

Rupert Blair/TC1992.0050
Mad River Valley Project/VFC1991.0004

JB Jane Beck
RB Rupert Blair
Date: May 8, 1992
Place: Warren, Vermont

RB As a follow up on Bob's story about the cow trading.
At one time from the mid 20's until the mid 30's
Warren Grange ran the fair behind the Lady of the
Snow's church. They had a nice little fair there. They
had cattle show, 4H boys shows. In fact I showed a
calf down there when I was a kid, long time ago. They
bought their grain from Steve Joslin, that's P. Joslin
grain company. He sent a bill to the grange for grain
that he had sold to grange in connection with the
fair. [1.05] There was some discussion that they
thought he overcharged them. Mrs. Sommerville, that's
Thelma's mother got up in the grange, Earl was there
at the same time. She said perhaps if Steve Joslin
hadn't been honest with the grain they could get
brother Fuller and sell him another cow!

JB Steve Joslin is Don Joslin's father?

RB No. Oh lord, don't ever mention that to him! That was

Fletcher's father. [2.00] He ran the grain store where the _____ ski club is now. Just a little while ago somebody said to me, it appears the river at one time ran over past that grain store. No, that wasn't the river, that was a canal. There was a dam and the main river up above the bridge. The Joslin mill and the Morriarty mill both had water wheels. They dug this canal and the bridge is still there right in front of the _____ ski club, where that they diverted the water over and went through their water wheels and out quite a little ways below the bridge.

[3.00]

JB And those mills both burned, right?

RB They both burned at the same time, sometime I would guess in the mid 40's, late 40's perhaps.

JB The Baird mill, (RB: Any Baird's mill.) Now that's been there quite awhile hasn't it?

RB Actually Andy Baird built that, he worked in the defense plant in southern New England, Connecticut I guess during the war. Then he came back after that and built the mill and run it since. But that was preceded by the Richardson boys mill that was a little ways up

the river. I think they had a water wheel up there.
There's still evidence of the ledges and the water
having washed out. [4.05; tape shut off.]

JB The Fayston general store?

RB Moultons lived in Fayston. There was a time when in
order to sell beer you had to have the vote of the
town to go wet they called it. And Waitsfield went
dry, always had gone dry. And they predicted they
always were going to. They were almost in the town of
Moretown, or in the town of Waitsfield, so Fayston
went wet as they called it. He set himself up a store
and he sold beer. Did a tremendous business. Warren
went dry too, so he had the run of the valley. [5.00]
Rumor has it, I don't know if it's true or not, that
some of his relatives who lived in Waitsfield were
promoting the dry vote. That's only rumor.

JB And I guess there was Gallagher's cider mill right
there too. Was it Harry Smith told me once that, how'd
he put it? That you had to strain the fish out of
Gallagher's cider, because he watered it down so.

RB I don't know anything about that. My uncle used to

make cider, he had barrels, tried to have a barrel every winter. As a young fellow, I was he always referred to me as boy. I don't think he ever called me by my right name in the world. (JB: Your uncle?) Yeah, he always referred to me as boy. [6.12] I was his eyes during the time that I was here as a kid, blind, he grew up here with him, worked with him, eventually acquired the place. So I got no complaint. I don't think he ever called me by my name but just boy. When my wife came here, we all lived in the same house, he always referred to her as girl! We were married in '42, of course that was during the time that sugar was rationed. He liked his cake and sweets very well. He said girl, I'll tell you what; if you will watch that sap, and you can get the boy to go up and tap some trees, we'll make some syrup, they won't have it rationed on us. [7.15] At that time we was shipping milk in cans, and we had big old wooden _____ sled that we used to draw manure out in, sweep it out in good shape, put 8 or 10 milk cans in it, put up on the hill. I think we tapped 60 some odd trees, and it was a tremendous year. I think we had a stove out there we

had moved. That used to be the kitchen. That was the old farm kitchen. I know my mother mopping floors, she had to wait until we get a warm day because the water would freeze on as she tried to mop it. There was no cellar under it. But any how we had a stove out there and they had the one in here. And that was the one out there, and we had just rebuilt the barn a few years before and all of the wood, boards and stuff that we had saved for sugar wood. [8.12] We had an old sugar house up here, we no longer sugared up there and stored in so we had a lot of good wood. So we would bring the wood down, throw it in the woodshed here and he'd go out and get it, and he had milk pails. We set the milk cans on the north side of the house. Of course _____ the snow in the shade well they wouldn't get warm. He would go out, he could dump sap into that pail, bring it in. She'd kind of guide him on keeping fire, kind of watch it boil. And they made 22 gallons. I remember that, he said girl, if you'll watch that sap, I'll put the wood in! [9.13]

JB Were any of your children born while your uncle was alive? (RB: Oh yes.) What did he call them?

RB He called them by their right names. (JB: Boy 2?) No,
Tom was born in '45, my uncle died in '51.

JB Tom's your oldest.

RB Yeah, he's the one that lives down here.

JB How many do you have?

RB Three. Then there's Kenny that drives the school bus.

JB Now is he the one with the deer?

RB Yeah, I got a picture here. [Rupert gets up.] Just
happen to catch here at town meeting. [rattling paper
10.08]

JB And then your third one is,

RB Patty, she's a nurse down at Mary Hitchcock hospital,
Lebanon. He carries some family resemblance of the old
fellow, or maybe it's just the beard, I don't know.
They didn't have red beards, he does, auburn. He
drives a school bus and he works over to the bus barn.
[tape shut off.]

