ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
WITH
TOMM BRADY

MARCH 11, 2009

READYVILLE, TENNESSEE

INTERVIEWED BY JIM WILLIAMS

PARQ

PRESERVE THE AREA'S RURAL QUALITIES

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW #5

ALBERT GORE RESEARCH CENTER

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

MT ORAL HISTORY PROJECT INTERVIEW #404

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ABSTRACT

Tomm Brady was born in 1961 in Kilgore, Texas. He moved to Tennessee to work for Tyson Foods and then, along with his wife, operated Nature's Own Potpourri, a candle and potpourri company, the sale of which has allowed him to retire early and pursue projects, including the restoration of the Readyville Mill. Knowing of Brady's interest in millstones, a friend suggested he search for stones in the Stones River downstream from the decrepit mill in Readyville, Tennessee. In this interview Brady recalls how he came across the remains of the Readyville Mill. Although it was in very bad shape and appeared to be ready to fall into the river, he arranged to buy it in early 2006. Most of the restoration he has done by himself. He had to get help to jack the structure up and put it on metal beams. Brady relates stories he has acquired from various passersby related to the history of the mill, as well as the area. During the first hour he recounts his background and then involvement with the mill. In the following ninety minutes, which is the videotaped portion of the interview, Brady first discusses before-and-after photos showing the restoration work he had accomplished from 2006 to the time of the interview, explains his interaction with assorted government agencies, Preserve the Area's Rural Qualities (PARQ) , other organizations, and the community at-large. The last part of the interview is a walk through of the mill, surrounding grounds and outbuildings, and then the mill race and dam. Researchers are advised to view the related videotape and photographs on the Albert Gore Research Center web site in conjunction with this transcript.

Tomm Brady

AGRC photo

Sketch of Tomm Brady

Historic buildings that are saved often have guardian angels. Readyville Mill's guardian angel turned out to be an unlikely one: Tomm Brady. When Brady left Kilgore, Texas, and moved to Tennessee to work for Tyson Foods, he did not know he would eventually be the owner and operator of a working gristmill. He settled in Bell Buckle and with his wife, operated Nature's Own Potpourri, a candle and potpourri business. He was successful enough to sell the company and retire early. He became interested, for reasons of which he is unsure, in collecting millstones. The search for stones led him to Readyville. Behind Russell's Store he came across an old, worn out mill and fell in love with it. The mill was the remnants of a milling operation that began in the early 1800s and lasted until the 1970s. After some time dealing with the then owners, in 2006 he managed to buy the structure and began his work of restoring a piece of Rutherford County's history.

The structure had remained standing in part due to the work of Preserve the Area's Rural Qualities (PARQ). The organization had tried to cover and protect the structure from the weather, but when Brady bought it was still in very bad shape. He contacted engineer Bob Warren to help him repair the support beams, jacking up the structure and replacing the old beams, which were failing, with steel ones. When he discovered the cost of window repair was beyond his budget, he found a man who sold woodworking equipment, persuaded him to teach Brady to use it, and made his own replacement windows at a fraction of the cost. Wherever possible, Brady has learned to do work himself, although he occasionally has hired out specialized labor, such as the notching of poplar logs done by an Amish man. The result is a project that has largely been a labor of love—with some frustrations thrown in—by a single individual with the desire to restore a piece of history. Brady's goal is an operating mill and a restaurant that will attract people to the area.

In its time, the Readyville Mill was one of the more important in the area. It ground wheat and corn and powered a lumber mill. With the addition of an electric turbine, the mill generated electricity to make ice, which was sold to homes and businesses in Rutherford and Cannon counties. The mill also provided electricity for some of the town, an unusual situation in the early 1900s in rural Tennessee. The mill even supplied the Tennessee Valley Authority with electricity. By the 1970s, the mill was no longer a major operating concern. A "back-to-nature" lifestyle community used it to grind grain for sale and their own use, but eventually the last grind came from the wheels in 1976. Some years later it was the abandoned derelict that Tomm Brady found, fell in love with, and began to try to restore to a more appropriate place in the community.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH

TOMM BRADY

PRESERVE THE AREA'S RURAL QUALITIES

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT INTERVIEW #5

[Small talk is audible before interview begins.]

WILLIAMS: This is an oral history interview with Tomm Brady on March 11, 2009. We're at the Readyville Mill in Readyville, Tennessee, and my name is Jim Williams from the Albert Gore Research Center at MTSU. Also here is Thea Prince and Jane Rust from PARQ and Matthew Brown from the Gore Center. Well, like it or not we always ask people first of all where and when you born?

BRADY: Born in Kilgore, Texas, in 1961.

WILLIAMS: So how did you get to Middle Tennessee from Kilgore, Texas?

BRADY: I went through grade school and high school and graduated and then went to Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. Carthage, Texas, is a nearby town. I'm an agriculture major, and I took an internship at Tyson Foods for summer credit. I met Don Tyson and when I graduated I went to work for Tyson in Shelbyville, Tennessee. Was mid-ground between my wife's home in Greenville, South Carolina, and my home in Texas. So Don said, you know, pick a plant. He wanted me to spend a year, working in, in the processing plant before I went into sales. So Tennessee was mid-ground between South Carolina and Texas. So I chose Shelbyville and worked a year in the plant and then went into sales for Tyson.

WILLIAMS: And is that who you retired from?

BRADY: No, no. I worked for Tyson for five years and in the interim, my wife and I started a candle company—potpourri and candle company—we were at a weekend event in Bell Buckle and Cracker Barrel—Sally Mustar was a buyer for Cracker Barrel and saw us and liked what we did—and we were doing this in an upstairs bedroom of our house, and on Monday, we got an order for ninety thousand dollars of Christmas potpourri from Cracker Barrel, and we had no company. We were just doing this in the bedroom and a four week ship date. So we made it, and Cracker Barrel kind of put our company on the map. At that time they were the leaders in gift items for . . . thriving industry of mom and pop gift shops nationally. So owners of those gift shops would see our product in Cracker Barrel and my phone

number was on it and they would call us and they wanted it, too. And we just kind of exploded. We ran that company for fifteen years and some fellows, venture capital people in the Northeast decided they wanted it more than we did and we gladly sold it. That was eight years ago, no not eight years ago, five years ago.

WILLIAMS: Was that in Bell Buckle?

BRADY: Mm-hmm.

WILLIAMS: How many people did you [employ]?

BRADY: A hundred and sixty-five when we sold. We employed a hundred and sixty-five.

WILLIAMS: What was the name of the company?

BRADY: Nature's Own Potpourri. So we sold it and I retired early in life and played a couple of years and found that I needed something to do. So I had horses and Steve Edwards, who is a local blacksmith, horseshoer, farrier, lives three miles down the road here, had shoed for me for a long time. And I had maybe ten years ago started collecting millstones for what reason I don't know. I just like them. I think they are works of art. They're hand-hewn stones that were used to grind mill in gristmills like this one. And I had gone to East Tennessee and bought some from a guy named JimWills, who is also a millstone collector. And they were in front of my barn before I got them put around the farm. If you visit my farm, there's mill stones everywhere. And there was a stack of them, or several, in front of my barn and Steve Edwards said he and his son canoe on the Stones River and he said behind Russell's Market there were two millstones in the river.

So several months passed before I got time to find Readyville and I found Russell's Market and I had no idea this mill was here. And it was in need of help. It was very, very—I would think it wouldn't have lasted much longer. Very ill repair, but I liked the shape of this mill building. I don't know why. It's just got a beautiful shape to me, so I walked back up to Russell's Market. It was overgrown. There were plastic on the windows that PARQ had been putting there, but the kids had torn that off and there was big holes in it. It was just in ill repair, so I walked back up to Russell's Market and they had answered this question a million times if they'd answered it once, "Who owns this mill?" And Russell told me that Wayne Epperly owned it, but he'd been dead for fifteen years. So, and he had no idea, he wouldn't give me anymore information that that. Probably suspect of why I wanted to know and who I was.

So I walked back down here and I called information, 411 information for a Wayne Epperly who had been dead for fifteen years and got a number and called it and Blythe Ackworth is one of his daughters, one of Wayne

Epperly's daughters and she answered the phone. First she asked me if I was from Readyville. She's not fond of Readyville. And I told her no, that I live in Bell Buckle and she said at that point, "Well, yes we would like the sell the mill." She has four sister, three sisters and none of them had any interest in the mill. My children, I have two children and they don't care anything about the mill, so his situation was the same. They live in Nashville and Kansas City and spread out and had no interest in Readyville or this mill. So I asked her what the price was and I almost fell off the porch. I thought because when I dialed the number I thought or when we started talking about it, I thought it would be much more expensive than it actually was. It was not expensive at all to buy and so I told her that I wanted it. And her husband is an attorney and I said, so she suggested that he do the closing and I said, "No, I have an attorney in Nashville, John Blankenship." And she paused for a long time. "Little Johnny is your attorney?" she says, and John Blankenship and she had gone to, grew up in the same church and their fathers started a, there's a nursing home affiliated with the Church of Christ in Nashville and their fathers had started it. So she was very familiar with John so that really made it easy and I think we closed in a week or so. And that was in, I think we closed in March of '06.

So I started just to first cleaning out all the buildings and they were filled with forty years of what would you say trash that people, a lot of people save things thinking that they are going to have a use, but the roof was all but gone and so everything inside had been wet numerous times and ruined. So the first we cleaned out all the buildings first and the mill itself was on twelve-by-twelve oak sills. Are you familiar with sills? That's the foundation of building if it's put on a pier and beam, in this case rock. And you put this huge piece of log there and then you build your building on top. Well, the sills had all rotted down and this end of the mill was actually twenty-two inches lower than it sits today. So it really was leaning over this direction. So the first thing we did after the clean up was, Bob Warren, who was an engineer in Murfreesboro, a structural engineer, through John Blankenship, who is a friend of Bob Warren, Bob donated his engineering expertise to design the plan to raise this building up, remove the rotten sills, and place the whole thing on steel beams. So that was the, we wanted to get the mill structurally sound and level, as level as we could. So Bob donated his time and expertise to get that project done.

WILLIAMS: You said Blythe didn't like Readyville?

BRADY: I don't want to step on too many toes here. When Wayne died—in 1973 this property was put on the National Register for Historic Places by Nancy Carignan. Correct me if I mess this up. Is that correct so far?

PRINCE: Sounds great.

BRADY: Thea and Jane Edwards know all this history, but as I said, my children, if I get hit by a truck on the way home, my children are not going to care about this mill. My wife I'm sure would put a for sale sign in the front yard immediately because they don't have a love of this that I do, and it's a personal thing I think. That same statement is true with Wayne Epperly. He bought this mill because he wanted one of his son-in-laws to have a job, have a project. So he bought this and then when that didn't work out the son-in-law became divorced from one of the daughters, so Wayne Epperly is holding this mill. And he is, I assume a very wealthy man in Nashville, and bought this for a son-in-law who is no longer a son-in-law, and then he died, Wayne Epperly died. Well the daughters they never had a stake in this mill but there was a lot of negative publicity. They would pick up the *Tennessean*, and read about themselves and their huge neglect for a historic piece of property as if it were their fault, and a lot of that, those stories were coming out of Readyville and Woodbury. People were saying, you know, "Those ladies should take care of that. It's a historic property." Well they didn't, had no interest. So they were really upset with Readyville and Woodbury because they would pick up their hometown Nashville paper and they were just blistered in the press. So there was some ill feelings. So she, I think was not interested in, in helping along the way. Very sweet ladies though, all four of them. And Blythe, you know as soon as we got through the "You're not somebody who has talked badly about us in the press part." I said, "No, I just found this place. I didn't even know it was here." Then it was very easy to acquire.

WILLIAMS: Did you get the millstones out of the river?

BRADY: I never have. I've not even seen them. I've been so distracted. I'm sure they're still here. They weigh two thousand pounds a piece so I just haven't found them. Apparently, they are down river, people tell me that they're down river a quarter mile or so.

WILLIAMS: So they've tumbled over the years down there.

BRADY: Well, as this mill's been here since 1812 and when millstones wear out, at the time nobody wanted them. Now they are very desirable landscape art, but at the time nobody wanted them so they just would tumble them off into the river or just put them in the backyard and then over time they are so heavy they sink and they are buried and you won't find them until you happen to be doing some dozer work or something.

WILLIAMS: You said you were prepared to pay more than you did. What would you have thought you should have paid?

BRADY: Oh, I don't want to get into all the numbers. I'm sure if you dig you could find them, but it's six acres. It's five point nine seven acres on the Stones

River. Frontage on both sides of the road and I just assumed that it would have been more expensive than it was. Course we're in Readyville.

