

MRS. JENNIE M. GRAY

FOLKLORE

G.9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-1-

AREA

Most of my stories have been collected in Deblois, Maine. I was born in Deblois and lived there for about twenty years of my life. Most of these stories I have heard since I was old enough to remember.

Deblois is a small town on Route 193, between Cherryfield and the "Airline" (Route 9). It was founded by John Deblois. At one time it was a very thriving little town, but at the present only about ten or eleven families live there. There is no school. The one boy who attends school is transported to Cherryfield. A majority of the inhabitants are retired, but the ones who are not, go outside to work. As can be told from the school situation, there are few young people there. Those who attend church do so at Cherryfield. Most of the families do enough farming for their own use. There are no telephones connected to the "outside", and until the past year there were no electric lights. Most of the homes previously had gasoline powered generators.

Deblois has always been quite a hunting country, with many sports coming in from out of state. Many of the men have been, or are, guides to them. Blueberries in the summer now bring an undesirable group of Indians to the area.

*Deblois
Cherryfield*

G.9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-2-

AREA (continued)

During the last two or three years the mail has been delivered by an R.F.D. Carrier. Previous to this a stage route delivered mail, passengers, and freight.

In this immediate area there are large deposits of Peat Moss. Some twenty years ago one of the largest peat processing plants in eastern Maine was located in this town.

From an active little sawmill town at the turn of the century, the industry and population have continued to dwindle until it's now nearly a Ghost Town. No School, no church, no Post Office, no store, no industry, and very few people.

G.9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-3-

BIOGRAPHY

Clyde Merritt

Clyde Merritt was born in Eastbrook, Maine on August 7, 1911. When he was about two years old, he moved with his parents to Deblois, where he has lived since. His father and grandparents had spent the most of their life there, also. His mother was born in Eastbrook, and lived there until her marriage.

Clyde has worked in the woods, on river drives, and now has a truck with which he plows snow in the winter and, in between the storms often hauls logs. During the summer he works on road construction nearby.

*Eastbrook
Deblois*

G.9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-4--

151 04

[2400] Molasses Pond, in Eastbrook got its name from the Indians.
Two of them were crossing the pond in a canoe with a jug of
molasses. They upset the canoe and spilled the molasses into
the pond. From that time it has been called "Molasses Pond".

Coll.:Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.:Clyde Merritt

B

Molasses Pond
Eastbrook
Deblois

[W181] Fred Davis was just as odd as they come. When anyone in
[W195] the neighborhood got anything new, he was angry and would walk
by on the opposite side of the road, sometimes for weeks,
according to how much he disliked what they bought. One time
Mother and Dad got a new phonograph. They were new, and it was
not to Fred's liking. For about two weeks, Fred walked on the
other side of the road, and would not look or come in the
yard. Finally, he would edge back by setting on the lawn,
then on the store steps, and finally he came to listen to it.
He was funny.

Coll.: Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Clyde Merritt

B

Deblois

Fred Davis and his brother, Ben, was always fighting. I don't know what they fought about. Anything and everything, I guess. One time when he was sick, Ben went down to see him. Ben [p251.5.3] thought that he was dying, and he was afraid that he would die without telling him where his money was hidden. He went into the room, leaned over his bed and asked, "Do you want to tell me anything?" Fred was too wise for him, though. He didn't tell him a thing!

Coll.:Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.:Clyde Merritt

B

Deblois

G. 9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-7-

151 07

[J1930] I remember one time Fred Davis was up here, it was about 1926, I guess. There was an eclipse of the sun. He thought the world was coming to an end. He wouldn't stay alone. We was working down in the woods, I remember. He came down where we was. He walked right back and forth. He knew the eclipse was coming, but he was scared just the same. He'd walk back and forth and say, "She's never comin' back, Boys." He was some worried, now let me tell you.

Coll.: Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Clyde Merritt

B

Deblois

Fred Davis was awful nervous. I remember of hearing Dad tell about Fred working in the shingle mill. He used to bunch shingles, and of course he was right beside the edger. He tied the shingles and he had to tie them tight, so he would get right up on the table to put his weight on them when he went to bind them off. Well, this day he was up there, when the belt to the edger broke. Of course he was up there with his foot on that bunch of shingles, and that old belt just a thrashing around. He didn't want to take his foot off the bunch, or rather, he couldn't, as it was caught, and the belt was trreshing right around his head. He was scared to death.

