Rober Wimble/TC1992.0047
Mad River Valley Project/VFC1991.0004

JB Jane Beck
RW Robert Wimble
Place Moretown, VT
Date 05/04/1992

RW Okay, I'm Robert Wimble.

JB And it's, May?

RW May 5th, 1992. Robert Wimble. And it's May 5th, 1992.

JB One more time.

RW I'm Robert Wimble.

JB Okay. Yeah.

RW Okay?

JB Yup. Good. [1.17] Well I was interested in what you started to say about kind of giving the, over view and you were talking about a part of the town where Irish settled, I don't know much about Moretown. So, any, any kind of overview is really helpful.

RW Well the earliest, according to my understanding, the earlier, the earliest settlement was in the Rock Ridge section which is over near Duxbury corners. [1.51] Near Waterbury. And, names like the Hazeltines, and people like that were, the early settlers, but we were

as I said we were divided up into different sections of the town by the school districts and over to Northfield mountain was the Cox brook section, and there was Jones brook section was down in, near Montpelier. And the, and then there was a Flanagan school house between Middlesex and Moretown and of course the Tappan school was right near the Green Mountain Power station outside of Middlesex. [2.35] And, of course the village school and then there was a common, common school up on Moretown common, and earlier I guess there was a, probably a school district over near, up on the south hill, where the Irish, I was telling you about Mrs. Regan had done that, research for that area, and the original Catholic church was there, and the, it seems like Mrs. House said there was something like sixteen school districts at one time. [3.13]

JB Is that right?

RW Yeah. Which seems like a lot, and there was a school over here beyond us, another school. Now whether that school that's over there, where they have, the town has the, snow fence and things like that, were, was

originally the school here, and then they built this later, near the four corners, I don't know. [3.33] But our barn here was built, to replace one that had burned in about 1920, and as I understand it was built from the original church, that was, vacated when they built the church in the hollow which is down in Moretown now and that was dedicated in 1853. So the building has some age.

JB I would say.

RW On it, yeah.

JB Now how long have you been, has your family been in this part?

RW Well we came here in 1945. My parents, my mother came to Moretown, in 1910. And, my dad in 1928. So.

JB From where?

RW Well, my mother came from Cambridge. But actually, just.

JB Cambridge Vermont?

RW Yes. But just recently we found looking up the family tree that, that my great, great, great grandfather died in Moretown in 1813. And I don't know that my mother ever knew this. [4.44]

JB I'll be darned.

RW But it's an interesting, interesting thing I think maybe it was the, well what did they have, typhoid fever at that time, yes, there was several out breaks of this at different times. But, this was something we found in the town, town records, we couldn't find where they lived, we were interested in that, but my mother was, well you might say, a maverick in those days she graduated I think from, from Burlington Business College which is now Champlain College, way back in maybe 1909 or 1910. So, and she came to work here in the, local store, and then she was a bookkeeper for Ward Lumber Company. And, let's see she went, her home that was right near the fire station, the blacksmith shop, in Moretown, went, she went through the 1927 flood and the 1938 hurricane. [5.46] So we were tested, the family was tested by water there. And, she lost a brand new car that was in a little garage near the, near the, present library. Sat there. And, when my dad came to town in 1928, he helped my mother, who was living up where, where Unis Ferris lives there, across from the town clerk's

office. Mrs. Bates had a boarding house there, and so they both, my mother because her house had been flooded, she lived there during the winter, and my father came to work in the talc mine. But the talc mine went, was became inoperative and so as a result he, he fell back on his experience as a, in the, as a board sawer, in the saw mill. And so he worked for the lumber company and, they met there in the boarding house. So that's, that's the way that the, that, that came about. [6.58]

JB The Ward Lumber Company as I understand it, has been for a number of generations, and I think I heard the story, and I don't remember, was the first Ward that came here with just a cross cut saw and an ox team and.