WILLIAMS: And what was your wife's reaction?

BRADY: My wife's reaction and everyone I know thought I had lost my mind because it was, you can't appreciate. These two ladies can appreciate, but you have to have seen what it was when I started. We couldn't sit in this building. There were no windows. This building, for instance, is all lined in poplar, but when I bought it, the outside wall was the inside wall. It was just a stud and the outside wall was the same as the inside wall. No insulation. You could look up and see the tin roof, which was rotted away. Two weeks after I bought it, we had a hail storm and there were hundreds and hundreds of holes because this, the roof that was on this when I bought it was probably from eighteen, from the early or the late 1800s. And it was just paper thin. It had rusted so badly and sheets were gone and it was not nailed down. So it was a big project. It looked to be an awesome project.

WILLIAMS: So why did you think you could do it? It didn't sound like you have a lot of experience before with . . .

BRADY: You know it's funny, what we learn in high school. I'm from Texas and every boy I think in Texas grows up, goes through high school in the agriculture, FFA program, so at least two hours and by the time you are a senior sometimes four hours a day of your class time is spent in the shop learning to repair farm equipment and learning to weld and basic carpentry and things that you would do around the farm. And I did that, not knowing I would ever use that. And really it was a lot of fun. I mean, it was, welding class we would see how many welding rods we could stick in the insulation in the attic and we'd weld a little bit too. So all the skills that it took to do this, and I am not a skilled carpenter and if you look close you can easily see that. But I've always had an idea that I can learn fairly quickly how to do whatever and this was the same. It's boards and nails, it's not . . . in a little bit. Ninety-nine percent of this I've done myself. It took six months to paint it, um, and I did hire a couple of guys to help me paint that had previously worked for me in other things. Bob Warren and two of his guys helped us to jack it up and put it on steel beams because we needed their expertise in doing that, but the majority of it is not, was not hard, time consuming but not so intimidating that I didn't think I could handle it. And I bought it as for something to do, so I bought it for a long term. I'm still not in a hurry. I just do literally a few boards a day or I plant some trees. Just to do a little, I try to get out here every day and do something. And three years later we're where we are.

WILLIAMS: What was the reaction in the town here when you bought it?

BRADY: Oh, I think, everybody was. Mary Ready says I'm the rock star of Readyville because apparently for years people, everybody in Readyville has beautiful and fond memories of this place. It's been here all of their lifetimes and all of their parents' lifetimes and many of them learned to swim here and they all did business here. You know, before there were Krogers and Publix if you wanted flour, which every family had to have, you must come to the mill. This was put here to serve the earliest settlers in Tennessee and there weren't any stores then. So you grew your wheat or corn and you brought it to the mill. And wait your turn. You're familiar with the phrase, wait your turn. That comes from the turning of the millstone. So you waited until it was your turn on the millstones and so this was a community gathering spot and I'm off track. I forgot what your question was now.

WILLIAMS: The reaction of the community.

BRADY: Oh, fantastic. Fantastic. I have had thousands of people stop, continually have people stop. I rarely get in a full days work because I'm showing people what's going on or touring around, incredibly favorable reaction. One group of photographers came from Nashville and blistered me badly because they liked it when it was, it was more photogenic they thought when it was about to fall in the river. So, but locally am I right? Locally people are very pleased. It's a small community, but literally thousands of people stop and I have had elderly people cry and I've had local people cry because they never thought in their lifetime they would see that it was, you know, serving any kind of purpose anymore. Thea's tearing up right now.

PRINCE: I know.

BRADY: [laughs] Great response. This artist named Maxwell. His daughter brought him. He was well in his nineties. He may still be alive. Well in his nineties and on oxygen. She drove him out here and he gave me those prints of whenever he painted these pictures and I guess he'd the oldest person I had that had an emotional reaction about seeing that the mill was open again or that things were going on here, cause it sat vacant for I don't know, almost forty years and literally inhabited by rats and coons. Thousands of rats, literally. They just ran, it was, it was their mill. That's where they lived, so . . .

WILLIAMS: I've watched your youtube video.

BRADY: Mm-hmm.

WILLIAMS: And it seems like you know quite a bit about the history of the mill. How did you learn that?

BRADY: I, since I bought it I have read *everything* online I think ever written. I still occasionally find something new about the mill and PARQ has an extensive history posted on their website for the mill, but just reading, Google search Readyville Mill and Ready's Mill and Charles Ready and anything having to do with this community, the mill's always mentioned. Local people stop by, Dowman Bragg that I have talked about, how old is Dowman? He might be eighty, but he worked here as a kid when he was little and . . . various jobs. And he's told me a lot about the mill and other old timers who, a bus driver from Franklin brought a bunch of elderly ladies out yesterday and he lived here in the seventies, Gil Ezell, and worked here. And so people have, you know, informed me and a lot of research on the internet.

WILLIAMS: So when did it stop being a mill? Do you know?

BRADY: Well, in the seventies there was a group of hippies that lived here, which are all still alive. They visit from time to time, but this was quite the little hippie commune. I guess in the late '70s, we had—now in 2009 we're kind of going back to a green lifestyle and the media is all green is positive and natural foods are positive, but also in the late '70s there was this whole hippie movement about getting back to nature and so they sold honey here and they had a school bus. They would drive to Kansas and they had a hole cut in the top of the school bus and all the seats taken out. And they would drive under an elevator in Kansas and they would fill up that school bus with wheat, all the way to the top through the hole in the roof and then they would drive back here and grind that here in the—When was the last grinding? Maybe in '76, '77, because the dam was failing and when it was gone there was no more power for the mill. So I would think late '70s, and they stayed here until like '80, '81, but the mill wasn't functional. They were having their, they were still selling flour and corn meal, but they were having it ground at Falls Mill and bringing it over here.

WILLIAMS: So you bought the place and then you have to go about, I suppose you had some sort of plan in mind. You know, where do you start?

BRADY: You know, it's embarrassing, but actually to this day I don't have a plan. You just tackle, this needs to be done so I try to stay focused on whatever that job is until that task is completed and then you just move to the next one.

WILLIAMS: Well, did you start with what you thought was the most critical?

BRADY: Most critical was the mill and that's the first thing we did was to have Bob Warren to come out and take a gazillion pictures and design a plan of how to lift this mill. I don't know if you're familiar, but there's a Brown's Mill, used to be Brown's Mill and nobody was taking care of it and they had a

big community gathering and they were going to save Brown's Mill and they had hired some local house movers to jack that thing up and because they thought that was the right thing to do. And so they were in the process of jacking it up and they had this big community meeting and Bob Warren actually was there. They had hired him as well to design a plan and he was not aware of the house movers that were already jacking it up and at that meeting, the first meeting Bob Warren attended they got a phone call that it's gone. It had fallen in the river because if you, the process of raising any building, especially one this age, if you go too fast, and crack something major, I mean it's seventy-nine feet tall, the weight of it just . . . And Brown's Mill just the weight of it when they jacked it up, it moved during the night and it had like log cabin corners and it pulled the bottom one apart and it was just like a puzzle and *sheew!* into the river. So that was the most pressing, was to get this mill stable because although the grounds are beautiful and these buildings are nice, the mill is the treasure so.

WILLIAMS: So why did you decide to use steel instead of replace with timber?

BRADY: Well, in the, probably in the '70s there was a grant given to, I'm guessing it was the Carignans. No, it was Epperly. A grant was given for him to do some work and he put steel beams, he put one steel beam across half of the front and a steel beam down the sides. So two steel beams were already here and it would have been not cost efficient to, I wanted everything to match and look the same. So we went back with the steel because steel had partially been done and steel is forever. And this mill floods. Make sure I show you the marks on the door where through the years they've notched the door when the water gets up into the first floor of the mill, which is regular, over history it's very regular. So that we don't have to replace sills again and the quality of the lumber that we cut today is not as good as the quality of lumber that was here in 1878 so if we put it on oak sills again the quality of lumber is not as good and down the road we would have to do it again, so we went with steel. For a number of reasons, cost probably the most important.

WILLIAMS: Did you have a budget in mind at the beginning?

BRADY: No. Yes. I did. I had, I had a couple of CDs in the bank that were not, they were just in the bank drawing a little bit of interest and I told my wife, I said, "I'm going to take these two CDs and that's all I'm going to spend." And I am beyond budget. I have exceeded the budget. [laughs] But I you know, I bet if you ask a bunch of people you would find that people perceive that I've spent a lot more than I have. And I have not spent a tremendous amount of money. Nowhere near what, not even a fraction of what the plan was if you hired everything done. The windows, it had, none of these buildings had windows. There wasn't a piece of glass anywhere in

any of these buildings. There was a couple of rotted out windows frames, so I got some bids from people who build windows and my cheapest bid was $54,000 to build the windows and there's a hundred and thirty something sashes in these buildings. So $54,000 is a lot of money, so I went to Franklin and there's a guy who has a woodworking shop in a strip mall over there and I said—he sells equipment—and I said I'll buy the equipment from you if you will teach me how to build these windows, and he gladly did and so I built all the windows at my shop in Bell Buckle. So instead of spending $54,000, I spent $3,100 and I own all the equipment to build windows, so that's kind of the story of all the process. I mean, this poplar, all the, I bought eleven, well actually I bought 13,000 board feet of poplar and I lined these two buildings and had enough left over to do the cabin. And the Amish in Ethridge, Moe Zook, it's his business to do tongue-and-groove poplar, so he cuts the tree and six months later you get a postcard that your order is ready and you drive over and all day long you load lumber. But I could not have sheet rocked these buildings for what this three-quarter-inch tongue-and-groove poplar costs. It was not even sixty cents a board foot. And you can't sheet rock for what this costs so if you hunt, if you hunt around you can find real good deals. You just have to spend the time and look. And I've never been in a hurry, so it's okay if I don't get something done today, I'll wait. That's like my kitchen. I've been waiting for six or eight months. Thea's pointing at the lights. There was no electricity in any of these buildings.

WILLIAMS: Ever before you?

BRADY: Probably there had been a light bulb from time, like in the mill there's still some insulators where back in the day they ran two wires instead of one piece of romex. They had two wires and there's some—so I'm sure it had a light bulb in there, but there was no wiring. There was no light at all. And all these lights—I don't know how many there are, probably close to a hundred—these are service station lights from the '20s. Island lights, they called them. Like if you pulled in to get gas, these would be your lighting. And for eight months I bought—green ones are a dime a dozen because most of them were green, but some of them were white like these. So eight months of eBaying I put together enough of these, they're steel and they're porcelain coated. And I just think they look cool and they kind of period correct for early electricity. So that was the . . . and interestingly in the mill on eBay was listed these white porcelain lights and somebody had twenty-four of them. They're bigger than these. I think these are eighteen inches and theses are twenty-four inches. They had twenty-four of them in their individual packaging that had been put away in, you know—hardware store closed down at some point and had five boxes of these that were never opened and they shipped them to me in the original packaging from the '20s. So that was kind of cool.

WILLIAMS: Since the mill was already on the national register, did you try to use the tax incentives and various things that are available for historic property?

BRADY: There are no tax incentives for private ownership. There are . . . I have every receipt I've ever spent. I mean, if it cost twenty-nine cents for a screw, I have a receipt for that, but my CPA tells me that there's, there', there's very little available for private ownership. If PARQ owned it, it would be, it would be funded by the government a hundred percent, I think. There is some little tax, and if you know one please let me know, but for some reason it doesn't qualify, there is something for restoration, but I don't qualify for other reasons or whatever, and I can't remember what those are.

WILLIAMS: I'm not an expert, but I wondered if you have . . .

BRADY: I have, I'm not, you know, and this is a problem for me because there is grant money available for projects like these but I am a hammer-and-nails kind of guy and I don't have the desire to chase public funding because I couldn't do what I do if I did that because it is a huge lengthy, lengthy project. There are other interested parties who, for instance, now concerning the river, we are on the list for some infrastructure money because I'm not, a guy named Neal Appelbaum, who is over the watershed for Cannon County is kind of doing some work along those lines and you know almost as much as I do, but apparently we're on the list for infrastructure money having to do with repairing the river and fixing the dam.

WILLIAMS: So when it came time to replace the siding and the, the walls and the windows, did you try to replace with like materials?

BRADY: I did. I kept every if we look, if you look kind of through the paint, on the outside, you can see that I kept every board keepable. I mean I would saw the rot out and then I would piece in. A company called Lennelle Lee, in Cookeville, mills bevel siding, which is what this has on it, so I brought a sample and had it milled identical to what was rotted away. And probably 40 percent of the exterior siding on these buildings was not savable. If it was savable, it's still here, but I pieced in like material so it's like it was. And at some point in history I don't know about this building but the ice-house certainly had been lined in something similar to poplar, maybe it was cedar. Some of it is still there, but the majority of it is long gone.