JB That's what she was called? (yes.) The Bob Haired,

RB Bob Haired Bootlegger.

JB Earl Fuller had all kinds of stories about Ruth
_____.

RB I'm one up on you, I got the old still.

JB Tell me about that! He told me a little bit about that.

RB My uncle bought the place from her after prohibition was stopped, trying to put the bootleggers out of business. [11.26] She came up one time, she said would you mind if I went into the old house, picked up a few things I left down there? I knew what she wanted but I didn't think she'd find it.

JB Did she find it?

RB Upstairs, yeah. She might of had the coil. Be illegal probably to have both of them. But there was one of the old copper wash boilers, the oblong one with the handle. They put in about probably a 5 or 6 inch brass screw top in it with a reducer to a pipe, sautered in on the top. [12.22]

JB Now did she start that or was it Dan Seymore?

RB No, Dan, he was all right.

JB So she was the one then.

RB She was the one. Dan is Lester's father.

JB Gabe, was it Gabe was the grandfather.

RB That was her father.

JB And was he involved? (no.) So it's just she started it

all by herself.

RB She started a lot of things.

JB She's dead and gone now, so you're safe on her.

RB I had a cousin, my grandmother's sister married a Poulin. They lived in Bolton or Jonesville, what they call Honey Hollow, I guess Bolton. After my grandmother and grandfather bought this place, that place became available. And they bought I think about 1910, was quite a big family. There was 4 boys, a father, couple of daughters. They bought the place and they ran the farm there. [13.52] They all died, or the old couple died. The rest of the family sort of went their own way, got jobs and moved away. There was left Jim who looked after his folks, bachelor, stayed there to home. After his father went, well he found it more than he really wanted to cope with, big house, he didn't need that. So he sold it to Ruth. This was about 1928 I think. [14.44] During the night you'd see these big cars come in, 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning. They'd be there awhile. Leave probably some time later, I don't know. You'd see car lights drive in. She raised German sheperd dogs. Whatever reason I

don't know. They had a couple of kind of ugly ones.

Protection I presume.

JB And she never was caught, was she.

RB No. Don't know how much it cost her, but she never got caught. [15.36]

JB I think a lot of people winked at prohibition. I think Earl Long had a great story about a raid on some dance he was playing for. They were warned and they got all sign of liquor out of there.

RB She did some business with the county law enforcement. In fact one of them used to supply the grain and the sugar, molasses, malt, stuff like they used. They used to tell in the south they could tell who was running a still because their cattle were always fat. [16.42]
The by product of their (JB: Mash?) their mash they give it to the cows. The cows were fat.

JB Did she do that here?

RB Don't know.

JB Did she have any cows?

RB She had cows, yes. Don't know anything about that. Probably wasn't enough to really make that much difference, I don't know. But the chimney goes all the

way down through to the basement down there, or did.

JB Where is it?

RB Tom's house down here.

JB That one right below you. (yes.) And she would make
it,

RB She made some I'm quite sure,

JB Right in the house?

RB In the cellar.

JB Not off in some mountain peak.

RB And some of the suppliers were. [17.40]

JB Was it good?

RB I have no idea. She apparently didn't kill anybody.
But the biggest thing was a stop off station between
here and Canada.

JB And that was her? She was the major stop over?

RB They tell me it was. Of course I was only 10 years old
at that time. I do remember quite vividly sitting
there on the porch watching some big car drive in in
the afternoon, heard a bullet whistle up over the top
of the house there. And I think perhaps I was be
better off if I went back in the house.

JB And how long did this go on for? [18.30]

RB Until they thought the prohibition kind of put them out of business. Five years probably, 4 or 5 years. Don't remember when hard liquor could be sold again here.

JB It was something like 1920 to, (RB: '32 I would guess.) So she,

RB The first that they let the bar was 3.2 percent beer. And that was during the Roosevelt administration, I remember that from the funny little story I heard. What was a 4 letter word ending in P that legalized by the New Deal? Beer. [19.33; laughter.]

JB And there must have been a lot of hard cider still put down during that period.

RB Of course cider was a common commodity anyway.

JB Does anybody do that anymore here?

RB Not very many. A few maybe. But it's quite uncommon now.

JB We've tried it a few times. It was never very good.

RB You don't keep it corked up as you do a jug of wine. My uncles tells the story, Myron Goodspeed, he was a mason, built chimneys. That chimney I'm referring to is this one right in here, goes down into the basement

in the cellar. It originated in the cellar, just a little ways from the cider barrel. [21.00] Seems along in the afternoon when Myron come up and he said Herb, I can't work anymore. Boys mixed the numbers all up on the square, I got to go home. He says I can't build a chimney, I can do it just as slick as a pin tomorrow, but I can't do it today! He could see that things got out of hand!

JB I think Bob Gove told a similar story, and I don't remember who it was about. His father had a sow that ate her piglets, and the guy says that he can cure the sow. [22.05] But some how he got into his father's hard cider. When Bob Gove's father came down there there was the guy, with his arm around a big sow pig, drunker than a skunk! And needless to say he didn't cure her.

