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Transcript of DARE Interview (1966): Jaffrey, New Hampshire; Primary Informant NH004 (Tape 1003-S1)

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INTRODUCTION: The following was recorded from Dictionary of American Regional English, tape one zero zero three, side one.

FIELDWORKER: This is a recording of Carl [beep], made in Jaffrey, New Hampshire on July eleventh, nineteen sixty-six, by [beep].

- 5 INFORMANT: That used to be the [beep] farm. And then, Mr. and Mrs. [beep] bought it about thirty years ago, and, uh, their son was killed in the war, in Italy, I believe. And then they, the son was planning to build a house up there where the cathedral is. War was over, they decided to make that hilltop where the son was to build a memorial to him. And, uh, they started that, that, uh, cathedral, and, um, it's, uh, grown to be a tremendous institution. They've had as
10 many as forty thousand people there in one day. [laugh] That was, oh, must be ten years ago when that happened. But they average ten to fifteen thousand every week through July and August.

FIELDWORKER: Was that on an Easter or, was that on an Easter or some, uh, religious day that they had forty thousand people there?

- 15 INFORMANT: That was a Catholic service. Yeah. And, uh, they all couldn't get there, huh, didn't have a good road like they have now there, so they, they, um, they, uh, bumper to bumper for two or three miles back in the main highways. And, so they, they had a special act in the legislature to build that new road up there. From one nineteen right up to the cathedral. And so, now, they have no trouble with, with um, traffic. And, uh, years ago, when they had that old
20 road, they used to pay six hundred dollars a year to, for a wrecker to stay there and take the people up the hill, get stalled, the road was so narrow, excuse me a minute... We had another special act of the legislature to build a road from the cathedral down here. It used to be a winding, crooked, rough road. And, they can only build two a state park like that. So, we, we enjoyed that. And this Annett State Park, was given by Mr. Annett a great many years ago. Uh,
25 the timber was cut off, and, and, uh, then it was allowed to, to grow up again. But, only to be used, only to be cut in selec-, uh, selective cutting, not slaughter everything that came along, (you know), and, uh, as I say, Mr. Annett, he, he, um, they ga-, they named this park after him,

and he made, uh, little wooden boxes down here, great many kinds of wooden boxes, particularly date and fig boxes, and they were sent to the Middle East to be filled with dates and figs. Then came back here to be sold years ago, he made a lot of money. And, uh, then he
30 made bottle boxes and cheese boxes, and, oh, all kinds of boxes. Now, let's see, what else can I say?

FIELDWORKER: Uh, the cathed—

INFORMANT: Oh then when the cathedral got busy, uh, oh, it was a CCC Camp too, through, in
35 the early thirties. And, uh, the barracks were all through there, washrooms, uh, kitchen and dining hall up there. And then, when the war came on, why, the barracks was sold for second hand lumber, and, uh, then when the cathedral got so busy the Dr. [beep] asked the state park department to open up for a picnic area. And, so, we've been open here sixteen years as a picnic area. That's about all there is to that.

40 FIELDWORKER: Now what are some of the attractions they have at the cathedral, they have an altar there, with—

INFORMANT: Well, they have what they call the, uh, the Altar of the Nation. And, uh, practically every country in the world has sent a stone to it, and every state has contributed stones, and, uh, then they have two other altars down in back of the main altar, have to walk
45 around to get to those. Then they have the Garden of Remembrance, which is a beautiful flower garden. We'll have to see that. You haven't seen that yet, have you?

FIELDWORKER: Uh, I think, uh, when I was there before.

INFORMANT: Oh, and, um, and then, when I was in the legislature, I was in the legislature fourteen years, as I said, told you once before, uh, Mr. [beep] asked me to, uh, sponsor a
50 resolution to make the altar a national shrine. And it passed both branches of our state legislatures, a concurrent resolution to memorialize congress in Washington to make the altar a national shrine. It passed both branches of congress as a national memorial to all war dead. It's, uh...