WILLIAMS: Did you find yourself wanting to do, or needing to do any research about mill construction or did you . . .

BRADY: Oh, yeah, I read, I read, everything online, and still do, like right now I'm reading how to install HVAC, because depending on what somebody is going to charge me I'm going to do that myself. I know I'm going to do all

the piping but, I would hire someone to actually do the Freon and hooking the units up if that was affordable, but if not I'll get on the internet and I'll do it myself. Which is pretty much how I've done everything else. Does that answer your question?

WILLIAMS: Yeah. So it sounds like you were concerned to be historically . . .

BRADY: Oh, I wanted it as historically correct as it can be, but still be functional in the twenty-first century. I mean you . . .

WILLIAMS: But not to the point of drawing blueprints and having experts swoop in and give . . .

BRADY: No, they cost money. They cost money. I can't spend, like I said, I had a handful of money and that's what I had. And, although I have gone over that, I haven't gone over that by much. And it's because I've, I do everything myself. Because I want everybody to make a good living I just don't have the money to pay them. I can't tell you how many rock masons stopped when I was laying rock. Because I bought some old fireplaces and tore them down. Some old rock chimneys and tore them down to do a lot of rock work around this property, and I'm not a rock layer and I even had some rock masons point out to me that I wasn't a rock layer. But I still didn't hire them, although I would have loved to have hired them, I didn't have the money to hire them, so I learned to lay rock.

WILLIAMS: Now, you said before you bought the mill, PARQ was already here with the plastic over the windows or something. So once you bought the mill what is your relationship been with PARQ?

BRADY: Thea checks on me everyday to make sure I'm doing things right.

WILLIAMS: Because they make it clear you're the owner, but . . .

BRADY: There is no relationship.

WILLIAMS: You are the reason for their existence.

BRADY: Other than the friendship and a . . .

PRINCE: Am I allowed to speak and then you can cut if you want?

BRADY: Yeah. Desire to have the mill looking good again.

PRINCE: We can be, we still want to be involved because we care, we can now be the educational arm. There are so many possibilities and visions that school kids come here and there's a gal that's writing a book about the children's view of some things that have happened here. And even as a 501 (c) 3 there's possibilities of us working together on things and that

way we can stay involved and we don't have to own this to enjoy that it's alive.

BRADY: It's kind of don't get hung up in the owner, this kind of belongs to Cannon County. I mean, it legally it's mine, but it's here for Cannon County. This is just a toy for me and I'm enjoying, nothing is, is a, feels better than to have these old people that are from this area come and just, just think that you know this never happens. A lot of satisfaction and we've had community events. I've never turned anybody down, even when we were, we shouldn't have had community events, when there were nails everywhere. Hopefully, long after I'm gone, this will be here and somebody will be tending to it a little bit.

WILLIAMS: So looking back over the three years?

BRADY: It's been three years this month.

WILLIAMS: What was the biggest challenge of restoring it?

BRADY: The biggest, what I disliked the most is the painting.

PRINCE: When you rented the cherry picker?

BRADY: The most challenging. That was challenging, yeah, that was challenging. I've yet to do what's most challenging. Most challenging is working with the state to get the dam repaired to get the mill operational again, and I am sadly losing hope of that happening. So it will be a challenge to convert a power source to operate this mill with a diesel engine or some other method. That's going to be, it will be a challenge to, the mill is not currently lined up like the shafts are not lined up because the building has moved so much as the foundation was rotted away. And when we righted it, we righted it as best we could, but you can't pick that thing up and slide it over so I've got some, that will be a challenge when I start lining up shafts and things. Painting is the most displeasurable thing I've done. Crown-molding the cabin would be the most challenging.

WILLIAMS: So the mill dam isn't on the property?

BRADY: It is on the property.

WILLIAMS: But the state . . .

BRADY: I have three point something acres over here and two acres on the other side.

WILLIAMS: So why is the state involved?

BRADY: The dam is there in its entirety. It needs a little stone work, but it's still there from 1842, but the river bank, the river itself has washed, the dam

used to go from this side of the river to the other side where there was a hayfield and it connected. The dam just went from this side over to the bank of the hayfield. Well, over time and no maintenance, the river has washed the dirt at the far end of the dam and where the hayfield is. So now there's a fifty-nine-foot gap where the river has taken out fifty-nine feet of the hayfield. So the river actually is going around the dam. So we need to repair, we need to backfill where the river has washed away the hayfield. We just need to move that hayfield back this direction and then water will go over the dam and then we could divert a portion of it through here to run the mill. And because it's the Stones River and we have the clean water acts and all of the environmental issues and there is no more, not a larger environmentalist than myself, but that needs to be fixed. That dam needs to be fixed because this is a historic treasure for Cannon and Rutherford counties and the state of Tennessee. There's just a handful of these mills left. There were twenty-seven mills between here and the plateau and now there's one. This is the last one on the Stones River anywhere that's still standing. And there were, I suppose hundreds of them scattered through the county and now there's none, one. So that needs to be fixed, so there is, there are environmentalists involved, there is TDEC involved, there is the Department of Agriculture involved, there are.

PRINCE: Army Corps.

BRADY: Army Corps of Engineers and there's so many of these large organizations that have to give me permission to repair the dam and because I have to go through all the organizations and there has to be so many studies, impact studies done on what will happen when the dam is repaired, that it's cost prohibitive for an individual to do it. So I do hope one day somebody realizes that other than myself and PARQ and there are many, many, many people who want to see that done, but we don't know how to do it. I don't know how to do it. I mean, I know how to fix the dam, but I don't know how to climb through the mass of . . . It would be eight hour, you guys know this I'm sure, but it would be a full time, forty-hour-a-week job for maybe years just to put the puzzle together to get all the questions answered to repair what's been there since 1842. A funny story is a girl, early on when I first bought this, I have been contacting all the state organizations and inviting them out because it's my theory that if people come out here and see the project, that they will fall in love with it as I did and want to fix the problem. So long before I filled out any paperwork or applications or any of that, I want the people whose desks that it will cross to have been here to see actually what the project is. So a young girl out of college, very sweet, works for the Department of Biology, let's say. She's a biologist. She was concerned, very sweet girl. We walked out there and she said well we are concerned about some life form, I think it was a mussel. Our records indicate that statewide the numbers are declining on this mussel. And I said well, how many were there in 1842? And I'm just

doing this to be funny and it was all in jest and of course they didn't take records of that in 1842 and she just looked so puzzled and she said well, I said well when did you start generating your data and she told me roughly and I said well, whatever populations were here then dealt with this structure in the river. I mean, if there were any there then, they were certainly getting from one side to the other. So she laughed and by the time she left was in love with the mill. But she was so far down the totem pole of people that could actually help me. I thought was, she had seen it and she was one of the hundreds that have seen it and is now a believer in and is in love with the mill, but I have had, I have not had the governor here yet, but I've had everybody right up to the governor and I think everybody wants it repaired. Everybody wants it. I get emails from you know the commissioners for these departments statewide for Tennessee. What's the progress? What's the progress? They're asking me this and it's just that I don't know. I think it's such a big, there are so many people involved that personally I don't have the energy nor the desire to coordinate them all into signing the paper that says "fix the dam." And now with this engineering plan it's just financially not possible for an individual to do that.

WILLIAMS: So they won't let you fix it yourself?

BRADY: No.

WILLIAMS: You would have to meet their specifications?

BRADY: Yes.

WILLIAMS: And that's the two million dollars you were talking about earlier?

BRADY: The engineering company says, is where I get the million five to two million. That's their number. That's not the state's number. That's the engineering firm's number to repair it to the specifications of the state. And I'm sure it's, I'm sure that that's probably a good number for all the people that must be paid to get such a thing going, but if I had a track hoe and two weekends I could fix it for ten grand or less. It's not, it's just moving stone and laying stone and the depositing of some huge rocks. I'm sure that's simplistic and layman. But in my mind that's how you would do it.

WILLIAMS: Has it helped you as an individual to have a nonprofit like PARQ supporting what you're doing?

BRADY: In what way? I love the support. I love everybody's support.

WILLIAMS: Well, when you're dealing with the government bodies—

BRADY: Oh, absolutely.

WILLIAMS: Do they look at you differently than if you were just a private guy?

BRADY: I don't know how to answer that, but the reason that the higher-ups have visited here is because Thea Prince and PARQ have the time in their lives to call and hound those people and get them to come and invite them and have the big lunches, and very successful. Like I say everybody that has been out to see this project, loves this project and sees what a value it is for the state and the counties, and they're all on board with the project. But it kind of stops there because I don't know where to go next.

WILLIAMS: You . . . do you have a ten-year vision, a fifty-year vision for the mill?

BRADY: No, my visions are more like ten days or ten minutes. I hope, I want the mill to be operational again and I want the dam repaired, so that we can show people how early settlers did it. It's such an engineering marvel, I mean, it's so simple but it's so intelligent. And it's, it's, it's beautiful out here. It's like I said, it's a treasure. And I want people to enjoy that. Short term it needs to generate some revenue just being . . . I mean I still see it as an investment, I'm not upside down, I haven't spent enough to where I'm upside down but when you have an investment, it needs to generate some income. So, you know, if I put a restaurant in then that will draw people and make more people familiar with what's here, and by doing these weddings and doing these class reunions and the more people that are aware of it, hopefully the more support we'll have to get these bigger projects implemented.

WILLIAMS: Does that mean you're going to have to hire people?

BRADY: For a restaurant?

WILLIAMS: For a restaurant or a wedding coordinator?

BRADY: Oh, absolutely, absolutely. This place could again be a large employer. I mean we can do, we've got a beautiful spot on the river down there for canoeing, a great place to put canoes in for canoeing and kayaking which employs guides and people who rent boats. And if we put a restaurant in here we'll need a full staff for that. We need speakers, what are docents, because when people are here they want to whole story, they want the tour. We need to hire people for that, and we need to just hire people to be here when people stop. I can see that we would generate, you know, certainly we would be Readyville's largest employer, and it wouldn't surprise me that at some point we could be one of Woodbury's larger employers. This is ten thousand square feet of buildings so there needs to be people everywhere. We're eight miles, six to eight miles from Interstate 24. We need the blue sign, and we'll get tourists. People love old mills and covered bridges and will drive out of their way to see an old gristmill or

covered bridge. So we need to build a covered bridge here too and we'd get 100 percent of the tourist trade.

WILLIAMS: Is it feasible to generate power?

BRADY: Yes! We can be 100 percent green. We can, this mill in . . . Arthur McFerrin and W. B. Hayes bought this mill, partnered in 1889. Before 1900 they had built this ice house, and Arthur McFerrin, his nickname was Rat, was a genius. He was one of the few people or the first people to decide that from the power of the river turning the turbine, I can generate electricity, and make ice, because ice is a reaction of ammonia and electricity. And in his vision to make ice he put that together, he produced electricity from the turbine that's still in the mill today, and then as a kind heart he wired every house in the community in Readyville with electric lights. Before Murfreesboro had power, this was one of the rural communities, the first in the state who had electric lights, and it was generated from power produced by the east fork of the Stones River and this mill, 100 percent green, and in 1937 TVA bought the rights for the power that was being produced by the mill. So they were still producing electricity in 1937. So it has all the bells and whistles for what's politically correct today. It can be green and we can, we get that turbine turning—that's a 350-horse turbine, it'll generate enough power, and has in history, to run all the houses in Readyville. So we certainly, of course we have a few more appliances in these homes than we did back then, but we certainly can produce the energy for all the needs of this mill and sell back the power to the electric co-op, and they have to buy it. Not that I would care if they bought it or not.

WILLIAMS: And you get some farmers growing organic wheat and then you—

BRADY: Already have a local group of farmers. Do you know their name?

PRINCE: There are several groups but I—

BRADY: There's a group of local farmers who are organic who now sell their produce in Woodbury and other places.

PRINCE: Angie Ott is one of the people.

BRADY: Who is it?

PRINCE: Angie Ott. She's the granddaughter of J. F. Adams.

BRADY: And they want to sell their goods out here.

WILLIAMS: Do they have grains to grind?

BRADY: Oh, they would love to have grains to grind. Yeah, but there's no place to grind their grain.

WILLIAMS: Naturally.

BRADY: The way it should be. I can hook an electric motor and grind some grain, and will in the short term, while I'm waiting across the street. We've got to take a break.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

[End of audio-only portion of the interview. What follows is a transcription of a videotape shot by Williams as Brady first discussed a series of photographs that he had taken during renovations of the mill. He then showed Williams and others around the mill buildings and the mill race and pond while discussing renovations and other issues. While every effort was made to describe in this transcript what the videotape shows, readers interested in a complete understanding of the discussion would be best advised to view the videotape, which is available from the Albert Gore Research Center.]