RB There was a Lovett ran this farm up above here. He was vice president of the _____ Light and Power down in New York. He bought the old farmstead. In fact he bought both of these houses up here. And he hired,

JB Which houses are these?

RB The Lovetts, where Anna _____ lives and the

Fuller place. He bought it after the Fuller family had moved away. He had a farm manager up there. He raised registered Guernsey cattle. [23.07] And the farm manager said that he thought probably whiskey was one of the best things you could give a calf for the scours. And he had a lot of trouble with scours that winter! Boss buying the remedy.

JB Believed him, old fold remedy.

RB I don't know about the calf, but he felt a lot better from it anyway.

JB Where did Tom and Biddy Egan live?

RB The place is gone now. [gets up; 24.11]

JB On the back street?

RB On the back street, a horse farm.

JB That big horse farm with all those white,

RB Where Esther _____ used to live. Right on the back street, there's a house on the upper side of the road, the barn on the lower side. That's just beyond a little gulley _____ they call it now. As far as I'm concerned it's just the swale. But there was a house and barn probably 15 to 20 rods before you get to the Seynor farm. There's a road now that goes

up into the field. [25.14] As a matter of fact they built 2 roads here.

JB Now I think you told me a story about Tom and Bidy Egan that I didn't get on the tape. Was that you that told me the story of his wake, how he died, they were always battling? And sometimes she'd take him to court then they'd both battle the judge. Was that you that told me? Maybe it was,

RB Must have been somebody else. I've heard a lot of stories about Tom Egan.

JB That's the only one I've heard, so tell me a little more. [26.00]

RB That little poem there, the Yellow Painted Hack? On Sunday morning early, Bidy Egan, Allen Foley, Walt Heriganberg, he married my grandmother's sister. In fact I've got a picture of him right here. Walt Riganberg, Old Tom, and old Tom was Tom Egan, and his dog Jack went tramping down the clover to look the school house over. And they all went a riding in the Yellow Painted Hack. [26.30]

JB Tell me about Tom and Bidy Egan.

RB That was Walt Riganberg.

JB And he was married to your grandmother's sister.

RB There's their daughter Merty, she married Burt Laro, they lived up on East Middlebury road. Turn right up there aways. They had a son just about my age, we used to ride motorcycles together.

JB Tell me about Tom and Bidy Egan then.

RB They ran that farm over there. One time he had an auction. Didn't sell much, he bought everything back again.

JB He had an auction?

RB Yes, cows and horses. [27.32] He bought most everything back, everything he wanted to get rid of I guess. Somebody said to him why did you do that, Tom? Said he wanted to find out how much it was worth!

JB How as he involved in the Yellow Painted Hack story?

RB He apparently was just there. Of course Wilson Averill lived where Lester Seynore did. He was his neighbor. Probably usually good friends. Probably I shouldn't be telling this story. They tell the story that Tom and Bidy were having some kind of squabble. [28.26] Some of the neighbors were there. Bidy complained, she said Tom, you used me last night and he threw soot on

me this morning!

JB There are a number of _____ stories about them.

RB There was Peter Moriarty lived over here, Luce Moriarty house just about the first place up on the right from the East Warren grocery. He was another one of the old school Irishmen. He had a wood pile, he used to be the fellow that would go around with the saw rig and sawing. [29.15; Rupert speaks in Irish dialect.] It's a little hollow and rotten and crooked, not much of it at all anyway. How much will you sell it for?

JB A little what?

RB A little hollow, rotten and crooked, and not much of it anyway, what will you sell it for?

JB Now there was quite a settlement of Irish up here.

RB There wasn't as big a settlement here as there was up around Bob Gove's place. In fact that's Patty Hill he lives on.

JB That's right, Patty Hill or South Hill as it's called now. And I understand that they came in because they were building the railroad at that time. And I wondered if that's when they came here as well. Do you

remember when Tom and Bidy came from? [30.13]

RB I don't know. I suspect that Tom, I can't believe that they were involved in the railroad.

JB Guy Livingston is also Irish. I can't remember what he told me. They came down through Canada though.

RB And there was the Browns that used to be here that were Irish. They were Browne. There was Johnny, Johnny used to work for us. He was, they would call him slow learner now. [31.10] His brother was the one that ran the business, in fact they owned the big farm where the brick house is in Waitsfield village, right across from Bonet's garage, just beyond the Odd Fellows Hall. But they originally lived up in North Fayston. They came from Ireland. In fact they were members of the nobility some where over there.

JB Also Ina Goodyear's, the Strongs came from Ireland.

RB Clarence Strong, I remember Clarence. I think his brother,

JB There are some wonderful stories about Clarence Strong.

RB Oh yes, there are.

JB The one I heard, who told me, Clesson Iurich, about he

couldn't get the telephone because these women were all talking about their baking. And finally just got ticked. And so he picks up the phone and says [sniffs] I smell burning cookies! And they all clomped down the phone and went to see if theirs were burning. [32.39]

RB They tell the one too about Alte Farr going up, getting the telephone up in Fayston? You probably heard that one. (no.) Eleanor denies it. There was a Bessie Coda was the operator.