Coll.: Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Clyde Merritt

B

Deblois

G.9

151 09

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-9-

[F 551]
[F 517.1] Towny Campbell used to peddle through here, too. He peddled brooms. He had a club foot. He didn't wear a shoe on it like most people with a club foot do. He had a suitcase rig on it. A box thing for some reason. He peddled brooms, mops, brushes. I don't know, it might have been the Fuller Brushes. I remember him for the club foot.

I remember one time Fred Davis went up to Uncle Bert's. As he went in through the little shed that was on the house, he went in to the house. The first thing that he said was, "Is Towny Campbell dead?" Uncle Bert thought he was crazy. But he had seen a broom on his way in, and thought of Towny.

Coll.: Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Clyde Merritt

B

Deblois

G.9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-10-

Charles Randall used to peddle through here. He sold Watkin's Products. He was a tall thin fellow. He came with a horse and buggy. He had a suitcase rig that he carried his stuff in. He used to fix horses' teeth, that is file them, etc. Had a "float" they called it to fix them with.

Coll.: Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

- Inf.: Clyde Merritt

B

Debl.

NOTE: I asked him about Jake the Jew. I remember vaguely of his being through there, and how frightened I was of him. I can remember no reason for my fear.

Oh, yes, Jake the Jew used to be through here. He died not too many years ago. He used to stay over to Aunt Ellen's. I can remember one time he was there he had a sick horse. That's about all I can remember.

Coll.:Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.:Clyde Merritt

B

Deblois

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-12-

NOTE: I asked about the cart that is fastened in the top of his barn. It is a small hand made two-wheeled cart.

[2400]

Yes, that cart was in the top of the barn when I bought the place. I bought the place from George Libby. His father, Rayme Libby, owned it before that. I don't know who owned it before Rayme did. I have asked several people, but they didn't know. It seems that the people who did had a little boy. The father made the cart for him. Not long after, the little boy was killed, or died. After he died, the father put the cart in the top of the barn, and said it would always stay there. When he sold the house, he asked them not to take it down. When I bought it, they asked me the same. It came down a few years ago, as the rope had rotted, but we put it right back up there. It won't come down again. It has been there fo over a hundred years.

Coll.: Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Clyde Merritt

B

29

Fred Davis was quite a character. He seldom went anywhere without a pack on his back. It was a home made knapsack, made of an old grain bag. Everyone said it was full of money. He did have a lot of money. I remember one time, I think it was when I bought this house, I had to have some money, so I went down and talked with Fred. Yes, he said he would let me have it. He went into that front room that he never used. He always had it piled up with boxes and stuff. Well, I heard him moving boxes around in there. Pretty soon, out he came with the money. Once in awhile when he wanted to go fishing, or go somewhere like that, he would bring his pack in to my mother and father and ask them to keep it. As far as I know, they were the only ones that he ever trusted with it. I often wondered what was in it, but I never found out.

Coll. : Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Clyde Merritt

B

Deblois

Do you know where the old Bacon Place is? Well, it is out on the Airline. The other side of Main River. Back when Old Man Bacon was alive, he was quite a man to scare people. One night a tramp came through and wanted to stay. The old man said all right, he could stay. During the evening Old Bacon took out his knife and spent most of the evening whetting it to a fine edge. When he was satisfied, he stuck it into the window sill and said, "There, stay there! I might need you before morning."

The tramp had taken this all in, so after Bacon had finished, he took out HIS knife, whetted it and stuck it into the window sill, saying, "Stay there, I might need ~~YOU~~ before morning." Old Man Bacon had found one person he couldn't scare.

[w32]

Coll.; Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.; Clyde Merritt

B

Main
Deblo

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-15-

Old Man Bacon, I don't know what his name was, was quite a man. They say he lugged all the lumber to build his house with up through the woods. He kept working on it. He would lug some until he got tired, then he would put them down and go back to get some more. He had boards and lumber all the way along. That's how he built his house. It was quite a ways up in there. I [F631] guess it was all of ten or twelve miles. He lugged every bit of it on his back.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf. Clyde Merritt

E

Deblois

G.9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-16-

(2400) I don't suppose you remember the cattle drives that they used to have do you? I think the last one must have been around 1920 or 1921. They used to make a cattle drive through here. They would send someone through to buy any cattle that were for sale, then in the fall they would come through and pick them up. I don't know who had it. They had a horse and wagon. They always had a dog and three or four boys with them. They would take the cows to Bangor to the slaughterhouse. The last one came through at night. Everyone would know when they were coming and keep their cattle tied up so they wouldn't get loose and follow the herd.

