

Earl Long/TC1994.0011
Mad River Valley Project/VFC1991.0004

JB Jane Beck
EL Earl Long
MS Miles Smith
Ev Ev Grimes
Place Hancock, VT
Date 03/04/1994

EV That's why we hire him, he's great.

MS Can't take me any where. [.13]

JB Okay. Okay.

MS Yeah.

JB Well let's start with you know where you were born and
that kind of stuff. [.27]

EL Fine. Yeah. I was born in Waitsfield right on the
border of the Warren town line in 1908.

MS Could I a, could I get you to not, not to play with
the kleenex right there.

EL Oh okay.

MS It's right next to my microphone. Sorry.

EL I'll be darned.

JB I said before, it can, the microphone can hear you
think.

MS Um hum.

JB So watch out. Ha! Ha! Ha! [.56]

EL You gonna start the thing all over again.

MS Yes.

JB Go ahead.

MS We'll just pick up right where we're going. That's fine.

EL Yeah I was born in. Okay I'm started, I'll start it all over.

JB Okay.

EL I was born in Waitsfield, in 1908 on the border of the Warren and Waitsfield town line. And my grandfather had a farm two miles and a half in Warren, east Warren, and he raised horses mostly race horses but I think one still holds the state record. [1.36] Led his colt, but amongst those horses he had a stallion, the stallion was sold for eight hundred dollars, at that time that was an awful lot of money. But the, the man that bought it, couldn't pay for it, so he had to go to Randolph to get the horse, and the horse was really ugly. He was, he was a good, he was a Morgan, and they are a very hard strain, they're tougher than

the average horse, I guess they can be uglier too.

But, [2.21] the horse, of course grandfather passed on and the horses reverted to my mother, and a, this stallion was hard to handle. We used him as a work horse not as a, not as a, we got him altered. He was a work horse. But it didn't help his disposition like it used to. Like it normally would. We had a, small pasture, run down in a lagoon, and in this lagoon there was a lot of clay, it wasn't visible, it was covered up and there was a, spruce trees, growing along a little streams. We turned the horse out, the horses out to pasture and, I didn't need the horse, dad was away, I did, I did go about two days after the horse was in the mud hole, he got in this clay stream and the more he fought the deeper he sank. About the second day, I looked for him and my dog found him and he scared the dog, all that was sticking out of the mud hole was just his head, and that was all gray from mud, and I had to get dad and I guess everyone of our neighbors came. They brought big teams of horses, we tried falling spruce trees across the mud hole to get prized, like to help life him out, couldn't budge him.

That clay suction was, so terrible and we had to watch out and we tried to get in ourselves. And so, I believe Raymond Bashaw, he had a team that weighed about a ton a piece, and maybe a little less. But, he hitched one horse, with a chain around his neck, we hated to do it but, nothing else to do, the horse was sinking, in preference being, coming out. And he just pulled a little bit at a time, and the horse was good like, pulled steady, didn't jump, he just pulled steady and that broke the suction of the mud. We got the horse out, but he couldn't stand up, he could stand up but he couldn't keep his balance, [4.54] about four of us, two on each side, we got him to walk, up out of the lagoon, up on the farm. And you know that horses disposition changed, I think he, realized that man was his friend instead of his enemy.

He was a good horse after that, he was. Yeah after.

It's, animals are, they are wonderful but they're more intelligent than we give them credit for. [5.25]

JB That was perfect, do you want to put a mat under, is that a bad.

MS I didn't hear anything.

JB Okay. Great. That was perfect. Let me ask you, a little bit about the, place of music, you talked about it before, Casey Jones coming in, the kitchen junkets, but also songs, in Warren and how important it was.

[5.59]

EL Yes. It really was. Of course back then we didn't have radios. I guess the first time we had a radio was 1925. And they weren't out too many years before then. So we, to have any fun we had to make our own music. I guess I started when I was about 9, 8 or 9, playing, trying to play second violin with my older brother. Don't think I done a very good job but a, as I say, they didn't have any professional to compare us with. But I did improve, as time went on, and we had, what they called kitchen junkets. And, any, the old timers remember them because I think probably in drama, most every area had the same type of entertainment. But a, the younger people don't understand.

MS Is something rattling down there.

JB No that, that was what I was talking about.

MS Oh I didn't hear it before.

EV That time we heard it.

MS Ha! Ha!

JB What we could do is just put maybe this under your feet, and then it, it's on the, on the floor so that a, I think.

MS Okay. I didn't see what it was. [7.18]

EL Was that turned off?

JB Well let's, let's just.

EL It don't make no difference, you'll handle it anyways.

EV Just edit it, don't worry.

JB But let's start again, about the music cause I think it's important.

EL Okay. [7.31] Yeah so, my brother and I and my sister played, dad and mother before us, dad played organ and trumpet, and mother played the violin. But as, well limited what mother could play on the violin, my brother took over from them, and I, my sister played organ and accordion, so we had a, little orchestra of our own family and we played to these kitchen junkets.
[8.04] Each neighbor would, they switched off

Saturday nights, one would have it and the next weekend another one. But as always one would have many, many more than, than the others. But, in about 1910, a man by the name of Erwin Jones, he called him Casey, Casey Jones moved in from the West, I'm not sure, I'm not sure of what state, it made no difference. And he had a new type of calling, and he was very interested in entertainment and parties and was just he life of everything in that line. So he brought with him a, a different type of calling but he, called just the quadrille, type of music. And like for an example, you'd have four people in the quadrille, you have eight people, four sect, four couples, and in the call would be a, a when you meet the girl, swing her, swing her if you love her and leave her if you don't and things like that you know.