FIELDWORKER: Uh, what kind of work do they do here in the CC camp—{CCC?

55 INFORMANT: They used to build} roads, and, and, uh, bridges, and little ponds, and, and, um, they were here during the hurricane, and they were able to, they were allowed to clean out a big farm, the debris from the highway, fifty feet in from the highway. So, they did a lot of good.

FIELDWORKER: Uh huh. Did they, uh, make these two little ponds up alongside of the road up here?

60 INFORMANT: Little what?

FIELDWORKER: Little ponds, going {(xx)—

INFORMANT: No, no,} they didn't make those.

FIELDWORKER: Well, how about this larger one that they swim in?

INFORMANT: Well, that's, uh, that's always been there.

65 FIELDWORKER: Uh, which lake was that?

INFORMANT: Contoocook, that's where they swim.

FIELDWORKER: And what do they call that now?

INFORMANT: Well, it's called s-, i-, officially on the map, it's Contoocook Lake. But all these summer people call it Lake Sunshine. [laugh]

70 FIELDWORKER: And, uh, you say that used to be Long Pond.

INFORMANT: Long Pond. I used to sail an ice boat on it years ago.

FIELDWORKER: Is that right?

INFORMANT: I was the only one in town that had an ice boat.

FIELDWORKER: I've never seen one. What do they, um, I've seen pictures of them.

75 INFORMANT: Yeah, well, they, uh, they have a main sail, and a jib sail, and, uh, a tiller in the back, the back runner has a tiller on it. Then they have a platform with two runners up front. And these, um, sails are connected to the boom and, and it was really a thrilling [laugh] sport.

FIELDWORKER: What were these runners like? Were they...

INFORMANT: They were, they were iron, um, made to cut the ice (xx), so they wouldn't slew.

80 They were sharp, just like skate.

FIELDWORKER: Did you have them made specially, or...?

INFORMANT: N-no, uh, well, yes, uh, the man I bought it of, had them made specially, but they, there were a lot of those, uh, ice boats out on Mystic Lakes in Winchester. That's where mine came from originally.

85 FIELDWORKER: Uh-huh.

INFORMANT: Do you know Don Kent has one?

FIELDWORKER: Yeah, on TV?

INFORMANT: Yeah.

FIELDWORKER: (Say)

90 INFORMANT: And he sails it down here (in range) on Pool Pond.

FIELDWORKER: How fast will they go?

INFORMANT: Oh, they'll go a mile a minute. [whistle] [laugh] And, uh, you can stop them, just head it into the wind, just stops almost instantly. [laugh]

FIELDWORKER: And, uh, [cough] the, uh, two runners in front are parallel to one another.

95 INFORMANT: That's right.

FIELDWORKER: Then, the one you steer by is in the back, {is connected to the tiller.

INFORMANT: That's right.} Yeah.

FIELDWORKER: And what's the purpose of the jib sail?

INFORMANT: Well, it gives you more, more, uh, speed.

100 FIELDWORKER: Do they use, {sail (xx)?

INFORMANT: No, I never used my jib sail much. I just used the main sail.

FIELDWORKER: Do they use the sail at all for steering? Or just the tiller?

INFORMANT: Just the tiller.

FIELDWORKER: And how many people will that hold?

105 INFORMANT: Well, you can get two in the cockpit, and, and you can put two on the runner plank in front.

FIELDWORKER: Is that a pretty large affair, then, or?

INFORMANT: Well, they run a plank, I think, that held the two parallel runners, and is probably ten feet wide, ten feet long, and the plank was that wide. And then it had a pole up to hold the boom. It was quite a rig. [laugh]

110

FIELDWORKER: I can imagine. Did you hold the tiller in your hand like you would a, uh, boat motor?

INFORMANT: Oh, yes. Yeah, you had to hold on to that to steer it. You had to be very careful the boom didn't come around and hit you in the head, too. [laugh] Uh, that's about all I can think of.

