

Willie and Erlene Bragg/TC1992.0008
Mad River Valley Project/VFC1991.0004

JB Jane Beck
WB Willie Bragg
EB Erlene Bragg
Place Fayston, VT
Date 01/31/1992

JB Ask you your names and we can say where we are just to make sure that I can, I get you both. Why don't I, I'll start with you and maybe I'll have to, move the, microphone a little bit.

WB Can you pick it up from here?

JB Yup.

WB Yeah.

JB Okay. [.24] So. Let's have.

WB I'm Willis Bragg and I'm here on the Fayston Bragg farm in Fayston, Vermont.

EB And I'm Erlene Bragg, and we've been here for nearly fifty years. No, nearly thirty, thirty-five years I guess. [.44]

JB Well let's, let's start with the farm itself, it's called the?

WB The farm itself.

JB Well it's called the Bragg farm, it's called the Bragg

farm, so I figure it had to be.

WB Well okay.

JB Your family.

WB Actually the Braggs, my great grandfather came to Fayston, in 1849. Not on the farm here, to begin with, he came about a half a mile away, there was another farm. But, soon after that, he came here, to this farm.

EB And it stayed in the family until about 1919. And then it went out of the family until we bought it back, in 1950.

JB Hum.

WB We actually, the house had burned, it was the second, second house that burned here, and it would of been, I think the ninth, I 1928 when the house burned and when we came here, we started building the house in 1950, there were poplar trees, a foot through growing up out of the cellar hole.

JB Gosh! [1.48]

WB But, we didn't actually come here, to live until 1952, when we started the house, and it was sort of a, a piece meal, type of thing, we cut the logs and did the

things all ourselves, to build when we got here.

EB It was a, a little different than building now, too, because we didn't have power, every thing was done with a hand saw, and it was, a very slow process. But the wood paneling and most of the materials, came off the farm. [2.20]

WB But I spoke earlier, that we had, we were sort of, we felt like kind of like pioneers, I had never farmed, and Erlene and I met at, in high school, we were married and lived in Waitsfield, to begin with and a.

JB You both grew up here though?

EB No I grew up in the Montpelier area.

WB But she came to, to Waitsfield in 1939 and, I graduated in 40 and she graduated in 41 and we were married in 42. And I worked in a general store in Waitsfield, that was my, business then, and we rented a, a apartment in Waitsfield, and paid ten dollars a month rent. And we lived there a year or two and the place was sold, and the guy that bought it raised the rent to eleven dollars and we thought that was too much. We didn't think we should have to pay eleven dollars a month rent, so we looked around, and at that

time there were a lot of places in the valley that could be bought, that were empty. The red house is down in Waitsfield in the Irasville section and next to the Howard Bank was where I was born. [3.37] My folks had sold it, moved to Waitsfield down in the center of Waitsfield, my father worked in the general store. And when Erlene and I came along, we were married, that place was empty. And we said here's the chance to buy a house. And we did, we bought it, and paid a thousand dollars for it. That went on all right, I still worked in the store, and every thing.

JB Now which store was it, was it?

WB This is where the Valley Paint is, there was a, typical country.

EB General store.

WB General store. We sold every thing from meat to groceries, and dry goods, gasoline, every thing that anybody would want. There were two stores in Waitsfield, at this time, there had been more but when I was working there there were two. [4.23] We moved into the one, in the Irasville section, I still worked there and the man that owned it, sold it. And, I

stayed working for this man, but we did a lot of things, I drove a bull dozer, and I run a chain saw, and I run a dump truck, and did all these things, but I never farmed. He also owned the Bragg farm here. And, Erlene and I like all young people, I had dealt with farmers.

JB Was this Carl Long?

WB Carl Long. Yes, this was Carl. I, okay, and a, I had dealt with the farmers and they seemed to be the people that, that had the new car and they had a freezer locker and boy this was just great. And we thought you know.

EB Farmers had it easy.

WB Farmers had.

EB And they got rich.

WB And they got rich. If we could only farm, we would have it made. [5.15] And there wasn't a house there, and of course like young people, they always want to build a house. Say this is it, if we could buy that farm, and we build a house and we would be, rich and live happily ever after. Ha! Well I still work for Carl, the same, stayed working for Carl, until about

1950, up 49 I guess it was, we decided you know we should be doing something if we're gonna, I'm not just gonna always do this, we should be doing something and making a move so, we talked to Carl and decided I said well you know we'd like to buy the farm. And he said well we'll a, try it and see but he said first you have to have a house. So we bought an acre, that included this cellar hole, and water rights so that we were gonna build a house even if we didn't farm. And I cut the logs over on Waitsfield common, and had, had the logs sawed into lumber and in 1950 we started building the house. And I was still working out and working up here, and then about, the night of fall 52, it was livable, we thought well, this is it, we had a chance to sell the place in Irasville, and we did, we sold it to Arthur Williams and his brother and thought we made a killing. [6.34] We really cleaned up big, so we came up here, we bought the acre, we came up here, and a, there was nothing, for equipment except the, a horse drawn manure spreader. Absolutely nothing, nobody had farmer here for 25 years, this was just a bare farm, there was no house, but we said this is

where we're gonna be. We built the house and we came up here that fall, September. We had two boys, at that time the younger boy was six and the older boy was like nine, and when we were building, they electricity wasn't here, it came to, a half a mile about on each side. But Green Mountain Power while we were building, did agree we had to pay a.

EB We paid for the line, and then they rebated on our bill for a few years.

WB Until we got our money back.

EB Was paid for.

WB But before we moved up here, we actually did have electricity, but when we started building, we didn't know whether we were gonna have it, cause it was, it was soon after World War II, and they weren't too anxious to extend the lines. [7.40] We came up here, and I don't know whether I should get into the foolishness of a, of a, but anyway we started in farming, we had, we got some young stock and we started farming. And.

EB Well I think it's kind of interesting the way you started farming.

JB Yeah. Yeah, I'm interested in it, absolutely.

WB I didn't know if we should get into it.

JB Absolutely.

EB I mean, it does make you sound kind of foolish, but
_____.

JB Oh!

EB If you want to get, well, Carl Long was a, a person that owned other property and he, bought and sold cattle and things, so that was sort of part of his business, he bought some, young stock, some heifers, that had been bread, and put them downstairs in the basement over here in the barn and when we came up here they were here so I would just pitch the hay to them and they had a water troth and that was all there was to it. [8.35] But we knew sooner or later we were gonna have to do something, and in January one of them freshened, had a calf, okay I had a cow and a calf and upstairs in the barn, I had started to, put stanchions in, re-build the barn upstairs, the stable part because it hadn't been used for long but, I took and measured off a little area and made a pen and put the cow and the calf in there. The cow, the calf, I feed

the cow and everything was fine, I went off to work, and I come back and did the same thing, and then I had two. And then I had three, and then I had four, and I kept jumping over each one to feed each one and I had a cow and a calf, and a cow, and that went on until.

EB You had seven I think.

WB I had nine.

EB Nine, oh, okay.

WB I had nine up there and we said finally you know this is foolish, we're not doing anything and I was ready to, to milk, and so one Sunday, _____, a fellow in Montpelier that ran a market came out here and I sold all of, what they call bob calves, these smaller calves.

EB Of yours.

WB To him. [9.41] Monday, he came and picked up the nine calves and when I came home from work Monday night, I had nine cows, young heifers, that had never been milked by a milking machine, and I had never run one. Ha! Ha! But I was ready. Oh, that was a real circus. I think I got a, like a hundred and thirty pounds of milk the first, the first milking, the first day it

was. And that was back when you had cans. We had a, we had bought a milk cooler, we were ready. And we took the cans and we had it taken down to that Route 100, and they were picked up and taken to Waterbury. And we started that was the way, we started farming.

EB And you might say that was on the job training, because we, no one was greener.

WB We had no idea what we were getting into. [10.30] But we didn't care we were gonna, but what, why I say we felt like pioneers, starting in with nothing but, we stopped farming in 1973. And by the time we got through we had, four tractors and all of the equipment, we had a, a silo unloader, we had a bulk tank, we had gone to the bulk tank, we had a gutter cleaner, every thing that, made farming easier.

EB At that time. Yeah.

WB At that time, we had every thing that every body else had. [11.02] When you starting in we, we swapped work, we rented, we borrowed, we you know all the things and then each year you would buy a piece of equipment until we finally got the.

EB We, we stayed in farming, through the years the boys

were in college. And each summer they would come home to help and we'd pay their way through college. And it worked out fine, until the younger one was finally done college then he had to go to work and it was just the two of us, with, I don't know 75 or 80 head of cattle and just too much to do. And, no one that you could hire, that was trained so. That really and then he was appointed an assistant judge in Montpelier.

[11.48]

WB Yeah when.

EB So we went out of farming.

WB When they finally decided they didn't want to farm, and they'd gone off to, on their own, we worked about a year, doing this alone and our younger son had got involved in the, Washington County Sheriff's department, part time that was, and I don't know how familiar you are with the assistance, the side judge system in the superior court in Vermont.

JB Just a little. [12.10]

WB Well it's a, it's a system that Vermont is the only state that still has it, where lay people are elected

to sit with the superior judge in superior court. Two from each county. One of our assistant judges, in Washington county died, well, I got a little ahead of my story, the reason that, Reginald there, the younger son got into it because the two assistant judges, handled the money, they kind of supported the sheriff's department that was part of, the assistant judge's job, they, they oversaw the sheriff and what his needs were. And, because of that he knew that one of them had died. He come over there one day and he says why don't you apply. [12.54] It was a part time job. And, we thought about it awhile and I said well, and I did. I applied and then, Governor Dean Davis appointed me. To fill out this, the assistant judges term. And I went out, we did our chores and, it was just part time job, we started, we had a term in September and then another one in March, well we started in September, and after awhile, it was, you know one or two days a week or part time, but then it came the March term, in 50, in 53, it begun to get busier. I was, away more. Leave towards morning and go off early and be here with all of the stuff here, and

then it came to the middle of the summer, we started to hay, and I was busier out there, when I should of been here, haying and she was trying to, do whatever had to be done there, so one night I come home, I said look, we got to do one thing or the other, either I got to quit, out there and come back here and tend to the farm the way I should, or maybe, if we could get along with the way we were, maybe we could sell the herd keep the machinery so if it didn't work out, we could just go out and buy a, a herd again and be back in it. [14.04] And that's what we did. And then from then on, it was busier, and I was one of the judges out there for almost thirteen years. When I retired in 1985, and since then I haven't anything.

EB Ha! Ha! Well you've been quite busy. Now I'm not too sure how much of our personal life she wants here, but.

JB No well, no it's interesting, the.

WB Well that is why, why I say we started in knowing nothing about farming, coming up here and building this farm up from, from scratch, and we farmed for a period of twenty years. We got in with the artificial

breeding so we had every generation of calves and cows were better, we built our herd on, so it was comparable and maybe as good as any in the valley.

JB Do you have holsteins, or?