RW Well originally I suppose that, they lived up on what they called Ward hill, up in Duxbury, and I think maybe they had their first mill up in Dowsville. [7.25] And I think that was where originally it started, and I think they came from there down into the, village of Moretown, as their business expanded

and things like that. Yup. But, so, Will Kingsbury who was, very generous with his time, and very understanding, he was their blacksmith, and, and they at that time, they, all the farmers had horses, and the lumber company had horses and they moved all their, their, a lot of their lumber around their yard with horses and I can remember as a youngster, before I would get up in the morning, I'd hear the horses go down through cloppity, clop, clop, with their horses and especially in the wintertime, you could hear the, the squeaking of the, of the steel, they didn't have rubber tires, they had steel wheels, and they had a lot of these, Army wagons I think they were left over from WWI, that they used in the lumber. To move the lumber around. This was before, before really the, the trucks became as prevalent as they are now. [8.40] We might have a, you know at the most twenty cars going up and down route 100 in those days. We'd move our, cow, we had a family cow, and we, another family by the name of Hayes, Richard and I would bring our cows out and bring them up the road, and we would, we'd march them from down by where the, where the lower

store was, up un to the library and, and we might hold up one or two cars. And we'd even know who they would be, it might be the commissioner of agriculture, Ed Jones, he'd be coming back, and so that's how much we've progressed, you know, as far as traffic goes. [9.24] In the community, you know. But, anyway the, it was interesting for me to, to see the, the transition from the blacksmith where the, where everything was done with horses, and, and he would make a lot of, wagon wheels and repair them, and he would make things out of metal. He had a, forge there, and I used to turn the crank and to make the air to go through the burn the coal and he'd hammer just like a, an old fashioned smithy, you know. And, Uncle Will Kingsbury. And, they even had a place there where they used to shoe oxen, I was too, too young, or too old, born to late to see that done, but there was a place there. [10.14] So. That was just a, you know we lived through that period of time when, when they used to do that, before welding became prevalent. Prevalent. And, and we, went from the, in the wintertime, people would put their car up and they would, they would, go to town

with their horse and buggy, and a lot of the older people would, that didn't know how to drive, would use, horse power to get where they were going, you know. So. [10.50]

JB Did you have electricity in Moretown?

RW We were, yeah, in the village of Moretown. But up on that, up on the hill, in the common I guess there were a few places that were fortunate that the power company came up over the, common and back into the village. So there was farms on the out skirt of Moretown, between Middlesex and Moretown that didn't have power and there were many up here, until that rural electrification came through REA, in 1945 after the war. So many of these farms up here had Delco systems. [11.23] With batteries and, and, and of course the in the wintertime. You used to, you'd see the, trucks loaded with ice and the farmers all would have their ice houses and cakes of ice, you'd see that. I don't remember the creamery, in operation but the creamery outside of Moretown, there the Messer's Creamery was I remember of my mother told me that we,

she got the pasteurized milk, I was a little one, and I was born cesarian, and she was what 44, I guess when I was born so I was a bottle baby with karo syrup and the pasteurized milk, and I, you probably well someone will probably mention Mr. Swenard, but, he was, a very lovely, French Canadian that came down and he had a, cows on the back side of the river before you get to the Carpenter farm on the right there, and he used to peddle milk, with a pick up truck and the, and it was raw milk, and every day they'd come through the village with their pick up and he and his family would, as I understand it, they milked their cows by hand. [12.44] All of their milk and sold it. And he was very, he had a large poultry farm their and he used to take, a fresh poultry, to the, to the city of Montpelier every, several times a week, and it was a favorite, favorite pass time of his to go to the movies. So he would go to the movies every afternoon, they got so that they, I don't know it seems like they used to say that he didn't have to pay to go to the movies, they knew him so well. And he would go to the Strand Theater, or to the, the Capitol Theater, it was

just an interesting, interesting pass time, but at, that was his, that was his hobby you know. [13.30] And.

JB Yeah I have stories, well Earl Fuller used to take his girl to the movies and coming back, at night with, they'd fall asleep.

RW Sure, yeah. Get.

JB _____. [13.50]

RW Yeah well I was telling you about Andy Newton, Will and Etta Johnson, used to live at, down at the beginning of the village, and her, her gift of the, popcorn ball as a Christmas, was a highlight. And, of course in those days, oh, a youngster would get a, an orange for, in his stocking or something like that, because you know fruit was not, fruit and vegetables were not readily available, in the rural areas like this, so, things like that were, were customary at that time, you know. I'm sure today if, if you gave a, a youngster an orange in his stocking he would think that you were, you weren't very generous. [14.42]

JB It was like a piece of coal.