It's just. The crowd [9.22] would take advantage of because they'd walk up ready to swing and then whirl and they had a lot of fun over those things. And this type of music just revived the whole, the whole set up and, Casey, loved it so much he wouldn't miss, a Saturday night unless there's an extreme emergency.

And a, cause Archie Pratt had most of them. [9.43]
More than anyone else, there's quite a few of you
people still around that remember Archie, they a, had
a good, good, we called it supper. Call it dinner or
lunch whatever you want, about midnight. At every
place. I a, to give you an example of one place we
went to, Wilbur Larrow, he brought in, the separation,
the cream from the separation that hole night's dairy,
a whole bucket of cream for coffee. That's the way
they were. [10.25] I don't think there's over three
or four neighborhoods that didn't have in the
neighborhood, three, four people that didn't have a,
kitchen junket. There's always a crowd to can depend
on a crowd. We weren't the only music, we many times
I had a saxophone player with me, Andrew Baird, he was
good, Andy everyone in the valley knows Andy Baird's
band. And a, Fred Smith, Fred Smith, Ben Shaw, after
I left town they, they took over and, they furnished
the music for, for years. Ben played the, tenor
guitar, which was a, not a very popular music right
now. It's kind of rare. Fred played the violin and
he won sixteen, old fashioned fiddle contests and so

it gives you an idea how good he was. Fred was terrific, he passed on, of course Fred passed on just two years ago. So that was a, the days of kitchen junkets. We got their with teams of horses. Or, walked. And I guess, the last I went to was about 1930. Then I left town, and. Good memories. [11.59]

JB One of the things I wanted to ask you about was singing because some families sang and I think your family and would you tell me a little bit about that, cause songs were so much more a part of life, too. [12.14]

EL Yes. This was more, they had it more as a novelty in the kitchen junket, they a, they'd ask different ones that had novelty songs to sing. And there wouldn't be more than, three or four songs sang. During the night. Usually dad, dad had two, three songs, he had a, one, parody on Home, Sweet, Home. And he had, I'm not sure I remember the names of the songs. But he had three, four songs he would sing, and he probably was about the only ones that they did sing, there was my dad. [13.03] And no you don't want, you don't, you wouldn't know music, you don't want any, any

parodies sang, but, I think Bob Gove, was a little fellow, but he remember these songs and, so I think they were written down. I think Bob sings them on sleigh rides. In Moretown for skiers. And he has a terrific business there. Beautiful horses. And good trails. But this all hinges back to our getting together. Years ago. Kitchen junkets.

JB And I think Guy Livingston sang us a couple of songs, I think the Livingston, weren't the songs sunk in families and a, you know, kind of as entertainment as well. Can you tell me?

EL It might of been afterwards, it might have been a, I think the only one I know of singing with my dad. We didn't, we didn't any of us sing any songs as I remember. [14.17]

JB So in other words it was kind of an older tradition do you think or?

EL Oh the tradition was good. I, I don't know what happened after I left town, because kitchen junkets were still going on. And that's why I couldn't answer, I couldn't answer that too well. There wasn't too many people that sang but they might of been

later, the singing did come in later after, after Casey Jones came and was singing calls from the West and, that brought in a lot of music. Singing music. The calls even today are picked up from, the singing calls. [15.02]

JB Okay another thing that you told me about was, working at Mad River and really the beauty of it, and I just wanted you to elaborate on that for me.

EL Yeah. I think a few, a few little things from now to now I, it was a beautiful, beautiful spot, anyone that's ever skied there would agree with me I'm sure. They a, of course the lifts had to be greased, every day, and I don't know as a necessity every day but I think we did grease them nearly every day. And a, whoever the operator was, would, have to stop, for a tower, and let the grease monkey off, and stop again when he gets it, when a chair comes along, cause I used to, climb trees back when we weren't lifted up there by, by a commercial rigs. Had to do it on a rope. It didn't bother me any, I, they didn't have to stop this lift, I'd jump from the chair of the tower

and, when I see an empty chair, I jump back on.

[16.19] But a, my speaking of this, the reason for it was the beauty, sometimes I would sit on the tower and when I got near the, near the top of the mountain, especially on a cloudy day, you don't realize the sun is shining on a cloudy day until you get above the clouds. [16.42] I've set there after I'd greased the tower and just admire the peaks of the mountains seeing some of the peaks of the White Mountains and a.

And the Adirondacks and New York. It looked like a lake with little islands. But, then the sun shining above there, it just, just beautiful. [17.02] And, well that's so much for that. But I, there was a, there was one thing, I, I'm glad I remember this one.

It's a, Roland Palomino, he was the big owner, if not the sole owner, of Mad River Glen, and of course Roland never bought a ticket. Roland, I was in the shack running a t-bar, and Roland came by, and got on to the lift, cause I had a telephone and a midway station and I called to the top, I had to, in case there was any problems. Roland got on the t-bar and he was skiing up, I got a phone I, called, I'm trying

to think of his name. Anyway, Westly Tucker. Wesley was a good kid and honest kid, he'd do as he was told.