WB We had holsteins. When we first started we had almost every breed there was, but we felt the holstein seemed to one that we wanted to go with and we had holsteins. And then from there to assistant judge was a little bit.

EB A little different, or another learning situation.

WB But one thing I do want to say about the assistant judge system, is there's a place in the superior court system for lay people, but you've got to know your place. [15.18] That, I think sometimes, and I think that was born out and some of the things that's gone wrong, they try to.

EB They get.

WB Because they're two of them they think that they can over rule the superior judge, and you don't have to have a law of degree to listen to a divorce case and, and take the facts and the information you hear and come up to a reasonable, decision as to who should

have custody of the children, how much support payment, you know things like that. But when it comes to the law, you aren't about to tell the superior judge, you know what the law is. Well I think some of them, _____ they could and that's kind of.

EB That's bad.

WB Tarnish the system a little bit, but they, if they do it right, I think there's a place for lay people. Okay, having said that.

JB One thing I wanted to back up a bit because you said this house burned, did it burn when it was in your family? Or? [16.23]

WB You probably heard, people talk about Emily.

JB Yes.

WB So you know really who she was.

JB Well tell me again.

WB Okay, she, she, my great grandmother, raised Emily, Emily is.

EB It was her granddaughter. Hanna Bixby Bragg lived here and she was the great grandmother, and her daughter Emily died when young Emily was born, or eight days after of scarlet fever. So she took the baby and

brought her up here on the farm with.

WB So Emily _____ actually lived here, a good part of her younger life, she lived here when the first house burned. [17.04] And apparently they built it right up, immediately and she told about it afterwards. That there lumber wasn't dry and as it did dry out, it was a terribly cold house. The second house. But it was a large three story building, we have pictures of the, I'm sure it's the second one, then as it went out of the family before it burned the second time, because it was 1928, when it burned the second time. And then, every body that was interested, were not interested anymore because it was a farm without a house. And that's the way it was until we.

EB The farm was, was bought by a lumber company and then so Mr. Long and they pretty much lumbered off the sugar trees and different.

JB So you didn't sugar?

EB No. [17.52] We didn't.

WB Didn't what?

JB You didn't sugar? When you?

WB No. No. It would of been, it was owned by Ward Lumber

Company when they were in business in Moretown and they cut, they had two sugar places they cut. So if you want to get back to, more the Bragg family and the house here, tell her the story about the, the letters.

[18.22]

EB We had a phone call one day, from a lady in Waitsfield that had been wondering through the cemeteries and found, Willis Bragg and she was a Mormon that was doing research into her, some families line and some who it crossed into the Bragg family and she was curious if the same W. C. Bragg, if it was the same family. And she called. And we invited her up. And from there, she had letters not with her but she had seen letters from his great grandmother written to her uncle in Missouri, a little bit before 1865, 1863 or 4. And they spanned well up through until about 19, 1911, or 12.

WB 14 I think was the last. The last ones.

JB How fascinating. [19.06]

EB And, so she said I'll send you a transcript. And she did the transcript, typed over each letter, in the transcript, and sent it to us and they were

fascinating, absolutely fascinating.

JB All on this farm here?

EB All about the farm about when they built the barn,
when they, you know what the props were, what the,
revenue was.

JB How wonderful.

WB Well the woman, actually the woman that this girl was
working for was great, granddaughter of, this woman
who was being written to. These were letters that she
had get.

EB Yeah. Anna wrote to her Uncle Roswell, and it was her
Roswell Grigg's granddaughter that had these letters
that had kept them in the family had them in the attic
and maybe a few of them got destroyed or mice or
whatever, but, a lot of them are there, we had, how
many letters?

WB The first time she came, she told us that she that
this other granddaughter had these original letters,
and she sat down and transposed them and typed them so
that you could read them.

EB Without having to handle them.

WB And she said the, we'll send you copies, then she sent

us the copies. She came back the following year, and she had the original letters in a brown paper bag, she didn't really tell us at first she had them, but then she admitted she had them, that we could look at, but didn't know as this Virginia Southworth would want us to have them, but we could look at them.

EB Well she wasn't sure, Virginia indicated that maybe we should have them, but she wasn't sure because she didn't come right out and say it. So, after we, she left them here and went on some of our other, touring around New England, and after we had seen them and copied a few of them so we'd have the handwriting, I called the lady in Missouri, and thanked her because we had the opportunity to read them, and that Marie would be stopping back to pick them up, well she says, why don't you keep them. So, you know that was just, tremendous for us. [21.20] But there are several Bragg descendants around that, the, the valley and we sort of agreed that they should go to the historical society, so they are, the originals are all out there. We've all got transcripts of them.

WB We felt that.

EB And because you know so many of us they would of been just broken up.

JB Yeah. [21.41] That's wonderful.

EB And so they're out there and we can out and look at the handwriting any time we want to but we have these transcripts which are just.

WB Oh it was like sitting down and talking with our great grandparents.

JB How wonderful!

WB Oh!

EB Apparently Asrow and Annie had a son Frank, and he was the one that wanted to push to build the big barn, and in one of the letters, Annie had written Frank talks about building the bib barn and Asrow shutters. Ha! Ha! So the generations didn't, obviously agree you know they thought it was quite an undertaking.

WB But it was, it was apparently the first letter was before the civil war, it said, before 1865 and then it picks up with 1865, and it talks about, it talks about the war, and it talks about the, the number of bushel of potatoes and apples and the number of loads of hay, that they had and a, what the weather was, and the big

thing was going to church, every body see usually they'd look to this, you sat down Sunday afternoon or Monday morning.

EB Well I'm sure they did, they didn't do any work Sunday.

WB Yup.

EB And, church was the center of every village, that was the social and religious, but more of a social gathering point, for every one, that's where they met their neighbors and.

WB And Emily, the Emily Eden after she grew up and got married, she lived down in Waitsfield and great grandma Bragg talks about one of the letters she wrote to this woman by the telephone was such a great thing, they just had it installed and she said I can step up and turn that crank on the box and I can talk with Emily down in Waitsfield. [23.24]

EB It was just the you know.

WB And about their fiftieth wedding anniversary they had, they had the celebration here, it talks about the, the ebony cane, that was given to Asrow, I'd give a right arm if I knew where that was. It could of been burned

in the fire but I, I don't think.

EB It was after the fire.

WB That was after the fire that they had that.

JB Oh how, how wonderful though. I mean you must feel like you really know them.

WB Oh it was great.

EB And it's nice, we've got a number of pictures of them taken here and in the, on the farm and around, but, they, the letters surprised us too in that the, english grammar and, and the way they were written, were, fairly polished, you know were, were.

WB She was well educated I guess.

EB Well I guess she was. [24.15] She was.

WB In a way but.

EB As much as most people were then. And, but I.

WB But it's funny they didn't, I think there were some letters that were sent on to other relatives, because every little while there would be one, well hand this one to, Aunt Sarah or, or somebody, because they didn't talk much about building the big barn, but it must of been a big event to do something like that and have so many people around. There is one letter that

said, the as long as they've all been cut, and taken to the mill and the lumber is back here on the farm, to build a big barn, they talked about it and it was a big undertaking, one time it was the biggest barn in the valley, when it was built.

EB It's a hundred and thirty feet long. [25.00] So it's.

WB And then it didn't say anything about a, having ten guys around and we fed all of these people, the length of time they would of taken to of built that barn, but after it was done, there was a letter that said well, now the barn is finished and it's furnished by a spring across the road, that gives, sixteen gallons of water in fifty-five seconds and you know, things.

EB That's the same spring that furnishes us and that we use.

WB We have it now.

EB It really is amazing. [25.28]

JB Now are these letters, these letters are in the historical society.

EB Yes they are.

JB So that I could go read them or?

EB Yes.

JB Cause I think it probably would be very good for me to read something like that, and.

WB Would you want to read them, would you promise to bring them back if I gave you our copies of, ones that are.

JB Absolutely.

WB This Laurie Jenson the lady that came from Utah that did all of this, the, oh.

EB She indexed them and you know gave a little, list.

WB It's in that green pack.

JB In fact what I can do is borrow them, xerox them, bring them back to you next week when I come. [26.07]

WB Looking at them in the original form, in the historical society will be a horrendous job.

JB Will take forever yeah.

WB You've got to open every envelope and be careful about it.

JB Oh yeah.

WB We didn't want to keep them because we felt that as Erlene said there were other Braggs, many other Braggs around.

EB I think. I don't want to discombobulate things, the

index, you see she gives.

JB Oh this is wonderful.

EB The date and who it was written to and what the main subject of each letter was.

JB Oh! What, this, really, would be wonderful for back ground information.

WB We're anxious to do this, yeah this other thing that Erlene has there, it isn't.

EB This Anna Bragg, wrote the centennial address for the town of Fayston in 1898, and it was printed, and last year Willis and I had reprints done, because they were so tattered you couldn't.

WB We put on another cover on the outside and we put a picture in the back of the.

EB So if you wish to take it, or if you don't have one, take it with you, and.

JB Oh thank you.

WB This, this is the way it appeared when, when they did it. And we had their celebration and this was the program that was handed out, and here's a picture of the gang that was taken at the celebration which obviously wasn't in, so we added that, and we added a

cover to it, the reason we did that, the original little booklet, there were only about, three or four or five, know, Waitsfield Library had either one or two, Erlene and I had one, and there were a couple of other cousins that each had one, but it to where it was so old and flaky, that we didn't want anybody to handle it, it was coming apart. So every body was doing a bicentennial project, last year, and Erlene and I thought as not just for a bicentennial project, but for a Bragg project, to preserve this.

JB What a wonderful thing to do.

WB We had five hundred of them made, we gave three hundred of them to the Fayston historical society to sell and we kept giving and sold to the other Bragg relatives.

JB Well let me, can I borrow it?

EB You can have it. You can have it.

WB You can have that, yup you can have that one.

JB Wow! This is terrific.

EB It gives.

WB And that was written by the same lady, my great grandmother that was writing the letters to the, uncle

and aunt down in Missouri, after they, well the reason she was doing it, they used to live here, down on Route 17, the Griggs and then when they moved just before 1865. Then the letters begun to flow back and forth. Well that's the reason we have.

EB One of the letters is interesting because as old Annie went out to the World's Fair in Chicago.

WB In 1898.

EB In 1898 and.

WB On the train in Middlesex, or Montpelier, and away they went.

EB Which must of been, a tremendous undertaking.

JB Imagine the difference.

EB Stayed with relatives out in, the general area, but, they don't say a lot about it, just that they did it.

WB You would enjoy the letter.

JB Oh yeah and I see here, hurricanes precious and landslides. One of the people that I interviewed several years ago, was Earl Fuller.

WB Earl Fuller.

JB Yeah. And who I understand tell a lot of, stories and so forth but also he was very good on farm life and

breaking horses, but he tells about a land slide, I
think up on Glen Ellen.

EB A big slide.

WB That was the one.

JB Where, was it the Cotas? Or? They were the
grandparents of Don Cota anyway, that lived there.

WB Yeah.

EB Um hum.