Coll. : Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Clyde Merritt

B

Deblois

You know they always say that a murdered person will come back to the scene of the murder. Well, I know it to be true, as I [E 414.1] saw one. This person wasn't exactly murdered, but was killed in an automobile accident. It was on the Black's Woods Road, on [E 334.2.2] that awful turn on the Ellsworth side of the Fox's Pond. Well, I was coming through there one night at just about midnight. Of [E 587.5] course they always come back at midnight. Well, I came around [E 425.1] that turn and I saw a woman coming toward me. It was said that a woman had been beheaded in the accident, and so I knew that she was coming back to find her head. She found it all right, [E 422.1.1.4] because I saw it! She had it right under her arm! I almost went out of the road, it startled me so.

E 422.1.1

Coll. Deblois, Maine

About 1950

Inf. Charlie Merritt

B

Black's Wood
Ellsworth
Fox's Pond
Deblois

[2400]

In 1928-29 the Jews from Bangor used to drive cows down to Bar Harbor in the spring. The people down there would rent them for the summer. They didn't deliver milk as they do now. They used to drive them right down the Bar Harbor road. There were dogs with them. Finally around 1928 or so the cars got so thick that they couldn't do it. They would drive them down in the spring and back in the fall. They used to buy others as they went along and drive them right along to the slaughterhouse to be used for beef.

As late as 1930, people in Bangor used to own cows. Every morning some of them would drive cows right across the Bangor-Brewer Bridge to pasture them in Brewer. Up where my father built his house used to be used as a pasture. At night they would drive them back. I don't know why they didn't milk them right there in the pasture, but they didn't.

Coll. ;Columbia Falls, Maine

December, 1963

Inf. Clyde Gray

B

Bar Har
Bangor
Brewer
Columbi

G.9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-19-

BIOGRAPHY

Mrs. Adelia Merritt

Adelia Merritt was born in East Machias, Maine, and is about 53 years old. She lived in the Hadley's Lake region of East Machias until she was graduated from high school, when she started teaching school after attending Washington State Normal School during the summer. After two years of teaching she was married to Clyde Merritt of Deblois, Maine. She has lived there since that time. She now teaches at Milbridge.

The songs that she sang for me were taught to her by her father when she was a child at home.

East Machias
Hadley's Lake
Deblois
Milbridge

G.9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-20-

[X460]

Edgar Albee from East Machias was quite a poacher. He usually had deer meat around. The game wardens were often there to check on things. The law stated that a warden could not search the bedroom of a pregnant woman. As his wife was usually pregnant--
[K300]
[K400] they had twelve children--he had a sure thing going. When the game warden came into the yard, the deer meat went under the bed, and his wife went into the bed. All was safe!

Coll.:Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

- Inf.:Mrs. Adelia Merritt

B

East Mach
Deblois

G. 9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-21-

Governor's Point in Hadley's Lake was named by Indians.

[1400]

That was a sort of a meeting place for Indians. Why, the last tribe to live there, their chief died and is buried there. They called their chief, "Governor". That is how the place got its name. The Indians used to go there when they were travelling through. It was a good place to get sweet grasses for their baskets.

Coll.: Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Mrs. Adelia Merritt

B

Governor's
Hadley Lake
Deblois

G.9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-22-

Mort Harmon was shipwrecked on one of his trips at sea off the coast of Africa. The whole crew had to stay there while a ship was built to bring them back. When he got home his wife was dead. She had died when the baby was born. The baby was about a year and a half old when he got back. Aunt Lynn had to take care of the family. He had heard of the death before he got home.

[R138]

On one of his trips he was lost overboard. He had been gone about a half hour before anyone missed him. The sea was very rough, and the captain would not turn the ship around. He said

[R150]

it was no use. He did give the sailors permission to take a small boat to go back with, if they wished. They proceeded to do so, and found Mort still swimming, waiting for them to pick him up.

Coll.: Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Mrs. Adelia Merritt

B

Africa
Deblois

G.9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-23-

[P251. B.3] Link Berry and Free Berry were brothers from East Machias. They were always fighting. That was what they lived for. They would get up in the morning fighting, and go to bed fighting, and fight all the time between. They made life miserable for those around them. Everyone thought that they hated each other. Well, Link died first. Free saw that everything was as he wanted it. He went in to see the body after it was readied for burial. He said, "Now I can die."