RW Yeah, that was part of that. [14.46] But there were, I think I was impressed with, with the way people shared their lives with others, in our valley. And, within our community, I'm sure it went on in all communities in New England but it was very important for, for specially during the war time, when and when travel was limited, because of gas rationing, that, that you used to be able to hitch a ride with the milk truck and go to Waterbury, today the labor laws would, laws would be that, liability, insurance wouldn't allow you to ride on a truck or things like that but this is a way that, country boys could go to the, go to the local, larger community. And, partake in the niceties of it, you know, but, things that, neighbors used to help neighbors, and there would be many people that would give of themselves of different ways, of the, Charlie Latimer, the Methodist, young Methodist minister that was, he was very, interested in, in sports and used to, he had a, boy scout troop, and then a youth group within the church, and it was sort of ecumenical, they didn't draw any lines because of religion that youngsters in the community were all,

were always friends. And, so we had a local baseball team, and used to take us to, we'd play basketball, after the Waitsfield High School would play theirs in the local. They had, their gymnasium was where the cabin fever quilts is now. Next to the, next to the valley players building. And, you'd go there to the Waits, watch the Waitsfield High School game and then, and then as the fire went out, you, you would play basketball, you'd practice basketball. And, the shirts or the skins, sometimes it was rather cool, with just an undershirt on, on that, ten or fifteen below zero night, you know. I don't know but. These are, these are memories that, that, that this was there, this was our. Our fair of sports in those days. For young people you know. That was back in the, in the, the early forties. [17.32] This sort of thing.

JB Well there's been a big change since then.

RW Um hum.

JB How big a town was Moretown, in those days, I mean has it grown in?

RW I think it's grown some. At the time, it seems like the census figures or the town report that we had

something like a thousand, people of residence. And then we grew to thirteen hundred, I have no idea what it is today.

JB So it's a bigger town really in the valley.

RW What's that?

JB It was a fair size town, for the valley.

RW Yes. Yes, I think it's probably, maybe one of the larger communities. And, we were spread out, because of our, geographic location. Splintered you might say, because over the mountain the people went toward Northfield, and out toward Montpelier, they were either centered their activities in, commercial activities, in Montpelier or Middlesex and Waterbury, and Duxbury Corner was down that way.

JB Well now was, did the Ward Lumber Mill really just effect this part of Moretown over here, or did it effect?

RW Yeah I think just mainly this area, they were, there were people that, that traveled some distance to work, in those days but mostly you, mostly just neighboring communities. [19.00] Yup.

JB Because it, it's interesting to me, the whole complex

of the Ward Lumber Mill and having its own store and every thing, it's quite different then you, you find in the other valley towns and it must of, I would imagine had a big influence.

RW I would say it did. I would, I would, you know I would, allow, perhaps people that worked for the company to, to maybe, I think my, my thought would be that we, at that time that was a local industry making use of, of forest products, and it gave people an opportunity to, to make a livelihood. And, locally so, there, they didn't have to travel a great amount of, miles to, to reach their work.

JB And then you told me there was the talc industry.

RW Yes. Yeah.

JB And that was over, towards Duxbury.

RW Yes. [20.20] And there was another one, that's another talc mine that's, probably located in Duxbury that was, in Duxbury but it's actually you between just beyond the junction of Route 100 and 100B, there was.

JB Yes.

RW Opposite the church of the crucified one now up in there was the talc mine that my dad had come to work

in. And actually he had worked for this gentleman that was, brother-in-law of my father's aunt. And, he was a logger for International Paper Company over in, over in the Adirondacks. And he had invested, twenty thousand dollars, in the, in the talc mine. Not my dad but, this gentleman by the name of Fred Buskey. And, he had come here to try to protect his interest because it was in hard times, I suppose that maybe the, the talc, was running out or there was a glut in the market or whatever, you know, but in those days that's, that was a lot of money. So my dad came in to town with just a suitcase, I would imagine. [21.36] And, and certainly he's, he's been very, very capable, industrious man, all his life here in the community.