JB And a, he, remembers I think that.

WB There's one of the letters that the.

EB Describes that.

WB I think it was a.

JB Oh, that's fantastic.

WB November 12, something very early there.

EB 18.

WB It talks about the slide.

EB It was in 1896, or 7 I think because Carl remembers.

WB 1897, I think it was.

EB Carl remembers going up with his father to see it. And
one of Willey's other cousins has a photo of it.

JB Oh really.

EB That was taken, that was told to her, her mother told

her it was the photo of the slide.

WB This one right here.

JB Oh! [30.37]

WB The slide off.

JB And who has that?

EB Elizabeth Mon, in Moretown, now she's in Florida until the first part of April.

JB Well the nice thing about this project is we have a lot of time on it but of course I'm looking for, I'm looking for all kinds of things. And.

WB Well this.

JB This is what a resource.

EB But this, this little booklet does give you a lot of anecdotes about Fayston if you haven't seen it.

JB I haven't.

EB And it, it describes quite a lot of the, the early life, the mills, and the farming and.

WB This is the only. [31.22]

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WB Really the only record we have of what Fayston was like, the first hundred years. [.12]

EB So.

WB It took us quite awhile.

EB We have a lady that is writing the history of Fayston,
or is going to, she's been compiling, Reba Hall and
perhaps you have met her.

JB No I haven't.

EB But we deliberately titled that the early years, we
didn't want to say, history of Fayston, because she
will some day, do the history of Fayston, and we
didn't want to offend her but, we didn't really want
to loose this part.

JB No this is what's so valuable. [.44] (tape off and on
again) [.58]

EB An evening.

JB Thursday, let's see Thursday morning I supposed to see
Ruth Greenslit at nine thirty, so I'll drop it by
after that.

EB Sure.

WB That's okay.

EB No it's no problem.

WB I was just kidding because it's.

JB No but I do know.

WB When we first received those, this is, _____ went home, she said I'll send them to you, and she did, she sent them right off, a brown envelope and I don't think I even opened them.

EB We didn't look at them for six months.

WB No and long in the winter I said to Erlene.

EB I broke my leg, and we sitting here, doing nothing and he got tired of looking at me, and so he said where are those letters.

WB I couldn't leave them alone once I started.

JB I bet! [1.39]

WB I was.

JB Oh!

WB Well we, oh you haven't got the tape in.

JB Yes I do have tape in there.

WB Oh okay.

EB There's one, of the letters kind of interesting when you think of the costs, about Aunt Sarah Grigg's, funeral.

WB Oh yeah she was yeah she was writing to, these other people and one was asking if they couldn't share some of the expenses, she offered to pay five dollars

towards this Aunt Sarah's funeral but he says if you can't well never mind, we will do it and the cost, the total cost of the funeral was \$25 and some cents.

[2.11]

EB And the gravestone was gonna be a white one as all the family had had.

WB Yup.

EB You know, the, it sort of is interesting.

JB Gosh, imagine. [2.24]

WB But we have seen changes, Erlene and I have seen changes here certainly in Fayston and in the valley. The first town meeting we went to, in 1953 in March of 1953, we raised a total, a sum total of eleven thousand dollars, we ran two schools, they plowed the snow in t wintertime, took care of the roads in the summertime and that's about all we did. Eleven thousand dollars. Two years ago was the first year that the little town of Fayston raised a million dollars. That's a change.

EB And there are only about six hundred and thirty voters in the town. Six hundred and, sixty some where in that vicinity.

WB But the first year there was forty-five.

EB Forty five of us, and it used to be a battle between the north and the south. [3.15] Now if someone was ill from either side of the town, that meant the officers all came from the north, one side or the south, depending on who as ill, and it was, it was really quite a rivalry, the ladies of the north or the south, put on the, lunch at noon, and they weren't gonna be out done by the other group, we had some marvelous meals, I'll tell you but it was, that with new people moving in has sort of eased the, ha.

WB When we first moved here, the road from Vassars, over through to this other road, in the wintertime they never did anything, it wasn't, it wasn't even plowed, but in the summertime the grass used to grow up in the middle of the road, you had two wheel tracks, that's how primitive it was then. It's a.

EB It really is.

WB And if anybody, you saw somebody coming, you knew they had to be coming here, because there was no other place to go. Ha! Ha! [4.18]

EB Ha! Ha! Ha

WB About the only person we saw was the mailman.

EB Yeah.

JB Well I.

EB The valley has changed a lot, I'm not sure of course you don't want to go back to the good old days because a lot of the things weren't so good in the old days, and I think our generation tends to be a little impatient with some of the young ones now, that, cry because they haven't every thing, they haven't got instant success and, instant home ownership and the videos and the skidoos and every thing that they want. And you know they really don't know what it was to have to gradually accumulate what you had. And it does make us a little impatient sometimes. [5.10] But.

JB Well, Ed Eurich said to me. He said, you know, [5.20] there's a difference between living through it, and telling somebody about it obviously there's a difference but he said you can't, you can't tell people they have had to lived through it, and so people that have come in have it and that's the major misunderstanding.

EB They're really, it was really poverty. When you,

really it's almost like a.

WB I don't know how the people in Fayston got along, it got to the point, in the early 30s, that they couldn't raise tax money enough to operate the town and they had always, I think it was the capital savings bank which is now the Chittenden Trust in Montpelier, apparently they borrowed money there every year, and it got to the point where one year they said that's it, you cannot borrow another penny, and they had to bond, they had to actually bond, there's something like ten thousand dollars, that was a tremendous sum because, after we came to Fayston, I was on the board of selectmen, and Erlene served on the school board but one of the things that we were paying even then in 1953, we're paying on this bond issue. Swanton line works and the National Life and one or two others.

EB Meredith.

WB L. Douglas Meredith had bought some of the bonds from the Capitol Savings bank and we were paying interest and paying off on those back then, so Fayston was a pretty almost the other side of the tracks type of town. [6.51] And then of course the ski area I think

obviously the ski areas saved every body up to this point, they got to where they had increased the grand list, they had the ski area and they had to the building and every thing else but, it's not, as Ed says it's, it's different living through it, then it is to tell about it. [7.10]

JB And, from what I'm hearing, certainly the ski areas have bought their share of.

WB Has what?

JB Has brought their share of problems and change and.

WB Yup.

JB I mean Ed Eurich was explaining to me about, his potato crop, and how successful that was but, the ski areas hire away and people and you couldn't get anybody to dig potatoes so he just, went out of the potato business.

WB Well this has nothing to do with, Fayston, but when I was growing up, I had a brother that was, about a year and a half older and we, we went through school together and one of the things speaking of potatoes, one of the things, we used to in the fall, pick up potatoes and we got paid three cents a bushel. That wa

the going, and if we worked hard, we could pick up eighty bushel a piece, we worked side by side, on two rows and dumped them together so that we, made two dollars and forty cents, that was, we were doing well.

JB Where were you working?

WB We lived in Waitsfield, and we worked for Clarence Strong, he lived over in East Warren. [8.30] Almost the Waitsfield, Warren town line, had a farm it, then my dad had a car and we'd, he'd let us, my brother had a license, drive up there, that was part of the fun of going to work, you could drive up to East Warren, but, we got three cents a bushel, and then I remember one year Carl Neil, Norman Neil's father, he has just beyond the round barn farm, the Pat Neil farm he had potatoes and it got into, almost the first of November and he hadn't got them all dug, and he was paying a bonus price of five cents a bushel to come and pick them, and we helped, picked up quite a lot, almost in the snow. Ha!

JB Ah! Well I've been interviewing, we don't have to you know, stay right on Fayston, because the, I'm supposed to be interviewing about the whole valley, and in fact

I've spent some time in, interviewing in East Warren.

WB Some, some of then of course I lived in Waitsfield until I moved, well until we came up there, but, grew up there and a, played with other kids in the valley, but, one of the big things that, but it was after Erlene and I was married, 1944, I think when we had a number of fires in Waitsfield. The store where my dad worked, where Carl Long owned the valley paint store, there was a building where the brick building this side of the valley paint, it was the old, we finally put it into the old fire station, that building burned, and the back part of the store building burned, you know that was a tremendous thing, it was, twenty below zero, in February, it caught fire in the back side and of course Waitsfield had no fire department, we depended on Waterbury and and Montpelier, the call went into, both Montpelier and Waterbury, send the fire trucks, and of course every body waited and waited, and waited, and while you was standing there and it was burning. Somebody went down by the bridge, they said well you got to have a hole

in the ice, so they could pump the water and they, some guys went down, they cut a big hole in the ice, and well the fire trucks came and when they got here, the hole was so far away they couldn't reach it and they had to cut another one and it was right after the darn World War II, when there was rationing, was on, and the firemen spent more time stealing stuff out of the store and lugging it back to a, they brought a station wagon for the, guys to ride in, because they wouldn't want to ride in the outside of the truck it's cold, sugar and shoes and every thing that was rationed, until finally Carl Long locked the door, he said, let it burn rather than to have them steal all the stuff. But the idea of it not having any protection then it was that following December that, the two mills, the feed mill and the sawmill over across the bridge burned where _____ ski club is, that and that was [11.32] and that we still didn't have any protection, they, they burned those and that was a, a scary thing.

EB So then you organized, a fire department.

WB At that time, then I was old enough so I was on the,

there was thirteen of us, there was a charter, I was one of the charter members, and Waitsfield bought a small fire truck after that but.

EB But before they bought it, after they organized before they bought it, there was a fire locally, the Lena Jones.

WB Well, for many, many years they had had, the old style fire department, they had what they called a pumper that, they'd drag it along on wheels and they guys would, would operate it and then they had a large chemical extinguisher that was on big wheels. [12.16] And after we formed the fire department we got the idea we better take that chemical thing with us, so somebody with a pick up would always be there, they'd back up when there was a chimney fire, what ever it was, and we'd load it on, but, for a long time we never used it, we just hauled it there, and the fire was put out, and we hauled it back. So. There was one day they had one right next to the church, that brick building next to the Waitsfield church, had more than a chimney fire, it caught in underneath and some of the, the upper part of the building was burning. So

they ran, the chemical was kept over at the, in the library hall, that was a town building, and somebody ran over there and they run down the street with it, and here it was and I guess somebody said before, I said you got to tip it over, in order to use it. Because we've been turning the valve and it must.

EB What they really meant was take the pin out and roll the.

WB Well it was a, that kind you had to have the soda and acid, you had to mix the two.

JB Oh!

WB So, somebody took the hose and they got up on the road they said okay, and tip it over, and somebody grabbed the handle and they, and as they tipped the whole thing over bottom side up and when they did, the hose then, struck the ground and the hose broke off and that stuff went all over, everybody and every where, but up on the roof, somebody grabbed on and tried to hold on to it, and ha, with their hands, and I guess a little of it came out there. [13.35] At that point, they decided well I guess we better run, figure out how to use this thing.

EB It's sort of like a keystone cops. Ha! Ha!