And I said there's an old guy coming up the ski lift and he has never bought a ticket in his life. I wish he would get one. Poor Roland got midway and, Westley just shut the lift right down. You got a ticket? No I don't need one. Yeah you need one, on this lift, he said. I'm the owner, and he went through all, to try to prove to Westley that he was Roland _____, and that didn't mean anything to Wesley. [18.43] Wesley says, you don't ride without a ticket. Well he hunted through his clothes, he found a, one of these third stubs of the lift. So he gave him that, and Wesley didn't know whether it was good for anything or not but he excepted it. Ha! Ha! And let him go along. Mr. Palomino came down to the shack and I thought, boy, boy I'm gonna catch it now. He came in, he said, "Earl, you got one great crew here," he said, "they don't miss anybody." Ha! Ha! We got a terrific kick out of that. Ha! Ha! [19.18] Yeah.

JB And then you had an experience with the lift as well.

EL Yes. I a, won't mention any names, cause I just met

the gentleman yesterday. Ha! A great guy. I was running a, rope tow. Not for Mad River Glen but for _____ Martin at Tucker Hill Lodge, but this was in mad River Glen, and it was a practice slope and it's probably the steepest of any place on the slope, of a ski area. So I, business was very slow that day I hadn't sold, I don't know as I even sold a ticket.

[20.05] One of the ski instructors came down off the mountain with, ten or twelve skiers jumped right out of the lift you know, I a, I kept if going, I expecting sod would come down at me, but no difference, it made no difference, except that the, ski, instructor would come in and pay. But he didn't he got on with them. So the next time they came down and started up again, I let the line get filled up and then I just shut it off, and left him there. Oh boy.

Oh boy I was in trouble. Fists was flying and, skis was flying off their feet, mister. So I let them steam down a little bit, and I said, "all I want is pay." My owner come up here, look at all these people skiing on the slope and not a penny in the till. What's it gonna look like, you know. If you're gonna

put people on, just pay. Well he wasn't going to.
Off the lift, off the lift. You don't have the
authority. I'm taking it. So, they went they got
Jack Murphy, I wasn't waiting for Jack Murphy he was
a, manager of the ski area but, Jack got me calmed
down and let them. No not til I get some money. Jack
didn't like it very well of course I wasn't, he wasn't
too friendly with me. I didn't always make friends
but anyway. [21.51] The ski instructor came out,
apologized, he realized he was wrong. He just hated
to admit it, that I in front of his people and. So we
got things going again, and you know that fellow and I
are the best of friends. Ha! [22.10]

JB One of the things that you spoke about were the
terrific changes in the valley, and.

EL Oh yes. Well. That is awfully hard to, to graduate
at, in just a few years where we shot a bear, and it
took all day to drag him off the mountain. It wasn't
over I don't think it was over two years, Sugarbush
was built there, the same place. And, you can imagine
of course the shacks and cottages and that like, a

regular city. And this was where, bears were living.

Ha! In harmony. Ha! Ha! Yup. Well, it's hard to think off hand of the changes because they a, they are still going. I, I was surprised, now this was a modern change, I, I worked for, in Warren we had a, two farms, I worked for Mr. Howard Carpenter, he had a farm what we called Cocklebush and just below it there was hemlock trees, and a oh just a beautiful place for deer in the wintertime. They'd a, yard there, and it's one of the best probably yards for deer you could go in there and find, in the wintertime, there's always, you see 8, 10 deer, in there. [23.54] And I was surprised to think the state with their unfair environmental setup, I'm sure the people intended well but they don't know what they're doing. They let them cut those trees down bulldoze, they've got houses built there. And, the probably, the best deer place, well. In the state! Ha! Ha! And so many speak to me about that and I don't know how it happened. The changes are, it's an awful lot in between and the people are the same. I, it seemed that all of a sudden, the change was so, so great that most everyone

noticed it and that would be when Damen Gadd sold Sugarbush, to new owners, Harlow Carpenter sold out, and Jim Herman sold out, of running the gold course owner and Sugarbush, but _____ the Sugarbush Inn and it seemed just like [25.06] the whole crowd, left.

A new crowd came in and, nothing was the same. It never can be. And, those are changes, the greater changes that a, we notice, and probably to other people there's many, many other changes just as great but, the ones I notice are.

JB I'm interested that, that you mentioned, you know, Gadd and, and the other guys selling out, but a, what about the changes when they came in. Were there?

EL Oh yes. When Damen came in, he got. (cough) Excuse me. He got a Jack Murphy with an airplane to survey the valley, he had in mind to put in Sugarbush but that wasn't advertised at all, and he knew just what he was going to do, before they started. Jack, he hired Jack Murphy as his manager. Jack promised him that he could build the Sugarbush. His ski lift and on the mountain, for a dollar an hour. No one

believed it. I went up there one day, and here was a crowd working, and here was a crowd coming, and here was a crowd going. [26.37] But it was a dollar an hour. He got it built at a dollar an hour. That was one of the big changes and when Sugarbush came in, I probably won't do any harm to tell it now, I was asked by Damen Gadd to evaluate a piece of property, this was before he announced Sugarbush. I had in mind that he was thinking of Mad River connections. But it really made no difference, I looked the property over, the sugar place had been cut off, there was good, reasonable good set of solid farm buildings, a big barn, which is now, was Hor_____ and now it's the Common Man I guess. But a, he wanted to know what I thought it was worth and, well, you could of bought it for five hundred dollars but back then property wasn't worth anything. But I hated to see people with, throwing millions of dollars around, take a man's farm for nothing, you know. [27.50] So I, as I mentioned to him, the lumber, the lumber has been cut off, but farmers here they go in debt, and once a year they'll try to pay up their debt by their sugarbush. And if

he probably without a doubt perhaps the sugarplace to pay his, yearly grocery bill. So I'm gonna evaluate every tree here. Big, big scroggy trees not lumber you know, as though they were lumber. It sounds fair.