JB Now he worked for the lumber company?

RW For a number of years, yeah. Seven.

JB And then?

RW Seventeen years. Yeah, and then came and bought the farm. Yup. On a shoe string. Yup. Through hard work, frugality. He'd frugalness he, he, we went through from the, you might say we went from the horse to the machines through that revolution, which is a changing,

changing times. [22.17] It's very challenging, you know.

JB Yeah I'm interested in that.

RW Yeah. Yup. So, the, we used to drive cattle from south hill which is up, beyond St. Patrick's cemetery, we'd drive cattle in the spring, there was, not ours but the Ward Lumber Company had a, they had a, herd of, registered guernseys and young people that worked in the, worked their families may have worked for the company, but we used to drive cattle, on foot from up there, way up to, to beyond the old fair grounds which is, well we call it the Cary place, it's way up in, north, in Center Fayston. [23.11]

JB Oh!

RW So it was quite a considerable distance. And we'd drive cattle from, from up there, also up on the Ward hill, so and you can imagine the, taking a bunch of cattle, yeah. A couple of hours, they'd run over every body's lawn, ha, ha, and it was quite, quite a feet, but there was, it was, we didn't have the, traffic that you'd have today, and they didn't have trucks, that would, would want to spend the time to truck them

so we'd run them, run them on foot, you know.

JB How many of you?

RW Well I'm not sure how many, I can't remember how many, but I just remember participating in this, you know. Yup, it was like the, like the mini-marathon, you know the cattle marathon, yeah.

JB Sure.

RW Because the cattle had just gotten out into the spring and they like to frolic, and they were young and so maybe they were scared but it was, it was quite a work out, I can remember people sometimes they get pretty upset when you'd run a bunch of cattle over their lawn in the spring. You know. Yeah. But the, the, up until after the war, there weren't very many automobiles and very few, very few commercial vehicles, and so, much different you know. [24.24]

JB Going from horses to tractors, did you, still use horses?

RW Yes.

JB For.

RW For a period of time as a back up. Yup, there was, some of the original tractors were, were small and

they weren't very well geared up, they didn't have very much traction. Depending on what model you bought and, they tried to, tried to be as economical as they could be, I think that some of the early tractors were small and well, in the spring many times, you know, you'd use your horses to pull the people out of the mud anyway, when these roads weren't all that great, yeah. And.

JB So you got your first tractor, just after the war?

RW Well, our first tractor we bought in, actually we had a, we had an old, Ford, Fordson which was an iron wheel tractor that was, was a very hard thing to start, you cranked it and you could break your arm with it. So we used to use that. But we were, we were, we didn't buy our first tractor until 1951. And, it was, I guess it was, four years old, it was used then but, that was basically the, after the war was mostly the time when they, when tractors became more, prevalent around here.

JB Boy and you said you bought this place in 45.

RW Well we rented it from a gentleman, that was a, by the name of Robert Karin that came from Canin,

Connecticut, or down in, and he was, you might say he was very, for, person of foresight, because he had come up here and bought a number of these farms as an investment, and so we bought the farm in the, we rented the farm from him and three years later we bought it. [26.55] So, we sold our little house in the village, there for seventeen hundred, and loaded all our earthly goods on the 1932 Ford truck, the farm truck and came up here with it, and.

JB How many cows you start with?

RW Well, not a, I don't know how many cows that were here. In the original herd. Maybe, maybe something like thirty or something like that.

JB And were you milking by hand then?

RW Well the first winter, I think the water froze up and I think the cows didn't give any milk, and so, I think we did milk by hand. We had two milking machines, and I think they, everything was so, challenging that I think we put the milkers up, and milked by hand. So, I guess maybe that, as you realize from seeing the village of Moretown, most, a lot of the town, a lot of the houses had attached barns. [28.01]

JB Yes.

RW That were quite large for a garage and they were, because they, they had been built at the time when people were depended upon horses for transportation. And so we at, we had a family cow, in the village. The, the way of farming was, was much different in those days before we had bailers, you know, we had to mow the hay and, even, I can remember some people with small places they used to do quite a bit of, haying with by hand, with a scythe, you know but, before the bailer we used to use a hay loader or pitch it on by hand. [28.49] So in, and I think when we came up here in 1945 there was something like 30 farms, in this area. And now I guess we're down to 2, operating farms. And.