JB Ha! Ha! Ha! [13.42] Yeah if they had a movie of that, your fortune would of been made.

EB But they a.

WB Now we're involved with Waitsfield Fire Department, now I guess we, we pay a portion of it.

EB A joint venture.

WB And it's nice to have the ambulance service, why years ago if you had a, needed an ambulance, they sent a hearse for you.

EB Waterbury's.

WB Waterbury or Parker, Metcalf Parker, what ever it was, would send a hearse because if you needed to send someone laid out, well that wasn't a very good idea.

JB Well when the store burned, how much of it did you loose?

WB They lost well, they lost the whole building where the, this brick one went up, and that housed the.

EB Telephone office.

WB The telephone office. The telephone switch board, it was physically in that building, well now you don't think that made a, the girls stayed there just as long

as she dared to and some of the rest of them, my brother was in the cvs and he had, he had come home, for a furlough and he and two other guys went n there, they tried to actually chop the cable and get the thing out, but it got so hot they couldn't do that, and they lost the, the switch board and every thing so for a few days the valley was without telephone service and it would move across, just across the street to another building and they brought in an old second hand one from, Boston or some where, because during the war, you couldn't buy any of that stuff.

EB Have you seen this _____? [15.08]

JB Yeah I have seen that.

EB Because that has some pretty good articles in the back of it.

WB Well what.

JB I also wanted to, ask you about, a little more about the store, I'm interested in general stores and in general but, the stories that come out of them, the humor, they were a meeting place and.

EB They were open every monday night, and every Saturday night, not until a closing time, until every body was

gone, and it could be, he worked there and it could of been eleven thirty or sometimes on a Saturday night before he come home.

WB My grandfather, owned the farm where the shopping center is down in Waitsfield, actually both shopping centers, was part of that farm and my dad grew up there, and when, he first got married, he owned a horse, I don't know how he got it but something with his father, my grandfather, he owned a horse and he, picked up cream from farmers, and took it to the creamery, I guess to begin with, it was in Moretown, no it wasn't either, to begin with it was in Waitsfield. Across from the, the, where the, oh last high school was, then he went to Moretown, then he, he got this job working for Carl Long in the store, and it must of been, in the twenties, very, I was born in 22, and I think it was before I was born, he was, he was in there. So he spent most of his life then working in this store, and they did, they sold every thing you can imagine, that anybody would want, you didn't go somewhere to buy your socks, and some other place to buy your shoes, every thing was right there.

EB But the early store even had a soda fountain didn't it?

WB Well no, that was put in, I remember I was young when that was put in, I can remember, well, he worked there and my brother and I were fairly closer in age, but my brother wasn't too well so he didn't start school until a year late, so that put us both in the same grade and we went all the way through, together, and when we got to be oh ten years old we used to go in and fill shelves and do things, didn't get paid at first but we, we were there doing those things and I can remember selling peanut butter, and lard, we used to have salt salmon in the barrel, cheese that you cut off, tripe that you picked out the pockets, salt pork in these barrels, around. [17.50] Didn't a lot of stuff that wasn't and my dad tells about other things, oh sugar and baking soda and baking powder _____, it came in bulk, and from then of course, it begun into packages and promoted.

EB The existing building now, it was the back part that burned and mostly the upper back part more than the littler wasn't it, so the, the store is still pretty

much like it was in the front, as you go in.

WB The front part didn't change any really, that part didn't burn, it was, it was the back side that burned, but they did their butchering, they slaughtered the, the cows and the pigs and brought the, the carcasses to the store, and my dad was a meat cutter, and I turned the meat cutter too after, well he, dad stayed there until my brother when he came back out of the service, always wanted to own a store, and he bought the one across from, it's where the video store is down here, they didn't have that section, it had just the one the side of it and it had been a grocery store, many years before and he thought he'd come back from the service and open up that store, and he did, and then he bought it and he opened it up and that made the third store but he had a heart condition and he died in 1947 I think it was.

EB Yeah he was only out of the service about a year before.

WB Before that my dad had gone, he left Carl and gone up there, and gone to work for him. I stayed with Carl and then I was sort of promoted, sort of taken, taking

his place and, and I was a meat cutter, and boy you did everything then.

EB But the store was sort of a, a gathering place, for your Saturday night, they'd come in and stand around the box stove, and and they'd talk, and talk, and you just wondered if you're ever gonna get rid of them so you could go home but, but it was, who was the, well of course this was later in the store but do you remember Shinney Graves and how you, gave him a piece of cheese.

WB Oh that was a, that was Frank Keeler.

EB Oh was it Frank Keeler.

WB This guy, ha, he was always hanging around then, the we had the big wheel of cheese and then you, you cut off the pieces and doing that there'd be little crumbs that would come down, you know, and he was always, taking u the cover and reach in and getting the crumbs, one day I decided I'd fix him, so I took some beef tallow, it looked just like cheese, and I cut it into little pieces and I stuck it in there, and sure enough and he came and, well I had to get, that was the end of the cheese stealing. Ha! Ha!

EB I thought there was something that _____ ate, and
[20.40] that _____ Clate gave.

WB That's Kinney Graves that she'd talking about, Eldon
Graves.

EB He _____.

WB He used to deliver milk, all around through the
valley, and there was one place there was a couple of
young girls that, had, you know and he delivered milk
there, and he was always fooling with them, and
apparently they had made some, chocolates, or
something, and or they had some chocolates, and he was
doing this always reaching in, and they hollered out
some, and put in some cotton batting, and he came
along and he, took one or two and he actually ate, ate
it, and he wouldn't admit he wasn't gonna admit to
those girls that a. There was cotton batting in them.

EB That was what I was thinking of. Yeah.

JB I was a, doing a project on general stores, and one
story I was told was this man, the storekeeper saw the
man steal some butter and put it under his hat.

WB This what?

JB He saw a man steal a pound of butter, and he put it

under his hat, so what he did was he then drew him over to the stove and engaged him in long, drawn out conversation, and eventually the butter.

EB Melted. Ha! Ha!

JB Ha! Ha! Ha!

WB Have you got anybody to talk about the, [22.00] the Mad River Valley Fair that they used to have here?

JB I've only heard, I've heard about, Earl Fuller spoke about it where, there was a woman that went up in a balloon, and took a man with her, by accident.

EB Oh yes.

WB That's a, I've got the, I've got, yeah I've got a, newspaper clipping but it happened at the flying airport when they had the, the fairs down there. And that was before they came up in back of the Catholic church.

JB Yeah I think that was, the Fourth of July fair actually that what he was talking about.

WB This actually happened though, the one that, you say Earl Fuller told you about it?

JB Yeah.

WB Yeah well he told you every thing about it, then.

JB Yeah.

WB About that accident, the guy did go up and.

JB And she gave him a parachute, apparently and he got down okay.

WB Oh but I'm speaking about the one over in back of catholic church, after they gave up that fair grounds, the grange I think it was, that sponsored these every year. When I was a young kid, then, they had a number, I don't know how many but it seemed like forever, they had them, and we used to go over there, and they would have, the type of a fair that you've seen it almost as large as the Champlain Valley. They'd have a couple of ferris wheels, and all of the midways then, and horse races and I think Earl Fuller actually races horses there if I remember as a kid.

JB Yeah he did. He, and I have, several stories about him, going, he had also, he used to go sometimes down to the Rutland fair, and race horses and.

EB But this fair put on wrestling.

WB Yeah.

EB Bouts too.

WB Yeah. [23.32]

EB Oh. A number of. Side shows.

JB And did they have a, I mean was it like the fairs of today or?

WB Actually the same, the same idea.

EB Did they have exhibits?

WB They had exhibits but not like they do today, I'm sure, I remember they had a, a floral _____ exhibit, my brother and I took over a roosters one time, and we exhibited, because you could get in free if you had a, had.

EB Had an exhibit.

WB Had an exhibit there.

JB And did woman exhibit sort of food?

WB I don't think they did that much, I'm sure there were flowers and vegetables, but it was the.

JB Quilts?

WB I couldn't tell you.

EB You wouldn't of been interested.

JB Yeah.

EB Not to have paid much attention to that.

WB But it was the first one in Vermont. And that, was pretty good, it used to start about the middle of

August which was very early. And it ran like three days the same as the rest of them.

EB It sort of started the fair season.

WB Yeah it used to draw a big crowd, because it was the first fair and then it went to oh probably Northfield had one, I guess, and then they had one in Waterbury but there was, this was the Mad River Valley fair, used to get big crowds.

JB Oh yeah. [24.50] Did a?

WB Always had gypsies like every body else, all the rest of them, and they had of course there was some of them, that were fortune tellers and of course they were the ones that.

EB Well you used to have.

WB You kept away from them because they.

EB You used to have gypsies come when you were in the store.

WB Oh boy yeah, they're about, once a year.

EB And of course they were scared of them. [25.06] You know.

WB Oh yeah, you were supposed to, well. Obviously this was part of their pattern, right off, when my dad

worked in the store, then us smaller kids we lived up in that, place there in Irasville, it was a, oh a half a mile away, and he would call, he had telephone calls, keep the kids in, there's gypsies here, or something like that, or they would call Warren and say the gypsies are on their way, lock your doors. [25.33]

EB Well we used to, way back, be told these stories of the gypsies stealing children, and but when they used to come to the store, you used to lock the door and just let a few in at a time. And then let them back out. Things you couldn't go today. But.

JB Yeah I've had a number of stories about the gypsies and the stores. [25.56]

EB Um hum.

JB And it in fact one time in Hancock the gypsies would mark the road, and some body came along after them, and, got rid of the sign.

WB Well they tell us, or they always like to tell the story about, my dad buying his first car. He, it was after he sold the Irasville house, and it was just before the, bank closing, he put all the money in the, Waterbury bank, and then he couldn't get it out, but,

this other person there, and Milford Long lived in Waitsfield, and he and his wife were friendly with my folks, they'd had a car and it seemed that every body else had a car but my folks never had a car, couldn't afford a car, so when they sold the house, that was a chance to buy a car. So this Milford Long got my dad to go to Waterbury to a Ford place, he went over and he bought a brand new car, a brand new Ford, and he paid something like \$425. for it, and they went over to get it and Milford the, I guess his wife or somebody took them over, but Milford got into the car and he drove it just outside of Waterbury, and then he got on the other side and said to my dad, you drive, and he never had driven a car in his life. He drove, he got in and drove that car home. Ha! Ha!

JB This is your father? [27.14]

EG Yeah.

WB My dad. And he learned to drive after he bought a car.

JB Yeah, I believe, well I heard a story of this guy that, bought his first car and he got in it, but he didn't, he forgot to ask how to stop it, and he had to drive it around, and around, and around, until it ran

out of gas. Ha! Ha! [27.33]

EB Ha! Ha! Oh goodness.

JB Well the, what do you think are the biggest changes that you've seen, here?

WB Probably the population. I can go to Waitsfield and, I've got to where I know people, even though they're not, native people, but you don't see many, well there's not too many native people around.

EB But working in a store you used to know every one that came to town, any how. But.

