hit the ground to push with, and he hit the slipper in his overhaul pocket. It give him the idea.

Said, "Maybe I can fool him up again."

He set that red slipper right in the middle of the haul road where he'd have to see it. Got in the brush there side the haul road.

Farmer come 'round the curve, "Soup buck saw buck let's get to town. Sawbuck!!! Gollee!! There lays a brand new woman's slipper." Said, "Somebody must have lost it, looks brand new." And said, "By the looks of it, it'll fit my ol' lady." But said, "Gosh, just the one, need two."

He throws it back down. "Sawbuck, let's get to town." Didn't notice which foot it went on. Got around a little curve there where he couldn't see Jack. And Jack just shot out, grabbed the slipper, took through the woods. Made an eye cut on him, set it in front of him again. He's comin' on.

"Soup buck saw buck let's get to town, soup buck, sawbuck!!! Gollee!! Aint' I a fool. There lays the mate to that other woman's slipper, and like I said, I believe it fit my ol' lady."

Said, "Gollee! Ain't I a fool." Said uh, "Bein they worth \$3.00 in town, I'm gonna tie this steer here, run back and get the other'n." (laughs)

Well, he ties that steer. (laughs) Shoots back to look for the other one, and, soon as he got gone, Jack struck out, untied that steer, back to the robbers' house.

They said, "Gah Jack, we don't believe this. You back with the second one this early. (laughs) We don't believe it." They said, "We'll pay you when you get the job done."

Well, Jack messed around that evenin' maybe talkin' with the lady, you know. Fixed a little supper, and got back in the bunk that night, sleep. He couldn't study, he studyin' again.

How in the world? I've got two, just need one, to save my life. And get nine hunderd guineas. How in the world am I gone get it? I fooled him twiced. He's gone get use to this, you know.

Well, they hollered, “Breakfast,” next mornin’. He got up, hadn’t thought no way. Eat the breakfast, he headed down the path. Still a tryin’ to study. “How can I get the third one? Got this clost, and gone lose the money and lose my life too.”

He got down the haul road. Heard the farmer comin’ with the third one.

“Soup buck saw buck let’s get to town, soup buck saw buck let’s get to town.” He’s gettin’ so close, ’bout one curve ’fore he seen Jack.

Well, Jack had to think of somethin’, and he had to think of it quick. His life depended on it, you say. He just happened to think. He jumped up run out in the woods. Farmer come ’round the curve.

Jack went “MOOOOO!!!!” Run a little further, “MOOOO!!! MOOOO!!!!”

Farmer heard it, said, “Ahhh, grave, just as I expected, other two got loose, I’ll tie this ’en right here, get out in the woods catch the other two, and take ’em all three to market today.”

Well, he tied that steer, (laughs) got up in the woods.

Jacks a goin’ “Mooo,” run a little further, “Mooo! Mooo! Mooo!”

Well, Jack was young and catty and the farmer’s gettin’ up in age a little bit. Jack got him in a laurel patch, and green briars growed in it. Got him, ol’ farmer tangled up in it. He barged out like a rabbit, young and catty. Got down there and untied that steer. (laughs)

Went back there. They said, “Jack, you did it.”

Yeh, in the mean time the ol’ farmer tryin’ to get out of that laurel patch.

Said, “Here’s ye nine hunderd guineas, and bein’ you done such a quick job, gone give you a hunderd guineas to boot, just don’t say nothin’ about us.”

Jack thought, there’s his thousand guineas. (laughs)

Well, he thanks ’em.

They said, "Well just don't say nothin' about us."

Jack said, "I won't."

Well, he gets out in them big forest. He's lost when he found it, and he's still lost.

Well, he got to thinkin'. He started makin' sorta big circles, comin' back around. Goin' little further doin' this.

Well he finally messed around where he 'membered a little bit. That got him sorta straightened out. He finally made it back home.

He got in, he said, "Dad, here's a thousand guineas, Doc told me I had to have."

And, Jack's dad said, "Where'd you get it at Jack?"

He said, "I become a highway robber." (laughs)

Said, "Take it up, tell ol' Doc, 'Doc I've got the thousand guineas now. I wanna come up, talk with his daughter.'"

Jack's dad went up said, "Hey Doc, Jack come in the other day with a thousand guineas.

Said he wanna come up and court ye daughter now."

Doc said, "How did he get that money?"

Jack's dad said, "I think he said he become a highway robber." (laughs)

"Well," he said, "You go back tell Jack, if that's, if he's that good at stealin', he's got to come up here tonight, and steal my three race horses in the, in the lot, outside the barn, you know, fence around it, the gate locked, and three of my guards a ridin' 'em." (laughs)

And, Jack's dad went back down, "Jack, Doc says you couldn't come see his daughter yet. You have to come up 'ere and steal his three race horses, in the lot, with the gate locked, and three of his guards a ridin', and I asked him if you done it, would they be your horses, and he said, 'Yeh.'" And said, "You might as well forget that girl."

Jack said, "Dad, all I can do is try."

Well he thought a minute.

He went to a bootleg, bootl, bootlegger and bought him a gallon a moonshine. He went by a little drug store 'ere and got him some chlorifor, chloroform, chlori, yeh chloroform.

He went and got him three little bottles. Mixed it up in it, what the bottles would hold, you know. Went and dressed up like a beggar, put him on ol' raggedy clothes, overcoat.

Got up there that night 'bout dusty dark. It gettin' a little chilly.

And he just layed down side the corral fence. Act like he went to sleep. Guards in there ridin' around in a circle on the race horse.

Well, he woke up, act like it. Lifted his overcoat, inside overcoat pocket. Pulled out one of them little bot, bottles, pulled the cork, act like he took a sip or a dram of it. Corked it back, and layed it down beside of him. Act like he went off to sleep again.

The lead uh, guard, said, looked at the other men. Said, "Men, it's gettin' cold here. That one's mine."

Well, he rode around, got off the horse, reached through under the corral fence, got that bottle, and just killed it, drank it straight down. (laughs) Threwed the bottle away. Got back up in the horse, they's ridin' 'round again.

Jack act like he woke up reach for that bottle. It's gone. He just reached inside this coat, inside coat pocket. Pulled out another bottle. Pulled the cork and act like he drunk some of it. Corked it back, layed hit down.

One of the other, uh, guards said, "It is gettin' chilly in here." Said, "That one's mine."

He run around, reached through, got off his horse, reached through and got hit. Drunk hit, and throwed the bottle away. Got back in the horse he's ridin' around again.

Jack act like he woke up again, reached for that bottle and hit gone. He reached in here in the right side and got another one out. Act, pulled the cork and act like he took a dram of hit. Layed hit down the side.

The third guard said, "Boys you'uns are right. It is definitely gettin' cold." Said, "That one's mine." He runs around, gets, rides around, gets off his horse. Reaches under the corral fence, gets that bottle and drinks it, gets back up in the horse.

Here they are ridin' around. 'Bout five or ten minutes, they fall asleep in the horse.  
(laughs)

Jack just crawls through under corral fence, gets each guard off the horse. Lays 'em cross like a layed up cross fence, one over d'other'n. He reaches in one, finds the keys in one of 'ems pocket to the gate.

He goes there, unlocks the gate, takes the race horses out. Unlocks the gate back, slides through under the corral fence, and puts the key back in the guard's pocket. Takes the horses on down to his dad's barn, and puts 'em in the stalls.

Up next mornin' he said, "Dad, go up tell Doc I got his horses. Oh, I got my horses last night." (laughs)

Anyway, Jack's dad went out, "Hey, Doc, Jack stoled his horses last night."

Doc said, "His horses? He stole my race horses." (laughs)

Jack's dad said, "No, I asked you yesterdy, got 'em would they be his, and you said, 'yeh.' So, Jack stoled his own horses. Wants to come court ye daughter now."

Doc said, "No, no, no, they ain't no way." Said, "You go back and tell Jack, if he wants to come up and court my daughter, he's got to come here tomorrow, not a walkin', not a

ridin', not a runnin', not a jumpin', not a skippin'. And, when he gets here, he can't come in and he can't stay out."

Jack's dad went back there, said, "Jack, you better forget that girl. It's gettin' harder and harder by each day."

Jack said, "What did he say?"

"He told me to tell you, you had to come up there tomorrow, tomorrow, not a walkin', not a runnin', not a jumpin', not a skippin', not a ridin', and when you get here, you can't come in and you can't stay out. That's impossible!"

Jack said, "Dad, all I can do is try." Done went this fur, you know.

Well, Jack thought on it a minute. He went out to the pig pen, got a big ol' sow hog. He, he drove it, uh, led it near to the Doc's house. And then he got on it, come through the Doc's yard, uh goin' from one side a hittin' this leg, and that side, goin' back to this 'en. He wasn't a walkin', he wasn't runnin', he wasn't skippin', he wasn't jumpin', and he wasn't a ridin'.

Doc told him to come in.

Well, Jack come to the, to his picket fence there, close he get. He got off the sow hog, and got up half in and half out the pig pen.

Said, "Doc, I done what you told me. I come here not a walkin', not a runnin', not a jumpin', not a skippin', and not a ridin', and I've not come in and I've not stayed out. I wanna come see ye daughter."

He said, "No, no, no, ain't no way Jack." Said, "You've gotta come up here tomorrow night, and steal a rabbit, cookin' in the black pot over the fireplace, me, my wife, and daughter watchin'."