JB You and the, the Howes?

RW Yes. Yeah.

JB And have the Howes been here a long time?

RW Yes. Yeah. Their family would go back many generations, yup. Yeah, you see we, I would of know that, except, as far as our family except for, the genealogy and having looking that up, then I realized

that, that our family had been here. Previously to my mother's coming, in 1910 or so. But I wouldn't of known that if it hadn't of been for history.

JB Right.

RW Yeah.

JB Yeah I just discovered that my great, great grandmother was born in Waterbury. [29.54] Yup there's a lot of forgetting, you know, if the story isn't told and passed on.

RW But there were things that we did during World War II, that I would, that I would just share with you, I can remember that we had a scrap drive, for scrap metal, and this huge pile of, of metal was on the school house lawn. And they had all, these old, all this old farm machinery, these old mowing machines, and rakes, and all sorts of, every thing you could think of, they needed the scrap metal for the, for the war effort. And there was a huge pile on the school house lawn in the village. And one other thing that we did was, we used to, the school children would take these onion bags and go out on their bicycles and pick up, pick the milk weed pods, in the fall and they'd use these

for life preservers. [30.54] Natural, if you've ever seen, seen the milk weed as just as it's ready to, it's mature, it's fluffy and it has this buoyancy that they used to make before they had the modern way of making life preservers that's the way they made them, with that sort of stuff.

JB I'll be darned.

RW So that was one thing I remember from the war. Another thing they. [31.20]

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

RW Yup. But, the.

JB And you stuffed mattresses with cotton.

RW For the, it was a part of the, a part of the war effort. My dad and many of the people would, they had a civil air patrol, up in Duxbury, up beyond, they had a look out and they had a twenty four hour surveillance of the sky [.31] for the air craft. And if they heard or saw any aircraft, they would call Albany, New York I believe, and they would keep track of it, they didn't have radar and all sorts of, of, of

surveillance in those days, that's the way they kept track of the, any aircraft if it should come, so they would have, volunteers go up there, and they had this look out up there on the, which is now, it was on Duxbury hill there, and Ira Harvey, it was right near his place, and he was the anchor man, if anybody didn't show up, then he would come. But my, I think my father used to go up between two and, two and six, Sunday night, because he'd, Saturday night, because he'd work. [1.30] You know in those days, they would work, they didn't they had, they worked from seven o'clock in the morning till five at night, and work until four o'clock on Saturday afternoon, and he'd bring back $27 a week. And they froze their wages during the war, so, that wasn't very much for a, for a young family man to be making, but that was, that was the, I would imagine it would figure about, fifty cents an hour, that he made. I remember he stayed home from work, for two weeks, to get an increase in his wage to 85 cents an hour. So, things weren't too, too booming money wise, during that time. I was just thinking of anything else that was, we had, my dad was

the civil defense director and we'd have these little mini-air raids, these, practice sessions, and they'd blow the mill whistle, and I was a boys scout and when they'd have one of these alerts, the message would come into the town clerk's office, her ward up in, lived opposite the, opposite the library, and then I'd very briskly run down to the, down to the lower mill, and they'd blow the steam whistle. [3.02] They'd blow the whistle and that would alert people that it was time for, for an air raid. And then my dad would go around and try to get people to pull down their shades, or shut off their lights, you know. But this was just part of the, I can remember how proud I was, running down the, running down the street, to deliver that message, you know, but probably eleven years old, you know, in the middle of the winter, at night and it was really something special. I was important. But, these were things that, that we remember from the war. There was much sadness, you know when, when those days when they, you'd see a gold star in the window it meant that some boy in that life, in that family had given his life for his country. [3.46] And.

JB In the?

RW In the.

JB In the village?