115

FIELDWORKER: Uh, um, now you say you had a cockpit on here. That didn't completely enclose the, uh, (xx), or was that—

INFORMANT: The cockpit was in the rear, right (where the) the hand that ran the tiller.

FIELDWORKER: Did it have a roof and a windshield, or...?

120 INFORMANT: No.

FIELDWORKER: Or just...

INFORMANT: Well, no, just was opened. (xx). [laugh]

FIELDWORKER: You still have that?

125 INFORMANT: No, it, uh, it got burned up in my hotel fire. She had a, had a hotel for over thirty years, and, and, uh, we lost, uh, twelve rooms and a big barn and an ell in the fire. And all my sport equipment, like snowshoes and skis, and the ice boat, and, and things like that—and sleds and toboggans—were all burned up. So I never bought anything more.

FIELDWORKER: Was that the, uh, inn down here?

INFORMANT: Monadnock Inn.

130 FIELDWORKER: They re-, rebuilt that then.

INFORMANT: Well, I built an addition on to it. Was an old, it was a boarding house when we bought it, but it wasn't, uh, it had no electric lights in it, had no hardwood floors, only had one and a half bathroom and I put in twelve more. And, uh, it's really a nice inn right now. The present owner is, made a lot of improvements too.

135 FIELDWORKER: Well, [cough], I understand there's a part of Jaffrey that they have a different name for, uh, doesn't appear on a map. This part we just picked up that wood in?

INFORMANT: That's Squantum.

FIELDWORKER: Squantum.

INFORMANT: Squantum.

140 FIELDWORKER: Are there any other parts of Jaffrey that have names like that?

INFORMANT: Yeah, they, there's one called Slab City.

FIELDWORKER: Where's that?

145 INFORMANT: That's up beyond, uh, between Jaffrey Center and Gilmore Pond. Called Slab City because they, they had wor-, woodworking plants there. Like this one down here, similar to this one. And then there's a Ballou City up on the Dublin, on the road toward Troy. And, uh, man-, they named that after a man named [beep]. And, um, he used to have a blacksmith shop there. At, in front of our congregational church, there's a granite, granite, uh, step. It's twenty feet long and, and a foot thick. And, uh, I guess it's seven or eight feet wide. And, uh, they got that from a quarry over in Marlborough. This was in nineteen hundred and, eighteen hundred and
150 thirty. And, [laugh], they used oxen to pull it over, (one at) a time. And I think they had, uh, eight pair of oxen that pulled it. Then coming down the hills, they had to put oxen on the rear to, to hold it back. [laugh] Was quite a, quite a job.

FIELDWORKER: Now, where's that church?

INFORMANT: Up in Jaffrey Center.

155 FIELDWORKER: Uh, whereabouts? Oh, it's on the right hand side when you're, uh, driving through {in the direction?

INFORMANT: Yes}, it's a brick church. Then there's the old meeting house nearby, which was built in seventeen seventy-five during the battle of Bunker Hill. They were raising the roof on the old meeting house and they could hear the cannon roaring down in Boston, Charlestown.

160 FIELDWORKER: Is that still standing now?

INFORMANT: Uh, that's still standing. We use that for a forum now. On Friday nights during July and August. The first forum starts tonight, by, uh, an artist from Peterborough. And, um, it's called the Amos Fortune forum, named after a colored man who belonged to the old meeting house years ago. And he gave a, when he died, he left a legacy to the church of a
165 hundred dollars to buy a communion set with. And he also left a hundred dollars to the school district in which he lived and, um, then when the school district was given up, we had to have a special act of the legislature to use that money for other purposes. And it had accumulated to twelve hundred dollars from a hundred dollars to twelve hundred. So, we used the interest from that fund for price speaking in our high school. [laugh]

170 FIELDWORKER: And what are these forums like?

INFORMANT: Well, they, uh, they're people that come and speak for nothing, they don't charge anything, and they speak on some cultural subject. We've had people like Vannevar Bush, who's president of Carnegie Institute in Washington now. He used to be vice president of MIT. And Karl Compton, who was president of MIT, and he's one of our speakers. Has been, he's dead
175 now. And, uh, Mildred McAfee Horton, she was president of Wellesley, and she gave a lecture one night a number of years ago. And we've had very distinguished men speak there. This year in August, we have, uh, um, what is Eisenhower's assistant now? Adams. Remember him?