Gah, Jack thought about his dad. It was gettin' harder and harder each day.

Well, anyway he went back that evenin'. He had him some rabbit traps, box traps. That night he set what he had of 'em.

Next mornin' he caught three rabbits. He had a big one, a medium sized one, and a small one. He put 'em in a hemp sack.

Well, the next, 'at next evenin', you know, when he was s'posed to go up there and steal a rabbit, he got up there late that evenin'. It sorta of a warm evenin', you know. Them in 'ere cookin' a rabbit over the fire place, makin' it hot in the house, you know. So, they had the door open, the screen door there.

Well, Jack looked through the screen door, through the livin' room, in the kitchen. Sure enough. There sat Doc, and his wife and daughter, sittin' there 'round the fireplace, watchin', you know, how the fire, cookin' the rabbit.

Well, he reached in the sack, got the least 'en out. He got side the corner of the house, made a racket, thumped it, turned it loose through the yard.

And the daughter seed it, said, "Gah!! Hey Dad." Said, "There went a rabbit through the yard."

He said, "Daughter, keep yo' eye on the rabbit cookin', rabbit in the pot." Said, "Forget all them rabbits in the yard." Said, "If you don't, Jack'll have it."

Well, Jack let it get sorta settled down a little bit. He got the medium sized rabbit out.

Thumped the house again, made a racket, let it go across the porch, and it hit the screen door little bit, kapumph!

And Doc's wife sees it, "Hey Doc. There went a bigger rabbit 'cross the porch, bigger than the one in the pot, I believe."



He said, "Ol' woman, like I told our daughter, keep your mind on the cookin' rabbit in the pot. Forget all them rabbits in the yard and goin' across the porch." Said, "If you don't, Jack'll have it."

Well, Jack waited maybe 'bout five or ten minutes, let it get quiet again. He eased up in the porch with that biggest rabbit, got it out the hemp sack. Eased the screen door open, turned it loose in the house. It went through the livin', the livin' room, must been 'cause they had a light on, or maybe a kerosene lamp in the kitchen. Went toward the light, went on through in the kitchen. Hit Doc in the chest, and scratched him a little, and went under the cupboard.

Well, Gollee, they all three forgot about the rabbit cookin'.

Doc had grabbed the broom handle down there tryin' to get it out from under the cupboard. Had his wife and daughter there gonna catch it. He was there gougin', you know, lookin' under the cupboard.

Jack eased the screen door on open, walked through the livin' room. Walked on through in the kitchen, went to the fireplace, lifted the lid off the pot, got the cookin' rabbit out, put the lid back in the pot. Back through the kitchen, out the livin' room, out the screen door, and back home.

They sat there probly, Doc a gougin', maybe five or ten more minutes.

He hit the rabbit, hit come out, and the daughter and his wife missed it. It went through the kitchen, through the livin' room, hit the screen door. So much force, it knocked it open, and gone.

Well, they got up, got back in the seat, watchin' the rabbit cookin' in the pot, you know.

He said, "Hey ol' woman." Said, "Rabbit orta be 'bout done."

Well she went over picked the lid up, said, "They hain't no rabbit in here."

He said, "Ah grave, Jack's got the rabbit." (laughs)

Well, next mornin', Jack give dad his rabbit, cooked rabbit. Said, "Take the rabbit up to Doc, tell him I got the rabbit last night. I wanna come up and court his daughter now, or visit, you know."

So, Jack's dad took the rabbit up. Said, "Hey Doc, Jack come in with a cooked rabbit last night. Said he wants to come up visit with your daughter." Court her, whatever, you know.

Doc said, "No, no, no, no. Ain't no way." Said, "You tell Jack, he's gotta come up here tonight, me and my wife sleeps upstairs. He's gotta steal my wife's shimme, with her in bed with it on, and me a layin' side of her. And tell him, I've got a pistol." Said, "It's got five shells normally in it. I'm gonna put six in it, and tell him I'll shoot him if I see him. All doors locked, all winders locked."

Well, Jack's dad went back down and said, "Jack, gosh, you gonna have to skip that girl. It is gettin' impossible. This here is impossible."

Jack said, "Dad, what did he say?"

"He told me to tell you, you had to come up 'ere tonight, with all doors locked all winders locked, steal his wife's shimme, her with it on, layin' in bed, him layin' a side of her, and he got his pistol, gone have six bullets in it. He said shoot to kill if he seen ye."

He said, "Son, that is impossible."

Jack said, "Dad, I've come this fur, all I can do is try." (laughs)

Well, he thinks a while on that, studies on it. He goes out and kills one of the sheep. Gets him a bladder of blood. He fixes him up a scarecrow. Puts some a his clothes on it. Puts his hat in top of it. And, he ties it to a long pole, 'cause he has it upstairs, you know.

He gets up 'ere 'bout 'leven o'clock that night. He sticks that scarecrow up in the pole. Butts the winder just a little bit.

Doc heard it. Said, "Jack if that's you tryin' to get in," said, "You break one of my winders like I told ye dad to tell ye, I've got a pistol here. I'll shoot ye."

Well, Jack just eased it back down a little bit. After a little bit, lets it sorta, calm down a little bit. He takes that scarecrow back up on that pole. He gets nearly to the winder and it lets it go back. And he comes back with force he knocks window, lights, lights out, and sash and all.

'Bout that time Doc's pistol went off...Bam, Bam, Bam, Bam, Bam, Bam!

Jack just lets the scarecrow fall in the pole. He had a rock there too. He dropped the rock make like a racket, and poured blood, that bladder of blood all over that scarecrow. (laughs)

So anyway, lay there awhile, and Doc's wife said, "Doc, you killed Jack." Said, "I heard his body hit the ground."

Gets Doc scared.

He jumps up out of the bed, puts his clothes on, his boots on real quick. He runs downstairs, opens the front door, and leaves it wide open.

His wife said, "You better go get two or three of your neighbors, help bury Jack." Said, "They'll hang you for that." (laughs)

So anyway, the doc's gone awhile maybe, Jack maybe waits ten or fifteen minutes. He just comes 'round form the corner of the house where he hid. Come through the door, gets upstairs, and sorta talks like Doc a little bit.

"Gollee," said, "I got two of my neighbors." Said, "We got him buried, so maybe they won't catch up with me."

Gets in bed with Doc's wife. (laughs) Talks a little bit with her, and, "Oh gosh! I've got blood all over my hands, forgot and never washed." Said, "I've got blood all over your shimmees."

She said, "That's ok. I've gotta clean one over there in the bureau. Well, get up and get it for me and I'll change," you know.

Well, Jack didn't know where the bureau's at, it's dark, but he felt through the room and finally found it, reached it to Doc's wife.

She changed and throwed the bloody one on the floor, which didn't have no blood on it, you know.

Jack just grabbed it down the stairs out the door he's gone, you know.

About thirty minutes, Doc come back in, locks the front door, goin' up the stairs, he's a laughin'.

Got near his wife. His wife said, what are you laughin' about?

He said, "Gollee, wasn't nothin' but a ol' scarecrow, blood poured on it." Said, "I made a fool of myself." Said, "I went and got two of my neighbors. Oh Gosh, made a fool outa myself. It wasn't Jack, just an ol' scarecrow."

Well, she said, "Didn't you come in here 'bout twenty or thirty minutes ago? Got in bed with me, and said you got blood all over my shimmees?" (laughs) And said, "I told you I had clean one in the bureau and you got up and got it for me, and I changed."

He said, "Ah, grave, Jack's got the shimmees." (laughs)

Well, next mornin' Jack told his dad to go up and take the shimmees up there and show Doc.

And, Jack's dad got up there and said, "Doc, Jack come in with your wife's shimme last night. He wants to come up and court ye daughter now."

He went, "No, no, ain't no way."

Jack's dad said, "Hold it right there, Doc. Jack told me if you didn't agree this time, that he had six bullet holes in his hat. He's gonna turn it in to the law that you tried to kill him last night."

Well, that scared Doc up. He told Jack's dad to tell him to come on up and court his daughter.

Well Jack went on up, seem like they just, they might have courted maybe three months or somethin'. Went and got a preacher, got married, and the last time I was down through there, Jack and that girl was doin' good. Jack had even made buddies with ol' Doc.

And that was "Jack and the Doctor's Girl." He went with through somethin' to get that girl.

Maybe it paid off in the end, Yeh.

## APPENDIX D

Orville Hicks

“Jack and the Heifer’s Hide”

Recorded at Appalachian State University

February 25, 2009

Orville’s version of “Jack and the Heifer’s Hide” is different from Ted’s, Stanley’s and others that I have read and seen. He includes the mothers-in-law during most of his performances of this tale. Ted said, “The Heifer’s Hide was his [Ray’s] favorite. Mom got tired of it.” (personal interview, March, 2009).

Orville describes his and Ray’s gesturing in the tales in the *Appalachian Journal*, “I didn’t know I done all that till I watched a video of myself.” AJ: But there are some purposeful, stylized gestures? OH: Yah, when my hands go out, and I go, “Back there in the mountain.” [points backward with his thumb] (53). “Ray would say, ‘Gawwwd’ and he’d come out with his hands way out here, and he gestured about all the time (54).

Now, Jack he had two brothers, Tom and Will. And they, uh, was in some of the tales and some of the tales they wasn’t. “I’m goin’ to tell it, Tom [McGowan], so you get used to it right now.” (chuckle)

But, uh, so Jack and his two brothers, Tom and Will. They lived w-a-a-a-y back up in the mountains, there with their momma and daddy. And the boys gettin’ up seventeen, eighteen years ol’.