RW A window in the house. They'd have a gold star, if somebody had lost their life there, they would have a, it would be quite a large, it would be about the size of a calendar and there would be a gold star, and I'm pretty sure that, I remember seeing that. [4.03] In the, so it was, it was a time of, well great seriousness, you know during the war. And we had rationing and, and because we were in the country, the, the availability of goods was limited. And so we, we became very self sufficient, which was, very good my mother was a great cook, and I'm sure as all mothers were in the country. They didn't, they didn't have frozen foods in those days. [4.42] And, so there was much, preserving of fruits and vegetables, with canning and meat also and, so. I wanted to, ask you, you mentioned a methodist minister, were there a number of churches, I mean you mentioned the Catholic church but what the Methodist church?

RW That was the only, there was only one Protestant and

one Catholic church in the community. [5.13]

JB Because in doing this project, I talked with Willis Bragg, and he loaned me some letters that his great grandmother had written out west and it fascinating, to go from, eighteen sixty to nineteen fourteen and there's a lot in that about the Methodist church in Waitsfield and that was a real center.

RW Yup. Um hum.

JB And, I wondered if that was pretty much true here? It sounds like it was.

RW Yes. Yup.

JB I was talking with, Theron Austin, the other day and or Helen, his wife said that, Christmas Eve, in the church apparently every body would come together, in the town.

RW Well this is, Greg has already covered that in the.

JB With.

RW With it, yeah, there were many, sometimes, there may, probably somebody will touch up on the fact that they had the maple sugar on snow, party in the spring and they would go and get the ice, get the snow, sometimes

they would go to Granville woods and get the snow and the farmers would donate the maple syrup, and the ladies of the church would, would, would boil it down for sugar on snow and there would be plenty of pickled eggs and sour pickles and raised donuts, Haddy Bates was great with the raised donuts and Helen Austin of course. And, it seems like, Mr. B. S. Ward that was the, the, the father of the Lumber Company would, would underwrite the, cost of most of the young people going to the, going to the supper if they didn't have enough money so that was nice for the youngsters to, to be able to do that, it was a real treat you know, it was sort of a festival of spring. And, the, it was, quite a few sugar places around and in the spring, and we had of course, what we call mud season, where, which shut the school down for three weeks and while the people, while the youngsters sugared or they couldn't go through the mud anyway, well I guess they could walk, and most people walked to school anyway but they, there was a three week vacation and it would coincide with sugaring, so we called it sugaring vacation, so they didn't go eight weeks and then have

a Washington's birthday holiday or Easter vacation, it was, sugaring vacation. [8.16] Three weeks in the spring. Of course in those days, the, the black top, the, the Academ would ended about just a little beyond the Route 100 and 100B junction. So, the village of, Waitsfield was, was dirt road from Waitsfield to Moretown, it was almost dirt road and Warren was a complete disaster in the winter, in the spring. So, we felt quite blessed the Moretown had a black top road, you know. [8.56]

JB Alden Bettis talks about driving milk truck back in Warren.

RW Sure. Yeah. Yeah. In the mud time. Yeah he and Nelson Patch and George Sawyer.

JB Yeah. [9.08]

RW Yeah.

JB I also interviewed him.

RW Yeah and in our community Ed Hayes was the milk man. So. [9.14] Well that will take care of some of it, right?

JB Well that's a, big help. [9.18]

RW As I recall when we first started this ski industry,

Ed Hayes who had the milk route, he bought a school bus and he was gonna start transporting people that would come in on the train, which is Amtrak now, they'd come into Waterbury, and he was gonna transport the people to the ski area, and we thought they would have a, it would be a, a dual purpose, he would transport people that needed transportation to the valley but he'd also would be come a good business, but I think because of, either the cars became more, frequent or, the maybe we had some snowless winter or not, but that never, never materialized, it was a, it was just a, it wasn't a good business. [10.13] Arrangement, but that, and they had, they took a survey of the people within the, within the community, to open their homes like a bed and breakfast for the skiers. So there was quite a bit of, of anticipation in regard to that, which, which never materialized, very much but that was, that was one of the, that was one of the, influences that you know. That, that started as a result of it. [10.48]

JB Did one of the things I wanted to ask was, I've heard a little bit, certainly in the Waitsfield area, that

there were summer people that would come up, and live on.