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

TAPE 1, SIDE B

RB Tobacco can. Can't think of his name at the moment. But any how he got into an argument with Bessie about some telephone call, and he told her what she could do with her telephone. In those days there wasn't any court battle or anything, they just came and took out your telephone. She complained to Farr, he thought it would be appropriate if he'd take his telephone out for awhile. So he went up, got the telephone. He said Mr. Farr, can I make just one more call before you take that telephone? Said yes, go ahead, but make it snappy. He called up the operator, he said Bessie, get

ready, get your dress ready, because here comes Farr with the telephone!

JB [1.02] You did tell me that one too.

RB Probably it originated a long ways away, but they tell that. Eleanor denies it.

JB Which makes it even funnier. Is she a long time resident then.

RB Eleanor? (yes.) She was born here, her mother was born here, her grandfather was born here, and her great grandfather came from Northfield I think.

JB And they started the phone company? Because Waitsfield,

RB Do you have one of those copies?

JB I have a book. Because they have a special book. All the other telephone books are the yellow ones. And I just wondered what the story was about.

RB This was an independent telephone company. They are independent completely, privately owned. And it started out as Waitsfield Fayston telephone company. I think Alty Farr worked for them for a time. [2.24] There was a McCallister involved in it. And Alty eventually took it over. Then after he died, Eleanor's

mother ran it for awhile with the help that she could pick up. Then when Eleanor married they took it over and expanded it. I dare say we probably have one of the most progressive telephone companies in the state, perhaps the country. We're all private lines, have been for a long time. [3.07] They had a device when they first started out. We were 5 or 6 on a line. And they used to call it the galloping ghost. If you were on more than more 3 minutes, you get this thing sound like a horse galloping, go like that for 30 seconds, and then you were cut off. That was on private. Of course your toll call it didn't work on. But if you were doing a private call, either 3 or 5 minutes, this gallop, gallop, gallop [drums fingers.]

JB And that was to get you off?

RB I guess you'd have to, that was the warning.

JB That you were going to be cut off.

RB That went on for 3 or 4 years. It wasn't terribly popular.

JB And they thought that this was a way to keep the phone calls short. [4.04]

RB Yeah, on a party line. We used to be on a party line,

everybody up this way out as far as Waitsfield town line. Our ring was 13, one long and 3 short. But that was first of the improvements.

JB The phone company went in here I guess about 1912 or 1910, 11.

RB Actually earlier than that.

JB Maybe, because I don't know whether I've seen you since I went to see Willis Bragg. But his great grandmother had a whole [tape shut off. 5.04]

RB Previous to that phone company there was Bell. Had a phone company in Northfield and he came over the mountain. There was a Mrs. McLaughlin, I don't know if she was the one at the 4 corners, or the one up to _____ . She was the operator, you'd call her and she'd plug you in over the line. I think they had, went to Granville from here too. And I think Louise Gove, Robert's mother was the one that plugged the switch in to go to Granville, but I wouldn't say for sure. I think that was the case. That didn't last too long. [6.03] I've probably told you this one before, Mr. Brown lived down here, simple old chap. Some

called him foolish. Wasn't as foolish as he had the reputation of being I guess. Fact his wife was some related to Everett Palmer's family, not close. Em her name was. He was very pious old fellow. He used to go to all the camp meetings and church meetings, anything to avoid work. He wasn't a tremendous provider but they had a big family. He went off to one of these camp meetings, and the family thought they would, when they got rid of him they'd bring up a feed for their sister and her family. [7.17] They just sitting down to eat. He came home a little early, said see Em! I told you the Lord would provide! He got a telephone, it came through anyway. How I don't know how he had the money to get a telephone anyway. And somebody came by selling phonographs about along that same time, so he bought one of them. He loved the music. Wanted to share it with everybody. So back in those days, you didn't have to bring anybody, if you was on the line just as soon as you took it down. So he got wall telephone, he got it up on a table, he put the horn right up to the transmitter, he let it run all afternoon. [8.16] Finally somebody complained as best

he could to Bell over here in Northfield. He called back over to his operator there and he said can't you get somebody to go over and get that damn fool off the line! You know of course you had a certain ring. Well he couldn't count well enough to know his, about half the time he'd answer somebody elses. And I heard this statement here, this was more than 40 years or 50 years ago probably. Orin Lovett lived down here where the houses are, one across the road from the other after you turn to go to Warren. His mother was in her 70s or 80s. [9.10] And the telephone rang several times right off. Within a few minutes he said well, they aren't going to give Brown time enough to eat his dinner today! He'd go answer the telephone, everytime he'd say hello, this is Brown, do you want Browns? And she'd just joking made the statement Brown wasn't going to have time to eat his dinner today!

JB You mentioned church. What role did the church play in East Warren? Was there a strong, was it a strong center of the town? Was it a Methodist church? What kind? Earl Fuller talks about going down there for some meetings. [10.02]

RB There was 2 churches in town. One up here I think was built in 1832. They tell me that the timbers for that church were drawn over the mountain from Middlebury. (JB: I've read that.) There's another thing, maybe I've told you about this. I don't have too much to go on. But the bell in this church up here in East Warren was a Revere bell. Maybe I've told you about that. (JB: Yes, you did.) If I had time, never will again, I'd like to research that a little more. I think it was a church in Forestdale was built about the same time and the bell was sold. I think it's over there, I hope so. [11.04]

JB It could well be. Now did your mother used to go down to church every Sunday?