Their daddy said, “Boys, you’uns ol’ enough to go out and get married and start a life of you’uns own.”

Well, Will went out and got married, but he come back home and brought his wife and mother-in-law with him, (chuckle) moved back in with his daddy. And Tom went out and got married but he come back home, brought his wife, and mother-in-law with him, moved back in with his daddy and momma.

Well poor Jack, he finally found him a woman. (chuckle) He got married, and he come back home and brought his wife and mother-in-law with him.

Finally, his daddy said, "Boys, I can't stand all this." Said, "I've got some land across the mountain here, and I'm goin' to give it to you. You'uns go over there, and build you'uns up a little ol' house and start a life you'uns own. Gosh, I can't stand all of you'uns here in my house."

Well, before he left home there, he give Will a big ol' mule for a weddin' present. He give Tom a big ol' mule for a weddin' present. And the only thang he had left to give Jack was a little ol' heifer cow he had there. He give that to Jack for a weddin' present.

Well, the boys went across the mountain there, and Tom and Will and their wife and mother-in-law built 'em up a little ol' house in the valley to live in. But Jack, his wife, and mother-in-law built 'em a house up on the side of the mountain to live in.

Well, Jack was kind of lazy and didn't like to work too good.

Tom and Will took their big mules. They'd go up on the mountain and they'd cut timber and work hard all day. They'd come down the mountain. They'd come by Jack's house. Jack be on the porch a wavin' at 'em.

"Alright, Jack, you lazy rascal, don't work." Said, "You'll starve to death this winter." Said, "That's what you'll do."

One mornin', Tom and Will's up on the mountain cuttin' timber, and Jack's little heifer jumped out of the fence. And it went up on the mountain, and Will seen it comin', and he cut a tree on it and killed it deader than a hammer. (chuckle 3x)

He come back to Jack's house and said, "Jack, let your little heifer out of the fence, and we cut a tree on it and killed it."

Jack said, "Bedad, that's all right." Said, "Me, my wife, and mother-in-law's needin' somethin' to eat anyway." (chuckle)

Well, Jack went up on the mountain, he drug the heifer down to the house, and he skinned it out from the tip of its nose to the end of its tail. Left the tail stickin' out, left the horns in it, and its eyeballs in it. (chuckle) He got the ol' heifer's hide, hung it up on side of the house to cure out.

Well, about a month went by. Jack, and his wife and mother-in-law, eat that little ol' heifer plumb up. They didn't have nothin' left to eat, and Jack went down and asked Tom and Will for a bite to eat.

"No, Jack, you won't work, and we ain't gonna feed you." Said, "You'll just have to starve to death."

Jack said, "Bedad. I'll just go down the road and seek my fortune somewhere else." Said, "That's what I'm goin' to do."

Well, it was fall of the year and Jack didn't have no coat. He went outside and it was kind of chilly, and got that ol' heifer's hide down off the side of the house. It cured out and got stiff. (chuckle) Jack pulled it up over top of him and used it for a coat, them horns stickin' out, its eyeballs in it, and that tail draggin' behind him. Jack went down the road, that ol' tail, flippty flop, flippty flop, flippty flop, pitchin' up dust behind him.



Jack walked and walked 'til about dinner time. He got hungry. Jack come by a little ol' house out there in the woods. Went up and knocked on the door. Ol' woman opened the door and looked at Jack.

Said, "What do you want?" Jack said, "Can I get a bite to eat? I'm gettin' hungry?"

"NO, NO, NO, NO, NO (!!!!) Ol' man of the house ain't home. You take that thang and go somewhere else." (chuckle)

Well, Jack went on down the road draggin' that ol' hide and that tail, flippty flop, flippty flop, pitchin' up dust.

Way up in the evenin', Jack come by another little ol' house, and Jack was give out and he was about starved plumb to death.

Jack went up and knocked on the door. Ol' woman opened the door and looked at Jack.

Said, "What do you want?" Jack said, "Gosh, I'm hungry and I'm give out. Can I get a bite to eat and maybe spend the night here?"

"Well, son, we ain't got a bite to eat in the house, ain't got nothin'. But if you want to spend the night, come on in and go upstairs and lay down in the attic, and you can ask my husband when he comes home.

Jack went on in the house draggin' that ol' hide behind him. (chuckle) Went up them steps, that tail, flippty flop, flippty flop, hittin' them steps. (chuckle)

Jack got up in that attic laid down, and Jack got to lookin', and they's a knot hole about that big in the floor. Jack looked down through that knot hole, seen everythin' that was goin' on in the house.

It wasn't long 'til Jack heard a racket. He put his eyeball down at that knot hole and looked down through it, and he watched that woman go to the door and open the door. And

there stood a man with a big scissor tail coat on, big ol' neck tie and a big ol' hat. He come on in the house and Jack said he knowed it. The way that man and woman courted, that couldn't been her husband. (chuckle 4x)

The ol' woman took the man and sat him down at the table. Jack watched her go in the kitchen, out of the cupboard, get a big ol' plate of chicken in there and bring it, put it on the table. Gosh, that man got to eatin' that chicken legs, and Jack was upstairs, his belly a growlin'. (chuckle) Jack watched that woman go back in the kitchen, out of the cupboard, bring a big bottle of wine and put it on the table.

Well, that man was eatin' that chicken, drinkin' that wine, that woman jumped up and said, "Quick, quick, hide." Told that man, said, "I hear my husband comin' home." (chuckle)

The only thang she had in the house was an ol' chest, and she opened that chest up and that man, took a runnin' with that chicken leg in his hand, and jumped down in that chest.

She shut it down right quick, and she run to the table, and she got that big plate of chicken and that bottle of wine. Took it back in the kitchen, hid it back in the cupboard.

Well, Jack was watchin' every bit of this upstairs.

About that time, her husband come in, dustin' hisself off, been workin' in the fields.

"Hey, ol' woman, what's for supper?"

She said, "Supper? I got a little bread and water I give ye." (chuckle)

He said, "Bring it out here. I'm 'bout plumb starved to death."

She brought her husband a cake of cold cornbread and a bottle water and put it on the table.

Well, Jack was upstairs watchin' this, and he couldn't stand it no longer. Jack got that ol' hide, (stomping of feet on the floor, 2x) flopped against the floor.

Man looked around, "Honey, where's that racket comin' from?"

"Oh, I forgot to tell ye, plumb forgot. A boy come by here wantin' to spend the night, and I put him upstairs in the attic."

"Well, tell him come down here and have supper with me, what little I got." (chuckle)

She hollered at Jack, and here he come down them stairs, draggin' that ol' hide, that tail, flippty flop, flippty flop.

And Jack sittin' there at the table beside the farmer and he set the hide upside of him. (chuckle) There's that ol' heifer's hide lookin' at that farmer and them eyeballs in it, and them horns stickin' out. That ol' man was lookin' at it, and Jack was lookin' at that cornbread on the table. He was thinkin' about that chicken that woman hid back in the kitchen.

That man wasn't lookin', Jack got that ol' hide and plopped it against the floor and said, "Shut your mouth, everywhere I go, you get me in trouble."

That man said, "Son, is that thang talkin' to you?" (chuckle)

Jack said, "Yeh, it's a talkin' to me."

He said, "What'd it say?"

Jack said, "I better not tell you, make the ol' woman of the house mad."

He said, "Jack, blamed the ol' woman of the house. I wanta know what it said."

Jack said, "Well, if you must know," said, "She got a plate of chicken hid in the kitchen."

"Is that right, honey?"

"Yeh, Yeh, Yeh. (!!!) Little I got in there for my kinfolk."

"Well, bring it out here. Me and Jack's better than your kinfolk ever be." (chuckle)

She brought the chicken, and put it on the table. They was eatin' that chicken, and Jack's lookin' at that water, thinkin' about that big bottle of wine back in the kitchen.

Jack got that ol' hide again and flopped it again on the floor. (feet stomping on the floor  
2x) "You blabber mouth thang. I told you shut up now."

That man said, "What did it say this time?"

Jack said, "Well, if you must know." Said, "She had a bottle of wine in the kitchen."

"Is that right honey?"

"Yeh, Yeh, Yeh. (!!!) Little I got saved for my kinfolk in there."

"Well, I told you bring it out here. Me and Jack better than your kinfolk ever be."

She brought the wine and put it on the table. Then, Jack eat most of the chicken, and that man drunk most of the wine.

They got done. That man looked at Jack, "What'll you take for that thang?"

Jack said, "Gosh, I can't sell my heifer's hide. If I sold that thang, I'd starve plumb to death. (chuckle)

That man said, "Son, I've got to have it, gotta have it bad." Said, "I can tell when my wife's cheatin' on me and hidin' food from me." Said, "I've got to have that thang." Said, "I'll give you a thousand dollars for it." Said, "If you don't sell it to me, I'll just kill you and take it."

Jack said, "You put it that way (chuckle) I'll take a thousand dollars for it, and that ol' chest you got sittin' there."

That woman jumped up, "NO, NO, NO (!!!) Not that chest now. That chest belonged to my grandma's, grandma's, grandma's, grandma's, gre-e-e-at grandma." (!!!!!)

He said, "Ol' woman, I don't care. If Jack want it, let him have it."