RW Yes, yes. And there were many. [11.04] Moretown because Duxbury and Fayston did not have, did not have any commercial center, they, people that lived in Duxbury or Fayston would have to go to either Waitsfield or Moretown to go to the store or the post office, so in the summertime there were many, professional people they would be, they would be minister, pastors, business people, that would have, summer camps and they'd come from, from New York City or Boston area. And they'd come here for the summer, and that's true. [11.47] That was a, there was an influx of people during the summertime. And then some, I guess some people well, in the fall, during deer hunting, many people took boarders, for a lot of people would come from the different cities to play, now usually Vermont towns, even, but come from down country also. And, stay for the, hunting season. People would, would put them up. And give them bed and board for that. Yeah.

JB So that one of the things that that said to me was

that tourism always played a small, or has for, a number of years.

RW Well tourism.

JB It was before the.

RW Tourism I don't know.

JB Not, not in the, as we know it today.

RW No. No. Maybe someone can tell you about the old hotel that we used to have here in Moretown. [12.53] With a dance hall, dance floor, and this and that, it was quite a, you know, every community used to have a hotel. And it turned into a, into a, like it was a, the low rent, the low rent, housing in my day but it, we used to call it the old hotel, and it was a, certainly a viable place when it was, when it originated you know. So.

JB And people would come stay, for a season?

RW I would imagine. I don't know. No, no. No, this was just for, for transient trade I think. [13.30] It wasn't that. Yup. So I don't know that we did have any, I can't remember of, of too many, tourist farms. Place.

JB Before the ski areas?

RW Yeah. Yeah. There may have been.

JB What about the general store? Did you have? [13.51]

RW The general store was, was complete, it had every thing that a person would need from hardware and they had grain for the cows and all sorts of hardware, and all sorts of clothes, clothing, and bulk items, for food, and there would be, the cellar would have these big, wheels of Cabot cheese, or where ever they made the cheese, it would be downstairs. And, there were, the store itself [14.33] would have a, they had a grocery route that would go up into Fayston, and they'd deliver a couple of times a week, or once a week, and people would call up on the telephone and, and give them their order over the telephone and then they'd go and, Mr. White the mailman was one of the people he finished his mail route and then he'd, he'd strike out, on delivering groceries with these big boxes of all the, people's needs for the week, but they, the pharmacy would bring in their potatoes and there would be peck bags of potatoes, you'd weight, I spent many, many hours of, taking potatoes out of, a bushel bag and putting them into peck bags. [15.16]

And, lining them up on the floor there, and the people would come in and get them, and people would bring in their eggs. you might say a barter, they'd put in, bring in their eggs, and apply it toward their groceries. But they did have a complete, stock of all the different, they have different, all sorts of different hardware and nails and things that, that a complete, general store would, would supply.

JB If you would, tell me that story again, you told me and I realized it was about hardware, but, in doing the, general store project I'd like to find somebody in hardware that can tell me and I want to remember it.

RW I'm not sure where, yeah I'm not sure where, you know that's where he said it was based, but. But, any where, Burt Cameron who was the local, he, one of his, one of his jobs was that he was, he dug the graves, for the, for the cemetery and while he was waiting, he told me the story of, of the, of the funeral where the family had come from the, the city, miles away and they didn't want to come back for the committal

service in the spring so, having a, much snow, the ground was not frozen and so they, took the casket and put it on the door, and dragged it on the crust, to the, over the, he said the snow was up to the top of the cemetery gate. So they dragged it in there, and getting ready to, to have the committal service and the, the casket broke loose on the door and the door took off, with the casket on it, and down over the crust and right out into the street, and across the street, it landed up against the, in the steps of the country store and or the drug store as the case may be and the gentleman came out and he said, what can I do you, do for you sir? [17.39] And he said, give me, well, when he stooped there, he, this bump and it aroused the store keeper and he, he came out and, and the casket lid opened up and the, the body, rose up, into a sitting position and the, the reply of the man's request of, if he could help and he said give me something to stop this coffin.

JB Ha! Ha! Ha! [18.12]

RW So.

JB I think, the wonderful thing about that story is, that

there's a lot of, tall tale telling I think in the general store, it just fits in.

RW Yeah. Yes, it was a, yeah. It was a yeah.

JB And.

RW Yeah it was a, it was certainly, that would be folk, folk lore stories.

JB Sense of humor stories. [18.32]

RW Yup, right.

END OF INTERVIEW