RB Not every Sunday. We weren't noted for being faithful church goers. Probably the attendance was about average. They used to have the Wednesday night Vesper service. She tells about Ida Brown, that was a daughter of old Wilison Brown proposing to the minister in church. I told you about that one I'm sure. That was one of the Vesper services in the evening. Don't know what did promote that. Sometimes

young folk go to church for one reason or another.

Us all having been young once can understand!

JB When did the, the church is gone now, right?

RB The church is gone now.

JB Did it burn or torn down? [12.32]

RB Torn down, it fell down eventually. Torn down and bulldozed in.

JB When was that?

RB I went to school up here in 1932 was my last year up here. And it was there then. It was torn down sometime during the time I was away at high school.

JB And where as it? It was right near where the store is now?

RB As you turn to go into the store, it was right on the left of the drive way as you go in. In fact, Kit Hartshorn's book she shows a picture of it. [13.20] It was very close to where that drive way goes in now. Probably stood not more than 50 feet from where the road is now, a row a trees between there. In fact somebody had one of the old scales like they used to weigh hay and animals on. And the pit when I went to school, the pit was still there where the scale stood,

right beside the church probably it was on the common. But as I understand, in sometime in the early 1800s, 1802 somewhere, that was given to the main common was given to the people of the town of Warren to be a common. And they were to clear the land and make it useable. In Spaulding's reminiscing, he tells about spring training up there.

JB Now this is John Spaulding's son.

RB I think that's a wonderful piece of work that he did.

JB I saw it down at the library.

RB He tells about the spring training and that's where they went. That was common land, it still belongs to common land. But then just east of that, [15.10] was the church land. The church apparently acquired East Warren Methodist, Episcopal Society, which comprised of several people, probably 20 or 30. They built the church, they established a cemetery, and they had the horse sheds here. I got into quite a discussion about those horse sheds, but I got a picture of them. When I went to school you could still see the foundation of the horse sheds, but they were gone.

JB Now was that store always there, the East Warren

Store?

RB No, that was a school house.

JB That's what it looked like.

RB In fact I got the original permit when I had the trailer park down here, to open that store. [16.05] We had it down here in the entrance of the trailer park. It was one of the amenities that went with it.

JB Who runs it now?

RB David Butler. He's over from Middlebury. His father,

JB Yes. I know his brother.

RB His father has a brother lives in Lincoln I think, or Bristol, somewhere in there. (Yes.) In fact I talked with David last night. Dorothy DeFreest, Marlene and David's daughter had part interest in it for a time. [17.09]

JB Now where does Thelma Ricketts live from the store?

RB It's the big square house just north on the right. You go past the cemetery, there's a little house, Thornson I think. There's a dog that'll chase your car there as you go by. Actually the dog that they have was one of the racing dogs that got too old and retired and she acquired it. But he always goes out and chases cars to

keep exercise I guess. Then Thelma lives in the old farmhouse just beyond, right across from Crystal Art Gallery. That's an interesting place. [18.00]

JB What's the Crystal Art Gallery? Haven't been in there.

RB They have local artists. In fact a photographer, Peter Miller (Yeah?) He had a display in there one time. I went in and looked at it. Thelma, her mother I was telling about, she's a dead ringer for a mother. She's just exactly like her. Her mother said one time that Thelma would never live to harrow what she plowed. Finally I guess she did. Sonny, this was Thelma's son that lives there now, he's 65, born in [27 anyway. He would be just 65. [19.09] I went down to grange one night, maybe I told you about taking Mrs. Somerville down to grange, it was a muddy time. And they had a plank at the front door. She, as a good grandmother would, stopped down to the store and got a candy bar for her grandson. I got out, opened the door for her, she started to walk up the plank, she slipped off into the mud. She held her pocketbook and her candy bar very carefully. She went right flat on her face right in the mud. I helped her up, got her glasses, said

hurt you, Mrs. Somerville? No, but it made me damn mad! [20.08] But she clutched right on to her pocketbook and that candy bar, she saved them. But she stuck her face right into the mud.

JB Where is Pike Hill?

RB It's the big hill just after you turn, you go out across the flat, as you're going to Warren village. Then the big hill that you go down, toward Warren village.

JB Now there was, and I was trying to remember, somebody told me to ask you, there was some piece of road, a bend or something that was called something on the way up Pike Hill. I don't remember what it was. There was a story behind it.

RB There was a big bend, there's one we used to call Bob Cat Bend farther down.

JB And why was that?

RB Somebody saw a bob cat there I guess.

JB No, this was because of some particular story, maybe a foolish story?

RB They figured if it's a foolish story I'd remember it.

JB No, I think it was Marlene DeFreest that told me and

told me to ask you. [21.19]

RB Wait a minute! That was Windy Willy Corner.

JB That's exactly right! Now tell me the story. Now which is Windy Willy corner?

RB That's the 3 corners down here. We used to call it the Guide Board. When I was a kid there was that road went right straight through and it was just kind of a small _____ there, you could turn either way. I can't see how they improved it either when they put this big bend in. I suppose it was, still have trouble with it. I remember going down through, I had an old '36 Chevy, and we ran it all through the war. [22.00] The spindle on the right side, right front wheel apparently threads got loose or something and cut off my _____ pin. I went to go around the corner, the left front wheel started around the corner, the right front wheel went right straight through. Took a little while to get that back so I could get home again. But Windy Willy, Windy Bill, he lived at that red house, the mail box with the flag or something on it, Masters lives there now. Windy Bill, you should have met him. He had all kinds of stories about the world, theories

about them. [23.08] So they called him Windy Bill.