FIELDWORKER: That Sherman Adams?

INFORMANT: Sherman Adams, he's going to be there to speak, in August, I think. Maybe I'm
180 going to, hold on a minute... [distorted] The first minister, name was Reverend Laban Ainsworth, and he preached there seventy-six and one half years. [whistle] He lived to be a hundred and two and a half. [laugh] And some of his great-grandchildren are living Ja-, in Jaffrey now, and two or three of them are ministers. And there used to be an oval—where's that picture?—right in, right in right in the belfry here there's an oval window the bell ringer
185 used to look out and watch for the minister to come across the common. As soon as he came out of the mans-, mansion the bell ringer would start tolling the bell until the minister got on the pulpit.

FIELDWORKER: Are there any other old buildings, uh, around here?

INFORMANT: Well, [cough], right next to the old meeting house is an old red school house.
190 [cough] that used to be up on the Dublin Road, but uh, the historical society got a hold of it, and had it, had the town pass a resolution to allow the, uh, the, um, historical society to move it down near the meeting house, so that will be open Saturdays and Sundays all during the summer months.

FIELDWORKER: Mm-hmm.

195 INFORMANT: And it's very, very interesting. My, uh, my mother went to school there years and years ago. Do you know the, that end of town with (all the) ark?

FIELDWORKER: Very vaguely.

INFORMANT: Well, well, then mister, the old ark was quite a boarding place. And that was just beyond the red school house in those days. And, um, a good many years ago, this old Dr.
200 [beep], he was the original homeopath doctor that came over from Germany. And, uh, he asked Mr. [beep] one time, if if he would, uh, loan, rent him a few rooms in the big house. It's a tremendous big house. [beep] (said he) didn't think so, but old Dr. [beep] made the offer so attractive that Mr. [beep] decided he'd rent him some. And he c-came for a couple of years, and then he asked if he could build a cottage on the premises, and they, Mr. [beep] said yes.
205 Well, this old doctor, homeopath doctor, he built that business up for the [beep] that boarding house business by sending his patients up there. Um, he said the curative powers in the air were better than his pills. [laugh] So [beep] never had to advertise for [laugh] business.

FIELDWORKER: What is a homeopath doctor?

INFORMANT: Well, um, I really can't explain it to you, but either don't use pills, or, or they, you
210 either don't use them or do put, use them, and I've forgotten now which is which. But, anyway, the patients got well. [laugh]

FIELDWORKER: That's good. [laugh]

INFORMANT: And, uh, as I say, he never had to advertise for business. And, uh, the place was filled all summer long, and, and, uh, a good deal during the wintertime. They had these
215 intellectual people, and uh, artists, and writers, and people of that, that culture. And, um, he, they certainly had a beautiful run business there for years and years. And, it's, uh, and then the man's [beep] man's [beep] son died, and, um, they built a road up from the main road, up toward the mountain, the foot of the mountain, and called it the [beep] Arthur [beep] Memorial Road. And we have a state park up at the end of that road now. And all the trails start
220 from there up the mountain.

FIELDWORKER: Uh, Mount Monadnock?

INFORMANT: Monadnock. Yeah.

FIELDWORKER: I understand there's another road that runs right up on top of the mountain. Is there?

225 INFORMANT: No. No, there is a toll road that goes, what they call half way. You go to the end of the toll road, which they charge a dollar for each car, and, uh, then you have to walk a mile.

FIELDWORKER: Oh.

INFORMANT: But we do have a park on the top of Pack Monadnock. And there's a black road all the way to the top. And we have a park there called Miller State Park.