BRADY: [Pointing to "Before and After, 2006 and 2009" slide show on computer screen:] And this is the mill from the river in March of '06. See, there's no windows and all the holes from the siding, cause a lot of the siding is just gone. This is, there was a miller's office just right here that was completely rotted away, and they had to take that down to get to the sill on this end, to replace. This is the building we're sitting in now [granary]. This is the ice house next door. I put a hallway in between so we can walk from here to there without going outside. This is the cabin that's in the back. This is the sill we were talking about. See it's fallen. And that is, you could actually just run your hand into that crack, right through eighteen inches of wood, because it had been wet and dry so many times. So had we gone back to steel, eventually we would have been back to this part. Here's the steel. And you can see the siding. I haven't even started that yet. The siding is gone on the fourth floor. The plastic that PARQ put up over the windows. There's no porch. Everything had rotted away. This is when we were putting in the steel. This is, you asked about the siding. This is the back of this building and you can see that it's just got, it's not there. This is not that I had torn it out. It's just rotted away and then I tore it out. All of the, all this is new siding right here, up here, all across the top. But every salvageable board is still on this building. This is taken when putting a new roof on. This is the end from the river. This is the reason I bought this mill. I just thought that was the coolest shape and this is painting it. We painted it three times with a brush. One with an oil-based primer and two coats of latex on top of that. Three people, six months. You couldn't spray it because this wood is so pitted from the age that the spray won't go in, so you have to push it in there with a brush. It was, like I said, it was my least favorite part.

PRINCE: How many gallons?

BRADY: This end—576—this end of the building was a good example of how you asked me what I saved. This is new wood here, that you can kind of see, if I could save it, I saved it. This is still painting. This is painting the porch railing trim. Windows are in.

WILLIAMS: Did you just choose these colors because you liked them or you had some idea it was . . .?

BRADY: No, in the rafters of the ice house was some old clapboard, which is what this is called on the outside, that was painted this gray color. Kind of a blue gray, and there was a partial window frame, the pattern that I used to make these windows, and it was this color red, so at some point in history it has been this color. And these are inside pictures and putting up lights—new porch railing. This is the mill race that goes under the turbines down in this hole, and that should all be filled with water. PARQ, you asked me what PARQ has done for me. PARQ gave me five hundred dollars and so a portion of that, not all that five hundred dollars, went into the front fence and the gate. I had a dozer come in and build me some parking back here. Got new stairs from forty-one dollars from the junk place, the salvage place in Clark Metal in Murfreesboro, which I love. You can find all kind of history at Clark Iron that people are selling for ten cents a pound. That's the river. These stairs on this end I just put in so we can get down from the porch right to the backyard. Now this is the backyard of the mill. The river. More of the same. This is all seeded and planted, and it's supposed to have been raining and it's not raining. I need some rain to make that look pretty and green. An old guy from Pulaski gave me these two wagons, this one is a Studebaker and the other one is an International Harvester. He came by here and had fond memories of the mill, and said, "Come by my place. I have some wagons that would look good." And this is kind of what it looks like today. And there are several pictures of the inside of the mill but . . . and some photographers, not myself, but actually some professional photographers took these during a country music video. They know how to take pictures where the light is just excellent. The equipment that's here now, if it's too heavy to steal, it's still here. [laughter]

WILLIAMS: You're lucky you didn't have much copper around.

BRADY: Oh, there was no copper left. This is the dam that's across the road, and this is the dam in 1930, across the road. And a lady called me, a sweetheart lady, I'll get you her name sometime if you need it, but we were doing, we were having this big state meeting where all the river people, all the TDEC people, all the tourism people, all the politicians we could gather. There were 125 people here, and I wanted some pictures of the dam. So I got the word out. And this little eighty-year-old lady calls me. Her name is Rachel. She calls me from the beauty shop in

Murfreesboro on Saturday morning. She said, "I've got some negatives." The negatives were huge. So I couldn't find anybody to develop them. But Shacklett's photography on the square, I called them just randomly. They said, "Yeah, we can scan those. We can do that." So you couldn't make out these pictures at all from those negatives. And I met that lady down there and she gave them to me. And I made her a copy of them, because Shacklett was able with the technology we have today, they were able to a lot more with them than this lady had ever seen before. This is 1930, that is 1930, this is in the '30s. And see this buttress wall right here. That is knocked down but all the rocks are laying right there where it's supposed to be. And the hayfield started just beyond that wall, and now that's gone and the hayfield has gone sixty feet beyond, and that's beautiful and we need that again. And this is in the '70s, 75. Elder, his name is Gary Jones, lives in the next building right here. He was the last miller who worked here. He was one of the hippies, still is. He's an artist, but he milled here the day it closed. He was here when Wayne Epperly walked in and said, "Everybody needs to find another job. We're closed." And that's the dam today.

WILLIAMS: So from the '70s to today the water stopped running over it because there'd been so much erosion?

BRADY: Yeah, the river, water finds the course of least resistance. So it used to go up to that dam and fill up the millpond and then fall over that dam because that was the least resistance, but once it washed out that hayfield it didn't need to back up behind the dam anymore, because least resistance would be to go over through the hayfield.

WILLIAMS: So that's been fairly recent that it stopped filling up the millpond?

BRADY: No, probably '80, between '80 and '85.

WILLIAMS: Well to me that's recent. It wasn't 1800.

BRADY: Well, between 1980 and 1985. Yeah that is recent. Seventeen sixty-six, Uriah Stone started mapping this area. I think we've seen all this.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

BRADY: But that gives you an idea of what—[videotape ends abruptly; resumes outside on the mill grounds].

PRINCE: [referring to microphone cord] Y'all keeping it up off the ground for sure between the two of you.

BRADY: Oh, we'll be alright. I can stay behind him.

WILLIAMS: Tell us about what you would like to tell us about what you've done, We're looking at the mill. It's March 11, 2009.

BRADY: It's cold.

WILLIAMS: It's supposed to snow supposedly. So your first priority was the mill itself, because of the sills?

BRADY: The first priority was to jack this mill up and replace the foundation. So that was the first priority.

WILLIAMS: How long did that take them to do that?

BRADY: Three months. You have to jack up a building very slowly. If you do it too quickly it puts it under too much stress and things break.

WILLIAMS: So they'd come out and give the jack a twist and wait a week?

BRADY: Mm-hmm. Like a quarter inch here, a quarter inch there. Finally we raised it twenty-two inches. You can kind of see that in the back if you want. [walking north around east side of mill building while talking]

WILLIAMS: So in the meantime were you doing other things? Or just waiting for the stabilization?

BRADY: I think I was waiting for the stabilization, and there was a lot of digging, and cleaning. I was cleaning at the same time we were doing this, because there would be days, even weeks when we didn't jack it up at all, if it's too cold, if it's too wet.

WILLIAMS: And there's all that junk in there.

BRADY: You can't see it but all this is on steel beams right here. [north side of building] You can see it from underneath. This is a steel beam. But this had to be raised up almost two feet.

WILLIAMS: So when you started the wood was sitting on the rocks?

BRADY: No, no these rocks are new. The wood was sitting down here on the ground.

WILLIAMS: So that's twenty-two inches?

BRADY: Twenty-two inches is probably like that. So that corner was, these stairs were not here, what was here? Nothing. Just the ground. You can see that really well from underneath if you feel like going over this fence and around the corner. But all of this wood that was originally here was rotted away and it had collapsed so this entire building was leaning that direction. And if you stand back and look at the building, you can still see

like from the second floor to the fourth, there's still some lean that did not come out. Although the floor is level, over, you know if things lean long enough they stay leaned.

WILLIAMS: So here you can see what looked like older [pointing to clapboards]—

BRADY: Older and new.

WILLIAMS: But they're the same wood and style.

BRADY: They're both yellow poplar. This is new yellow poplar, and there is no way that it will last one hundred and forty years, because of the quality of lumber that we have is not like what it was back in the day.

WILLIAMS: Is there any reason they used yellow poplar for mills?

BRADY: They don't like termites. Termites don't bother yellow poplar.

WILLIAMS: That's a good reason.

BRADY: Uh-huh. So we've got very little termite damage. Had some but not a lot. Matthew you can step over right there. This is a low spot. It's interesting underneath the mill, too. I'll hold your camera. Are you shooting?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, I was just looking at this other beam. My house sits on posts.

BRADY: Well this is the large post that it sits on right here.

WILLIAMS: Okay. Did you have to do anything to the support?

BRADY: No, that one was good.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

BRADY: Okay, now you can see what we did here.

WILLIAMS: So that's northwest. It's like being in my basement.

BRADY: Yeah, now all this had to be dug out because it was full of what the river had washed in, and silt and dirt all the way up so . . .

WILLIAMS: And this is not one of the beams that was already here?

BRADY: No, this is a new beam this. This beam was here and this beam was here.

WILLIAMS: Okay, so this is northwest.

BRADY: Yes.

WILLIAMS: And so the north and west corner had old steel beams and . . .

BRADY: And since that was already done we just decided to go on with that all the way around. So we now have steel beams from that corner to all the way around.

WILLIAMS: And some of these timbers look pretty, these look new.

BRADY: Actually there is a new, see where the pulley is hanging, above the stones that's a new twelve by twelve and twelve feet long. That was a bear to put in. I've got two more and I've already taken out this one, and I'll have to take this one out as well and I already have those beams here. I've just got to get in there so I can rebuild this part.

WILLIAMS: Where the rods are sticking up, you'll have it like over here.

BRADY: This beam is in pretty good shape, this beam is not, and that beam I've already taken it out. It was terrible.

WILLIAMS: Where do you—what are those, twelve by twelve?

BRADY: Twelve by twelve and twelve feet long, and I got those from Trott Lumber in Shelbyville, Tennessee.

WILLIAMS: Do they saw them new?

BRADY: They saw them new.

WILLIAMS: Salvage them.

BRADY: No, no. They're new. White oak.

WILLIAMS: So there's some rubbish.

BRADY: Oh, absolutely. Every time the river comes up, water comes down the mill race. I've seen the water this high.

WILLIAMS: Almost to the . . .

BRADY: Almost to the joist, and over time I'll show you marks on the door where it gets way up into the first floor. And since I've owned it, it hasn't and I'm hoping it won't, but I know that it will.

WILLIAMS: So is this where you're saying it's not lined up with the machinery?

BRADY: We can see that from inside. There is a shaft that comes from the turbine, and then there's a shaft that's actually in the mill. Where they meet I've got to do some serious shimming.

WILLIAMS: And the turbine that you were talking about, the 350 horsepower, that's?

BRADY: Yeah, go where Matthew is. It's in the pit. That's the turbine.

WILLIAMS: That's the turbine? It looks like a turbine in a dam.

BRADY: Mm-hmm. That is a Leffler turbine from the 1800s, and at some point this was what they call an undershot. It had a wheel in this hole, before the concrete, which was poured in 1949. It had a wheel under here that would turn, and it's called an undershot because the water pushes the wheel from the bottom instead of having the weight coming from the top.

WILLIAMS: And you don't know when that went away?

BRADY: I don't. I would love to have it.

WILLIAMS: Maybe it's down the river somewhere.

BRADY: I'm sure it is, or pieces of it.

WILLIAMS: Anything else under here? So how much work is involved with . . . do you think?

BRADY: Immense.

WILLIAMS: You've only just begun.

BRADY: All these have bad bit bearings. They are froze up at the moment so all the bearings have to be repoured. Not rocket science, but a lot of work.

WILLIAMS: And you have, I see some of the belts are here but they're broken.

BRADY: Some of the belts are still here. That shaft has, I've got some, the second shaft over—see it's fallen to the ground. I've got some lumber to replace under there to get that reattached.

WILLIAMS: So this one's in place. It's just not hooked up and ready to go.

BRADY: Right. I doubt we could turn it because it's been, like, eons. No, we can't turn it, but it will turn.

WILLIAMS: But the supports are there and it's just a matter of . . .

BRADY: Oh, yeah, a little bit of heat and some oil and it will turn again.

WILLIAMS: But with the water coming through I bet that's a job just to keep it—

BRADY: Cleaned.

WILLIAMS: —lubricated, cleaned, and not rusted.

BRADY: Okay, let me have your camera. I'm not going to fall in there because I've done this a lot of times. Watch me step right off in. [looking west toward the river] The river makes a horseshoe right here. The river is on the other side of the road in front of us, and it makes a horseshoe right here. And

the dam is on that side of the road and there is a channel, which is this mill race, so it diverts a portion of the water when it's open through the mill race, which turns the turbine and puts the water right back in the river. And it was dug by Charles Ready's slaves in 1842 with picks and shovels and mules. They didn't have dozers and backhoes and trackhoes.