Always talking. That was the Windy Willy corner.

JB Before it was the Sign Post _____?

RB We always called it the Guide Board. There was a board that said Waitsfield, Roxbury.

JB But was it Windy Bill before it was the Guide Post?

RB Yes, it probably, depending who you were talking to. Probably I told you there used to be a skimming station up just this side of the 4 corners? (no.) Well there [24.00] was a time when modernization was beginning to take place. The farmers got together and they built what they called a skimming station. Together they bought a separator, and probably a churn. The farmers would take their milk, rather than setting it in pans and skimming it or owning their own separator which eventually happened, they would take it up to the skimming station with the big separator. And there was a little building, I don't know if it was here in '62 or not. [Ruperts gets up, looks at map.]

JB Up above here?

RB Now, the 4 corners. [25.10] It doesn't show on here.

JB By the 4 corners you mean in East Warren.

RB East Warren 4 corners. It was probably an 8th of a mile, just this side of DeFreest's barn, where the barn is now on the left hand side of the road. How they acquired the land or who owned it. Aaron Este used to run it. Aaron Este was the son of the minister that was referred to in the Yellow Painted Hack. This was in the early 1900s. But the farmers all used to take their milk up there and they'd run it through the separator. They'd weight the cream, pay them for that. And they apparently churned it and sold it, sort of cooperative creamery on a smaller scale than Cabot by quite a lot. More stable too probably. [26.25]

JB How long did that run for?

RB I really don't know. Didn't run for too many years. I would guess maybe 10.

JB Probably back around 1910?

RB I would guess somewhere along in there. It came between the time when everybody owned their own separator and the time when they had the big pans. It was an interim thing. That story probably was one that Marlene referring to I told her about it one time.

[27.03] Maybe I told you last time about this Aaron Estes. He was kind of a joker. Bill come in with his milk and Aaron wasn't saying anything.

JB This is Windy Bill.

RB Windy Bill, yeah, Will Trask. Trask brook we always called it Trask brook. His father Horace Trask I think was his father. Their original was in Lynn, Massachusetts in the shoe business. They came up here anyway, a long time ago. Don't know who the farm did belong to previous to that. The right side of the road was the old Whitcomb place. He was one of the proponents of the theory that the world was flat, and he had the map to prove it. [28.03] There's a society in England they tell me now that still adheres to that. But he was a member of that society anyway, and I guess he probably believed it. Seems that Bill took his milk up to the creamery. He wasn't having much luck striking up a conversation with Aaron that morning. Aaron was kind of setting him up for it. Windy Bill said what's the matter, Aaron? Don't you feel good this morning? He said hell no, I don't,

really. I had a dream last night, bothered me. Said it's been bothering me all morning. And of course inquisitive as he would be he had to know what it was bothering him. So he kept after him, I don't want to tell you. Said I don't want to talk about it.

[29.10] Bill insisted on it. So he said well, being you, yes, I'll tell you. Said I dreamt last night I died and I went to hell. Terrible place, terrible. I didn't seem as if I could stay there forever. I finally went to the devil, I said is there any way, is there anything I could do to change this all? [30.03] Says is there any way I can go on to the other place? He said no. Said I'll tell you what, I'll make you a deal. I give you 3 guesses. If out of those 3 tries if you can think of something that I can't do, I'll let you go on. Of course Windy Bill, he was in this time when they used to go out west in the threshing. And he always came back with a theory, and this is probably where Aaron got his basis for part of his story. Windy Bill's contention was that the east never could compete with the west. [31.04] So I said to the devil you can't flatten out those hills in Vermont so

they're just like they are in the west. Said no problem. One sweep of my hand and Vermont would be just as flat as it is out in the west. Said you know, that was quite a thing. I knew I was in trouble. I thought awhile, I said you couldn't dry up the oceans so it would be all dry land. Said no problem, no problem. One sweep of my hand and the oceans will be all dry land. Said I was pretty discouraged. I thought a long time on it. [32.10] Then finally I said to him my last chance, said you can't make another man that looks as smart as Will Trask and put as few brains in his head. Devil says pass on!

JB And so what did Bill Trask do?

RB I assume he went home!

JB What a wonderful set up. I think one of the Vermont books it tells about going to the creamery, these 2 old fellows, they always took their milk to the creamery. Didn't know each other too well but they'd meet on the road. [33.08]

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE B

TAPE 2, SIDE A

RB along in the road. One of them said to the other you

have a horse had the colic? Said yeah, I had one last spring. Said what you do for him? Said gave him castor oil. By that time they were so far away they could no longer carry on a conversation. Couple weeks later they met about the same way. Said how's your horse? He died. Mine did too. You've probably heard that same [tape shut off.] And he was boss. Dave Sellers over here, he came into the barn one time, I was feeding the cows. They were all watching, he said it makes you feel like a chairman of the board, everybody looking at you. [1.16] My father in law used to tell the story about the old fellow was out driving, his old Model T Ford, went down the road. Back in those days they had motor vehicle cop. He wasn't state police. They sometimes pinch hit for the game warden too. He stopped the old fellow, he said could I see your drivers license? So he showed him his drivers license, _____. Noticed he had a fish pole in the back. Said going fishing, yes. you got a fishing license? [2.09] He pulled out his fishing license, showed it to him. Said my god, this woman sitting beside me is my wife. If you want to come down to the house I'll show

you the marriage license! He was operating perfectly legal. This was up in northern part, Greensboro I guess it was, Hardwick.