230 FIELDWORKER: How high is Pack Monadnock?

INFORMANT: Um, I think it's twenty-nine hundred feet. Monadnock is thirty-one sixty-six.

FIELDWORKER: They're pretty near the same, then.

INFORMANT: Pardon?

FIELDWORKER: They're pretty near the same, same height.

235 INFORMANT: Mmm, no, there's a quite a bit of difference. One's twenty-nine, the other's thirty...

FIELDWORKER: Well, couple hundred.

INFORMANT: Oh, oh, Monad-, Pack Monadnock is around nineteen hundred.

FIELDWORKER: Oh, I see.

240 INFORMANT: Yeah. I'm sorry. Got it wrong. Yeah. But, um, when we keep a couple of boys on Mount Monadnock during the summer months to police it, and also they sell refreshments like tonic and candy. Some days they pick up a hundred dollars up there, selling candy and, uh, tonic. They, uh, they take up something that they can mix with water. There's water up there, and springs are not far from the top of the mountain. So, they, uh, mix, uh, their drinks right there.

245

FIELDWORKER: Everyone who buys has to walk that mile up to the top.

INFORMANT: Oh, on the toll road, yeah, but up at Monadnock, you have to walk two miles.

FIELDWORKER: Oh, if they stop at the state park

INFORMANT: Yeah, if they stop at the state park they have to walk two miles. But, uh, they, they get tremendous crowds in the fall to climb Monadnock. Oh they must, they have two and three thousand people that go up there some weekends. Yeah, it's tremendous. Yeah, they're the last park to close in the fall. They close on the eleventh of November. Veteran's Day.

250

FIELDWORKER: Mm-hmm. You were saying you had quite a collection of wildflowers planted in your garden.

255 INFORMANT: Yes, I used to have them from early April until end of September. There was always something in bloom. Huh.

FIELDWORKER: Did you find them all around here?

INFORMANT: Oh, yes, all around Jaffrey.

FIELDWORKER: What were some of the, uh, varieties you had?

260 INFORMANT: Well, I used to have, um, oh, six or eight different orchids, and, um, then I had the cardinal flower and the lupines, and, and the arbutus, and, uh, the, oh, hepaticas, and bitter, (it's out of this), that ginger, wild ginger, and spring beauty, and I had the May, May apples, and, uh, oh, I must have had a dozen different orchids.

FIELDWORKER: Did you have much trouble transplanting them?

265 INFORMANT: No, they used to propagate very well for me.

FIELDWORKER: Were they all perennials?

INFORMANT: Um, practically all were, yes. A good many of the wildflowers are perennials. And I had thirty-five varieties of ferns. Ferns was my hobby, really. Huh. We had, I had one fern called a walking fern. It's, uh, grows in Massachusetts. That was one fern that was given to me.
270 And then I had what they call the, the, um, climbing fern. It's, um, it grows around Connecticut. That was given to me too. And it's against the law to take it out of the state of Connecticut.

FIELDWORKER: The climbing fern, is that something like an ivy?

INFORMANT: Something like it, yes. Only the leaves are very small and dainty. Yeah. And it was a, it was an interesting hobby. Had a guest there one time that got me interested in ferns, and
275 he gave me two of these rare ones. And they had the, then I had a bulbiferous bladder fern given to me by him. And that propagates by root and by spores, and by bubblets. [laugh] It was very interesting. And I, I went up into Vermont and found some of that too. Brought it down.

FIELDWORKER: What are some of the more common ferns around here?

INFORMANT: Well, the common ferns are the lady fern, and, and sensitive fern, and the
280 cinnamon fern, the interrupted fern, and, and the ostrich fern, and, and, uh, then uh, some of the rarer ones are the wood's ear, wood's ear ferns, they grow up in an altitude, they don't grow down in low temp-, low altitudes, you've to get up two thousand, more than two thousand feet to find them. And they grow up on Monadnock and up on Gap Mountain which is a little foothill of Monadnock. And, uh, let's see...

285 FIELDWORKER: That eagle fern, is that...?

INFORMANT: That's very common, yes, that's what they call a break.