WB I can go down to Waitsfield and, not know any one hardly now. You know for somebody that lived here all your life you. It's a. It's scary. Of course you're getting older, and you're, we're in the older generation now, many times, I see a young person and they'll say hi, Willy, or something like that, and I say, hey who's that guy, and it's a child of somebody that a, I do know.

JB Yeah.

EB And we should know the young people, but so many of them have beards or. Long hair, it's hard to recognize them when you don't see them, from year to year.

JB Well I'm beginning to find that with my own children's friends, you know they change so much. From the time they're teenagers and you don't recognize them.

WB And I think that inflation is something we can't comprehend, it's, I said earlier when we first got married, I think that, I made something like, thirteen dollars a week, and then I was raised to eighteen, which was a tremendous raise, but you're paying ten dollars a month rent, it was all relative, but now, you know people, for an hour that some people get, you can't begin to think of, but, the price of land is high.

EB I don't see how, young people really get a start now because to find to get a toe hold and build up. Both of them have to work, just to keep going each month, it's, it's a, bad for the young people in this valley. The ski areas too are a, brought in a different group of people, a lot of the people that came in, that, provide services and you know, live here, were good fellow citizens, and a lot of the others were but some of the young groups that came in, the ski bum group, they're here just for a good time and it tends to

influence your own young people in that, you know that's, every thing come easy and we should have fun and forget about tomorrow, it's a little different attitudes that hasn't been good, for the valley, a lot of things about ski areas that haven't been good for the valley, some of the things but it has raised the value of property and it's given work to people, but it's awfully low paid employment and people because there's always an idiot some where that will pay outlandish price or something, because of that, they believe that all land is of tremendous value and that every one is wealthy simply because they live in a certain area when there are probably more just above the poverty level, people here then. [31.21]

END OF TAPE ONE

EB Simply because they live in a certain area, when there are probably more just above the poverty level, people here than there are in any other area. Because it's, it's not a steady employment, it's so, up and down.

WB I can't believe that there's been a time in, in time, that had been, there had been so many changes there's a in the period that we have lived, from, because I

can remember there's as a small kid before my folks,
had electricity in the house, you take from then,
until the changes that we have seen, to landing on the
moon, and I can't believe you can change that much, in
the next sixty years say that we've had in this sixty
years, the advent of television, and the medicines,
and every thing and the frozen foods, and the
processing, I can't believe that you can think of
those things, now there's, now you got the, your
computers and that technology, and every time you pick
up the paper somebody comes up with the, a computer
disk that's a million times faster than the other one
and a, I think you can speed up maybe some of the
things, but to go and such a wonderful time from no
electricity to telephones and radios and then
television, and all of the diseases. [1.52] (tape off
and then on)

JB Well many of the people I've talked with, have told me
about home medicine and home remedies, and many of
those remedies have actually aided science and
developed a, a.

WB The only home remedy that I can ever remember is my

folks always in the fall, they always went out and got goldenrod and hung it up, and.

EB What ever for? [2.18]

WB I found I had, and that was for every thing I guess, no I don't know just what they used it for.

JB Was it a tea?

WB Then you steeped it and had a tea. This goldenrod made a tea. But, we always had, we had a country doctor, Doctor Shaw, when I was a kid, you probably heard all about him, then.

JB Well I've heard a few things.

WB He was the greatest.

EB He had a brown salve that cured every thing. [2.41]
Whether it was a cut or a burn, or a rash or what, he had this brown salve, and I swear it was good.

WB He lived in the parsonage down in Waitsfield and he would, in the wintertime, I guess some of the time, he had a sleigh, a horse and a sleigh, but many a times, either he didn't want to for some reason he would walk, and he'd been known to walk into North Fayston for somebody that, and house calls were a dollar, office calls were fifty cents, and you'd go in there

and his shelves would be lined up with these jars.

EB You got a dollars worth of medicine for every fifty cent _____.

WB All kinds of medicine and he would, if you wanted, he would take them down and he would taste it and find out what it, try it and then he would, that was my first experience with doctor. [3.30]

EB I remember when my father had, apparently it was rheumatic fever or something of that sort, and I was about four years old, and what they did, the remedy they took burdock seeds and brewed them, made a, brew of burdock seeds and mixed it with gin, now I hope there was more gin then burdock seed but.

WB Probably there was.

EB But that was the remedy for, what ever he had. [4.00]

JB Rheumatic fever.

EB Rheumatic fever or arthritis or what ever, he got over it, so.

JB And I understand the brown stuff, the mud that it was called, what did they call it? Mud, the thing that doctor.

WB Doctor Shaw.

JB Shaw had, was something that he mixed himself and.

WB Yes.

JB And when he died, nobody knew how to do it.

WB Yeah.

EB It had a peculiar smell to it, too, didn't it?

WB Yeah.

EB Probably it had something we wouldn't be allowed to use now, mercury or something in it, but it had a strong odor, but but his daughter used to have it, even she died three four years ago, and.

JB Oh so she did know. I wonder.

EB So she apparently knew what it was. [4.49] She had it. Maybe her granddaughters would know.

JB I was just, thinking at they still around here?

EB Oh yes, the one of them, her daughter Anne, works in the Meheron's market. [5.05]

JB Ah!

EB And, Anne Meheron Dumas, and the, the. Her nephew owns the market so.

WB Well there's one of the things to that, the f_____ that they had along the Mad River, they apparently had, for the most devastating one in our lifetime, was

the 27 flood, but apparently they had some, years before that, that a, actually took out all the bridges down through, and they went right back and put them back in, and I can remember the, I can remember the 27 flood, but we lived in Irasville, and we weren't effected by it all. But the hurricane of 38, the water was this high, and it.

EB Took out the bridge by the mill, didn't it?

WB Yeah it took out the one down here, in Waitsfield, that's where.

EB Route 17. Um hum.

WB But a, we kids were out running around it and, I mean we shouldn't of been let out of the house, why the water, came up almost up to Route 100, from bridge street out that way, there, there was cars, down underneath the garage that were full of water. And my brother and I and Charlie Mun, Howard Mun's brother, and Clate Keegleberry, walked from where _____ Maris ski lodge is, through the covered bridge, and up to the Valley paint store, it was the grocery store then where we lived, with hip boots on [6.44] and the hip boots weren't high enough, why we weren't swept up, we

took hand and hand, and walked off why we weren't swept up the river that time.

JB Well one of the things that Earl Fuller told me was that the river was much higher.

WB Was what?

JB The river was much higher in the old days.

WB I think the river has changed quite a lot, above Waitsfield village, because the dam above the covered bridge, has now washed out, they had a, a dam built up there, and that diverted the water, over a canal to those mills, where Marritmar is, they run the feed down from the saw mill. They had to do that in order to get the water to go over there, and then it came back, into the Mad River, so there wasn't much unless you came over the dam, that went under the covered bridge but now that that's washed out, it doesn't back up there as much it just.

EB Yeah but we do have a lot of high water in the meadows, and things that we shouldn't have, if they were allowed to clean out the bars in the river a little bit, you know, you can't touch anything in the river and actually I can't believe the flooding helps

the, fish and, river life and in more then the taking a little gravel out. But it's, it's kind of filling up and then it spreads up on to the field, the recreation field gets, periodic flooding and.

WB We used to provide our own entertainment too, we had everybody, if you could skate, you helped clean off a spot on the river, and you went skating, well you made your own, base, I can remember playing baseball, as a kid with some of the other kids, right in front of the valley store, and you would sit up there, and throw and catch and bat the ball, and say ouuuu here comes a car. And we'd all step out of the road and then you go back and play for, fifteen minutes more, or before anybody would show up and then you'd see another one. You don't hardly dare step out on the street now, before you get run over.

EB Now when we lived in the little red house, or when you lived over in the little red house, you went up the road and picked apples and set your step ladder under the tree right in the road.

WB Right in front of the Howard Bank there.

EB And then you left it there and went home to lunch and

you came back, and.

WB Well the ladder would be there and if anybody came along they drove out around.

EB Ha! Ha!

WB Oh boy.

JB Well before the ski industry really it was, lumbering and logging, and the mills were.

WB Mainly farming. I think there was more farmers of course we had the, we had the mill, and the farmers brought in logs and that type of thing, he had a feed mill, but I don't think they, they employed a few people, but everybody farmed. Of course every body had a farm.

EB And a, sugaring was pretty almost every one had a sugar place.

WB And it didn't get into raising, well I guess some people raised the, maybe potatoes, but you didn't get the strawberries and somebody would sell peas and they'd sell corn, and all those things, now because every body had their own. [9.50] I think that, the economy had to be fine.

JB And it was this smaller type farm.

WB Now there were, you know somebody had a couple of cans of milk a day or less.

EB Somebody that had eight or ten cows.

WB Yeah, because when we came up here, there were, oh there were many, many farms. And they, they went out all over the, I think the big, loss of farmers was when the, they came out in the, and the creameries demanded a, bulk tanks. You could no longer ship in forty-four cans. That weeded out a lot of farmers. And at that point we stayed in it, because they, we were taking our milk down to Route 100. And the Vassars were. And _____, he says well you guys put in a, a bulk tank and we'll come and get it, and boy we couldn't do it fast enough, just for the fact that we, didn't have to take it down, to the foot of the hill. Then they paid a premium on it and at that point, we did like every body else and, but that weeded out a lot of farmers. [10.50] And then.

JB Yeah I've heard a number of people have told me they went out of farming.

WB I think, oh they got to where some of them went, even if you had a bulk tank, they got discouraged or, I

don't know what the reason was, they weren't putting enough milk in, they weren't making it and they went to doing something else. [11.08]

EB Well it could be just like we found, that they got older and they had no help and you can only go seven days a week for so long, because you don't have time to be sick. I mean you go to the barn whether you're sick or not. And you can only do that so many years, as you get older, you can't do it.

WB I know one of the frustrating things about farming was a, they started to come out with, things that make life easier, and every year things boy now I've got every thing and the next year there'd be something else, I remember when they come out with the first, hay conditioner, I guess they call it, or a hay crusher, it was a machine, when I first saw one I couldn't imagine what it did but once you saw it work you had to have one. [11.55] And it went, after you cut the hay, it came along, some body else brought it along and, it picked up with these two rolls, like a couple of big ringer rolls and, run hay through it, and crimped it, maybe they called it a crimper. And you

could almost mold the hay in the morning, and put it in the afternoon. So obviously you had to have one. But, it was battle to keep ahead of.

EG Technology.

WB Yeah.

JB And the other thing too of course was the cost.

WB Yeah I know the.

EB A lot of farmers you know, couldn't say no to a salesman and they had to have the machinery whether they really needed to have it or not. And I think that put a lot of farmers out of business they over extended themselves.

WB I know one of the first tractors we bought was a small Ford tractor, well the very first tractor I had was a, farm all that, had two plows, you plowed over one way, and then you could get up and pull on this lever, and pull it up out of the ground and they bought the other one back and it went the other way. And then the next year I bought this small Ford tractor that had a two bottom plow with a hydraulic system that you drive over there and you pull on the lever like that and you pick up out of the ground, I paid something like seven

hundred dollars for those plows, and even in 1973, when we went out of farming, I think we paid fifty six hundred dollars for, the tractor alone, the next year. You can pay forty five thousand dollars once a day and you've got nothing.