JB Is that where your wife came from?

RB She came from Rutland eventually. She was born in Greensboro Bend. He was telegraph operator, station agent, for St. J. and L.C. railroad.

JB And how did you meet your wife down in Rutland?

RB She came up here teaching school. [3.06] It's a very common occurrence back in.

JB That's what I hear.

RB In fact, I can think of a dozen times when that happened. Otis Wallace's wife, she came from, _____ I think her name was. Mrs. Bonet when Verna Bonet came into Waitsfield teaching school. Mrs. Joslin.

JB Fletcher Joslin's wife?

RB No, his brother's wife, _____'s wife. Can't think of her first name now. She lives in the old high school. In fact she's living in the same room she taught in when she first came there teaching.

JB Is that now living? [4.05]

RB Oh yes, condominium as such.

JB At one time it had stores or something in there didn't it or gallery?

RB They were going to. But it eventually sifted out to the fact that it is a condominium. It's kind of a nice arrangement. It's inexpensive in it's centrally located. I can't think of her name. Donnie Joslin's mother came here from Richford or somewhere down here teaching school. Mary Ketcham, she came from over, her folks lived over in Sudbury, married Rudloph Elliot.

JB I talked with Delong, what's her first, Thelma? (no.) Alice who taught school here I guess. And she married.

RB Yeah, she married Eldon Delong, he lived out in the west part of town. She came from Duxbury. [5.23] But it was a very common occurrence. Mabel Elliot came in here teaching school, she married Fred Elliot. Rebecca's mother, Rebecca Peatman, her mother Danielle came from I think they called it _____ came from Hancock, Rochester, some where there, teaching school. She married Rebecca's father.

JB A number of people have suggested that I go talk with Marian Wallace, who was I guess a Bisbee. (yes.) Would she be a good person to talk with do you think? [6.10]

I know she was away for awhile.

RB Actually I don't know her. I would guess that perhaps that she would be of a family that would have a lot of contact and stories.

JB Her brother apparently was a great story teller. Was it Ralph? (Ralph Bisbee?) Is that her brother?

RB I think her brother Ralph and John. There's another [pause] I met her down to the Waitsfield bicentennial. [pause; 7.08] In fact I was down there went into their display and they didn't have one the _____ gazateers. I had just rebound mine. Lady up in, Mrs. Coughlin up on the Common Road, and showed me how, what information she had on it. I actually went out looking for a piece of leather to bind the back. Mine was all gone. That one there is the one that's down to Warren village now. I took it out, was going to show it to her, how it came out after she had advised me. She wasn't there, so I stopped in down to the Waitsfield bicentennial, they had it open for a week. So I left that copy down there. [8.08] I got to talk with her a few minutes. She was Johnny Bisbee's

daughter. How far back, she's probably 50 by now. I have some recollection of how old she might be, funny little story on myself. Her father sold New Idea farm machinery. He went over to Raymond Gove, he was talking with him about buying a spreader. My uncle and I went over to Gove for some reason. My son, Tom, he was 4 or 5 years old then, he went over with us. Johnny was there with his daughter who was probably 10 or 12 years old then. [9.20] In kid fashion they went off playing, I got into the car, my uncle started home. Just got around the bend, said where's the kid? Turned to me, I forget and left him there. That was about as bad as they tell about the old fellow lived up in Stetson Hollow here. I probably told you about him. He never could remember to get the groceries. They sent him down to the village. Of course back in those days it was common for the woman to stay at home and send the man to the store for the groceries. Groceries be coming back that they wouldn't really want to lift anyway. Didn't come in 14 ounce boxes. Anyhow, he lived way up about as far as Warren village as we are or a little farther perhaps. [10.24] So he

went down, come back. He brought everything in to the house, set it on the table. _____ there! Don't think I forgot anything this time!. Said where's mother?

JB No, you didn't tell me that one. There were a number of Hollows. There was Stetson Hollow, sort of going back through Granville Woods, right?

RB Stetson Hollow, Martin Hollow, Bear Wallow.

JB Because there was a bear there?

RB I don't know. There's a swamp up there, Bob could tell you more about those things. That was more his, there was Martin Hollow.

JB And there must of been a Martin that lived there?

RB Fellow name of Martin probably. [11.37] Stetson Hollow, South Hollow. Cy Bagley Notch up there too between Stetson and South Hollow.

JB And did Cy Bagley live up there?

RB Yes. Somebody was telling, I think it was Ellie Richardson, which is Ed Iurich's grandfather. [12.08] This old Cy Bagley apparently was probably similar to Raymond Gove when he lived over here by himself. He had a little cabin right up where there is a notch,

you can travel through with a horse and buggy probably, from Stetson Hollow to South Hollow, they call it Lincoln Gap now. But it's still South Hollow to me. Somebody tells about walking over through there, about midnight and there was old Cy Bagley sitting out there playing his fiddle. Says there is what they call the Cy Bagley Notch.

JB Now is that over on Lincoln mountain?