Damen said. So I would say, probably five thousand.

But the property, you give what you want for the buildings. And that was about the deal. And they built the barn into, _____ the house I think, they moved that some where else. [28.40] I think he, he made good on his property, he didn't loose anything but it did help the original owner. I don't think he ever knew who done it. Ha! Ha!

JB Now that was the Patterson place?

EL That was the Patterson place. Back. Yeah. There was, three places fairly close, but two especially, Sam Patterson, came from Ireland, and he married my father's cousin. Jenny Long. And Henry Eurich, came from Germany, and he married another one of dad's cousins. A sister to Jenny. Which would be Sara, Sara Long. And there was two brothers, bought in the same area, Ed Long, and Edgar Long, Edgar is the father of Roy the one that I used to chum with, catch

short fish and all those goodies. Yeah. It reminds me of getting on something else, unless you want me to stick to the subject which I don't know as I can improve on.

JB I'd like to ask you about Roy Long.

EL Okay. Yeah. Yeah. It, he lived in the same area, and a, before, long before of course Sugarbush. So, the area was entirely different, Roy barefooted, overalls, with, he had a brother and a sister. Merrill, Roy and Kent, I can't remember the sister, she got killed and she died in the flood. [30.31] Anyway, Cora. Cora. Roy there was no money on the farm, they had enough to eat, every one did but that's about all. You, you went barefooted, maybe you'd buy a pair of shoes for dress but they weren't always the best looking. But anyway, Roy got to be 20 or 25 and he took a job, digging electric light, post holes, there was electricity as far as, in Waitsfield as far as fiddler's green and that was the end of electricity. But so they, didn't have post hole diggers back then, you dug them with long handles

shovels. You got five dollars a hole, Roy would dig average of five holes a day and most, most of them dug just a hole a day. And which, tremense money for a man never had any but he killed himself for money, he had a purpose. He was going with a, lady in Warren, Mildred Downer, [31.48] and her father owned a hotel, and beside the hotel they had a little building it used to be a carriage shed, originally but they turned it into a garage for, a couple of boys run a garage there for awhile. Roy married this girl, he had two thousand dollars saved, he married this girl and dad let his use the store the garage for a store, he, it bothered Roy him not knowing anything about the grocery business, the merchant business, what to do with just two thousand dollars. But Gardner. [32.37]

END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE

SIDE TWO

EL Gardner Hayes used to truck for all the other stores in Warren and, and he advised him. And why buy a full case, of can goods and that like. They'll split a case for you. And so that's what he done, he's buy a, half a case of, or a part or a quarter of a case or

whatever he could, you know, to have a variety to start his store. [.27] And that's how Roy got started. Roy helped an awful lot of people out, over the years, through the depression, and they just couldn't pay their bills. So, they'd leave their farm, Roy would buy it for what the lumber was worth or whatever. He owned an awful lot of property. And his taxes were big. When Sugarbush came in, Roy turned into a millionaire overnight. I mean multi-millionaire, overnight. That was a, and what a great step from the barefooted boy used to go fishing.

[1.12] Yeah. Gosh. Roy helped an awful lot of people but. They had hookups there I didn't particular approve of. We had a lumberman couldn't pay his help end of the week but they didn't want them going up to Montpelier trading in the chain stores so.

He and Roy, got together apparently, it appears that way, he'd give, Roy would give them their groceries and they'd sign a, paper, Roy would get his money from Henry Brooks. Ha! They kept the business in town. Ha! Ha! Ha! [2.00] I don't think their kids will like that but it's the truth. Ha! Ha!

JB I didn't mean to cut you off before when you were talking about the, Orseenys' and the farms up there, and you had an idea that you were another subject you were gonna go off on.

EL Well it was a, mainly the subject was mainly a family, occupied most of the German Flats and that whole area, Edgar, Edgar Long's farm joined right on to Sam Patterson's and right just above it was Henry, Henry Eurich, and just over the hill was Edgar, Ed Long. And a, so this family was a, all bordered neighbors. There was a right up that, when Damen bought, bought the Patterson place I wasn't sure just what nationality Patterson was, but there's quite a write up there about the Irishmen. Yeah Sam Patterson but I guess he came from Ireland. My dad came from Ireland but he was, part English, part Scotch. Patterson I guess all Irish. Yeah it just happen to be the neighbors together that's why I brought it up. [3.28]

JB And then you had some stories about a, Bitty and Tom Egan.

EL Ha! Ha! [3.36] It was just a little bit before my

time because these, these stories pass on from generation to generation and it was good enough so I, I don't imagine they had any chance to alter this, I wouldn't alter it anyway. It seemed later, their later life, well before then, I've got to give you a little, a little history of Tom and Bitty. I don't know what her name was, they always called her Bitty.