He went upstairs, lay down on the bed and held his breath until he died, too. They were buried together.

Coll.: Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: Mrs. Adelia Merritt

B

East Machias
Deblois

Song

MY DARK VENUS

There's goin' to be a festival this evening

[T 91.7.2] A gathering of Colored Mighty Rare

There'll be noted individuals

Of prominent distinctiveness

To permeate the colored atmosphere.

Sunny Africans of the four hundred are goin' to be there

To do honor to my lovely fiancé;

And we'll bask in honey clover

When the ceremony's over

And the parson gives the dusky bride away.

My gal's a high born lady

She's dark, but not too shady

Feathered like a peacock dressed so gay;

She ain't colored; no, she's born that way.

I'm proud of my dark Venus;

No old coon shall come between us.

Along the line, they can't outshine

That high-born gal of mine.

Coll. : Deblois, Maine 188

November, 1963

Inf. : Mrs. Adelia Merritt

A

Deblois

SONG

[p458]

THE WOODSMAN'S SONG

A is for axes that are so well known

B is for boys that use them, also;

C is the cutting we first must begin

D is the danger we oftentimes are in.

Hie derry, oh derry, and hie derry dum

Round the shantyman's dwelling there's nothing goes wrong.

E is the echo that through the woods rang,

F is the foreman, the head of the gang;

G is the grindstone that swiftly turns round;

H is the handle so smooth and so sound.

CHORUS

I is for iron we cut down the pine,

J is for jolly boys all in a row;

K is for keen edges our axes we keep

L is the lice that keep us from sleep.

CHORUS

M is the men, the head of the camp

N is the needle we mend our pants.

Q is the quarrel which we do not allow

R is the river we drive our logs down.

CHORUS

S is the sled so stout and so strong

T is the team that drew them along

U is the use we put ourselves to

V is the valley we haul our logs through.

CHORUS

THE WOODSMAN'S SONG (2)

W is the woods we leave in the spring
Now I have sang all I'm going to sing.

CHORUS

Coll. : Deblois, Maine

November, 1963

Inf. : Mrs. Adelia Merritt

A

Deblois

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-27-

BIOGRAPHY

Newell Torrey

Newell Torrey was born and raised in Deblois, Maine, as were his parents and grandparents. He has lived there all of his life. Much of his life has been spent in hunting and fishing, trapping, and other outdoors work. He is over 70 years old, but still enjoys being in the woods. In the winter he often takes his pack on his back and goes into the woods to tend the traps that he has set. He lives alone now that his wife has passed away, and is an immaculate housekeeper. During the summer he has a large garden with which he keeps his neighbors supplied with vegetables. He often mows the lawns of anyone in town who is for some reason is unable to do so. He takes no pay for this, but does this for enjoyment.

He spends very few evenings alone, but goes to the neighbors as soon as his supper is over. He loves to tell stories, mostly of hunting. He thoroughly enjoys himself in the telling, and sometimes laughs so hard that he can hardly finish his story.

Deblois

When Dad and your father was young, they didn't use to have a radio or television to watch. There used to be a lot of people around here, now I can tell you. Bart Leighton lived right across the road in that house, and he used to play the fiddle. Pete Turtolotte, he used to be up here and he played the banjo. Then John Woodard, he would come up and he used to play the piano or organ. They would get together and they would have a dance. It wasn't nothing that was planned, they just got together and all the young folks went and had a dance. They used to have some awful hassles, I can tell you.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Deblo

Times didn't use to be as good as they are now. When Uncle George Melvin was alive, he used to haul eggs from here to Bucksport with a team of horses. He used to go around and pick up eggs. He didn't pay more than twelve or fifteen cents a dozen for them. Then he'd take them and go clear to Bucksport with them. And then was prosperous times, too. There wasn't the money around that there is now. People didn't have as much. They traded work back and forth and they didn't need money. The women had a few hens and had egg money to get what they needed. The men never needed to worry about getting a job. They used to go down to Cherryfield when the Campbells and Stewarts had stores down there. They would get what they needed. Then when The Campbells and Stewarts needed men to work for them, they just looked on the books to see who owed them money and they knew who to hire. They never used to see much money, but they got along all right. They traded a lot, eggs and things. It wasn't nothing to see someone taking a wagon load of pumpkins and squash, they would load them up and take them to Cherryfield and trade them for things they needed. Why, when Hazel and Merle went to Machias to Normal School, they lived down there over a store, and they used to take eggs down to trade for the things that they had to have. People got along all right.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Bucksport
Cherryfield
Machias
Deblois

G.9
Jennie M. Gray -30-

NOTE: I asked him about the names for the following story that I had heard years ago from my Dad.: A man was grinding his [E 3863] axe one night and he was having a hard time turning it. He said, "I wish ----- were here to turn this grindstone." (The man he wished for was dead.) All at once the grindstone began to turn [E599] as fast as it could, and he was not able to leave it until his axe was all ground. It scared him almost to death.