Well Jack left there with a thousand dollars in his pocket and that ol' chest on his back. Jack knowed all the time that man was in the chest. He seen him go in it.

And Jack got down to the river. "This ol' chest is full of holes, ain't fit for nothin'. I believe I'll pitch it in the river."

That man said, "Son, please don't throw me in the river."

Jack said, "Who's in that chest?"

"Me, son, the preacher." (chuckle)

Jack said, "The preacher?" Said, "God, what are you doing in that chest?"

"Son, that's a long story. Don't pitch me in the river. I'll give you a thousand dollars."

Jack said, "Poke it through the key hole." (chuckle 2x)

The preacher poked a thousand dollars through the key hole. Jack got it and went home.

Tom and Will was out in the yard with their big mules fixin' to go to work.

Jack said, "Look, brothers. I've got two thousand dollars."

Will said, "Where'd you get that at?"

Jack said, "I got it out of my heifer's hide."

Will said, "You ain't lyin'?"

Jack said, "No, I'm not lyin'."

Will said, "You got that much out of yore heifer's hide? We'll get that much out of our mules hides." (chuckle)

Will picked up a axe, knocked the mule in the head, killed it deader than a hammer.

(chuckle) Tom knocked his mule in the head and killed it dead. They skinned 'em out.

Didn't let the hides cure out. Went down the road draggin' them ol' mule's hides behind 'em and about eighty degrees, flies blowin'.

Come little ol' house out in the woods and Will went up, knocked on the door. (big laugh)

Woman came to the door and said, "Shoo, what's that smell?"

Will said, "That's our mule hide. You wanta buy 'em for a thousand dollars a piece?"

She said, "You get them stinkin' thangs and get away from me."

Gosh, she grabbed a broom out of the corner. Went beatin' Tom and Will in the head, runnin' 'em plumb back to the house.

Well, about that time, Jack got up to his house on the side of the mountain.

His wife met him at the door, said, "Jack, I've got some bad news."

Jack said, "What kind of bad news?"

Said, "Well, your mother-in-law died while you was gone." Said, "She been dead 'bout three days, gettin' kind of stiff. Need take her down there and have her buried."

Well, Jack had an ol' wagon there, didn't have but one seat. He set his mother-in-law up side of him on the seat. Started into town with her. (chuckle 4x) 'Bout half way to town, he come by this ol' mill pond.

Now, the man who run this mill pond, he was real mean, stingy, and greedy. Been in trouble with the sheriffs, and he hollered, "Hold up."

Jack stopped, said, "What did you want?"

Said, "It's awful hot out here today. You like to have a cold glass of water?"

Jack said, "Believe I will."

He said, "It'll be a dollar."

Jack knowed he was stingy, and greedy, and mean.

Said, "Bring me a glass of water. I'll give you a dollar for it."

The ol' man brought him a glass of water and Jack got down off the wagon a drinkin' it.

That ol' man said, 'What about your mother-in-law, does she want a glass of water?'

Jack said, 'I don't know, ask her.' (chuckle) Said, 'She's kind of hard a hearin'.'

(chuckle) Said, 'If she don't answer, shove her.' Said, 'She'll wake up.'

Well, he got up on the wagon, said, 'Hey, you want a glass of water?'

Well, she couldn't answer. (chuckle)

He got mad at her and shoved her and she fell off the wagon and fell in the pond.

Jack jumped in the pond, swum around and got her out. Said, 'You've done it now. You've drowned my mother-in-law. I'm gonna tell the sheriff on you.'

'Gosh, son, don't tell the sheriff on me. I'm in enough trouble.'

Jack said, 'Well, give me thousand dollars. We'll forget about it.' (chuckle)

Man gave a thousand dollars. Jack took her down town and had her buried. Went back home. Tom and Will was out in the yard, said, 'Look brothers, got another thousand dollars.'

Will said, 'Where'd you get that at?'

Jack said, 'Down at the funeral parlor. They's buyin' dead mother-in-laws, a thousand dollars a piece.'

Will said, 'Honey, come here, and bring yore mama with ye.' (chuckle)

Will knocked his mother-in-law in the head. (chuckle)

I tell this to my mother-in-law every chance I get.

Tom knocked his mother-in-law in the head, (chuckle) threwed 'em back of the wagon.

Took 'em down to the funeral parlor.

And that man came out and said, 'Can I help you?'

Will said, "Yeh, we killed our mother-in-law. You wanta buy 'em?"

"What? You do, what? You better get out of here. You'll get in jail and never get out of jail."

Gosh, it scared Tom and Will. They run back home. Jack was out in the yard. They said, "Jack you lied to us. You told us to kill our mules and mother-in-laws." Said, "Now, brother, we're gonna kill you and take that money you got." Said, "How do you want to die?"

Uh, Jack said, "If your gonna kill me, it don't matter. Shoot me, hang me, beat me to death, but please, don't drown me down in that river down yonder."

They said, "Jack, that's what we're gonna do. (chuckle) We're gonna drown you in that river down yonder."

They went to the wood shed and got a hemp sack, and they made Jack cloomb down in it. They drug him down to the river. Got down there to the river, and Will said, "Throw him in there."

Tom said, "Gosh, he's been mean to us. I hate to throw my own brother in the river."

Will said, "Let's go back home, get that gallon moonshine, drink it, come back. One of us'll pitch him in the river."

They got a big rock and put it on the sack where Jack couldn't get out. And Tom and Will went back through the woods to the house. They hadn't no more nurry got out of sight, Jack wiggled around in that sack. He wiggled around. He got his head stuck out. He couldn't get out no further. Jack was sittin' there. And he looked and here come a man down the road with a hunderd head of sheep, goin' into town to sell 'em.



He got nearly up to that sack and Jack started singin', "Oh, what joy divine, oh what heaven mine." (singing the melody)

That man stopped and scratched his head and looked at Jack. (chuckle) He said, "What are you doin' in that sack?"

Jack said, "What does it look like? I'm fixin' to go to heaven."

That man said, "Go to heaven?" Said, "How old are you?"

Jack said, "I'm nearly eighteen years ol'."

That man said, "I'm ninety years ol'. How 'bout me and you tradin' places?"

Jack said, "No, I can't do that. This might be my last chance to get into heaven."

That man said, "Let me in that sack and I'll give you this hunderd head of sheep I got."

Jack said, "Bedad, I believe I'll trade with ye." (chuckle)

The ol' man went over to the sack, and he got the rock off. Jack cloomb up out of it. Ol' man cloomb down in it and Jack put the rock back on it.

Told that man, said, "Be quiet now. When them two angels come back and find out it ain't me in that sack," said, "They might throw you somewhere else." (chuckle)

The ol' man said, "I won't say a word."

Jack got the hunderd head of sheep and went back home with 'em.

Tom and Will come up out of the holler in a few minutes. They drunk that whole gallon of moonshine.

Will said, "Get out of the way, Tom. I'll throw that rascal in the river."

They got the rock off, jerked it up, didn't even look in it. Tied it shut, said, "We're gonna throw you in. You got anythin' to say?"

That ol' man thought it was them angels goin' throw him into heaven. He wouldn't say a word.

They got that sack and whirled it around. Threw it out in the middle of the river and it kicked around, went down under and they said, "Well, (clap hands like he's dusting them off, 3x) that's the end of Jack."

They got home. There was Jack in the yard with a hunderd head of sheep.

"Jack, where'd you get them sheep at?"

"Well," said, "Where'd you boys leave me at?"

Will said, "Bottom of the river."

Jack said, "That where I got them sheep."

"That's," said, "The bottom of that river's full of sheep. If you'd throwed me another hunderd foot, I'd got another hunderd head. Didn't you see me kickin'? I was a gatherin' sheep."

Will said, "Hurry, pitch us in the river. We want some of them sheep." (chuckle)

Jack said, "Be obliged to."

Gosh, Tom and Will run down to the wood shed and got 'em a sack.

Got down to the river and Will said, "I'm the oldest. Pitch me in there first."

He cloomb down in the sack. Jack tied it shut and throwed him out in the river, and he started kickin'.

Tom said, "What's he kickin' about?"

Jack said, "He's gatherin' sheep."

Tom said, "Hurry, Will's greedy. He'll get every one of 'em." Said, "Pitch me in there." (chuckle)

Tom cloomb down in the sack. Jack threwed him out in the river.

Well, Tom and Will wasn't around to bother Jack no more,

And Jack went on back home to his wife, and three thousand dollars and his hunderd head of sheep.

Last time I's down there to see that lazy rascal, he still ain't done a good day's work.

(chuckle 2x)



**Figure 34: Matney Community Center near Beech Mountain, NC, April 3, 2010, Thomas McGowan, Orville Hicks, and Ted Hicks (left to right)**

## APPENDIX E

Stanley Hicks

## “Jack and the Heifer’s Hide”

Video Recording of Public Performance (Courtesy of Thomas McGowan)

In the third book of the Foxfire Series, Ray McBride interviews Stanley Hicks and writes, “Stanley Hicks could have kept us entertained for months—if any of us had had the time.” (Wigginton139) As was noted in the literature review, Stanley Hicks enjoys the humor in the stories, and his views were different than some who grew up in western North Carolina with the Jack Tale tradition. Cheryl Oxford writes,

Like the noted Jack Tale-tellers Ray Hicks and Marshall Ward, Stanley Hicks took seriously his role as guardian of the old mountain ways. He was concerned that these stories and songs of his parents and grandparents not be lost or forgotten. However, of these three traditional performers from Watauga County, Stanley Hicks was unusual in his view of folklore as a living art continuously evolving and adapting to new times and circumstances. (Oxford 93)

I'm gonna to tell you one about Jack and Tom and Will, about the Heifer Hide.  
 Back in them ol' days, you know, this ol' man had three sons, Jack, Tom and Will.  
 He took and gave Tom a horse and Will a horse, and give Jack a heifer.  
 And Jack he was like myself, he was so lazy, to just where he could hardly walk.  
 So they went out to this ground, and he says, “Now boys, I’m goin’ to give ye this land.  
 You just go ahead and clean it up, it’s yours.”