And, excuse me. (cough) [4.04] They loved to drink. They were as Irish as Patty's pig. And they loved to fight. Well there was no one else around to fight, but just Tom and Bitty. They stand toe and toe and slug it out sometimes she's get the best of him, but she usually got the worst of it. When she did, she'd go down and have him arrested and they'd take him to court, well they, couldn't do much about it. The courts were all held in town. They had some lawyer come in from out of town one time. And he, he thought they should do more than slap old Tom's wrist for abusing his wife cause he knew nothing about their, their living, their set up and he said, "well look at. Look at the man." The lawyers have, look at the man, look at his face. Isn't he a mean looking

man. And the judge, the old lawyer was just about as homely as they came, you know. And the old Tom he got so, I'm as good looking as ye. Ha! I guess it brought the house down. Well anyway, that was their life, they fought all the time but they seemed to enjoy it, that one night in the wintertime cold, oh it was cold, Tom went out to take care of what the animals there were, whether it was chickens or cattle or what, well anyway. But on the way back to the, to the house, he had a heart attack. And that's what they called it. He died. And he wasn't, he wasn't, Bitty didn't notice it, for quite awhile and before dark she went looking for him and found him there.

[5.50] But he was all doubled up. Well not, not too much but he was doubled up. And, I believe Oscar Eaton was the undertaker for, and he had come from Waitsfield, they believed him, of course Irish they're gonna have a wake. So they, put some kind of a weight, don't know what there was for weights but a, anyway they put some on his feet and some on his head and stretched him out the best they could, you know for the wake, and. Well of course quite a few, there

was the Sullivans, and the Foleys and quite a few Irishman, east Warren back in those days. And, Sullivans, Egans, yeah. Anyway, they, a good turn out at the wake, it's about midnight they dancing and stomping around, and someone said, "let's give old Tom a drink." [6.46] So they grabbed him by the back of the head and tipped this up and the weight come off his head and old Tom sit up in bed. Ha! Ha! It didn't take long to clear the place out. Ha! Ha! Ha! [6.58]

EV Could you say it again from the part where they went to tip him up, because you banged on the table.

EL Oh I'm sorry.

EV Tell the story from that part again.

EL Yeah. From the, let's see. I start where?

EV From when they went over to the coffin to give him a drink.

JB Oh!

EL Oh yeah. Yes. They were dancing, and drinking and having a good time, and somebody suggested that old Tom be joined into the celebration. So one or two guys went over to give him a drink and apparently

moved his head and the weight came loose, and up sit
Tom in bed, and that was, that finished the party, the
wake. Ha! Ha! [7.49] I guess that's it.

JB That's a good story. One of the things I wondered do
you want to try a couple of versus of Wilson Averill's
hack with a, that part about Bitty Egan?
(shuffling of feet, short pause) [8.33] Cause she's
in about the first verse. As I remember.

EL Okay. This is, here's number one, I didn't think it
was quite that soon. There I got it, and Bitty, okay.
Yeah.

JB Okay.

EL Yeah.

JB And maybe if we can, can you see it if we put it flat
here so, just because the ruffling.

EL Okay. My eyes aren't that good.

JB Here how about these.

EL Okay.

JB Do you want those?

EL No. No. No. Those, I have to get rid of those, right.

MS Let me just move this.

EL Okay. I'm gonna, I'm not used to the, not used to

the, I don't know the words I'm having to read them.
So this isn't be too good but it will give you the
general idea. [9.21]

JB Great.

EL It seems that this yellow painted hack, was a, is the
name of the original song. They were rebuilding the
schoolhouse in east Warren, and they seemed to have
spent more money than they should. And somebody is
always is someone, somebody used the tune of the
yellow painted hack, and made up, a parody on it, and
they got, I guess they got, didn't overlook any one
that was, that was a, involved. Anyway.

One Sunday morning early, Bitty Egan and Alden Foley,
Walter VanDusen, Old Tom and his dog Jack, a friend of
theirs from Hardwick and Mobey Wilson Averill all went
out a riding in the yellow painted hack. Then woood
be dandy, ah Napoleon he is a pacer, the finest on the
track, then it's woood my dandy, go along Napoleon, he
is the pacer the first on the track. He will do 240
drawing Wilson Averill's hack. The road was rough and
muddy, Bitty looked quite ruddy. But all along Waldon
Thomas for whiskey had no lack. The reverend he was

smiling as though his friend beguiling, and onward
they went riding in the yellow painted hack. Then we
sing the chorus again. They drove to neighbor Esteys'
to see the good boy Charlie, have his hitch the ponies
while they all went out back, to trample down the
clover and to look the schoolhouse over, and all ride
home together in the yellow painted hack. [11.17]
Then many, many more versus. And they're equally as
good.

JB Ha! Ha! Ha! You, did, I think you told me that a,
something about the, influence of the radio and was
that the song Up Jump the Devil or?

EL No.

JB No I.

EL No those a, this Up Jump the Devil, you know Nashville
Tennessee hillbilly stuff.

JB Yeah. But. That came in from the.

EL I picked that up, since World War II.

JB Okay. And then you had some kind of circus song
didn't you?

EL Well this is, one of the parodies that dad used to
sing at the, yeah, if I can remember it? [12.09]

(short pause)

MS Okay.