I don't remember who it was. I remember hearing about it, though. The men didn't have any radio or television to see or hear, so they used to spend most of their evenings getting their axes ground ready for the next day. Sometimes they used to fix them so's they could turn them themselves. They would have something like a sewing machine treadle on them. If they couldn't do nothing better, they would take and cut a pole about six or seven feet long. You know that on one side of the grindstone there is a little short handle, not much more than a knob. Well, they would bore a hole in the end of the pole and slip it on over this knob, and they was able to grind their axe.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

Deblois

B

G.9

Jennie M. Gray-31-

There used to be a lot of work around here, and a lot of people. Why, your father and his brother used to have a sawmill down the river. They used to saw shingles day and night. Men brought shingle stuff in and they would saw them all winter.

Rhideouts had a box factory. They used shooks for boxes. They was kind of clumps for boxes. You could go anywhere then to cut them. You could go anywhere to pick blueberries. They would put them in these boxes and then load them on to a wagon and take them to Bangor to Haymarket Square to sell. There was a man from Columbia who worked in the mill there. He sawed barrel staves and heads. Kind of a cooper shop. They was soft wood barrels, made right down there in Rhideouts mill. They was good for fish barrels.

Twin Wilsons, they used to call them, was in the ladder business. They had a mill by the river. They sawed out a lot of stuff. They sawed out, rounded it and sent it to Boston. Of course they sawed some boards for local use, too.

When the Beddington Dam went out, it took all of the under part of your father's mill. They never used it there again. Then the first hurricane that we ever had, it blew Uncle Ell's barn down, and blew Merritt's mill down. They tore the rest down and moved it.

There used to be a lot of work around here.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Bangor
Haymarket
Sq.
Columbia
Boston
Beddington
Deblois

G.9

Jennie M. Gray-32-

The road didn't use to go where it does now. It used to go down the Lane, down past the old Rayme Dyer place. Just the cellar there now. They used to be a big set of buildings there, and they had an open shed on it. I guess it was all built, you know, but it was a big long shed, and they used to hold dances there. That was when Dad and your father were young men. Leck Shorey, she was a young girl then, she used to go down there to dance. Well, sir, one night they was down there and they was more than pegging her down (dancing) when the heater fell down. They het it with an old big stove, of course. Well, that heater fell down, and it pinned Leck right under it. Well, about that time old [F624] Rayme Dyer grabbed that stove and picked it right up and threw it right out the door. He was an awful big man. He weighed around three hundred pounds or more. He were out of the ordinary.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Deblois

Rayme Dyer, he were out of the ordinary. He was a great big man. Years ago there was a lot of big men. The Schoppees out to Spragues Falls were big men.

[F624] Your father and uncle used to have a shingle mill down by the river. Not down by the bridge, but down the river aways. They had a small road in to it, but it wan't much of a road. Well, Rayme Libby said that he had seen Rayme Dyer take one of those dry pinions--they weighed about four hundred pounds--. He said that Rayme Dyer would take one of them and put it right on his shoulder and lug it right down there to that mill. It were the only way, about, to get it there. It were almost too much for a horse.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Spragues Falls
Deblois

G.9

Jennie M. Gray -34-

F624]

Rayme Dyer were out of the ordinary. He took a barrel of flour on his shoulder and carried it from here home. (That is about two miles.) They said it didn't put him out a bit.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Deblois

Jennie M. Gray-35-

NOTE: I asked about the stage line that used to go from Bangor to Calais, over the "Airline".