JB And yeah, did you ever use horse at all or?

EB No.

WB No. When we moved up here, people would say how many horses? I'm not gonna have horses, you can't farm without horses. But, we, we never did.

EB We never had a horse. We're scared to death of them, you know. Ha! [13.39] I can like them from a distance but I know nothing about horses.

WB Nope we never had horses. We get along all right and.

EB And the Braggs that were here did farm and.

WB Oh yeah they had oxen, and horses that some of these letters, you'll get an education when you read those.

JB Yeah I can't wait to read them.

WB They talk about, yeah we had a hundred bushel of apples, or no a hundred bushel of potatoes, I guess or something like that, one year they didn't have a, they didn't have squash pie because the squash they didn't

have any squashes, the squashes something happened,
either the squashes or the pumpkin, I can't remember
which is was. [14.16]

EB I think one of the letters she sent five cents for a
silver thimble was it?

WB Oh yeah, I remember.

JB Ha!

WB Yeah.

EB Or something a, but you know.

WB It's been a, almost two years since we read those, and
they're kind of, forget those and.

JB Yeah. Oh! Well now with the Vassars did have they been
here a long time farming?

WB They, they were here before we were. I think their
folks came here in 1928, either 28 or 30.

EB Well did they come before this house burned? [14.50]
Or?

WB I think they had to.

EB It was right around that time.

WB They had to, because this house up on the corner here,
was a deer hunting camp, and the guy that came there,
came from Vergennes, and Middlebury, and over there,

every deer hunting they would come over here. But apparently, the Tunbridge fair was in, like in September, and some of them came over here and stayed and then went on to Tunbridge and cause, one of the fellows would tell see he remember when the fire was, so we came back from the Tunbridge Fair to stay there, and then they were going back home and they looked down and they saw this, little flame so they come running down here, and the house had burned, that day and it was just a little of what was left. But, I'm sure there were people here when it burned, there was just that they got here after it was all over. But I think the Vassars must of come about the same time, they did, because Robert, the, older boy of these two here, of the farm boys, was born over here in 32, he I guess he was the first one to be born over.

JB And did they come from Canada? [15.58] Vassar?

WB They came from Winooski.

JB Winooski.

EB Winooski or Westford, or some where in there.

JB Cause it sounds French, it must be a French name, is it not?

EB Yes it is.

WB Yeah.

EB And it's a French family. Yeah. The younger generation don't speak French, but the parents did and.

JB Are they still alive or?

EB No. No. Both the parents are gone and. But, they've been here a long time. [16.26]

JB Were you involved in logging at all?

WB Not, well I was involved in logging to a big extent, when I worked for Carl, after he sold the store, that was one of the things he, he always bought these timber lots, and things like that and they logged them off. And, this was the beginning of chain saws, one of the first chain saws that came out. He bought one of the, big heavy, eighty seven pound chain saws, a small chain saw that had a couple of bicycle handles, they was a motor and it was a two man outfit and another guy on the other end that held up the other end. And that's what I did for awhile was run a chain saw. [17.10] And, was involved in logging to that extent, and then it begun to get a little smaller and a little smaller and then it got to where it was a one man

operation. And it was during the time, that, we were, he had a, logging lot over on palmer hill, over in Waitsfield common they were working on and gave me a section of, he says you can cut out the lumber here and you can have that, to build a house. And I was working six days a week for him and my dad and I took the chain saw and worked every Sunday for, I don't know how long, to cut enough lumber to build a house there, so I was involved, I, more or less been involved in operating the machinery, not as doing it for a business or anything like that, I guess we did sold a little off from here, but as you can see, [18.00] the wood pile out there.

JB I was impressed with that, very impressed with that I thought you know I looked at it and thought gosh I should have my camera with me.

WB Yeah I, I've a, I a.

EB It's a very, a very photographic barn, and painters come up, sketchers and a, sit up on in the road and.

WB Yeah we're always picking up a magazine or?

EB It was on Vermont Life calendar.

WB Two years ago, 89 or 90 the December, the month of

December, and the snow storm was the barn. Ha! Ha!

But, last year's farm show was on some of their farm show, this year.

JB Now when was this barn built?

WB 1909.

JB And is that in the letters? [18.50] Great!

WB Oh no it's, well it's in the letters but it's not in the, because.

JB Yeah.

WB Actually a, Frank, I my, see my great uncle, my grandfather's brother Frank, stayed here after Will, after my grandfather left with Azro Annie, and did the farming, he is the one that decided to build a big barn, get down there and build a big barn but before it was completed he died, he had a heart attack and died.

EB And it distracts his dad from those letters that tells about he had an attack, and the doctor came, and he said it was plurallcy, that it didn't.

WB Give him camphor, he had camphor, he didn't.

EB And if it didn't go into his lungs, or something, but it was obviously a coronary from the way he, they

described it but.

WB But I think after that, after he died, Azro and Annie, kind of went down hill, that was 1909 and Annie died in 1915 and Azro didn't die until 1920.

JB And were they, they were your uncles? [20.03]

WB No, no, my great grandfather, Abernathy, great grandfather and great grandmother.

JB Oh okay. [20.10]

EB Azro and Annie.

WB And they had a, one of the kids was Frank, and my grandfather Will.

EB And Harriet, that's the daughter. She married a _____. And Emily and then Emily died and her daughter was brought up by grandma Bragg, and Harriet married a _____ worth and went to California. So some of these letters I'm sure were sent on by the _____ to her in California. [20.34]

WB I took the, out of the originals of that, the letter that she wrote to, Missouri, about the fiftieth anniversary and actually photocopied the letter so I've got the, the handwriting and the envelope for that fiftieth one. I kind of wanted that, to have that

much of it. It wouldn't of paid to try to.

JB No it makes a whole lot more sense.

WB Oh yeah. She's a, she's done a good job of transcribing them. [21.08]

JB Well the, other question I had about logging was, the Ward Mill in Moretown, seemed to drive much of the logging in this area, did it not?

WB Apparently anyone, well they were people that, bought tracks of land, and the older Wards a, they, they ran a store, a grocery store in Moretown. Cause for the mill workers and for people there, and one of the things, they tell about I'm sure they did that, they would, maybe somebody would have a, a store bill, a grocery bill and they would take this track of lumber, that one, and so they did a lot of lumbering themselves as well as buy logs from, anybody that needed the money, you know and wanted to come down there. They had quite an operation there. I can remember when they had both mills going and.

JB When was that? [22.09] In the thirties?

WB No it was after that because I used to draw saw dust from both of those mills and we were farming, so it

was after.

EB In the 55.

WB Yeah and then they, they moved one of them to Waterbury. And then they sent a, a kind of a.

EB Clapboard mill.

WB Yeah well they had the chair stop, where they made so square, hard wood, the upper mill and then they still have the clapboard mill, right at the.

EB The upper mill burned and I can't remember whether it was around, it was 1960.

WB But they, they certainly were a, important to the valley, the lumber business that they developed, and helped with, land owners and farmers, and they had, whatever.

EB Have you seen a copy of the archaeology book, I've got one but it's been loaned out, that, oh I think it's a state publication but it describes all of the mills that were in the valley, and where they were located, in Warren, Fayston, Waitsfield, you know, interesting sites, [23.28] but I loaned that out a couple of weeks ago.

JB Well when it comes back in.

EB When it come back perhaps I can, at least tell you
what it is, and where you can get it.

JB Yeah. Great!

EB A copy of it.

JB Yeah one thing I have, which you might like to see is,
a poem, made up actually it's by George Greenslip, of
the Parker Slayton.

WB Mill.

JB Mill.

EB Mill. Oh! [23.55]

JB And I just talked with well Ruthie, that has some more
of his, poems, but I thought it would be interesting
to try and get them explicated and, you know all of
the material that you can get like if.

WB I suppose when, when the inhabitants first came here,
the, that was the only source of power was the water,
they didn't have electricity and the, well the steam
mills and gasoline engines, and that sort of thing,
they harnessed the power and then the next guy down,
he'd have a mill and then the next one and, that's the
way they did that.

JB And this would of been, I think the, father of the

Parker that worked with Emma Coolidge.

EB Was it Carol Parker that worked with Emma Ford's husband?

WB It was who?

EB Harold.

WB Oh! [24.51]

EB He was from Hancock.

WB Harold Parker, well Harold Parker ran a mill up there.

EB Um hum.

WB He was one of the, one of the mill owners. I guess Lyle Ford, or Emma Ford's husband was part owner at one time. It would be their father.

JB But Rupert Blair had a photograph of a, this mill and I think some of the people. So again it would be nice to get the.

WB Well we haven't said too much about our historical society, _____, we decided that, [25.38] we should be doing something in Fayston, because every body else is.

EB Well actually Marie Jenson by bringing these letters to us really stirred us up and we thought we should preserve some of this.

WB Historical society. And we've had it for, two years
now, _____.

EB Starting _____.

WB And about the only thing we've been able to do was,
get a few pictures.

EB Well more than that, we, we have, a letter and
envelope with the Fayston post mark, from the Fayston
post office.

WB North Fayston.

EB In 1903 was it? Or?

WB 1905.

EB It was only in existence for three or four years over
there and this type of thing and, interesting old
photos and.

JB Well you're certainly welcome to copies of these tapes
if you'd like.

WB It's what?

JB You're certainly welcome to copies of these tapes if
you'd like.

WB Yeah that would be great.

EB Oh that would be great! For the.

JB Yeah.

EB What we did, we had a, a state bicentennial celebration the 21st of September last year, we organized a bus tour, of various points of interest in town, had children's old time games, had an ice cream social, had a box lunch at noon, and just the general good time and this lady was here from Utah, and did a home video, of pretty much of every thing so we have a video tape of what went on and that will be, over there, but it's hard to, I'd like to see some of the genealogies worked up but that's a pretty time consuming.

JB Yeah. [27.25] Well and the, well talking with Ed Eurich, I mean the genealogy is fascinating cause he's related to all the Longs and then I talked with Earl Long and he in Hancock, he played at a lot of kitchen junkets.

WB You've talked with him? [27.45]

JB Yeah.

WB Really.

JB And, I Bob, what is Bob's. Gove I guess.

EB Yeah.

JB Knows a lot of the songs that.

WB Oh yeah.

JB That Earl does and I want to talk with him and I talked with, Otis Wallis. Who told me that each team, you know, from the, that would go from the Ward mill had a, bell, and you could distinguish the teams by the, tone of the bell and he would hear it the morning, and _____ . [28.27]

WB This must be fairly interesting.

JB I've had a better education in. (tape off and then on)

EB Some where wasn't it?