They went out there and built 'em a log cabin. They started workin'.

And ol' Jack he just laid round and wouldn't do anythang.

And back then they just had a few little country stores. They didn't have too much in them, just a little chewin' tobacco and stuff. And a few groceries.

They said, "Jack you go and get some groceries. We'll just be workin' in this new ground."

Jack went off to the store to get the groceries.

And Tom and Will said, "We'll cut us a tree on his heifer, kill her, and we'll get rid of Jack that a way.

So Jack he went on to the store, he was gone a good little while.

The ol' heifer she was a browsin' round where they was cuttin' at, and they cut this tree across this heifer and killed her.

Jack, he came back, and they said, "Jack we've had awful bad luck, real bad luck. Huh!!! But that's what happened." He said, "We was a cuttin' timber and these trees and your heifer gotten under one. It cut down and killed her."

Jack said, "That's alright, don't worry about that."

He went down there and he skinned this heifer out. Hung the hide up on a pole and let it dry. He just set round eatin' steak, eatin' meat, and gettin' fat and fat. Wasn't doin' a thang, just layin' around there.

Tom and Will, they was gettin' awful disgusted with it. They didn't know what they was goin' to do with him.

They said, "Now, when he eats up all that meat, Jack will leave."

Well, he got it all eat up, and went out tucked up the whole heifer hide. He sewed it up and it stuffed full of shucks. And he laid the tail cross his back, and he started down the road draggin' his ol' hide.

They said, "Huh!! We got rid of Jack this time we won't see him no more."

He went down the road, draggin' his ol' hide and it hot. He came to a house and pecked on the door and out come a woman.

She took a glance or two at him and said, "What's your name?"

He said, "Jack."

"Whatcha want Jack?"

He said, "I'm lookin' for a place to stay all night."

She said, "I really don't keep no strangers. You'll have to go on down the road."

Jack he went on down the road, gettin' thirsty and hot. Come to another house up on the hill, and he went up and banged away on the door.

Out come another woman with a broom in her hand. She looked at him and all around, and said, "What do you want here?"

"Agh, I'm just lookin' for a place to stay all night."

"Agh! We don't keep no stranger here, you'll have to go on down the road."

You know that's the way it goes.

He went on down, and it was gettin' late in the evenin'. The sun was goin' down, and he was just tired to death draggin' that ol' hide.

And he come to another house, two-story house, log house. He went up and banged on the door, and out come a woman.

She looked at him and said, "Whatchu want, what's your name?"

He said, "Jack."

"Well," she said, "Whatchu want?"

He said, "I'm lookin' for a place to stay all night." He said, it's gettin' late, I'm gettin' hungry and thirsty."

"Huh!!" She said, "We don't hardly keep no strangers, but if you stay, you'll have go upstairs."

And back in 'em days, you throw a cat or dog down through the crack.

Jack, he took his ol' hide, he drug it on up the stairs. Kapump, kapump, kapump, kapump, and got on upstairs. He was watchin' down through a knot-hole.

And this woman, she had another man. She called him Ol' Parsons. She had another one you see. The other one was out there workin', the other one, a second one.

Jack, he was watchin' down through this hole. She was bakin' fruit and bread, and all this stuff, and roasted turkey, and roastin' a pig and all. She got all this stuff, and put it in the cupboard.

And Jack he sees Ol' Parson down there, you know, she called him Ol' Parsons.

Well, way up in the night her ol' husband come in. You know, he worked the ol' sawmill, you know. He come in just wore out.

He banged on the door. Said, "Agh." And said, "Why you comin' in here way in the night wakin' me up?" Said, "What in the world you comin' in at this time of night for?"

"Well," he said, "I have to work late. I had a whole lot to do and I just couldn't get in from the work."

Well, she opened up the door and he went on in.

Jack was up there, on that ol' hide, just starvin' to death and was thirsty.

And he was rollin' round on that hide and beatin' around up there.

He said, "You got anythin' to eat you ol' woman."

She said, "Yeah, a little corn and mush."

Jack had seen all this stuff in the cupboard, and his mouth just waterin'.

And him on that hide, and he said, "What's that up there, ol' lady?"

Well she said, "Little ol' man came in here draggin' a little ol' hide." Wanted to know if he could stay all night, told him he'd have to go upstairs."

But in the mean time, she took ol' Parsons and locked him up in the chest.

So her husband couldn't see him, you know. He was in that big chest layin' in there.

He said, "Come down Jack, and eat a bite with me."

Jack, he went down. He couldn't barely eat that ol' cold mush, that ol' corn mush. He reached over there and pomp-pomp-pomp on that ol' hide.

"Shut up talkin' or you ain't goin' to be eatin'."

"What'd you say Jack?" "

"Oh, couldn't tell a'tall. Oh, it'd make the woman in the house mad."

"What'd you say Jack?"

"Oh, couldn't tell a'tall." "C'mon Jack and tell it."

"Well, there's some fruit bread down in the cupboard and some stuff."

"Is there, woman?"

She said, "Yeah, the kinfolks'll be over."

He said, "Well me and Jack is kinfolk."

They got that out, and eat quite a bit of it. And Jack wanted to try a litte bit of everythin'.

And he, pomp-pomp-pomp on the ol' hide again.



“Oh, shut up and quit talkin’, ol’ Jack.”

“What’d he say, what’d he say?”

“Oh, couldn’t tell a’tall.”

“It’d make the ol’ woman in the house mad.”

He said, “Confound the woman in the house.”

“There’s roasted pig and turkey down in the ol’ cupboard.”

“Is there, woman?”

She said, “Yeah, the kinfolks’ll be over.”

He said, “Well me and Jack is kinfolk.”

We eat that, and Jack is just stuffed up to the brim. He just couldn’t hold anymore.

He said, “Jack why you gonna take that hide?”

“I just couldn’t sell it. I just couldn’t sell it a’tall.”

He said, “I’ve got to have that hide.”

“No, I just couldn’t it, I just couldn’t sell it a’tall.” He said, “I just couldn’t let it go.”

He told him everythin’ that happened.

He said, “C’mon Jack, sell me that hide.”

He said, “Tell you what I’d do, I’d take 1000 guinea.” That was dollars you know.

“I’ll take 1000 guineas and that ol’ chest.”

“Nah, you’re not gonna sell my ol’ chest. My father gave it to me, his father gave it to him, his great-granddaddy gave it to him. You ain’t gonna take my chest.”

He said, “I gotta have your chest.”

“No, you ain’t gonna take my chest.”

“My father gave it to me, his father gave it to him. His great-granddaddy gave it to him, and his great uncle gave it to him. You ain’t gonna take my chest.”

He said, “Confound your uncles, confound your daddy, confound all your kin!!!!!”

Jack said, “I’ll have the chest.” They traded.

Well Jack, he sat up all night, and watched it and ol’ Parsons, you know.

Well he just watched all night, and the next mornin’ he was just weak and wheezin’.

He said, “Now you have to take and load that ol’ chest.”

Well, he said, “I will.”

They scoot it out on the porch. Jack he bowed down, you know, scooted it on its back.

And he barely could wobble and get outside the house with it. Just barely did get out where they couldn’t see.

He said, “Confound, confound, this ol’ heavy chest!!!! I’m gonna throw it right down here in the well.”

She said, “Please don’t Jack.” Said, “The ol’ Parsons down in here. If you goin’ to throw it down in there, I’m goin’ to have and get it.

They scared the life out of that ol’ man. He got his money and took off towards home with it.

Went back, started back toward home, got back.

Tom and Will had worked their heads off, just killed ’em bout it.

Ol’ Jack, he begin to show what he got out of his ol’ heifer hide, and all.

They said, “We don’t believe you!!!!”

He said, “Here’s the money, I’ll show you.”

They run out there and got them musket loadin’ rifles.

They shot the horses down and skinned 'em out.

And stuffed them full of shucks, made them raw, you know, them ol' raw hides.

And took them down the road a goin' with them, you know.

People got to shootin' at 'em, told 'em you got to get these thangs off and bury them.

So they took 'em and buried 'em.

They went on back and said, "We'll kill Jack. We'll kill him. He's lyin' to us!!!!!"

They went back to Jack, and he was sittin' there just a rockin' away.

Said, "Jack, you lied to us. We come back and we're goin' to kill you!!!!!"

Jack said, "Huh!!!!!! I never lied to you."

"Oh yes you did. You told us what you got out of the heifer hide!!!!!! People got to shootin' at us, threatenin' to hang us, killin' us. We said we'd just have to bury our hides."

Jack said, "Huh!!!!!! That ain't my fault, that's yours."

They said, "We're goin' to take you down the river and drown you. We'll get rid of you that way."

Well they got a big ol' toe sack and they pulled at em'.

They took him down to the big ol' river. A big ol' hole and a big rock, you know.