WILLIAMS: So at the time it was running how much of the water would actually be diverted through the mill race?

BRADY: You know, that's a good question, depending on the level of the river. Sometimes the river was so low that it wouldn't power the mill, so they ran it with a steam engine that sat on a block in the front, which I'll show you. That was in the 1940s. Just depending on the level of the river. The river never stopped flowing.

WILLIAMS: So from an environmental perspective you're not taking away all the water from the river.

BRADY: Oh, no, no, no, no. We're diverting a portion.

WILLIAMS: And it comes right back.

BRADY: And in my case all we'll do is divert a portion occasionally for tourism. It's not like we're going to run this like a business, a milling business because if my wife wants flour she goes to Kroger, It's ninety-nine cents for a five-pound bag, while here it would be ninety-nine dollars for a five-pound bag.

WILLIAMS: Right. So you've put in all of this fencing. Looks recent.

BRADY: Uh-huh. That's as high as a forty-foot ladder will reach, and it is a, it's going to be a problem. I'm going to have to hang out that window and paint that, and renail it all, because a forty-foot ladder will only reach.

BROWN: From down in the race?

BRADY: Right, and there's no other place to put it.

WILLIAMS: So what are those, just ventilation, under the eaves?

BRADY: No, under the eaves, there's cleaning equipment on the—that's the third floor—and as the wheat berry falls through, the cleaning equipment blows all of the waste out the back. So this was the best fishing on earth, right here because it was full of fish food all day, all of the time.

WILLIAMS: That's interesting.

BRADY: The original dam for Charles Ready's first mill was right here [walking in grassy area adjacent to river north of the mill].

WILLIAMS: Meaning back to 1812 or so?

BRADY: 1812.

WILLIAMS: So the fellows who told you there were millstones, they're down there you think somewhere?

BRADY: They're just down a little way down there, and I've just been busy so I haven't . . . and I have well over a hundred millstones so these wouldn't break me if I don't find them right away, so I've just not been in a hurry. We may be able to see this. We may not. This right here was the original dam and, let's see if I can see, there are still wooden beams in the bed of that river right here and you can see them because it was a wooden, they started with lumber—huge logs and they are, the logs are still in there. So the mill would have sat where we're standing and kind of hung out over the river.

WILLIAMS: So the rock, just below the surface there . . .

BRADY: This was the mill pond. The dam was here.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, you can still sort of see how it's falling down over the . . .

BRADY: Uh-huh. But it was right here.

WILLIAMS: Has there been any archeology done?

BRADY: Not that I know of. Has there been any archeology done?

PRINCE: Nothing I've heard about.

WILLIAMS: Professional, not treasure hunters.

BRADY: Oh, there's been lots of metal detecting and . . .

PRINCE: [faintly audible] A lot of MTSU students that take sides off the John Bragg, the rock wall, the rock there, but I don't think we've gotten a lot around here.

BRADY: So this was 1812 and then in 1842 they dug the mill race, so there would have been another mill where this mill stands now in 1842, which burned in the Civil War or thereabouts. Matthew's going to find all those records.

BROWN: That's right.

PRINCE: Robert Mason was a well-known educator from MTSU. He used to put little inserts in some of his books because he lived here in the area, but I don't know if it was something he was [trails off].

BROWN: Good question.

BRADY: When the mill burned in the 1860s, one of the Union soldiers stayed around and after the war, he worked here. He was the sawyer. His name was Barkley. When I bought the mill I read that story over and over on the internet and you know, you don't know what's legend and what's true, but they added a sawmill to this mill because they needed to rebuild all the other burned-down buildings and houses in this area from the war. So Barkley stayed over and he was the log sawyer and worked with a bunch of local guys and somehow fell into that saw blade and cut himself in half. So they sent a rider to his wife to tell him what had happened and Doc Adams lived across the road, and he put two parts of the body in a wagon and took him home. And I was, Huddleston Steele is the engineering firm that did my septic system design, and I walked in there one day and this guy stopped me and he was Barkley's great-great grandson and it was a hundred percent a true story. So that was . . . you know I'd read that and I'm sure y'all had seen that article too, but you know you never know what's real but here's the great grandson.

BROWN: Absolutely, sure.

PRINCE: So he was beside himself [joking].

BRADY: He was beside himself, yeah.

WILLIAMS: What is the, is that a board running across the lower part?

BRADY: Yeah, when I put a new roof on I put roof jacks on there, which are not original, but a roof jack is the metal thing. The board sits on the roof jack so I can move that if I need to do any work out there or painting in the future because it's very dangerous. When I was up there painting it was very dangerous. So a roof jack gives me a flat place to stand to paint or do any repairs.

BRADY: Okay, thank you for coming.

PRINCE: I'm so proud of you.

WILLIAMS: Nice to meet you. I'll see you again, I'm sure.

BRADY: Maybe this summer all the painting will be done.

WILLIAMS: Can't just swing out from that tree and . . .

BRADY: You know, by the time I painted it, I was tired of painting so I said eh, it'll be okay for now, and that was last year. I think Jane's going to do it for me.

RUST: Oh, I am.

WILLIAMS: So, here you can see through the race.

BRADY: Uh-huh. And from the front you can see all the way under the mill.

WILLIAMS: So that was quite an engineering feat.

BRADY: Absolutely, in the day.

WILLIAMS: Any idea where the machinery came from, in the 1870s?

BRADY: Oh, yeah. Most of it's still labeled. Bernard and Lee is a major producer of milling equipment.

WILLIAMS: Is that in the east somewhere?

BRADY: Boston, I think? The stones that are in this stone came from France. They are French burrstones and they came from starts-with-an-M France.

WILLIAMS: So the millstones are a special kind of stone?

BRADY: There's all kinds of millstones for different functions. If you're going to do flour, you need a French burrstone because it has a lot of natural holes in the rock and pits for the flour to get in to make finer flour. And then if you're doing cornmeal you would use granite stone. And then there's lime, on Stone Mountain. Is it Stone Mountain or Short Mountain?

PRINCE: Short Mountain.

BRADY: Short Mountain, they actually built millstones. You can still go up there and see on the courthouse there's some of the stones that were mined and built. But those were for corn. They were granite stones, so they were for corn, limestone stones for corn. [walking on east side of mill then up the steps into the mill building first floor]

WILLIAMS: The church I grew up in in Kansas City has a millstone in it, in its foyer because the community was called Hickman's Mill and now its called Hickman Mills but the post office changed the name, hundred years ago or so.

BRADY: I read something recently that I'm going to do. In Ireland, you would stand on millstones while you get married and that was legendary to promote longevity because millstones are so old.

WILLIAMS: People will pay for that.

BRADY: So I'm going to put some back here.

WILLIAMS: So they actually want to get married here in the mill? Or where do they . . .

BRADY: Well all of them so far—I've had no one come out that didn't book it. They want to get married at the end of that fence with the river behind and then they want to do receptions and stuff in here.

WILLIAMS: So you're going to set up a millstone for them to stand on.

BRADY: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Okay, so what did this look like when you bought the place?

BRADY: Well, pretty much like it does now, only the floor was like the ocean, it was wavy.

WILLIAMS: Because of the sag?

BRADY: Because of the sag. This over here was twenty-two inches lower and all this is new. Like this is new lumber. Most of these around this corner are new because they had just rotted off. You know, once the sill rotted and fell, then these were too close to the ground and they rotted as well. But like the inside, that is original.

WILLIAMS: Is that painted?

BRADY: It is painted and then I pressure-washed everything I could get off off because it's not historical paint. It's paint from the '60s and '50s. Over here is some kind of bathroom lime green that will not come off that needs to come off.

WILLIAMS: So your impression originally is that this would have been raw wood, not white-washed?

BRADY: Absolutely, not white-washed. It would have been, I mean, early on they didn't have paint. People didn't start painting their houses until, I guess in Boston was probably the first place that they painted houses. And that wasn't until the 1900s.

WILLIAMS: This is your wiring that's coming in now?

BRADY: Yeah, this is my wiring.

WILLIAMS: And the lights you were talking about earlier?

BRADY: Yeah, these are those old lights that were—

WILLIAMS: —in the '20s

BRADY: They're from the '20s but they're brand new. They've never been used before here.

WILLIAMS: Amazing story.

BRADY: This is a horizontal mill. It has two stones side-by-side that are inside here. And they're the same kind of stones as these, just the general idea, only they're side-by-side and there's three of these one here, here, and here.

And again, they're here because they're too heavy to steal, otherwise they would be gone. But you put your grain in here, it goes through the stones, and out here. These would be the first to go here. Relatively quickly I'm going to get these going so we can grind some cornmeal and make some money.

WILLIAMS: And these are the same, or no?

BRADY: These are the same. They're called Meadow, the company is called Meadows. And these are probably, were probably built in, right at 1900. This one actually has a blower on it. This is a blower that will shoot that grain that way. In the day, this mill produced flour and a lot of poultry and livestock feeds, cornmeal, and grits.

WILLIAMS: So is your next challenge to deal with health authorities, or are you exempt from…?

BRADY: I will be exempt from that when you're doing cornmeal. That's probably as far as I will go is cornmeal, because the equipment is not here to do flour any longer.

WILLIAMS: So it's still identified. It's International Harvester. Huh, is that what it says?

BRADY: No, this was painted, no it does say International Harvester, you know, I've never seen that. This was painted by Flipse? You know Flipse? Are they, what nationality are the Flipses?

PRINCE: I don't know.

BRADY: Oriental. And they owned this at one point, and the grandfather repainted all these so I don't know if that's— like all this his grandfather painted and he's younger than I am so in the last forty years he did this painting. But that looks original to me, the International Harvester part. I'll have to check into that. Does this one say the same? No. These are millstones and there's two sets. This one is upside down, but the reason I collect these is, how cool is it that a man would sit down, and this is not one stone. This is one stone right here, from here. They make these perfect cuts with a hammer and a chisel, no saws and electric machinery, just a hammer and a chisel. How long would it take to cut that out, and this one, and this one, and this one, and this one, and this one so that they form a perfect circle and they meet with such a small tolerance? This takes, it's just craftsmanship that we just don't see anymore. And this is a French burrstone. You see the pits that are all over the stone, and I have some stones like this at home that are solid, one stone. But it's the Marne Valley, is where these rocks are mined. As they ran out of these larger stones, they started piecing them together like this. When they pieced them together in order to get the weight correct and balanced, they back

poured them with plaster inside this metal band to give it the weight. This is a jack that a local blacksmith has made me my thing. I've got to raise it up and move it off so that I can replace those two beams.

WILLIAMS: What was this, what are these for?

BRADY: That's an arm, that's for moving that stone. Now this is a jack screw and right now it would just pull this out I've got to put a pin through there. You turn this and it'll lift that stone and then you just swing that around and put it over here or wherever just out of the way. And it will also flip inside this band to sharpen it.

WILLIAMS: So then that's to change the stones depending on what you're grinding?

BRADY: No, you don't change the stones, that's just to mainly to sharpen the stones. After you turn so much flour they need to be dressed and the edges need to be sharpened up. These would be the, right here, you sharpen this edge right here, all these. When you do that it will make finer flour, which is what everybody wanted.

BROWN: Do you use a file to do that or . . . ?

BRADY: You use a file and there's a special hammer, a little chisel thing. Which I have seen on eBay and bid on, but they all go for more than I want to spend. Because I know my original one is down in this mill race. I just need to have time to get down there and metal detect. As is this right here, I'm sure. This is all leftover elevator equipment. An elevator is this, these. A wagon would come up to that door, filled with wheat. It would go into this hopper which goes down this chute into these elevators. It would be lifted all the way to the fourth floor, one cup at a time on these conveyor belts. Then it goes all the way to the fourth floor and then it starts gravity falling through all the cleaning equipment and then back down through this chute right here into the stones, ground into flour, it goes down that hole, up this elevator and into some tanks that are on the second floor. These are the bottoms of the tanks and those are the actual bagging machines. So a person would stand at the base of that, push that lever with your foot, and that would fill up a bag of flour.

WILLIAMS: So that wheat's moving around a lot, more than you'd think.

BRADY: Oh, yeah.

WILLIAMS: It goes up, then down.

BRADY: It's going all the way to the top, all the way to the bottom, back up to the second and then down into the bag. And at the same time all that wheat is moving, cornmeal, and chicken feed, and horse feed, all that's moving too.

WILLIAMS: So how many, is there only one of these systems?

BRADY: No, there's this one, there's one back here, see that hopper back there? And there was another one over here and there's another one upstairs. Because different groups of men were working on different projects all at the same time. There was a hopper here.