WB I can't remember. _____ because we wanted to find out we had some pictures of their raising this barn, and it was like in the 40s, it was, we had burned and we wanted and he old us exactly how it happened, it a, apparently, they didn't have electricity and they milked with a gasoline engine and they ran the milking machine with a compressor, or a vacuum, and a, he had filled the thing with gasoline and a, maybe spilled some and started up again and before he could do anything, woof, it was, and it, but that's how we talking with Ernest.

EB Ah ha.

JB Now would be good to interview?

EB Do you think Ernest would have.

WB You'd have to.

EB He's one of these that don't say much unless you drag it out of him, you know.

WB Yeah I don't know, Erlene and I went to talk to him because we were old enough so he would talk to us but. And we knew a little bit of what he was talking about.

JB Yeah. Which makes it a whole lot easier.

WB Yeah I don't know.

EB He, it depends, I guess.

JB How old a man is he?

EB He's probably 90.

WB 80 something.

EB Close to ninety I think.

WB He lives with Paul Hartshorn down on.

JB Now he's been somebody else that has been suggested to me to go see. Yeah.

EB Yeah.

JB So maybe if I got them together. [30.01]

WB That would be great, I'm sure that a.

EB Kit Hartshorn is Paul's mother. In Warren.

JB Okay. And she's somebody else I talked with.

EB Well you're gonna talk with her tomorrow aren't you?
Or next week?

JB No. That was.

EB Greenslit.

WB Oh okay, but I called, I called Kit, to ask her about
a photograph and ask if I could come see her, at some
later date, so. [30.31]

EB Are you reaching into Moretown, too? Yup, have you
talked with any one down there?

JB No. Greg Sharrow who also works with me has been
working down there, he interviewed a, Mrs. Moore,
yeah. Aileen Moore.

EB Aileen Ward.

JB Ward. And, he's done a couple of interviews down
there.

EB Well then he's a, he would know, who to talk to down
there.

JB But I mean I'm open to any suggestions.

WB We're sorry we didn't talk more with Emily Eden, but.

EB Her mind was sharp and she was a hundred and three
when she died.

WB When she had her hundred birthday we, oh gees nothing wrong with Emily, we'd wait a while but, we waited a little too long because she lived here, in this this house, she could of, known the bedrooms were here, here and. [31.31]

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WB Now we'd like to know the lay out of the house and. I don't know why we didn't do that because we had been up here long enough, to be interested in this place.

EB Yes but you know when you are working to, to survive, and educate your kids, and keep your family together you don't really have time, it's as you reach retirement that you can begin to spend your time.

WB You begin to think about those things.

EB I'm anxious to go out to the new, vital statistics.
(tape off and then on) [.35] Building, have you been in there? They say that's wonderful.

JB In Montpelier? Or?

EB Well the new one in Middlesex. The public records.
Back of the state troopers.

JB I've only been in the old one.

EB Yeah.

WB The one you're talking about, these people, you don't want to wait too long because.

JB Well, that, I'm yeah. But you think maybe, Ernest Nelson with Paul Hartshorn.

WB I'm sure that with Paul, you probably.

EB The two of them together would, would, I think.

JB Now does Paul work during the day so.

EB Oh pretty much, he's the boss.

WB Yeah I think he does, yeah he's. He's apparently busy but, I'm sure that you could go and arrange. Cause he works for himself. [1.24] You could, and Paul's wife is a daughter of Ernest Nelson so that's.

JB Oh I see.

WB So that's how the, Ernest has been living with him quite awhile.

JB Well that's a, a good suggestion, I think it was Otis Wallace that suggested, Paul cause I guess he's like a.

EB Next door. [2.00]

JB Yeah and a, there was a, I think and Arthur Hartshorn.

WB Arthur Hartson.

JB Hartson. Who also made up a number of songs he was married to, Bell, who was brought up by Elisha Fuller.

EB Oh it would be the Hartson that used to live up on Lincoln Mountain road.

JB Yeah. [2.29] (tape off and then on)

EB That.

WB I think it would do well to talk with the guy.

JB I will.

EB Color.

WB He's a little like me he's a little hard of hearing, but he wears a hearing aid, I think some of the time, but if you can get it, the guy interested it, he can tell you a lot of.

EB Yeah. I think probably like us, we don't know exactly what you want, you almost have to ask the questions to

JB Yeah. I think that, that's true and yet, it's also association, and you never know what's going to come up.

EB No.

JB One of the other things that, I wanted to ask about, that a number of people have spoken about are the old apple trees. And, like you had some out here but, I

don't.

WB Well when we first came up here looking out this way there was a, there's an area, about an acre I would think.

EB Apple orchard.

WB That was strictly an orchard. [3.45]

EB It had the old.

WB And we harvested it, bushels but that was forty, just about forty years ago.

EB And then, water from the barn drained in there.

WB Yeah that was my own fault, right, the water from the old _____ tub in the barn, started running down that, I don't know why it didn't before but, and every year there would be another one that would die out. And instead of my going down there, and.

EB Channelling it.

WB And channelling it to where it should of been,
_____.

EB Well I don't think we realized, [4.16]

WB It was too late.

EB What was happening either.

WB Well we had all kinds of apples in the fall.

EB _____ and, what they called a strawberry apple,
there were.

WB Yeah I can't even remember the names, of them.

EB Early mac and, late mac and there was a banana apple,
and a, these down here.

WB The problem was.

EB What Nathaniels.

WB There probably was more than.

JB _____.

EB And, [4.40] snow apple your father used to call one of
them.

WB I bet you there were fifteen different types of
apples. And there were probably forty trees in all.

EB I would love to get some of the old varieties and
bring the orchard back but.

WB Of course when we came up here, my folks were alive
and they used to come up here a lot and my dad knew
the kinds of apples, but you know we never questioned
him about what went on here. (a noise)

EB What was that?

JB Was that a bird?

WB No. [5.10]

EB Well we feed the birds out there.

WB I got a couple of bird feeders out there but.

JB Well you father must of been pleased when he bought this place.

WB Yes. Yeah. We didn't think about it being the Bragg farm so much when we decided to come up here, and we really hadn't got really into it that much. But it is, we think it's kind of nice. We had, four hundred and forty acres it was really we bought three farms, there was had been put together. Actually from this corner up here, out, and the town highway 18 they call it, on the map, we owned every thing that butted the road except a small section the Ward Lumber Company owned. [6.00] And up over the years, we have sold off to different, we have really developed that, town highway 18, there isn't a house up there, but what we sold a piece of land, except this one right on the corner.

EB There's some very nice houses up there.

WB And I don't think there's one that is a nice, a nice, house, it's a very, we've been lucky in that.

EB But it was, it was land that wasn't good farm land, wasn't even good land for heifers, or pastures you

know, it was kind of rocky and a, but it was, it was open because we run cattle up in there, so. [6.40] I don't know what the noise was.

JB Hun. Yeah you never, a bird fly into the window. So, your father, let me go back one more time, cause your great grandfather that first came up here, and where did he come from?

WB They came from Massachusetts, or Connecticut.

EB Ipswich, Mass. And Connecticut.

WB To Warren.

EB To Warren but actually it was, great.

WB Great, great grandfather.

EB Great, great grandfather, William Bragg, Azro's father came, in 1849, and from Warren up here. [7.25] And, then, he died living with Azro.

WB With Azro yeah.

EB And then Azro had a son William he was Willis' grandfather. And, so it would of been, great, great grandfather that.

WB Well they've been in Fayston since 1849. But they, I don't know, I don't remember when they came up here.

EB We've got, we've got to do some more record searching,

I think they came to a farm just a little bit lower down. [7.55] Which must of joined _____.

WB But in the early years, a little booklet there, they tell about he was, at that time, when that was written he was the largest land owner in Fayston.

JB Is that right.

WB The farm family, well I take that back it was the largest farm in Fayston, I don't know.

EB _____.

WB Yeah I don't know.

JB And how large was it? At that, that was the whole?

WB I don't think he owned as much as we do, because there's two farms, one they call the Blair farm with a hundred and twenty acres, and the McCoyne farm was like eighty acres. So this was about two hundred and twenty acres.

EB Right, right, yeah. 20, 40. But, Fayston was a pretty thriving community. It had nine schools and it was a little school right down at the intersection here, and every one of those schools had like forty students in it, thirty-eight, forty students, they were all farming families a lot with Irish backgrounds and they

was all big families, that.

JB Now is Sugarbush in Warren or is it in Fayston? [9.02]

EB Sugarbush North, Glen Ellen is in Fayston.

JB Yes.

WB But Sugarbush is in Warren.

EB Sugarbush itself is in Warren.

WB Mad River is in Fayston.

JB Mad River yeah so then Fayston goes.

WB They usually say Waitsfield because we don't have a post office. And so.

JB I see.

WB But Mad River and a Sugarbush North they're both in the town of Fayston. [9.20]

JB Okay. Yeah. I've got to look at a map but. I have a pretty general idea, but.

EB Really Fayston goes down within maybe a thousand feet of route 100, pretty much down towards Moretown. It's, it's pretty much down to the foot of the mountains. As you go down towards Waitsfield, the sub station, is in Fayston, but Allen Lumber is in Waitsfield, the line is right by the, power station there, so it's fairly close.

JB Yeah I think, I think I realize that because if you, you drive down one hundred, you see the road coming and it says Fayston, every.

EB North, central, south, yeah.

WB I think a, what we've at times looked to the land records in Fayston and, it seems as though, people swap places or sold theirs and bought others, it was kind of a, a business like or fun, it seemed like every little while they'd be swapping around. They don't do that any more. [10.35]

JB Did your great grandfather have sheep up here?

WB They never have mentioned it, in any of these letters, and I don't remember, I don't think so. I don't know why I say that either, I don't think she ever wrote about, any thing about the sheep, it was always, the young stock.

EB The barn photo that Emily wrote on doesn't mention anything for sheep. I don't know if I got.

WB And some of the letters they had chickens because in late years Azro's job was to take care of the chickens, and gather the eggs and that type of thing. [11.14] No I think it's been pretty much dairying and

surviving, they, big gardens and, well they talked quite a lot about the sugaring. They apparently they had two sugar places. And, that was, a big thing, and tell about how much they got for sugar. I guess sugar more then syrup was the way it was I suppose they could store it easier, and ship it easier and it was boiled down more so.

JB And I guess they also used it as sugar.

WB Yeah. [11.47]

EB You, this is off the subject, we were talking about, what damage the power _____.

WB Well that was taken the next day after that.

JB And did you go right to, did you stay open.

WB That's me and that's my brother.

JB Oh my gosh.

WB No we had to move, we moved immediately from there down, on bridge street to the blue building that was empty and we, continued a, the store business until 1948, that was 1944 and Carl sold to, Doc and Bob Bisby a father and son combination, they operated it awhile, and then Bob was a sheet metal, he had learned this after he got out of the service, the son, and his

dad, Doc Bisby, they owned the store, and it was then, they moved up to, Irasville, as did by Bisby Hardware and that's where the name comes from, these two Bisbys. But that was the next morning after.

JB Hum. It must of been pretty depressing. [12.54]

WB Oh it was.