Yes, there used to be a stage that went from Bangor to Calais. That is I guess it went to Calais. It might have gone farther. Your uncle used to drive the one from here to Cherryfield. That was when they lived down under the hill in that house that used to be there. They had a whole barn full of horses. He used to stay in the Mack Cook house down there. That is where Lee Willey lived, you know. He would come up here and change horses, then go up to Beddington, to the Schoppee House. That is how it come to be such a big place. A lot of people used to stay there. I remember one time they told about. Your Uncle Charlie went down there. I guess it must have been about his first trip. They had gas lights there, and of course they didn't have anything like that up here. He didn't know how to put it out, so he put it in the bureau drawer!

Arthur Tucker used to drive the mail here, too, at one time. He used to keep a horse up here to change when he got this far.

Jimmie Small was another one that drove the mail. The Post Office was down to Uncle Joe Farnsworth's then. In the winter the road would be plugged, and they was hauling logs out across Beddington Lake, and he couldn't go by road, so he used to go down to the lake and take her right across the lake. It used to be quite a haul with a team.

Coll. Deblois, Maine
November 30, 1963
Inf. Newell Torrey
B

Ban
Calais
Cherryfield
Beddington
Deblois

Jennie M. Gray-36-

NOTE: I asked him about Wilber Day.

Yes, I remember Wilber Day. He lived out there to Wesley. He was an old proacher. He was just a common laborer, you know. Of course back in them days they didn't press things too hard. He had lots of dogs. He was an old man when I remember anything about him. I don't know, but I think that that Doris Farnsworth that was up to Beddington, she was his daughter, That is, he brought her up. He took her and her brother when their mother died, and he raised them. They came from East Machias, but he brought them up. I seen him once a long time ago.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Wesley
Beddington
East Machias
Deblois

Will Driscoll from down there to Cherryfield, he was Johnny's brother, he used to make people holler. You'd think they was really saying it themselves. They do that on radio and on television now. Of course they have got it pretty well perfected now. But he used to be able to do it pretty good.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

*Cherryfield
Deblois*

I remember one time Ward had some warts on his hands. Oh, his hands was covered with them. Charles Oakes, he used to live up there to Beddington where that feller---Meserve, lives now. He used to cook on the river drives. Probably you don't remember when they used to be down here. (I did.) Well, Ward (his youngest brother) was down there one day, playin' round, you know. Well, Charles, he looked at them, and he kind of rubbed them, I guess, and he told me, he said, he guessed they would probably, they might you know go away sometime. Well, land sakes, it wan't no time at all before them warts were all gone.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Beddington
Deblois

Note: I asked about his uncle who had a reputation for being able to stop bleeding. The uncle is deceased.

[2 71.5]
[D 2161.2.2] Yes, Uncle Ell Torrey could stop bleeding. Of course that wan't nothing more than a gift. That's a gift. Of course the only ones who can do that are the seventh son of the seventh son.

I don't think that he could stop the bleeding across water. I think that he had to touch them. I think that that is nothing more than a gift. Of course he didn't pass it on to anyone. He didn't have seven sons.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Deblois

NOTE: I asked about Jake the Jew. He remembered him, but did not offer much information on him.

Oh, yes, I remember Jake the Jew. He was an old rags and rubber man. It ain't been too many years that he has been dead. He used to buy old rags, and most anything that anyone didn't want,

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Deblois

(Note) I asked about Kling Klang, the peddler.

No, I don't know as I remember him. There was an old feller that used to be through here. He were a peddler. He used to stay over to you aunt Ellen's. He died over there. He used to be called "Old Man Cole", I don't know what his name was. He come from down east somewhere. He used to peddle clams and fish, and herrings. He had an old gray horse. He used to come through here in the winter. He had just a standard sled, you know. That were before automobile days. He would stay at Ellen's. That was when they lived down to the old place. He used to go through here and go to Beddington peddling. He would sell clams right in the shell frozen solid. He had bloaters, too. They was small fish and they didn't have them packed in a box the way they do now. They would string them on edgings and hang them in the smokehouse. I think he died over to Ellen's.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

November 30, 1963

Inf. Newell Torrey

B

Deblois

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-42-

BIOGRAPHY

Harry Stevens

Harry Stevens was born in Harrington, Maine about 40 years ago. He has lived in Harrington all his life. His mother is still living there.

Harry loves to tell stories and enjoys them as much as his audience. He enjoys a good joke. He has worked as a State Highway Patrolman for quite a few years, so he comes in contact with a great many people. He remembers stories that have been told him.