EL Old pinky Barnham's great big show was in an awful stew, they lost the curiosity and they don't know what to do. It happened just a week ago, oh how they wept and cried, and through the crowd it quickly spread, the old baboon had died. And they wanted I should take his place and do the best I could. They locked me up in a great big cage with monkeys, bad and good. They called me Crowley Number Two, the kids stuck pins in me. They'd feed me candy and peanuts, how pleasant that would be. My sister had a policy upon her husband's life, he ran away and left us sad an broken hearted wife, she said if he were only dead, the insurance she might claim, so she bought a coffin and on it engraved his name. She wanted I should take his place, and do the best I could, to play off dead and be nailed up in a coffin made of wood. She said, when the mourners were all gone, she said, she's set me free. Perhaps she might forget it, oh how pleasant that would be. [13.32] I guess I missed some of it but. It's hard to remember. There was another one

sang, this is an Irish song, that one is pretty good.

Yeah. I think I got most of it.

Times were hard in Irish town, every thing was going down, Pat Malone was pushed for ready cash, he for life insurance spent all his money to a cent. Now all this affairs had gone to splash, then his wife spoke up and said, "Dear Pat, if you were only dead, that twenty thousand dollars we could take." So Pat laid down and tried to make out that he had died until he smelt the whiskey at the wake. [14.21] Then Pat Malone forgot that he was dead. Shouted from the bed, if this wake goes on a minute, the corpse he must be in it, you got to get me drunk to keep me dead. So they gave Pat Malone a _____, afterwards they filled him up, gently lowered him back up on the bed. I've got it wrong. At the morning gray everybody felt so gay, they all forgot he only played up dead. So they took him from the bunk, still alive but awful drunk, laid him in a coffin, with a prayer. The driver of the cart said, "be dead I'll never start." Until I see that someone pays the fare. Then Pat Malone forgot that he was dead. Shouted straight, raised

himself and shouted from the bed. If this, you dare doubt me credit, you'll be sorry you said it. I'll drive on, or else the corpse will break your head. So they started out on the cemetery route, the neighbors tried the widow to console. Until they hit the base on Malone's last resting place. And they gently lowered Patrick in the hole. And then the sod begin to drop, it burst off the coffin top, quickly to the earth he did ascend. I forgot the finish. Well anyway, lucky he forgot he was dead. [15.52]

JB Ha! Ha! That's quite a song.

EL Yup. Yeah most of the songs are similar to that. Old German song, _____, they're all similar. Shall I sing that one. Ha! Ha!

There was a good old German man who's name was Mr. Dongoback, he was very fond of sausages and sauerkraut oh lack, so he build him a great big butcher shop, the largest ever seen, got him up a patten right making sausages by steam. Oh Mr. Dongoback, how could you be so mean. Sorry you invented that here wonderful machine. For dogs and cats and long tail rats no more will they be seen, for they grind them in sausages in

the Dongoback machine. One day a little boy came walking in the store, called for a pound of cheese saw walking around the floor as the boy was standing there he whistled up a tune, sausages begin to dance themselves around the room. Oh, Mr Dongoback how could you be so mean, sorry you invented that here wonderful machine. [17.00] Dogs and cats and long tail rats no more will they be seen. But we'll grind them into sausages and Dongoback machine. One night Dongoback machine some reason it failed to go. So Dongoback he crawled inside to see about you know, his wife was taken with nightmare came walking in her sleep, she gave the crank a hang and a yank and dongoback was meat. Oh Mr. Dongoback how could you be so mean, sorry you invented that here wonderful machine, for dogs and cats and long tail rats no more will they be seen, we grind them into sausages and dongoback machine. [17.40]

JB Ha! Ha! Ha! That's a pretty tough one.

EL Well those are the types of songs they, they used to have for, for novelty, that is, they're jokes, more or less jokes on people or nationalities, that. (short

pause)

JB Now the other thing I was gonna ask you about was your landscaping business because did you start that once Sugarbush came in, was that a? No.

EL No my brother, older brother, he a, he went to school and studied it, then he went to, further his ability by practical working at the Armstrong in the White Plains, New York. Armstrong a _____ company.

[18.38] He came back home after working two or three years with them and started his own company and I, I was a partner with him, but he done the studying. I learned from him. As we went along. And we had, eventually we had all the work there was from when we got rid of Davey and Bartlett, all the big companies.

We had it all. But a, [19.00] that was back in the days, rope, everything was done with ropes. One, of course I, I didn't work only three or four years my brother and he got married and, her brother took over so, my brother and I dissolved the partnership. But a, that was the way we done it, of course an awful lot of work back then because of the, 1938 hurricane. Oh in Montpelier, they had, big elm trees and most of

those big elm trees were blowing down and, we had one, out here right across, there are thousands of dollars of lights there, a playhouse, a big tree, it must of been three feet through it, you know. Right across those lights and they didn't want it to come down, break them, it was quite a job to get that off, we had almost used skylights you know. [20.03] It was interesting work, but hard work.

JB Now you also sort of, I think at one point, distinguished, we were talking about the ski areas and you sort of distinguished the difference between Mad River and Sugarbush, and a.

EL Well, Sugarbush, Mad River was more of a friendly place, that was the first one. And it, similar crowd patronized it, Sugarbush went out further, it reached out further, it had a, well everyone, you didn't know everyone was gonna be there and, I, I know I, this, this is going to, yes, of course one of the big changes. Damen told me, he wasn't gonna allow any Jewish money in Sugarbush. And a, [21.17] I can't tell you the name of the, this Jewish gentleman, but he wanted to buy some land off of Damen. Damen

figured I'll set it so he won't buy. "How much you want?" He said an acre for land. Damen said, "\$48,000 an acre." Good, I'll take four acres. Ha! Ha! Jewish money got into Sugarbush. Ha! Ha!