JB And did people just join in and help you clean up. No. No.

WB After every body came to watch it, and afterwards every body went their own way and it was, for weeks we were shoveling out that stuff, and you know how that stuff smells, too.

JB And it gets in your clothes.

WB Fire. Yeah.

JB And you hair, and every thing. Oh! So there was, was there an apartment up, above it?

WB Yes. Yup there were people actually, that is where my folks moved when they sold the, the red house, next to the Howard Bank, they moved up over the store, and we lived there until 1939, and then my folks bought the, the little yellow house that's right by the bakery down here, right across over the shopping center,

there's the little yellow house is still there and they had a barn, we lived there in 1939 and, Erlene's folks came to town, and they lived up over, the store, they moved in up over the store, after my folks moved out, that's how, how I met her, I was working down in the downstairs and she was upstairs.

JB Ha! Ha!

WB Then they moved to Stowe, her dad was, when the forestry service when I met him and that was back in the days of the CCC's, were just winding down, they had a, a site camp over here in Fayston, why he came to Waitsfield and then, that was, was moved out and he went to, to Moscow to Stowe and moved over there and they lived in Stowe, and Erlene graduated from Stowe High School. But then there was another family moved in there and they were actually living there when that burned, I remember, they, people showed up and we, well this other building on this side of the burning, we knew we weren't gonna save the, the apartment, so we moved every thing out, that they had, down out of it, so they didn't loose any of their furniture or their clothing.

JB So you had time? [14.52]

WB What's that?

JB You did have some time?

WB Oh sure, yeah. Yeah people were there to do what they could but I thought you meant afterwards.

JB No I, well I did but you.

WB Oh sure, this was one of the things that, that the telephone of Waitsfield Fayston Telephone Company was a service they offered. With a fire alarm. Two short, three times, was a fire alarm and I sure that that was sent out, because they wanted help, that was the only way that, this was like, two o'clock in the morning, that this started, what, the way we feel that it happened, this other building that housed the, the telephone office, down stairs at this time was a second hand place, it had been a barber shop but it was a second hand place, and up over it, the second hand place over to one side there was a people living there and then there was another apartment. And the guy that, that lived up in one of those other apartments had spread ashes out in the back during the day and they, we think that it started there because,

he woke up and the fire was going and he I guess he pounded on the wall and he got in the other apartment, awake and then to the telephone office, and then see, called, I expect called Carl, because Erlene and I were living, right next to the Masonic Hall, there's a step down there, down in the basement, and how we knew about it, they'd already called my father, and he and my mother came down, to do something and my mother came over, and wrapped on the bedroom window, and said hey the store's on fire. [16.33] We and obviously went over but there was a lot of people that helped and try to do things to that, move out those other people and as I say they tried to get the switchboard out but that was no doing at this point.

JB And did you get stuff from the store out? [16.45]

Where it was burning or?

WB Not too much, not too much, we did some of it. I say the people were stealing stuff, one guy he came in he had on bib overalls, he came out with an ax, stuck down the front of him so, it was during, during World War II when things were scarce, _____ items were scarce, canned goods, sugar, every thing, you know,

well maybe you don't but.

JB Well I do, no I, I remember the rationing.

WB So people were, stealing more then they were helping, and so finally Carl says that's enough and he, locked the door. [17.22] So I think that rack on the front there was where they had bulk cookies, it seems as though it's a.

JB That's a great picture. So you have a number of photographs, for the historical society.

WB This is one that I took, and the reason I don't know how, the people that were running the, Valley Paint Store they're out of business now. I gave them a copy like that, and they gave it to the fellow upstairs that, developed pictures, he gave that to Erlene. Ha! Ha!

EB This is Willis and this is his brother, Merrill. You're in the picture, no his brother Merrill there, this is Willis.

WB He's the one with the uniform. [18.10]

EB Yeah. This was the original barns, before they built the big one.

JB Oh my gosh.

EB And one the back of it, I was just reading, Emily has listed the barns, the short barn, the long barn, the heifer barn, the _____ barn but she doesn't say anything about sheep.

WB I don't ever remember hearing her say anything about sheep.

EB And the horse power.

JB Oh this is the one you were talking about.

WB Those barns were all torn down, in order to build this bigger one. [18.36] But is this the one where they're sawing wood.

JB Um hum.

WB Oh! You know obviously they took that because there was action, which you very seldom see, there wasn't anybody that would waste, a sow to work. [18.53]

JB It's a great photograph. And who are the people in it?

WB I don't know.

EB I don't know that he.

WB _____.

EB I don't know that we, I don't think Emily listed them on the back.

JB Sawing wood at, Grampa Braggs.

EB Gramps Braggs.

JB Look at the long pile of logs, this shows the old barns, upper barn, ox, heifer, lower barn, floor stables, long, we always had plenty of wood. It was a cold house, six rooms, six.

WB Stoves.

JB Oh six stoves.

EB Yeah six stoves.

JB And that was the house that was cold because of the shrinkage.

EB Um hum. I don't remember whether he tries to identify the people there or not. [19.58] You looking for the.

WB I thought I had a picture of them. That's a copy of the one that.

JB Oh the a, yeah. You know they wrote had so much better hand writing then we do.

EB So help me we get thanks you's once in awhile from a senior at _____ and it's printed, I don't think they can write. [20.24]

WB But this is the North Faytson.

JB Yeah that's 1900. September 19th.

WB That was.

JB Now was there ever a post office in your store?

WB In Fayston?

JB No in Waitsfield.

EB No.

WB No.

EB The post office was, always where the brick, where the library building is. While we were alive, or where was it before?

WB When it, when, before it was in the back of that building there, where George Billings ran a post office.

EB In back of this one okay.

WB Yeah.

JB So it was in the store originally.

WB But it was, it went on this other side, way to the back.

JB Ah ha.

WB And then it moved from there, to the library, the front part of the library, and then from there down where the sign company is, by Keyhole had the sign company and then it came up to where it is now.

[21.09]

JB That's a terrific picture, we're a.

WB I had a, I had a cover _____ we we had an estate down in Waitsfield that, [21.21] we had a, property and going through the, the personal property I ran across this envelope, where they stamped East Warren.

JB No kidding.

WB Before we got, we had an auction and we moved every thing up here, because we couldn't of had it down there, and some where, and we lost that, that's too bad cause somebody in Warren I'm sure would love that.

[21.44]

JB Oh yeah.

WB The historical society.

JB And that closed what 1902 or something wasn't it?

WB I don't know, they had one of these some where, but I don't know how many years, but.

JB Cause I guess East Warren at one point was, healthier then Warren.

WB Yeah.

EB This was the, house that burned the second house that burned. This is another view of it and right here by the end, they used to drive into the horse barn.

JB Oh so you had a attached, I've been fascinated.

EB It was attached.

JB You know cause in the Champlain valley, there are very few attached barns. But over here, there are some like over Wallis's barn is attached.

EB This you drove right past here, they used to come in on this side, and right straight off, and you can still see the foundation stones, in fact we've got photos of, family gatherings, that show the stone wall just as it was then. [22.46]

WB And we could pick out the certain stones and know exactly where they were standing.

EB This is the old couple before they died.

JB And this is again, Azro?

WB Azro and Annie.

EB Azro and Annie.

WB Yup. Annie is the.

EB Great grandparents. Yup.

JB Wonderful photographs. Now when do you figure this was taken? Oh it says, does it, oh no it says Azro.

EB Azro.

WB I don't think we know.

- EB Um I don't know but it wasn't too long before she died, I would think maybe 1910 or so.
- WB I thought most, most of the letters, maybe the last couple of letters I thought maybe Annie was a, not really wondering but maybe she.
- EB Repeated herself a little.
- WB I don't just remember, it seems at thought there was something about it, I thought that.
- EB She wasn't as well.
- WB She wasn't quite as sharp as she had been earlier and.
- JB And who, who is this here? [23.42]
- EB Well that was, let me see, that was Frank's wife, Maraina, and this was a lady that was visiting them. So after Frank died in 1909, and you see, Grama Bragg isn't with them so this had to be after 1915.
- WB Yeah.
- EB It was probably, before they left the farm. They left here in 1919.
- JB These are great.
- EB But you see it was quite a large house.
- JB Oh it's a big house.
- EB Yeah. And that was the way to be if you had to have

generations living together. Now, you can't in a little ranch type house, have two or three generations. But where you had the two or three stories and the grandparents had their couple of rooms, and you know, it was a way of living. [24.35]

JB How many generations were here then? Was it three?

Two?

WB It must of been three.

EB Living here at that time?

JB Yeah.

WB If, if William lived with Azro.

EB William and Azro, and.

WB And then Frank was here.

EB And if a, if Frank was here, and if Emily had died and young Emily was here, it must of been four generations.

WB Four.

EB At one time here.

JB Okay, now back up. Azro, and Anna, or Annie were.

WB William was the first one.

JB Okay.

WB My great great grandfather.

JB All right.

WB And then come Azro and Annie, my great grandfather and grandmother, from them, we're talking about Frank, no.

JB Okay.

WB There was Frank and Will, and my grandfather, but they were on that level.

JB Okay.

WB And then Frank, and then Emily Eaton.

EB Well Frank and Will and Emily were their three children, Emily died, three of the four children, Emily died so if the baby Emily was there, there would of been four, generations at one time here.

WB Yeah we get Emily and Emily Eaton mixed up.

JB No Emily Eaton was adopted, because Emily died. Or was Emily Eaton, Emily's daughter? [25.42]

EB Emily Eaton was Emily's daughter, and was, was Anna's granddaughter.

JB I see.

EB So Emily.

WB Eaton lived with Anna, after her mother died. [25.53]

EB See Emily, the first Emily died six or eight days after her daughter was born, of scarlet fever so the

grandmother took her right in and, raised her here. So there would of been four generations at least, I don't know whether Frank and Maraina had any of their children here at that time or not, but.

WB But there would of been four.

JB Well you almost needed that to work a farm, too in those days.

EB Well you did, you had to have two or three hired men, and you had to have well old Aunt Sarah Briggs she was, you know, I guess probably now they'd say she had alzheimers but she was beginning to loose her mind but she was here and she did the sewing and it took a lot of hands, to feed, ten or a dozen people every day and.

WB To get the meals a, in the summertime you got to start a fire and.

EB You've got the garden and you got to can.

JB And no running water.

EB Nope. No.

JB Did you _____, coming down here?

WB I think in one of those letters it talks about putting in the inside closet.

EB Yes.

WB Yeah. They had to.

EB It was after Frank and Annie had their fiftieth anniversary I think, and they put in the inside closet in their quarters, where the back was. I have an idea probably there was an outhouse out in the, addition of the horse barn.

WB Where ever it was there.

EB Probably at that time.

WB And they had _____. [27.15] (Both talking at the same time here)

EB Of the cold spring and down in the orchard there was a little spring there and in the summertime they used to go and get the drinking water there, cause it was so icy cold.

JB I bet you can't wait to read this. [27.35]

END OF TAPE TWO