RB Yes, in fact as you go up on Lincoln Gap road there's a, used to be a 4 corners there. You turn to the right and you go up over the hill toward the golf course. If you turn left you went down to Thayer mill. He had a mill down in there. [13.30] Old Will Thayer they used to tell that he had a whole city up there. He wanted another, if he wanted a little more storage space he was going to build himself a new building. He had a real city. Then you cross the brook went up over, and you can see a old spot in the ridge there, you went over and came out in Stetson Hollow.

JB So they're all sort of the other side of 100, Stetson Hollow, Martin Hollow?

RB Yeah, they're all on the other side. [14.07]

JB Is Martin Hollow again going up Lincoln mountain?

RB No, you go up Granville _____.

JB Where is it that I've always heard that the Mad River and the White River rise in Granville, up on the hill away?

RB As you go out there you come to a place where that, I remember it as being an open land. They set out pine trees [pause.] It's just before you get to the left turn that goes over the hill to Granville. As you go out through Granville Gulf, through there, you come to a place that, little old road over the hill to get to Granville. When the pulp company was there they had their old camp 17 there. That was Puddle Dock. [15.21]

JB And you could still go up that road?

RB You come out in Granville. In fact it actually about as close as it is going down the gulf.

JB You're talking about Plankton Road?

RB Yeah, you go down Plunkton, you come on to the main road, then you go probably a mile, and there's another left turn that goes to Granville, or you can go straight through I guess you can get clear through behind Rochester that way. It's a lot the same as,

JB Actually I do know that road.

RB It's very much the same as the road here. But that used to be what they called Puddle Dock there, the old timers. [16.08]

JB And why Puddle Dock?

RB I think that was where the, Plunkton, that was another station the International Paper had these pulp cutters. They didn't have television, they had to make their own entertainment. They had these different places where that they changed their loads. I think the old log hollow they used to draw them down with horses to the main road. Those were places where that they stopped and transferred. I don't think they floated any logs from there.

JB So Plunkton would be, why Plunkton? They plunked it down?

RB Well, Puddle Dock, that was a mud puddle down there. Plunkton, I don't know.

JB And then Cod Fish Corners.

RB Cod Fish Corner. That was where they went down to get their cod fish. Where they picked up their supplies for their logging camp.

JB That must have been the store then.

RB Yeah, that was the first place where they had a store.

JB And that was right as you go through upper Granville.

RB It was upper Granville. I think they put the logs into the river there.

JB I think so too.

RB I don't know if history has been recorded or not about the log drives.

JB I interviewed Elwin Shirley when he was alive. He had been an assistant cook on the log drives there and talks about them, putting the logs in, then going down the White River. [18.12]

RB John Paul had a long story. In fact some of his ancestors probably still, (John Paul?) the surveyor. He had a fairly complete history of the log drives on the White River. I was always intrigued by the history of the White River, that branch. I forget which branch it is, some are 4. But the Peavine railroad always intrigued me too.

JB Me too. In fact I interviewed a woman that was on it during the flood, and just got home I guess.

RB Used to have the little old hand car they called the

Hummingbird. [19.13] My father in law tells a story about the St. J. and L.C. railroad, going down to the hospital. And somewhere up in Northern Vermont she got on to the railroad, she thought she had plenty of time to make it. All things progressed fast as she'd figured on. Before they got to Burlington the baby was delivered. And the conductor was complaining some why anybody would get on to the railroad car in that condition. She said I wasn't when I got on here!

[20.02; tape shut off. pause]

RB _____ . I stopped in to inquire about something regarding history. And we got in a conversation, I had these clippings. It was back in the early 1900's, from there up to 1930. And she had a ball with them. They were referring to things that she had remembered, notes of marriages that she remembered when, they were her friends. I had a funny thing too one time. There was an old bureau up here in the attic. [21.15] The drawer was lined with newspaper. I pulled the newspaper up, looked at it. You've probably run across Leo Howe up in Moretown? If you haven't you should.

JB She won't talk to me. I called her, I got her, Geneva, and she won't have any part of it. So I didn't figure I could run around her and call her husband.

RB The reason she wouldn't talk I presume is because he hasn't been at the place in 10 years. But his father was a very out going individual. And there was the account of his marriage. So I took it down to him. [22.11] He was in his 80's then, his wife been gone for a good many years. I don't know if those clippings would do anything for your history or not. It'll take me a few minutes to look them up. [tape shut off.]

JB And went off into stuff that [can't hear.] which I didn't read.

RB In fact we was talking history, and I said to _____ I can remember a lot of things that happened back. I don't ever intend to remember anything that's going to cause anybody pain or embarrassment. But she'd been chewing at me a little bit, and she said I can remember going to a minstrel show once, back in the early 30's when I was a kid. [23.14] They had a fellow there was a clairvoyant, claimed to be. Said you know, there's a young fellow here in the audience

who has lost the back seat of his Ford _____,
Model A Ford, it was actually a touring car, Patheon
is actually 2 seated soft top. Said he lost the back
seat of his car. Can't figure out if somebody stole it
or what happened to it. He said I can see that now,
it's laying under a tree somewhere. Oh, I can see it
all now. That's where he was parked last Saturday
night, Clarence Hartshorn, her husband. [24.24] [can't
hear.]

END OF INTERVIEW