WILLIAMS: So it wasn't like today we're doing corn, and tomorrow we're doing—they could do multiple things.

BRADY: No, it was like, yeah they were doing multiple things all at the same time. This was a very large mill in comparison to others. It did 6,000 bushels a day. That's a lot of wheat.

WILLIAMS: There are records?

BRADY: You know, are there records?

RUST: I think in that MTSU book.

BRADY: Ah, I haven't seen any.

RUST: They have some references.

BRADY: References but actual records I do not have. You know, there's things from this mill everywhere. I get people come by, but they want to sell me this stuff. Like the stolen millstones from under the porch. The man wants to sell those to me, he stole them. I'm thinking no, you need to give those back.

WILLIAMS: What's that contraption over in the corner?

BRADY: That's a fanning mill. This, okay, this is not part of it. This is the hopper that goes, this shroud goes over those stones when this is removed. This shroud goes over and this hopper sits on the top of this. This is a fanning mill and it's used for cleaning, let me find the handle, it's for cleaning by hand. If somebody has some buckwheat, or wheat that's different than what you're doing you would just use this because it's just a little bit of wheat they wanted. It's a cleaning machine, like this is the fan and it will turn right here but it's not going to because it's locked up but that would blow and you'd put the wheat in here and it blows all the trash out the back just as the ones upstairs do. It's called a fanning mill.

WILLIAMS: It's got some writing on it too, but I can't make out what it says other than T-E-N-N.

BRADY: Then it's made in Tennessee. This sort of thing didn't travel a lot because people, a local guy could make that.

WILLIAMS: It looks like it's pretty fancy lettering for what it is.

BRADY: Mm-hmm. Actually the lettering starts up here. You know Ken Beck?

RUST: Yes.

BRADY: Ken is a friend of the mill, he wrote for the *Tennessean* for a long time, y'all have read stuff he's written, but on top of those, see those two boards that come out of that post right there? Well, twenty-something years ago, Ken grew up here and he loves the mill, but he came up here after everybody had long gone and it was falling apart. It was over twenty years ago, but somebody had piled up this bunch of stuff by the door as if they were going to steal it. In that pile was the speedometer for this mill which is around, still got all the original lettering, it's going to be beautiful when I get it cleaned up. But Ken picked that up and put it in his car so nobody else would steal it. Well, he brought it back to me about a month ago oh, and it's the coolest thing, it's got these big bell weights in the bottom that spin and it tells you how fast your millstones are moving. It's an old, old 1800s piece of equipment. The gears are maple so if a log floated through the turbine it would shear the maple gears and not the metal part, which is kind of innovative. I guess they got tired of replacing metal teeth so they put in with maple.

WILLIAMS: So there's not a screen or filter or anything out there to keep the . . .?

BRADY: No, to keep the trash out of the mill race? No, that was somebody's job.

WILLIAMS: How you going to keep the canoers out of the mill race?

BRADY: I would love to see canoers going up and down that mill race. I would love that. They couldn't get through, it's got gates, so they couldn't get into the turbine with a canoe. But it would be nice to be able to canoe from Woodbury down, right into the front of the mill right there. I kayaked the Stones River from the arts center down to here last summer, but I dragged my boat most of the way.

WILLIAMS: The license plate patches are not yours or?

BRADY: Some of them are. That one is. Back in the day, they would, if there was, there were belts all over this mill and they'd have to cut holes through the floor just for the belt to go through and when they were through with that they would put an old oil can or a license plate on the top of it. So I just continued that where there was a, I ran across these license plates from '33, the Depression was '33, nobody bought license plates, nobody bought anything, so that's pretty easy year to find and they were cheap at a junk store so I bought those and put those down. Other places you might see oil cans. That's a Fairbanks scale. All three buildings have a set of Fairbanks scales.

WILLIAMS: Now you have one of these where we were sitting before so that's what it is. So it's a . . . whatever's sitting on it . . .

BRADY: Yeah, when it's working. Somebody stole the guts, which are all the weights, the bell weights. This would be floating, it's stationary now, it's not floating. If we lifted up with the hook right there we would lift me off the floor so this would float. When you stood on it it would set your weight right here. These bagging machines, Delmon Bragg worked here as a kid and he said that they could do a fifty-pound bag within a half ounce. You stand on this and you set this, this is a floating—this floats up and down, and you put an empty, and it has a spring right here so when you put your bag on like that and as it gets heavier it pushes down and when it's full it's within half an ounce of fifty pounds. We had Jamie O'Neal did a video out here and we put corn in upstairs and she filled her little bag up.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

BRADY: Want to go up?

WILLIAMS: Yes. [walk up step to second floor]

BRADY: Every bit of this up here is machinery for cleaning. Wheat would fall through it and then the chaff and all the waste blows out the back. This is a supply of elevator . . .

WILLIAMS: Oh, yeah, little cups and…

BRADY: Cups and belts. These are augers. They had to move grain from once place to the other. They'd do it with an auger. All these are hand carved. That's the granary building where we started, where we were sitting down. There's an auger system, there's a trough in the back of that building and you would fill it with wheat and it would go through an auger down into the first floor here and start up if you wanted to bypass that first hopper. So you could go, on rainy days, you could go right out of the mill, right out of the granary building over into this building.

WILLIAMS: So they would use that for storage before the . . .?

BRADY: Storage before and after milling.

WILLIAMS: Would they—were they buying other people's wheat and then selling the flour or were they just doing this as a service?

BRADY: It was like a bank. Nobody really had any money, so they kind of bartered. Farmers would bring in a bushel of wheat and the mill kept 25 percent of it to sell how they chose. And then they would also keep your, on the third floor of this building was like a depository were you had 100 pounds of flour, you could keep it here and get it ten pounds at a time. They had

some control over pests here, lots of cats. You know, if you had grain products and flour, they knew how to protect it from vermin better here so you just stopped here and picked up whatever.

BROWN: So they stored it upstairs.

BRADY: On the third floor they stored it.

BROWN: How much weight could a building like this hold?

BRADY: A hell of a lot. More than you would get by with OSHA today, I'm sure.

WILLIAMS: So to get it back up there. Were there outside steps?

BRADY: People would just go up the steps and go get it. If you wanted ten pounds . . . Is that correct?

RUST: Yes, and also, if you brought in a bushel of corn or something, you didn't necessarily have to wait your turn. They might have some all done.

BRADY: Already done.

RUST: And you would go back—

WILLIAMS: Just take what—

RUST: And you would just . . . It might not be *your* particular corn that you took.

BRADY: But they would keep . . . they would store it here for you and you would come get it as you needed it. That's what the front window downstairs is for. Women wouldn't come in here. It was just a bunch of men and this place has a history of rough men. So they put in that window because women would not come into the mill. So they put in that sliding window on the front so people could come get their . . . the wives could come get their meal without coming inside the mill.

WILLIAMS: What are these things with the holes over here? There's boards with the holes.

BRADY: This is a sifting machine. This metal bell bolted to the floor right here.

WILLIAMS: Uh-huh. Okay.

BRADY: And then on top of that is another piece of metal that's outside. And on top of that are all of these screens. These are sifters and they have silk screens. The top ones, the screen holes are large and then they, as it gets closer to the bottom, they get finer and finer. That's the way you sort your flour from finest to most coarse, and this bell thing is kind of an apparatus that shakes. And it would shake this entire building. And that's what sifts that flour down into the grades that the miller was wanting to achieve.

WILLIAMS: And they'd pull the, is it like a tray? They'd pull the tray or . . .?

BRADY: Well, there would be something like this, and those have lips on them.

WILLIAMS: Okay.

BRADY: And they would fall down into. The fine would, what you wanted you would divert into whatever kind of trough you wanted. These are for finished flour. These are, the bottoms of these are downstairs, the conical bottom comes out and this is where flour, ready-to-go flour, ready to go to bagging machine flour were in these two tanks. And this is another cleaning system that is cleaner up there. I think this is for grits and cornmeal. Because this is a grit clean right here and there is another cleaner right here, and there's more storage that's here for, you know when it's, when it goes through the, this is a larger version of that fanning mill that blows everything outside, and when it's clean the wheat berry would fall in here and up this tube and out the other until it gets to where it needs to go.

WILLIAMS: I didn't imagine it moving around quite so much.

BRADY: Oh, my gosh.

WILLIAMS: Up and down and around.

BRADY: It moves up and down and around. And these are clutches. This is a clutch that engage or disengage this set of shafts.

WILLIAMS: Yeah.

BRADY: I love these oil cups, these drip pans. They had to get up there everyday and oil those shafts so it wouldn't get on the floor they had those cool little oil cups. And when it's, have y'all been to Falls Mill? Ever been to Falls Mill? It's between Fayetteville and Winchester maybe, but it's operational. Belongs to a guy named Lovett and his wife Jane. And it is so quiet. It's amazing. All the machinery is going but it's just quiet, quiet, quiet. And it's beautiful. They've got a thirty-six-foot water wheel.

WILLIAMS: Here's a couple of the insulators you don't see.

BRADY: Those are original insulators, those white ones. And then my conduit goes right through the middle of them. You know codes won't let you do insulators anymore.

WILLIAMS: But if they, if they didn't have any electric light in here it'd be pretty dark on the [unintelligible] days.

BRADY: Yep, there wasn't much light.

WILLIAMS: I guess you didn't need a whole lot if everything was working right.

BRADY: Yeah. This is, this is, the machine that sits here, was the death of many, many, many mills. When you bleach flour, I mean when you grind flour it's the color of wheat seed, kind of tan brown. But women decided they wanted white flour, because it's prettier in a cake, so they started bleaching. This machine makes an electric arc that bleaches flour from natural to white as the grains of flour fall through and because when you were just going crazy milling in here it would be full of dust, wheat dust, which is very explosive and that thing would arc and blow the mill up and burn it down. Many, many, many mills are gone because of that piece of equipment right there. But they had to have because women wouldn't buy brown flour. They wanted white flour. [walking up steps to third floor] Dang, I need to get up here and sweep.

RUST: Well, that will have to be you, Tomm. Two floors is my limit.

BROWN: You don't come up any higher?

BRADY: Well, come on! We've got the fourth yet!

RUST: [from below] No.

BRADY: This is the third, and this is a reel. It's another piece of cleaning equipment that falls down into the shaker that I was talking about downstairs. And all these plugs are for arms that come out and send it down to that sifter.

WLLIAMS: So this is from Moline, Illinois?

BRADY: This is from Moline, Illinois, and this is Bernard and Leas, as is this one, Bernard and Leas [Mfg. Co.].

WILLIAMS: Centrifugal reel.

BRADY: And this is . . . I don't know what that is. For cleaning.

WILLIAMS: Now, the sign out there says it was King of the Patents?

BRADY: King of Patents flour was their brand name and Mary Russell at the market here has one of those bags framed, the only one I've ever seen, a cloth fifty-pound bag of flour, King of Patents with this guy's, like a crested warrior or something on the top of it.

WILLIAMS: Does anyone know the origins of that?

BRADY: I don't. Here's how those cups work, and this is moving very quickly and it just throws it right down into this chute and this chute on its way. The elevators on the first floor we looked at with the cups, they go up here and this is the reason that these buildings are so high is because they need

enough gravity to speed up that wheel on its journey back down through all the cleaning machines. In the ’60s or ’70s they put in this galvanized thing with the blower to bypass the cups and blow it all up here. And I’m going to take all that out. I like the cups better. Pretty good view out the window [looking west over the river]. You can kind of see how high up we are. It’s a long way to be hanging outside with a paint brush, I promise you.

BROWN: Absolutely. Absolutely.

BRADY: And we’ve got another twenty feet up.

BROWN: That’s a long way.

BRADY: It’s a long way, I can tell you. I’ve been out there for hours and hours and days and months on end.

WILLIAMS: Sorry [to Brown].

BRADY: As this mill got bigger—like these are old oil, Esso oil cans that are original to whenever they needed to patch a hole there—as these mills needed to be more and more efficient they added, and I don’t know what year—early on, they added this fourth floor, so they could get even higher so it’d have more gravity, so it’s got a fourth floor. And when I got it, when I bought it you had to crawl out there on a board and I kind of cat-walked it on both sides because I like it open and you don’t want a lot of people standing up there anyway because the construction, it wasn’t designed for a fourth floor. They added that on later, so I just kind of half-floored it because I don’t want too many people up there. It loves wasps and dirt daubers. When I got it level and it was time to clean, and I brought a pressure washer here and started on the fourth floor. I had five inches of mud on the bottom floor when I finished from the dirt dauber nests, just dirt dauber nests, and see I had them all cleaned out and they are starting to come back, I see one on the floor right there. Here’s stairs that go to the fourth.