FIELDWORKER: What's a break?

INFORMANT: They call it a break, yes. And, um, oh, I had a lot of ferns, I can't think of them now. Lost all interest in them.

290 FIELDWORKER: I understand you found, uh, your supper growing here in a someone's lawn a while back.

INFORMANT: S-, found what?

FIELDWORKER: Found your supper growing. That big {puffball.

INFORMANT: Oh, that big,} uh, puffball, yes.

295 FIELDWORKER: How do you cook that?

INFORMANT: Well, you, um, you slice it up, and, uh, fry it just like you would mushrooms. Yeah.

FIELDWORKER: And do you season that with salt and pepper?

INFORMANT: Salt and pepper, a little butter. Fry it in butter, margarine. Yes, it's, uh, doesn't
300 take long to cook it, Just about five minutes. You sauté it like you would mushrooms.

FIELDWORKER: Is there, I don't imagine that you can eat those when they, uh, oh, say in the fall, when they get dried out?

INFORMANT: No, they're no good then, that time, but...

FIELDWORKER: So what months are they, in what months are they edible?

305 INFORMANT: Um, well they'd be ready to eat now, if there, if you can see any of them.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

INFORMANT: I haven't seen any this year. And they won't come out, well mushrooms won't come out until we get some rain. If we get a good steady rain of, of a couple of days for those mushrooms, and, and, um, puffballs would shoot right up. [distorted] The story of Arthur the
310 Rat. Once upon a time, there was a young rat who couldn't make up his mind. Whenever the other rats asked him if he would like to come out hunting with them, he would answer in a hoarse voice, "I don't know." And when they said, "Would you rather stay in side?" he would say yes or no either. He'd always shirk making a choice. One fine day, his Aunt Josephine said to him, "Now look here. No one will ever care for you if you carry on like this. You have no more
315 mind of your own than a greasy old blade of grass." The young rat coughed and looked wise, as usual, but said nothing. "Don't you think so?" said his aunt, stamping with her foot, for she couldn't bear to see the young rat so cold-blooded. "I don't know," was all he ever answered,

and then he'd walk off to think for an hour or more, whether he would stay in his hold in the ground or go out into the loft. One night, the rats heard a loud noise in the loft. It was a very dreary old place. The roof let the rain come washing in, the beams and rafters had all rotted through, so that the whole thing was quite unsafe. At last, one of the joists gave way, and the beams fell with one edge on the floor. The walls shook, the cupola fell off, and all the rats' hair stood on end with fear and horror. "This won't do," said their leader. "We can't stay cooped up here any longer." So they sent out scouts to search for a new home. A little later on that evening, the scouts came back and said they had found an old-fashioned horse barn where there'd be room and board for all of them. [cough] The leader gave the order at once. "Company, fall in," and the rats crawled out on their holes right away and stood on the floor in a long line. Just then the old rat caught sight of young Arthur—that was the name of the shirker. He wasn't in the line, and he wasn't exactly outside it. He stood just by it. "Come on, get in line," growled the old art [sic] coarsely. "Of course, you're coming too." "I don't know," said Arthur calmly. "Why, the idea of it. You don't think it's safe here anymore, do you?" "I'm not certain," said Arthur, undaunted. The roof may not fall down yet. "Well," said the old rat, "we can't wait for you to join us." Then he turned to the others and shouted, "Right about face. March!" and the long line marched out of the barn while the young rat watched them. "I think I'll go tomorrow," he said to himself, "but, then again, perhaps I won't. It's so nice and snug here. I guess I'll go back to my hole under the log for a while just to make up my mind." But during the night, there was a big crash. Down came beams, rafters, joists—the whole business. Next morning—it was a foggy day— some men came to look over the damage. It seemed odd to them that the old building was not haunted by rats. But at last, one of them happened to move a board, and he caught sight of a young rat, quite dead, half in and half out of his hole. Thus the shirker got his due, and there was no mourning for him.