

**WALTER HOLCOMB (born 1928 or 1929):  
An interview by Skip Vaughn**

Walter Holcomb was interviewed 1980. The interview was printed in the *Redstone Rocket*. The Holcomb family lived in the Pond Beat community. Holcomb discusses the family farm, hunting, going to school, and being first “displaced” by TVA in 1937 and then being “thrown off” their land by the Army in the fall of 1941.

The text of the article written is presented verbatim below.

**Walter Holcomb. Standing beside missile test equipment that is located where his family lived before the Army took possession of the land in 1941. Source: *The Redstone Rocket*, July 2, 1980.**



**“Water plant worker lived on farm here,” *The Redstone Rocket*, July 2, 1980.**

Walter Holcomb was 12 years old when the Army came. For him it was a good time. The surveyors, construction workers and their big machines were quite a sight for a country boy whose family got around in a horse-drawn wagon.

The coming of the Army also gave him a chance to pick up a little spending money by selling coffee to the men building the big water treatment plant on the river bank about a quarter of a mile from the family farm.

Today, Holcomb works at that water treatment plant. He can step outside and almost see his old home place, which is

now inside Test Area 1 on the northeast corner.

Back then the community was called Pond Beat, a name that designated a voting district.

Holcomb’s father, William Holcomb, had 80 acres and with a wife and six kids raised milk and beef cows, pigs, and cotton, corn and other cash crops.

They lived in a two-story log house heated by four fireplaces.

He remembers that his parents “weren’t happy, but they took it real well” when the Army made them move. It was the