WILLIAMS: It’s just the tops of that machinery basically.

BRADY: Yeah.

WILLIAMS: It wouldn’t have been much reason to come up here unless something was broken, or to oil it. [climbing steps to fourth floor]

BRADY: Well, they had to oil this shaft, so they would come out here and crawl out on these boards, and the PARQ people crawled out on these boards to put windows, to put plastic on these windows.

WILLIAMS: That’s some dirt daubers that you’ve got there.

BRADY: I'm telling you.

WILLIAMS: Those are big ones.

BROWN: What are these things? I don't understand.

WILLIAMS: Wasps that build—

BRADY: You don't know what a dirt dauber is? This is a wasp, and this is his house, and they store their feed in here. Where are you from?

BROWN: Boston.

BRADY: Okay, no dirt daubers? These are larvae. They build this mud house like a wasps nest, only it's made out of mud, and great fishing bait. This is a larva of a dirt dauber.

WILLIAMS: They just stick under eaves.

BRADY: And there are other cavities in here that are full of the food for this. Like we'll find like dead spiders and other dead things like that's a spider. I pulled his little legs off. But that's a spider that the mother dirt dauber killed and put in here so this larva can eat and grow into another. But you don't want these because look, I have a big pile of dirt.

BROWN: Where does the material come from?

BRADY: It's just mud. River bank.

BROWN: So they bring it in?

BRADY: Oh, yeah. They suck it up off of riverbanks.

BROWN: And then they just set it up on the floor?

BRADY: No, usually up high, under like any little . . . Like when I bought it, you can probably see part of it, like this whole thing would be a dirt dauber, side-by-side dirt dauber nests.

WILLIAMS: That looks like an adult up there.

BRADY: What?

WILLIAMS: Like an adult that's dead.

BRADY: No, that's a red wasp building a new nest.

WILLIAMS: Oh, is it?

BROWN: That's alive?

BRADY: Yes. They love.

WILLIAMS: He's not moving very fast. Must be the cold.

BROWN: How'd you know there was nothing alive in here that would sting you?

BRADY: Oh, dirt daubers don't sting you.

BROWN: They don't sting you?

BRADY: Even if they're alive they don't sting you. That is a red wasp and he will sting you and you'll have a huge welt, and if you're like me you'll holler, "It hurts!" But it's so hot in here in the summer that they love it in here. I have to be careful. I'm going to put a vent, a draw fan on that end. There's already a hole there for a piece of equipment, but I'm going to put a draw fan so it'll ventilate air from the bottom and keep heat out of here. As best you can. And this is the fourth floor of the mill.

WILLIAMS: That's great. I have four minutes left on this tape, so is there anything critical that we've missed?

BRADY: About the mill? I dunno, probably forty more minutes or forty more years.

WILLIAMS: [as they begin to descend stairs] I'll just keep it running.

BRADY: Well, Matthew at least you learned about dirt daubers.

BROWN: Well, that's something.

WILLIAMS: I can see how that would be a problem, I can see . . .

BRADY: Oh, it's a huge problem. But you know when I'm in here, I haven't, I've been working on, I've rebuilt this little cabin and that's kept me busy for the last little bit so I haven't been in here much. And the more activity that goes on in here, the less the wasps will want to be in here.

WILLIAMS: So what was, I'm sorry.

BRADY: Go ahead.

WILLIAMS: What was the cabin for? Somebody lived here?

BRADY: I suppose. It was built I think the same time as the mill because the structure under the floor and the lumber is all the same. Do you have any history on that old cabin, Miss Evans's cabin?

RUST: No.

BRADY: It's been on the property, I would assume, since the mill.

BROWN: That's also made by the wasps?

BRADY: Yea, that's the dirt dauber, and they'll just stick to anything. That's one that's fairly new because it's not closed and the dirt dauber is going up in there and filling that with dead insects to feed the larvae that she will later lay in there. But they're a mess, because they stick like, see that one up there? There's several right in there. But this whole, you remember, I mean this whole, you couldn't even see lumber in here there was, it was just covered in mud. Like I said when I pressure washed it, I had five-and-a-half inches of dirt dauber mud on the first floor.

BROWN: Are they detrimental to the structure of the building?

WILLIAMS: No.

BRADY: No, they're just, you know, critters.

WILLIAMS: They're just annoying and people don't want them flying around.

BRADY: A lot of people . . . they have a separation in their, they have their main, their head and then their body and then a long, maybe a half inch, not any bigger than their leg connects their torso, abdomen I suppose it would be, so they're obviously not a wasp but they look similar so everyone is afraid of them. But dirt daubers do no sting. When we were kids my grandmother was the greatest entertainer, we would tie string, little tiny string, or sewing thread to dirt daubers and have little kites, and they're up there flying around on the end of the little string. And my grandmother would hook them up for us and we had the biggest time. It's like Wii only in the '60s. I do want to show you these flood marks, but they're kind of hard to.

WILLIAMS: Oh, yeah.

BRADY: [opens first floor door on south side, then points at marks on door frame] Okay, in 1948 water got here, and I need to clean all these out. In 18 something or other water got here. They tell me there's a mark in here from 1902 when it was well above the door, but I have yet to find that mark. '73 is here. A guy named Hayes owned it in 1889, and I'm assuming this is somebody Hayes because it's an H.H. there. R.C—who's R.C.R. that would have owned the mill at some point? The Justices, the Hayeses, anyways you can look through, and there's carvings all over the outside of the mill where lovers have climbed out the window and carved their little names and such. This is where the dynamo sat [pointing to yard southwest of the mill building]. A dynamo is what makes electricity out of a turning turbine and it sat right there, and then from this corner sent power, the wire powered all those houses in Readyville.

RUST: Wasn't that house Rat McFerrin's house? **[videotape one ends; begin videotape two]**

WILLIAMS: This is the ice house.

BRADY: This is the ice house. Want to turn the light on?

WILLIAMS: They weren't, they were never cutting ice were they?

BRADY: Actually they did. They made 300-pound blocks of ice, and then they cut that into fifty-pound blocks and there's a pulley left on the front porch from where they cut it, cut the 300-pound blocks into fifty-pound blocks and they delivered it in an old, old truck. I've got a great picture of that truck. It says "Hayes McFerrin Ice Company" on the side of it. And they delivered it to Woodbury and Readyville and Murfreesboro. And through that door will be a kitchen at some point, but it's not yet.

WILLIAMS: What are you doing with the stove?

BRADY: Somebody gave that, and dropped that by here. You know when somebody brings you something and you don't want to say no, but I don't want it.

WILLIAMS: This is your new . . .

BRADY: This is the heat and air that is going to go in there. Next time you're here—heat and cool. And then I'll put another system in here similar to that.

WILLIAMS: And you've got an icebox down there.

BRADY: That icebox, I have a house in Carolina and I was on my way down there oh last year sometime, and this lady had this at a junk store for a hundred dollars, and I said, "I've got to have that." Because this is an ice house, and I thought it needs iceboxes. And it's made by General Motors of all things and it's electric. The motor and stuff is here, and apparently it works. I've never plugged it in. I have to rewire it, but apparently it works. But it cost 100 dollars, and it cost 400 in fuel to go get it. It wasn't a wise decision, but I'm glad to have it. It's a cool icebox. And this is, I'll give you an idea of what this building looked like before the poplar went up. That's kind of what it looks likes: the inside wall is the outside wall.

WILLIAMS: So you have modernized in terms of insulation?

BRADY: Oh, absolutely. You have to. People want to be comfortable, but you know it was, in places, like this is kind of cool looking, this lumber on a slant.

WILLIAMS: Yeah.

BRADY: But in the granary building it's not done that way. It's just the back of the clapboard siding with studs like this. So yeah, I insulated and put up all the poplar. I haven't done the kitchen because this has to be fireproof sheet

rock to meet codes. Compliant. So this is waiting, plus I have plumbing yet to do in here and other things.

WILLIAMS: So this is where your kitchen will be?

BRADY: This is where the kitchen will be at some point, when you loan me the money to buy thousands of dollars of kitchen equipment.

WILLIAMS: Yeah.

BRADY: This is all parts to the mill that they'll be in the mill for a while and then I'll need to work over there, so I'll have to move them in the granary, then we're having a party so I have to move it into here, and I've moved this like 800 times but I hate to throw it out because it's mill equipment and I don't know what it is or how to put it back together. But I hate, you know, so it just moves from one place to the next place to the next place. We talked about this siding a while ago, this, that is original and it's just like quarter inch beam board, and when this was an ice house it would have, instead of the insulation that it has now, it would have cedar saw dust, and so that is what held in the cedar saw dust in the ceiling and the walls. And how they ever got that not to burn from the least little spark, but they did. So I left those two because they were still there and I just kind of poplared around it.

WILLIAMS: I like the smell of the poplar.

BRADY: Lumber. I hadn't, you mentioned the conduit over in the other building. Well, I sprayed that conduit in the mill with brown paint so it wouldn't be as visible with the silver paint. Don't record this. [Recorder is shut off then resumes.] It wasn't my decision. They wouldn' give me—I had no say.

RUST: Did they have any retribution in the wall?

BRADY: I don't know, never heard. They got arrested, they confessed, and that's all I've ever heard. [walking outside behind the building] This looks like a chicken pen, and it might have had a chicken or two in it, in the day, but in the '30s, FDA came out with inspectors, and any time you had this much grain you had immense populations of rats and mice, so all these old mills had cats, lots and lots of cats. But when the FDA inspector would come you could not have cats with your food products, so they would put them all in the chicken pen. And word would travel from one mill to the next that the inspector's on the way, cage the chickens up. So that's really a cat house.

WILLIAMS: So this is the picture you showed of the boards that were . . .

BRADY: Yeah, all the, you can see where it's new. This whole back of this building.

WILLIAMS: And all this wood came from the Amish folks?

BRADY: The poplar didn't, the outside didn't, I didn't know about the Amish at the time or it would have, but this outside came from Winell Lee, which is an American company and six times the price of the Amish. Here I'm going to go around and let us in. [recorder is paused, then resumes as the party stands on the slope behind the ice house] Up in here, but this porch had long been rotted off, and the back end had long rotted away so I just took this center section, this two-story section from here to about that door and pulled it over here with my tractor on a couple of telephone poles and started back. I almost burned it, it was so far gone, but Mary at Russell's Market, said, "Oh, you fixed the mill. You've got to fix Miss Effie's house." Miss Effie was an artist that lived here in the I guess '20s and '30s and she painted naked on the front porch, so all the boys loved to come to the mill and sneak through the bushes and watch Miss Effie paint. But the construction of this is the same as the mill. The same materials, the floor joists underneath are the same, so I'm assuming it's a similar time. There's no records of this house anywhere.

WILLIAMS: It was sitting like this? Just on the pillars?

BRADY: Yep, it was sitting on rocks over here by where that dirt pile is.

WILLIAMS: You said you pulled it?

BRADY: I pulled it with my John Deere tractor on them telephone poles that are right up there. I just made a skid and it was up on rocks then, and I had all those floor jacks from jacking up the mill, so I just lifted it up and moved the rocks and let it down onto those telephone poles. And it took me all day to drag it because the tips of the telephone poles would bury up, and I'd have to stop and jack it up and put something under there and go a little ways more. And I just went from there to here, but it was a long way because this was not, it didn't look like this. This was trees and rocks and unlevel, unlevel. Because I put this here before the dozer came in and flattened this out for me. But this is how people used to live, this is a one room level, it has one little loft bedroom, this is how people, this was all the space you needed. For me it's the perfect size. My house in Bell Buckle is almost 6,000 square feet. I like this, as far as space goes this is way better. Now this is probably not as period as it should be, but it was just a shell, and I had enough poplar. This is kind of mixed up. There's poplar and maple and walnut and bodark and whatever I had is in here.

WILLIAMS: Now what are the plans for this?

BRADY: I don't know. It was here and Mary talked me into fixing it. The weddings that I have coming up all the brides see this and say, "This is where the brides will get dressed and we'll hang out in here," so I got to get some kind of a furniture in here so. But it turned out. It's a good little camping house. But you asked me the hardest part, and it was this crown mold. I will never in my life hang another piece of crown molding. If you've never done that, it is *hard* work. And this back part, it was this way at one time, but all this is new, all this, there is no framing or anything left, I'll cut this out. This is called trash lumber. This is box elder and you know that because of the red veins in it. No carpenters want this because there is too much crack. I love it. I like the red in it like this piece and some of these cabinets, like this is box elder. Very inexpensive. That's box elder. Isn't that cool?

WILLIAMS: There's a big knot in it.