And a big deep hole down in it.

They said, "We're goin' to drown you."

Jack said, "You can drown me, but I'll tell you what, I got out of my hide."

Well, they got him tied up in there. And said, "We better go back to see if we can find that money before we drown him. We might not find it if we drown him. We better go back and see."

Well Jack he was layin' there, ya know, in that ol' toe sack kickin' around.

You know, here come a big ol' sheep herder along.

Ol' man really ol', about ninety year ol', with a whole gang of sheep and a nice horse.

He come along and seen Jack, a kickin' and workin' around, workin' around in that sack.

He went up and said, "What you doin' in there, brother?"

Jack said, "Oh, I'm fixin' to go to heaven."

He said, "You're fixin' to go to heaven?"

He said, "Yea, I'm fixin' to go." He said, "They'll be along, I reckon and get me."

He said, "What's your name?"

And, he said, "Jack."

He said, "Pray Jack, let me go in your place."

He said, "No, I might not get another opportunity to go." He said, "I'm goin' to go while I got an opportunity to go."

He said, "Well, I tell you what I'll do Jack."

He said, "If you let me go in your place, I'll give you this horse and all these sheep."

"Huh. Well that sounds a little better. Well, untie the sack."

The ol' sheep herder, he untied it. He got down there and got in it.

And Jack said, "Now, listen before I tie you up." He said, "They'll be two angels come talkin' along. Now don't you speak to either one!!!!!!" He said, "If you do, you won't get to go!!!!!!"

He said, "They'll find out they've got the wrong man, and they just won't take you a'tall."

He said, "Don't speak no matter what they do or what they say!!!!!!"

Well, Jack, he went hid in the woods and he had them sheep and that big nice horse.

And here they come, Tom and Will, talkin' along just like he told ol' sheep herder.

They come down, they talked.

One took one end of the bag, one took the other end of the bag.

They give him a big shove, you know, over off this cliff down into the river.

Ol' sheep herder, he kicked and flopped around and went down.

“Huh”, they said!!!!!! “Now that’s got rid of Jack. We won’t be bothered by him anymore. We’ll just go back and go to work.”

They got back to the house. Jack came back ’bout time they got back.

And he went out and got on that horse. Got them sheep ahead of him and took off.

“Hey, Hi, Hoe, Hup, Hey, Hi, Hoe, Hup, Hey, Hi, Hoe, Hup.”

And they heard him comin’, and they peeped and looked. Said, “Oh, Lord have mercy.”

They said, “That looks like Jack. But we know it ain’t him. We drowned him.”

“Hey, Hi, Hoe, Hup, Hey Hi, Hoe Hup” right on up into the yard.

They said, “Jack, Lord of mercy, we thought we just drowned you. And here you come with a thousand head of sheep and a big nice horse, Huh!!!!!! How’d you get them?”

“Well you thought you drowned me, but I was gettin’ up sheep. You got me up a little further and I got up some more.”

They said, “Jack you’ve broke us up every way. Now take us back and throw us in the hole!!!!!!”

No, he just wouldn’t do it, just wouldn’t do it a’tall.

“We thought we were gonna drown you. Now c’mon Jack, please do it.”

“Well, you’ll have to get two good sacks.”

They got two big ol’ sacks and went back down to this hole.

Now, Tom was a little heavier than Will.

Now Jack said, "Will, you'll have to help me throw Tom in. I can't throw him far enough."

Well, they put Tom in there and they give him a big shove.

He kicked and kicked around, goin' down. And said, "What you doin', what you doin', what you doin', Jack?"

Said, "I'm gettin' up sheep, got him a little further to get a thousand head more."

Said, "Put in this as quick as you can and throw me as far as you can see."

And that's what Jack done.

Last time I seen Jack, he was doin' real well.

Thank you.

## APPENDIX F

Ted Hicks

## “Jack and the Heifer’s Hide”

Recorded August 18, 2009 in the parlor of Ted’s and Rosa’s Home

Well, I’m fixin’ to tell you, this ’en here’s called Jack and the Heifer’s Hide. (laughs)

Well, anyway in this ’en, most of ’em got Jack in it, of course, you know. And Tom and Will. Will’s the older brother, and Tom’s the middle one. In this ’en, they stayin’ home with their dad and mom, yeh.

Well, in this one, their dad gives Tom and Will a big mule a piece. And didn’t have nothin’ left. Jack’s the youngest, and he give him a little heifer calf. And told ’em to pay for it, you know, work it out, get up and get ready to clear new ground for the spring plantin’, you know.

Well, Jack seemed like he wasn’t interested in that someway, and he’s gonna, gonna get out and like they call it, seek his fortune, you know.

Well, he went out in the woods with Jack and Tom, I meant Tom and Will. And, and he, he messed around and got gone from ’em, and come back to the house mindin’ other thangs, you know, yeh.

Well, Will noticed, mentioned to Tom.

Tom said, “I don’t know what went with Jack.”

They sorta got to talkin’. It made ’em mad ’cause Jack went off and left and wouldn’t help ’em clear ground.

So, all at once, Jack’s little ol’ heifer come through with the flies, you know, in after it with its tail twisted.

That give Will a idea. He said, "Tom, let me cut this tree about half, two thirds down. You hem his little heifer calf up and run it through, and I'll cut the tree on it and kill it."

Said, "That orta get even 'cause Jack run, loused off and didn't help us work none."

So, Tom went after little, Jack's little heifer, and brought it back through and he run it under that tree, and Will made two or three more chops with the axe and it fell and it just timed out there and squooshed Jack's little heifer calf.

Well, they went in that evenin'. Said, "Jack, you loused around and didn't help us clear new ground. We didn't notice, and your little heifer calf come through with the flies after it, tail ringin'. I had the tree 'bout ready to fall, and it squooshed it."

Well, Jack said, "That's ok, brothers. Don't feel bad about it. I been wantin' a little beef meat to eat anyhow."

They said Jack went out. He skinned that heifer out from its tail, its legs, come all the way down to its head, and come up and left the horns with it. And, took it back and put, put it an ol' buildin' there, you know, stretched it out, lettin' it dry.

Well, 'bout a week after that, Tom and Will goin' up to that shed, and Jack was in there, had that hide there stuffin' it full of corn shucks.

Will said, "Jack what are you doin'?"

Jack said, "I'm gone seek my fortune."

Will said, "With that thang?"

Jack said, "Yeh. I'm gonna put it full of corn shucks and go seek my fortune."

He had it named Lizzie. That's the name of his heifer calf, Lizzie.

They just laughed at him. Said, "You better go on help us clear new ground."

Jack said "No, I've got more important thangs to do."



So he took out. Carryin' that ol' hide, you know, stuffed corn shucks on him.

And, he walked and walked and gettin' sorta, houses back 'en, log cabins built, you know, maybe springs was fur apart, you know.

Well it was gettin' late up in the evenin' like, and he hadn't come to no houses or nothin'. Gettin' purty hungry too, you know. He got to figurin' he better find him a place to stay, you know.

He come to one log house, pecked on the door. Woman opened. He said, "Mam, how 'bout spendin' the night here?"

She said, "Law me, spend the night here." Said, "The man of the house is gone. Besides that, what's that confounded thang you got on your back?"

Jack said, "Won't do to tell." Said, "Bedad, beg my pardon. I'll be on my way."

He walked on, gettin' little down in the evenin' more, you know.

He come to a second log cabin. Pecked at the door. Woman there. He said, "Mam, how 'bout spendin' the night here?"

She says, "Law me, spend the night here. Man of the house is gone, and by the way, what's that thang 'n your shoulder?"

Jack said, "It won't do to tell. But said, "Beg my pardon, I'll be on my way."

Well, he's goin' on, gettin' a little, gettin' a little dusty dark, you know.

He got to thinkin' he'd always been teached all his life. The third tipped out.

He done tried two houses 'ere. The next one come up, if he ever fount one, gone be the third one.

He said, "I always been told all my life the thirds tipped out. When I peck on this door, if I do find a house, I might have to sleep in the woods," he said, you know.

Said, "I'm gone mention it."

He come on and finally found the third house. He pecked the door. Gettin' little dusty dark. Woman open the hitch. "How 'bout spendin' the night here?"

She said, "Law me, spend the night here. The man of the house is gone."

He said, "Blame the man of the house and all your kin. I've been taught all of my life, the third tips out." Said, "This is the third house I've asked." Said, "I'm gone stay anyway."

She said, "Oh, Oh, Oh! If you put it that way, come on in, but you'll have to go up in the attic. I don't want you to, my husband catch you down here with me when he comes in."

Jack said, "That'd be ok."

He went up to the, they had, sorta like, steps goin' up the wall, get in the attic. He drug his ol' heifer hide there with him.

Well, he's up in 'ere sorta dark in 'ere, you know, gettin' dark down in the evenin', you know, dusty dark.

He hadn't been up'ere, but seem like over ten minutes, and he heard somebody talkin' down in the kitchen part, he figures, you know, below where he's at.

He kept lookin'. He found a crack in the ceilin' or maybe where a rat or mouse had gnawed a hole.

Lookin' down through with one eye, and he looked down through, and sure 'nough, he's lookin' in the kitchen.

And, there was a man, a man there talkin' to the woman dressed up purty good, had a neck tie on.

Jack figured, you know, the way they's talkin' and stuff, that couldn't be her husband.