JB But Mad River was a much more of a family place.

EL Family, yes. Yes, we're a family community, it's a, I don't know just the word for it, everyone seemed to know, the same ones come back, every year, it was a friendly, more friendly place.

JB Now the other thing that I've heard, about Warren is that in the early days, it was much more of a mill town, logging, it was sort of manufacturing and.

EL Oh yes. Well maybe it's a, many, yes that would be quite interesting for, for the younger people to know about. [22.36] They had a, lumber camps, they had sawmills, and not having the transportation like they have today, with the manufactured the lumber where it was and, this is, this is a, a story which probably happens in lots of places but not, not to finish like this. The only one I'll use a name on, because the only one I knew the names of, is a, lumber mill, of

course the mill went, it had to have a man, a nightwatchman, this a nightwatchman apparently slept during the day time. And, one of the, the lumberman, running his wife, while he's sleeping. A man named, Charlie Maxim, all the old timers in Waitsfield know who he was, in Fayston, he was a, trapper, hunter, he liked wildlife like that and, he was ingenuous and some how he run a wire from the mill, up steep, right behind it, a big steep bank and it's, almost a vertical drop. And, [24.01] he hitched that wire, he, tightened the wire but on the wire he had a tin, tin can. A hole through both sides of it, and he had a string on it, a light, a very light string on it and he let go of that can, and it'd go down this steep wire, and it made the worst dam squeak like an animal you know, and then he'd pull it back up and let it go again. Those, this fellow of course he's a nightwatchman. He was on duty, the fellow was running, Maxim's friend's wife. [24.34] And he waited until he got ready to go out, and make his lines and he let that can come down through and this is the damest screeching animal that guy had ever

heard, boy he put, he run for the, for the boiler. He went into the boiler, I guess he figured the fire would protect him. Ha! He tried it a little later on and another screech came out. Ha! That was the end of him. He quit, he left. Ha! Ha! [25.00] Yeah they had the, the, they have, they used to have go devils and they'd draw as much as three thousand feet.

On one team of horses. But sometimes like the dug way and the steeper hills they, they go in groups, they'd take the team off another, they'd double up the teams for the steep hills. Three thousand feet for one team would draw. On a, on a go devils, that was like a dray, you had a sled in front, which would turn.

EV Could you start that again please? That was like a dray. You hit the microphone. Thanks.

EL Oh I'm sorry. Yes. A the go devils was a, in a smaller vehicle, a smaller vehicle, yeah it would be called a, a dray. Your sled is turnable, in front, you have a, kind boat, and the rest, your dray runs back, your go devil runs back, and you have a bunk on the very end of the, well the timbers that, anyway it,

if anyone knows what a dray is you know what a go devil is. Well it's a larger scale with a bunk on back where the dray doesn't always have one. And they could, they could draw a very large load. [26.18]

They, and the roads, of course in the wintertime they rolled them, and when these logs trucks came down through, they, I don't know, whether it was brakes or what it was, but they start gauging a little hole and then it keep getting bigger. And they called them cradle holes. So in the sleigh lots of times we'd want to get in a hurry, boy, go in those cradle holes, we, it's quite a bump. It's quite a bump. And there were lots of them. [26.53]

JB One of the things I was going to ask you to do is how you would kind of characterize Warren, Waitsfield, Fayston and Moretown, as their differences.

EL About the only difference in the way of life, would be the nationality. Canadian French population came down most they settled in Fayston. And the, there was no village, Fayston had no village and no stores. They used Waitsfield, for their place of business. Yes.

Many of them. Many of them couldn't speak English, they done very well. I played pool with them. And, young, younger people that came down. They are very, very sensitive about their, about their, language, their English, so don't make fun of them. Or you in trouble. Ha! Ha! No, a lot of French. But a, there were two class of French. The later ones came down, more merchant people, merchants family, sons and families. And the first ones that came down was the horse traders. And I'm gonna tell you don't trust those horse traders. They, they were a different set of people. Ha! Ha! Yeah they. I, of course the, the terrain made an awful lot of difference of, not too many. Waitsfield was farming, Warren was more of a, at one time, was more of a small manufacturing town, they had a tub factory, they had two saw mills. Mary Edna, I don't know what it was, she put up, washed out in the 27 flood, but she was going to work about a hundred women so as she was building a mill of some kind there. They, [29.10] and they had three stores in Warren. Oh, Waitsfield had five stores. Operating at the same time. I don't know where they got their

business but they seemed to make money all of them. Seemed to live. But it's all farmers. It was back then they didn't many of the things they did, eggs they wouldn't buy them like they do today. You bring your eggs in and, you had to light them, they had to, a little box, you put your egg in it, and if it looked all right, if it wasn't all right it would be a little dark and. You can get by without laying bad eggs but.

But they, take farmers eggs, they'd trade for groceries. A lot of produce was trade, traded. It was for cash. And that's more the times that it was, the valley I guess that time all these small towns was doing the same thing.

JB What about Moretown? Now that was different wasn't it? Because.

EL Yes. That was a one man town. Actually it was, B.S. Ward, Burton Ward. His father before him started a lumber business, Hiram. Hiram. That be a, in 1800s, way way back. Burton, this is a, the one I remember he was an elderly man when I was a boy. And, you had, they had a store. They had wood, you had your fuel, you had your food and the people that worked for, B.S.