BRADY: But see I like that. A buddy of mine said, "How come you didn't cut these knots out?" Now why would I want to do that? Look at this maple. This is a maple knot, is that not beautiful? Why would you cut that out? But a carpenter, I mean a cabinet builder, cut that stuff out, I like it. [to Rust:] Have you ever climbed in this one? Oh my gosh, it was more dangerous than the fourth floor of the mill. You could fall right through the floor and the ceiling was coming down.

WILLIAMS: Well, what have we missed?

BRADY: We can walk over to the dam if you want.

WILLIAMS: Oh, yes, I do. See the . . .

BRADY: It don't matter. [exit the cabin; recorder shut off; recorder resumes in the parking lot looking at a log fence] This whole area is solid rock, and I needed some fencing to divide off the parking lot. This is buck rail and there's no post holes. It just sits on the frame. This I cut off at my farm in Bell Buckle. That was a two- or three- week project putting in some buck rail fence.

RUST: [unintelligible as group walks down the gravel slope]

BRADY: The rain is coming. I'm running out of big projects though.

RUST: Does that mean that you'll have to go home and do the "honey-do" work?

BRADY: No, that's been [unintelligible word] for three years. I'm in trouble about that.

RUST: I'm gonna get my stuff. Thank y'all. [recorder shut off; recorder resumes as Brady, Williams, and Brown walk across the road]

BRADY: It's an interstate highway, that means it goes south to north, I think to Chicago or something from, but it was the new 70. This community was a lot more thriving when everybody had to come this way. Then they put in the new 70 and bypass—somebody came down here. [opening a chain link gate across the road from the highway to the dam]

WILLIAMS: So this is your, still your property?

BRADY: Yes.

WILLIAMS: You said three something on one side and?

BRADY: Three seven over there and two over here. Now there was, see these foundations right here? There was a blacksmith shop set up. This is the footing for a foundation and it spanned the mill race over to that rock wall over there and he had his own waterwheel so he did his little blacksmithing machine work right here. That I need to rebuild as well. My next big project. Until I get water, why bother?

WILLIAMS: When did that go away? See that was completely over the water.

BRADY: Yeah, and the wheel would have been kind of on the back or the front of, and so he used the power of the water to do all of his forging.

WILLIAMS: Was the power to blow, or what do blacksmiths need?

BRADY: Oh, they need to blow.

WILLIAMS: So they don't have to do the hand blowing, but they're—

BRADY: And any kind of bending machinery. I mean they had all kind of things. You know what? A fun trip for y'all one day, on the weekends with your girlfriends or wives or what have you, is to go up to Falls Mill, it's operational. They have done, over time, they have. That's a garder snake. They've done all kind of. Well bite me why don't you? That's a little garder snake.

WILLIAMS: He wants to hold it.

BROWN: I certainly don't. [laughing] You just snatched that right off the ground.

BRADY: Yeah. Don't video this. This is topsoil to cover the septic tank.

WILLIAMS: So where did the, is that what the dirt, the septic tank where the dirt is scraped off under there?

BRADY: That's the fill lines out in there. But underneath all that farm machinery, there are four swimming-pool size septic tanks. And all that farm

equipment is there so nobody drives on top and falls into my septic system.

WILLIAMS: And then you have a leech field?

BRADY: My leech field is out on this side of that big huge dirt area, every inch of that big huge dirt area.

WILLIAMS: You really are set then. Lots of . . .

BRADY: Yeah, lots of poop in there, it really made me mad because it's so overkill for what I need, so overkill.

WILLIAMS: Is that the county or—

BRADY: The state.

WILLIAMS: The state because your [unintelligible phrase].

BRADY: They don't want restaurants on septic systems. They want them in town on a sewage system, so it's just a . . .

WILLIAMS: So nobody here is on a sewer, in Readyville?

BRADY: No. All this is septic tank, and they're not, like the local guys, they aren't familiar with anything commercial. So if they're not familiar, they'll say, "You got to hire an engineer to tell us what to do." Makes it all real expensive. [period of walking to dam]

WILLIAMS: Now it seems like this would be one of those shovel-ready projects, that the state could just jump right on it.

BRADY: Yeah, I know. It is putting shovels in the ground, workmen, men working right now. Okay, that right there is the end of the dam. That's always been the end of the dam. And from the end of the dam now to the hayfield, which is washing out right there, all that's got to be put back and then the water will come over like it should. I mean, how easy does that look? Backfill with huge, huge shot rock and go on. But no. These rocks are cool, which is spillway and all those rocks have washed down. This is where the bathing beauties of the day would sit and let the water run over them. [climbing onto the dam] Sometime in the '20s they put this wall up to raise the dam a little bit because they wanted more flow so they could grind more wheat. And this would have been the mill pond right here where we're standing, would have been all that. And then see that pile of rock right there? Stacked rock? [pointing upriver] That's the opening to the mouth of the mill race that goes back underneath the dam. So when the water rises here it sends a portion of the water through the mill race and all the rest of it goes over the top of the dam.

WILLIAMS: And they just kind of bolted this concrete—

BRADY: They bolted it—there's a form inside this concrete I'm sure—a metal form, and they just bolted it right to these rocks. These rocks are at an angle this way, and that's so when the river is pushing against them it pushes them down and not forward. Which is kind of a neat engineering, I wouldn't have thought to do that, but then I don't think I would have taken on laying rocks this size.

WILLIAMS: Not in 1812.

BRADY: All slate [?] [wind blowing strongly, river water becomes audible at end of dam] See that buttress wall right there? And it's kind of all covered in all that debris. But this was the end of the dam, and the wall went right here, so right there it would have been touching that bank.

WILLIAMS: So this needs to be rebuilt?

BRADY: Yeah, we need to just close this gap back. What we really need to do is backfill from here all the way around to there, just fill this back in and then like re-concrete the face of this wall right here, and then water will have no choice but to go right over. So TDEC says the river's taking a new course now, it's not supposed to be there. So that's the thinking. But it can't be healthy for the river system to have that much silt going down the creek.

WILLIAMS: But who owns this? What do these people . . .?

BRADY: Well, I used to own it. I don't know how that works now legally, because I own both sides of the river. Mill owners are the only people who own the rights all the way across the river. Most property lines stop in the center of the river so, but my warranty deed says that I own both sides of the river so I can maintain my dam. So I don't know if I own that, [unintelligible word] on that. That's the corners. [looking through the trees to a brick house on the far bank of the river] That was called Ready's, did he paint that? That looks recently painted red from this end. It is. It's supposed to be like, that's new, that's the first time I've seen it. But it's a red brick, slave-built brick. It was built in 1829. That was the Union soldiers' headquarters and the Union soldiers' hospital in the Civil War. Quite a historic place and Jim and Jimay, I mean Jim and Minnie Jimay, live there. They bought it about the same time that I bought the mill. They're great neighbors.

WILLIAMS: So are there any nineteenth-century laws about the rights of mill owners that would preempt . . .?

BRADY: You know, I paid my lawyer a thousand dollars to research that, and his assistant came back with a thousand dollars, I mean a thousand pages of

documents that says, yeah, my warranty deed says that I have the right to maintain this dam, which I was going for, but he said, "You know, it says that, but you'd have to have more money than you have to fight that." Because all these laws have, I mean I'm grandfathered in right down to the nitty-gritty, but it's going to cost a lot of money to say that.

WILLIAMS: Now where's this water on the other side coming from? [below the dam but separated from the main channel of the river]

BRADY: Oh, over here there's a plug. We'll walk down—just go, cut down right there across the gravel. There's a two-by-two plug down on this end, and they put that there because as the river comes down here every few months you need to open this plug up to wash out all this river gravel because it's just filling up the mill pond.

WILLIAMS: Oh, okay.

BRADY: So, you pull the door, which is on the other side. It's not currently there. I've got to build a new one. But then all of this gravel washes out through this hole.

WILLIAMS: So because it hasn't been doing that it's built up.

BRADY: Yeah, it was built up a whole lot more than this. I've taken a tremendous amount of this gravel out, right here to use at the mill. Which is legal.

WILLIAMS: People sell this stuff.

BRADY: Well it's not legal to sell anymore, but as long as I use it on my property it's mine. [video closeup of the plug opening through to the other side] And this place is full of geodes. Do y'all have kids?

BROWN: No.

BRADY: No kids, well kids love geodes, like if we break that it's full of crystals. You know what a geode is. They are like everywhere. We had a bunch of, a van load of old ladies yesterday here for a tour and there was a guy from Franklin and he found a dozen or so, and they were so excited. They enjoyed that more than the mill. That looks like a bone, doesn't it?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, it does, a cow hip or something.

BRADY: I tell you, if it's that solid rock, it's not a cow. But it might be—

WILLIAMS: Dinosaur vertebrae.

BRADY: A T-Rex bone. That's the inside of a geode we broke yesterday. They're not purple and gorgeous like they are in rock shops in Aspen.

WILLIAMS: So Stratton Bone is the local representative?

BRADY: Uh-huh.

WILLIAMS: And the senator?

BRADY: Jim Tracy is a guy that I know and I guess he's a . . .

WILLIAMS: Okay, I saw him yesterday.

BRADY: Jim?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, I was up at the capitol.

BRADY: Yeah, because he's been out here and is very familiar. But you know nobody, everybody just wants to sit on the fence. I need somebody kicking and screaming down there saying, "Fix this now. Infrastructure money now," and I hear Jim Stubblefield is in charge of the infrastructure money, but it's been advised to me not to call him and bother him about my project, and I'm thinking what kind of advice is that?

WILLIAMS: It seems like the economical development people are, you know those might try to move things along. Just if there's a Cannon County, like there is in Rutherford County, the industrial and economic [board].

BRADY: Yeah, to be 100 percent truthful, I'm just tired, I'm tired of it. Why can't we just do it?

WILLIAMS: So what would happen if you just came, if you just did it?

BRADY: Oh, they would fine me out the wazoo, and blow up my work probably. There's a guy in Bedford County that had a little, it's not even a stream. I don't see how the state even considers it a stream. It's a wet weather ditch. And he's putting in his driveway and he's doing this massive landscape, I mean massive landscape. He was making all of these ponds that that creek went through, and he didn't have the right permits and it cost him 200,000 dollars. [walking back to the mill] This is a pretty little lane in the springtime, when all these trees come out.

WILLIAMS: So this yellow house up ahead of us, is that on the original property?

BRADY: It was.

WILLIAMS: It got carved out.

BRADY: At some time it's a little postage-stamp carve out now. I own on both sides of it, and their backyard is just a patch, and as soon as I bought the mill of course they called me and wanted to sell me, they wanted 70,000 dollars for that little house. I didn't pay 70,000 dollars for six acres and

everything else I got. So I told them, "I think I'll pass." And the more work I do on the mill, the higher the price gets. [recorder shut off and resumes on the mill side of the highway] From the reaction with the ammonia to make the ice, every little girl told me their favorite thing to do was to come over here and bathe in the ice-house water. [Brady greets someone waiting in the driveway; recorder shut off then resumes] Yesterday morning I thought, I gotta quit. Five dollars and nine cents.

WILLIAMS: [Looking at the millstones supporting the stairs into the granary] So is this your decorative touch or was it like this?

BRADY: No, this was like this in history. In the old paintings that you see and the old drawings of the mill will have them. But when I got here this was the only one left [the largest underneath the top of the stairs]. These two were light enough to steal. They were gone, so I put these grindstones, I have millstones this size, which are much more valuable than a grindstone, but I put those there because nobody is here all the time yet. This in Atlanta that's about six grand, so people stole the ones that they could get out of here, so I'm not willing to put a couple grand there and 1500 there in that little hole for somebody to come get until there's people here more frequently.

WILLIAMS: Can't you electrify them somehow?

BRADY: Yeah, we need to. [looking under the granary building at the foundation sitting on stone pillars] You know, I'm just continuing the theme. They used what they had. That's kind of what I'm doing.

WILLIAMS: This was a little, just a limestone shelf that they built on.

BRADY: Come on this end.

WILLIAMS: Used the natural formation.

BRADY: This is the fire truck, guys. There's a ghost kid that's here. Because if we pick that up and move that somewhere, in a day or so it'll be right there, and I am not kidding you. It's, and I'm not a firm believer in ghosts or anything, but that fire truck stays. There's a, like they built it right into the corner. There's a huge limestone bluff in the back and it goes up almost to the roof line. You could walk back there and just walk right up on the roof, cut right into the hillside.

WILLIAMS: Well, we're back where we started.

BRADY: And it continues, this rock wall continues along, see how big it is down along the river aways? It's really, really, really pretty out here. It's a real good place. Like I said, I fell in love with it the first day I was here.

END OF INTERVIEW