So, he kept, you know, he, eye get to waterin', he'd switch to the other eye, lookin' down through 'ere.

Directly, she went to the cupboard, brought out ham meat, fried chicken, all good eats, maybe some lamb meat and stuff.

They eat some of that, and got up, danced around the table. Then they set down, she went to the cupboard.

Jack's soakin' all this in, you know.

She brought out dried apple fruit cakes, apple pies, cherry pies.

Gah, they eat some of that, and got up, jumped, danced around the table again.

Well, all at once, she went and got under the bed, and she drug out moonshine, a jug, and wine. Aged for so long, it's clear. Couldn't see it in the jug, ye know.

Well, they drunk some of that, and boy they really did dance around the table.

Well, Jack, he was up 'ere and soakin' all this in, ye know, memberin', ye know.

Bout that time, he thought he heard a racket outside.

“Hey!!! Ol' woman, come help me get in. I don't believe I'm gone make it home.”

And, the man in the house, ye know, in the kitchen. “Where can I hide at?”

The woman told him to get in the ol' chest or trunk over 'ere in the corner.

He went over, and she lifted the lid and he got in it, and she closed it up, ye know.

Directly, she run out the door, and directly here she's helpin' somebody, and, “Oh, Lordy, Lordy, Lordy.”

Ol' man been workin' the sawmill, workin' 'bout thirty mile. And come in of the evenin' wore out.

She helped him get in, set down.

“Hey ol’ woman, got anythin’ to eat? I feel like I could eat somethin’.”

She said, “Why ask? You know what we’ve got around here. Cold cornbread and water.”

He said, “Well, fix me some of it up. Said, “I’ve gotta have some.”

Well, she fixed him some. He’s there eatin’, ye know, at the table.

Well, Jack, someway or another made a racket upstairs.

He looked up. Said, “Hey, ol’ woman, what’s that upstairs?”

She said, “I forgot. They’s a little ol’ boy come here and ask to spend the night. I told him you was gone. He said this is the third house he stopped at. He’s gone stay here. He’s always been taught all his life the third tipped out. So I told him to go up in the attic. I didn’t want you to catch him down here with me, ye know. I knowed what you might do.”

He hollered up, said, “Hey!! Whatche name?”

Jack hollered down, “My name’s Jack.”

Well, he said, “Jack come on down.” Said, “You welcome to eat what I eat around here.”

Said, “You my friend right now. Come on down,” ye know.

Well Jack come down that ladder aside of the wall. That ol’ heifer hide, *bumty bump*.

Lizzie he called her.

He said, “Set down at the table and enjoy yeself,” ye know. “Eatche some cold cornbread and water. That’s all we got.”

Well, Jack set down in the chair, and he set Lizzie on, he called it her hind end or somethin’, side of him, settin’ ’ere, ye know, ’bout up even with him in the chair.

Woman got Jack some cold cornbread and water. He took a bite of that and what he ’membered seein’, his stomach beatin’ his brains out.

All at once he went, "Lizzie. Sh, sh, sh!! Keep that globbin' mouth shut." Said, "Everywhere I go, you always makin' the women of the house mad. Keep that globbin' mouth shut."

Man was hungry. Been eatin'. Didn't pay no 'tention.

Jack took a bite of that, and oh gosh. He couldn't hardly swaller it.

He said, "Lizzie! I said, keep that globbin' mouth shut. You gone get me throwed out of this house yet. You gone make the woman of the house mad."

He looked up and said, "Jack, is that thang tryin' to talk?"

Jack said, "Yeh, it's got a mouth it can't keep shut."

Said, "What did it say?"

Jack said, "I better not tell ye." Said, "It always makes the women of the house mad."

He said, "Blame the woman of the house. What does it say?"

He said, "Well if you insist. He said they's ham over in the cupboard, fried chicken, lamb, all good meat to eat."

He said, "Ol' woman, is that right?"

She said, "Yeh, yeh, yeh, yeh, yeh!! Little keepin' for the kinfolks when they come around."

He said, "Fetch it out here ol' woman. Me and Jack just as good as any your kinfolks'll ever be."

Well, she went and got the meat and stuff out of the cupboard.

Eat, Jack had eat all that he wanted. Man he goin' at it, ye know.

And, directly, "Lizzie, now I told you, keep that globbin' mouth shut. You've done made the woman of the house mad. She could throw me out already."

He said, "Jack, if it's tryin' to say somethin', tell it. Forget the woman of the house. Mad or whatever.

Well, "He say, he say, that, Lizzie, said that's the name I call it, say that dried apple fruit cakes there in the cupboard, apple pies, cherry pie."

He said, "Ol' woman, is that right?"

She said, "Yeh, yeh, yeh, like I said about the meat, little keepin' for the kinfolks when they come around."

He said, "I told ye 'afore, fetch it on out here. Me'n Jack as good as any of your kinfolks'll ever be."

Well, she went and got them. They eat their fill of that, and Jack figured he got a good trade a goin'. Gone have to get some of that liquor and wine out of it.

He says, "Lizzie, Lizzie, keep that globbin' mouth shut. I done told ye twice. The woman of the house be gone kill me the way it is already."

Ol' man said, "I told ye. Forget the woman of the house. What did it say?"

He said, "Gosh, it say the moonshine under the bed yonder and wine so clear you can't barely see through the jug."

He said, "Is that right, ol' woman?"

She said, "Yeh, yeh, yeh!" Said, "Little savin' for the kinfolks got any money."

He said, "Ol' woman, fetch it out here." Said, "Me and Jack done got the new money fever."

Well, she brought it out, and Jack, he didn't, he just sippin' his. Ol' man worked all day and walked all night. Gosh, he's hittin' it heavy. He's gettin' drunk, you know, gettin' lit up they call it, high.

He said, "Jack, I've never killed a man before, but if you won't sell me Lizzie, or that ever what that contraption is you call it, I might just kill ye for it.

Jack said, "I don't, I don't think I could sell it. God, I, I might starve. That's all that keeps me a goin' when the houses I get next to."

Well, he said, "Like I said, Jack, I've gotta have it. Sell it or what. I've gotta have it. So, I'll give you a hunderd guineas for it." That was a gold coin back 'en, ye know.

Well, Jack kept a holdin' out, you know. Gonna make a trade, ye know. Not be too, jump at it too quick.

He said, "Gah, like I told ye, I might starve to death without it."

Well, the ol' man said, "What, what is your trade on it?"

Well, Jack thought a minute. Holdin' out, you know. Keep a buildin' it up. Says, "I'll take a hunderd guineas and that ol' chest over yonder." He knowed what was in it, ye know.

Ol' man said, "Uh, the trade's done been done. The smoke's went up the chimney. Here's ye hunderd guineas and that's your chest."

That woman let in, "NO, NO, NO, NO, NO, NO. You can't let Jack have that chest." Said, "My great grandpappy give it my daddy, my dad gave it my great aunt, and my great aunt gave it to my aunt, and my aunt, and my aunt give it to me. No way you can have it."

He said, "Hush ye mouth." Said, "I told ye the trade's done fixed, and smoke's went up the chimney. That's Jack's chest."

Well, Jack said, "I forgot to put it in the trade that you help me load it." He knowed it was gone be heavy, you know.

Ol' feller said, "Yeh, I'll help ye load it."

He went on and Jack figured he better leave 'fore dark. 'Fore the truth come out, you know.

So anyway, the ol' man helped Jack load it. God, it was heavy. He sorta staggerin'. They left the door open when they brought him in. He went out through it.

Well, he got outside, wabblin', gettin' heavier ever step he made. He come purty close, he come to a small little river there.

He said, "Gah, this ol' chest is cracked up considerable." Said, 'It won't be worth the price to carry it home. I believe I'll just throw it here in the river and get rid of it.'

'Bout that time, somethin' spoke inside that chest.

"Pray don't, Jack. Pray don't." Said, "Ol' man Parsons in here." (laugh) Said, "If you don't throw it in the river and open it up." Let's see, yeh. "Open this chest up and let me out of here, I'll give ye another hunderd guineas."

Jack's so 'cited. He throwed it down and jarred the man up inside of it. It hit the ground a little bit.

Well, the ol' way said he pushed it out through the keyhole. I'll put that in it. A gold coin ought be come out the keyhole. Said, "I'll fix, not leave him in there."

Jack just let him out, and he paid him another hunderd guineas.

So anyway, the guy come back. Jack lifted the lid and the guy, you know, was shook up and got out. Paid Jack another hunderd guineas. Thanked Jack for lettin' him outa there.

Said, "You saved my life," you know.

So anyway, he thanked Jack, and Jack thanked him.

And he got on back home.



Went to Tom and Will, said, "Look Tom and Will." Said, "You cut a tree on my heifer and killed it on purpose, I know it." But said, "Look here. I cured the hide out, and I sold it for two hunderd guineas.

They said, "Gah, Jack, you lyin' to us."

He said, "No, no. I sold my heifer hide for two hunderd guineas."

"Now, you lyin'. No. No. Ain't no way you got that outa that heifer."

"I did it, I did it," he said. And said, "Thank you for killin' it. I eat the meat. Got so fat, couldn't see for my eyes and two hunderd guineas for the hide."

They said, "Well, Jack if you done that."

They went out, and took a pine knot and knocked their big fine mules in the head. Skinned 'em out. Took off with 'em, blood raw, all the hairs."

Jack said, "You better cure 'em out."