Ward, never got out of debt. Nobody. Unless you rich when you went there, you wouldn't be working for them if you were.

EV Could you, I'm sorry, you hit the table again.

EL Okay.

EV Could you say what you were saying about people who worked for Ward never got out of debt.

EL Never got out of debt.

EV If you could start the whole, wait a second Miles is gonna. [31.16]

MS Yeah I'm all set.

END OF SIDE TWO, TAPE ONE

SIDE Three, Tape Two

MS Okay.

EL Mr. Ward, Mr. B.S. Ward had lumber lots, and he had people cutting lumber for him, and they had two, or three sawmills too that I remember, that were quite large sawmills, so their help burned their fuel, they furnished wood, and they had one big grocery store, that they sold about everything, yup. About like country, old country stores, they had, much bigger variety [.51] then they have today in any one store,

so a, the help would go in and get credit, and they never got out of debt. They, every one that died would, died owing Ward. There might of been an exception, there, when I say everyone but the majority.

JB Otis Wallis talks about a, the teams going from Moretown up 100, I guess to Fayston. They logged mostly in Fayston? [1.26] Or? Do you know about that?

EL Just the logging was mainly in Fayston, yup. Fayston was, was very wooded town at one time, but, and that was their main produce was lumber and they cut out a lot of it. And this was, of course some of it was shipped to Ward's Lumber Mill, very little of it stayed in Waitsfield, I have forgotten where it went, possibly some of it to Waterbury. And probably it was Waterbury. It's all done with teams, all drawn with teams. [2.09] The, Waitsfield never was too much for lumber but every farmer had a sugarplace and every farmer had enough lumber of his place to, build a barn if it burned or something like that. [2.27] And, you could always a, trade lumber for your sawmill and you

didn't have to use money.

JB So another difference I guess is a, really going from a barter kind of a, economy to a cash, I mean you must of seen that in your lifetime.

EL Oh absolutely but that was, that was every where in Vermont, that was, yes. If you, that was a signs of the times every where. Farmers, Vermont farmers didn't have an awful lot of ready cash and, a, yes they all bartered. Trade. I just found out from a, from a man from California, why it was that, Vermont, Vermonters don't like lamb. [3.25] It seems that one time we, when they were trying to clear off the lumber in Vermont, they used mostly sheep to keep the brush down, growing up after they cut it, and a, the sheep done a great thing in clearing the lands for the farms. But a, no amount of cash flowing around so it wasn't a, a farmer sold meat, he sold the lamb and kept the mutton. And have you ever tried to eat any mutton? That's why Vermonters are not big lamb eaters because they didn't eat much lamb. That was sold. They ate the old sheep. Ha! Ha! Mutton. Ha! Ha! I guess they called some of them mutton heads. Ha! Ha!

JB Now, we were talking about a, the barter and exchange, but when, when did that change, certainly in the valley? [4.26]

EL That changed as soon as, the IGA stores, your larger stores came in existence, they a, that not too many years ago. That changed more since World War II, I'd say up until then there was still bartering going on a certain amount. They handled those stores were, there was something of them, if you buy something you look around one of those country stores, and I'll tell you, they, you might not be just what you wanted, but it would be, the same line. They'd have it. You might have to take a half an hour digging through, rustling a bunch of junk to find it. Ha! Ha! [5.11]

JB How do you think the skiing industry has been for the valley?

EL Well, you see we got to compete with the world, Vermont couldn't stay like it was, not and live and. In this society. That it was a good thing. It turned, many farmers that, couldn't even pay their taxes, into millionaires. Property going up like it did. And, yes, over, all and all it is a good thing

for Vermont, we, as long as the rest of the world is going like that, it's we got to keep up with it. We all say well, we should, like it used to be but it can't be. No way. [6.01]

JB Yeah often a, people say the good old days but a.

EL Yeah some of them weren't so good. They're good old days because you're young and when you're young you enjoy life and, those are the good old days. And a, when I'm, when I've been playing music, it's different people say, oh gosh, you, it depends what their age, play different songs. Oh that was, he picks the best songs, well those are the songs they were dancing when they was going with their husband or, whatever. You know what I mean. And to them, that's music.

JB Would you play us a song?

EL Oh golly! Not alone, I've got to have a backup. I don't have to have no.

JB No. You have.

EL When we get through recording here.

JB Great! Okay. [6.55] Yeah. No, I'd love to hear you. Well I think we're almost done is there anything that you can think of that you would like to tell.

EL No actually I was bothered before you came, what I could think of to talk about.

JB Well you've talked about a pile of stuff.

EL You have to, well you bringing them up was just telling a story, someone tells a story, you think of one. Ha! Ha!

JB Actually one of the things I did want you to tell was I remember you told me about the burning of the kaiser and how shocked you were about that.

EL Oh yes. Yes.

JB But I, you know that was. [7.39]

EL Yeah well that, yes, I was only ten years old at that time and, and yes it was a sad thing to me, cause he looked just like pictures of Kaiser Bill with his mustache and, and they a, out in the far and some of the town leaders, had pitch forks, they hung him up there, over a blazing, jabbed him with pitch forks and to a boy ten years old that didn't, I didn't enjoy that at all. No, I just mentioned that because one of those things that, kids shouldn't see. [8.14]

JB Okay I think that a, we're almost done.

MS Okay. I guess I'll get a little room tone now.

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[8.25]

END OF TAPE