They said, "No, gah. You got two hunderd guineas for your heifer hide. We can get that much for our mule hides, blood raw."

So here they go on. They done like Jack, walk, hadn't come to no houses or cabins nor nothin'.

Gettin' sorta late in the evenin'. They got to studyin'. We better find ourselves a place to stay tonight.

They finally come to the log house. Pecked on the door, and the woman answered and said, "Hey, how 'bout spendin' the night here?"

She said, "Lawsy me, spend the night here. The man of this house is gone, and besides you bloody rascals, you get out of here."

Well, they left, and finally got to the second house, cabin. Pecked the door and the woman opened it up. Said, "How 'bout spendin' the night here?"

She said, "Law me, spend the night here. The man of the house is gone. Besides that, the flies is on you rascals. Get out of here."

So, they took off. They gettin' madder and madder at Jack, they knowed he told 'em a big 'en, you know.

They finally come to the third house. Pecked on the door. Third cabin, and pecked on the door. The woman answered.

"How 'bout spendin' the night here?"

She said, "Law me, spend the night here." Said, "The man of the house is gone. Besides that, you got maggots and whatever's on your back. You bloody rascals, you." She run 'em off with a broom. Run 'em out.

Well, they took off. Come to that river where Jack was gettin' ready to throw that trunk in, the chest in.

And they just get their bloody hides, throwed it in the river.

Goin' back home, they said, "Jack done lied to us." Said, "We'll kill him. We'll take his two hunderd guineas and that'll be a hunderd guineas a piece. Might pass for mules," you know.

They got back and said, "Jack, you lied to us."

Jack said, "No, I didn't."

They said, "Yeh, you lied to us."

Said, "We gonna kill ye, and split your two hunderd guineas. Hunderd guineas a piece. How do you wanta be killed?"

Jack studies, says, "Well, if you have to do it, I, I didn't lie to you, but if you have to kill me, shoot me, hang me, beat me to death, stone me, or any way, any, do anythin' you won't to, but please don't drown me."

They said, "Jack, that's the way we gonna get ye."

They went and got a hemp sack. Wrastled Jack, and put him down it. They carried him down to a big hole in the river. Where they's a big ol', like swimmin' hole, pool deep, black hole you call it.

Well, they got t'ere, and, they got to thinkin', that was their brother, you know.

Will, said, "Tom throw him in."

Tom said, "Will, you throw him in. He's my brother too."

They got to arguin'. See sawin' ye know.

Will thought, said, "Tom, let's just quit arguin' who's gone throw him in." Said, "Let's throw a rock over the openin' the sack, or log, and go back to the house and get that gallon moonshine. And we'll drink it as we come back, and when we get here, we'll both throw him in. We won't care then, you know.

So, they rolled a big ol' log, and rolled it over the openin' of that sack, hemp sack.

Took off.

Well, time, they'd went back to the house, you know, a few minutes to get back, and there happened to be an ol' sheepherder come up the risin' there, little hill, above the river. He's sittin' there, watchin' his sheep pasturin', you know, and he kept lookin' down at the river, and he kept seein', look like somethin' is a movin', you know, sack, you know, somethin' he didn't know what it was, kickin' like 'at. And, he's scared of it. He got down on his all

fours and come off that little risin'. He gettin' closer. He got closer. It looked like a sack, hemp sack, somethin' in it kickin' (Laugh)

He come on up, he said, "What are you, or who are you, or what are you doin' in that hemp sack?"

Jack said, "My name's Jack."

Ol' man said, "What are you doin' in there?"

Jack said, "I'm fixin' to go to heaven."

Ol' man said, "What?" Said, "How old are ye?"

Jack said, "I'm nineteen. I'll soon be twenty."

Ol' man said, "Ain't that awful young to go to heaven?"

Jack said, "It is." But said, uh, "If I don't take it now, I might get old and get mean and might miss my chance." Said, "I decided I better take it while I's young."

Ol' man said, "Gollee." Said, "I'm ninety three, and I've been old, mean in my days. Only way I'll get to heaven, I'll have to buy my way in." Said, "What would you take to swap places?"

Jack said, "Like I told ye. Ain't no way I can swap places. I might not get this chance again."

The ol' man kept insistin'. He said, "Jack, I tell ye what, if you'll believe it, I've got ninety nine ewes and a buck up in the risin' up yonder, hunderd head of sheep. I'll swap you them to go in your place."

Well, Jack kept holdin' out. "I don't know 'bout that. I might not get another chance. I might get old and get mean and go the other way, ye know." Split hell wide open, you could say.

Well, he kept holdin' out.

Directly, said, "Ol' man, if you can, see if ye can roll this log off this, open the sack. I believe I'll trade with ye."

Well the ol' man was purty weak with that, and he finally rolled that log off, bein' round.

Jack got out, and the ol' man got in, and Jack rolled the log back over the openin' of the sack.

He said, "Wait, I forgot. When them two Gabrielle angels comes back, don't you speak. If you do, they'll know you not me." You know, "You won't get to go."

Ol' man said, "I'll be quiet."

Well, Jack got back up in that risin'. Sure' nough. There's ninety nine ewes and one buck. Hunderd head of sheep. Well, he just started takin' 'em back to his dad's barn, you know, or the corral, fence, there you know, pen.

And, anyway, 'bout ten minutes, here come Tom and Will. They done drunk that gallon moonshine. They was a barely staggerin', you know, wabblin'. They got there, they said, "Jack, you got anythang to say 'fore you go?"

That ol' man in the sack, he thought he was goin' to heaven. He just kept tongue tied, you know. Didn't say, didn't make a whimper.

"Well," said Tom. "Throw that log on. He ain't got nothin' to say, and grab that end there."

Tom rolled the log off, and got the openin', squeezed it. Tom, uh, Will got the back. They got him like 'iss, and swung him. They give him a pitch out in the river, and bubbles come up, and ol' man went under. Poor feller. Went to heaven. Um.

And, they went back home. They hadn't been home over ten minutes, standin' there 'side of the barn. Gettin' sobered up a little bit, you know. (laugh)

All at once, "Hey Will!! Open up the gate. Help me get my sheep in. They gettin' away from me."

Will looked around, said, "Tom, is that Jack?"

Tom said, "I don't know. You know where we put him at."

Will said, "Yeh, in a deep hole at the river. That's gotta be Jack. Let's help him get his sheep in the pen, and ask him where he got 'em at. Maybe he can help get us some." (laugh)

So, anyway, they got the sheep, opened the gate and got 'em in.

Tom said, "Jack, where'd you get them sheep at?"

Jack said, "Where'd you put me?"

Said, "We put you in a deep hole in the river."

Jack said, "Yeh, I know." But said, "You cheated me."

They said, "Cheated? How did we cheat ye?"

He said, "You just throwed me a hunderd foot deep, and I got a sheep for every foot I went down." He said, "Why didn't ye throw me a thousand foot deep and I'd have a thousand head?"

Will said, "Gosh, Jack. You caused us to kill our mules. Would you help us get some sheep?"

Jack thought a minute. Said, "Yeh, go get you'uns a hemp sack a piece. I'll do that. And give me my hunderd guineas a piece back." So, he got his hunderd guineas a piece back, put 'em in his pocket.

They went and got 'em a hemp sack. They got down to that river, that big hole, you know, deep hole.

Well, Tom said, "Jack, if ye throw, if ye throw Will in first, he's greedy. He might get all the sheep that's left and I won't get none."

Well, Will said, "Jack if ye throw Tom in, he's greedy. He might get 'em all."

He said, "Brothers, like I told ye. They's oodlins of 'em. Plenty of sheep in that river. Don't worry 'bout that. Besides that, Tom, Will is the oldest. Let's Will go first."

So, Tom finally agreed. They got Will in. Tom got one end, and Jack the other'n. They swung him. Threw him out in the river, and he started goin' down. Bubbles comin' in. Got to kickin'.

Tom sorta caught on a little bit. Said, "Jack, why is Will kickin' so, right yonder?"

Jack said, "Look real close. He's gatherin' sheep."

Tom said, "God Jack, like I said, Will's greedy. Get me in there quick." (laugh)

He got in the sack. And Jack, by hisself, you know, couldn't throw good as two. He throwed Jack in, I meant Tom in, and here the bubbles come in, him a kickin', and he went under.

Well, Jack sorta cried there, you know. It sorta made him feel bad. He killed his brothers, but they was gonna do him that way, he got to studyins.

So he went back, and stayed there with his mom and dad, and you know the last time I was down through there, he had increased a thousand head. (laugh)

And that was Jack and the Heifer's hide.

Ted: That's the ol' way. It ain't got the mother-in-law in it.



**Figure 35: Ted Hicks, Public Performance at the Matney Community Center, April 3, 2010 (Photo Courtesy of Tom Hansell)**





**Figure 36: Lisa Baldwin and Amy Michels (left to right)**

## VITAE

Lisa Baldwin was born in 1957 in Huntsville, Alabama. She received a B.S. in Elementary Education with a minor in music from Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama in 1978, and has taught elementary and middle school grades for twenty seven years. In 1989, Lisa and her husband, Dave Haney founded *Learning Through Song*, a music program that integrates elementary curriculum objectives, singing, movement, and performance. Lisa has continued to perform for both *Learning Through Song* and as a singer-songwriter. She also performs with Dave, blending traditional country, folk, and bluegrass music. The couple will be moving to Spearfish, South Dakota in June 2010 to pursue new opportunities.