Harrington

One night we went out sanding and we had done most of the road except down to Marshville. Oh, it was an awful cold night, and John and Dean was on the back of the truck. We got right down there by that little rise after you go by Joe's house. You know where I mean, don't you? Well, you know how they always pound on the body for me to rise the body. Well, they pounded and I raised the body. Pretty quick they pounded again, and I raised the body some more. Pretty soon I heard a H--- of a pounding, so I stopped the truck. Before I could get out, Old John was right in the cab with me, His eyes was bugged right out. He was scared to death, the old critter was! "Why didn't you stop the truck?" he says. I says, "How did I know that you wanted me to stop the truck?" "Well," John says, "Didn't you hear that woman screeching?" His eyes was bugged right out, you know, and Dean was just as bad as he was. They was both scared to death. "What woman?" I says. "That woman back there!" John says. I says, "There wan't no woman back there." Well, by gosh, I couldn't make them believe that there wasn't any woman back there. They swore that they had heard one and they had seen the tracks coming right along behind the sander. I wanted to go back and stop as I thought that it might be one of those little foreign cars that had gone out of the road down there, you know, and someone might be hurt. "Now," John says, "If you want to go back there and stop, I ain't goin' to stop you, but by God, I ain't goin' to be with you." Old Dean was just as bad as he was. They swore that they had seen the tracks follering right behind that sander.

Marsh

[J1786]
[E 402]

I thought it might have been a piece of ice caught between the body and the tire, and I looked it all over, but I couldn't find anything. I took them home, and then I went back down and I looked all along there, but I couldn't find a thing. I don't know what they heard.

Coll. Harrington, Maine

October, 1963

Inf. Harry Stevens

B

Harrington

Did I ever tell you about the time when John got in a fight with his overalls? Well, Old John was quite a stepper when he was young, you know. He was a young feller and he didn't want his mother and father to know what time he got in, them being both of them, ministers, you know, so he used to come in pretty careful, you know. Well, he used to hang his overalls on the corner of the (G1800) closet door, and this night he come home and it was pretty late and he was sneakin' in so's his mother and father wouldn't hear him. Well, sir, he saw them overalls hangin' on that closet door and he thought that it was a man. Well, sir, he drawed off and let him have it! Of course it was them overalls hangin' on that closet door, and Old John stuck his fist right plumb through that door!

Coll. Harrington, Maine

October, 1963

Inf. Harry Stevens

B

Harrington

I remember the time when old Harley Worcester died. You probably don't remember him, do you? Well, sir, I remember that day just as plain as can be. John and I were in the gravel pit over there near home, so when it come dinner time, we went home to dinner. Someone had been in the pit that mornin' and told us that Harley had died. I don't remember who it was that come in, but it was just before we went home to dinner. Well, harley had a brother that looked just about like him. I guess he was a little stouter than Harley was, but he looked just about like him. His name was Ben. Well, sir, John was just sitting down to dinner (J1766) when he heard someone knocking on the door. Of course people was always comin' there, as John's father and mother was both ministers, so John got up to see who was there. Well, sir, now you know, when old John opened that door and seen Ben standing there, I guess he just about dropped! He thought sure that it was Harley come back from the dead. He just looked one look, and he said, "I guess you must be looking for the old man!" That was when his father was all right, you know, and was preaching here in Harrington. John thought sure that Harley had come to see his father about something, and I tell you, he didn't finish his dinner that day. He got out of there as fast as he could go, now I tell you.

Coll. Harrington, Maine

October 19, 1963

Inf.: Harry Stevens

B

Harrington

G. 9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-47-

BIOGRAPHY

Mrs. Frances Wakefield

Mrs. Wakefield lived in Harrington during her childhood, later becoming a hairdresser. She has worked in New York, but now lives in Columbia Falls, Maine, where she has a small beauty shop.

Her grandmother, with whom she spent much of her childhood, was a very superstitious person. Frances is not at all superstitious, but remembers many of her grandmother's beliefs, which are recorded on the index file cards.

New York
Columbia F.

[D 1810] My grandmother was very superstitious. I can remember the time that she told me about knowing that something was going to happen. She said that she had been working around the house as usual. It was in the summer, that is, the last of the summer. My father was working in the fields, and she saw him come into the basement of the house. She went down to see what he was after, and she couldn't find him. She thought that he was still down there, hiding. She looked all around, but he wasn't there. She went back upstairs, and when she looked out in the field, there he was, still working. When he came in to dinner, she asked him why he hadn't answered her, and he told her that he hadn't left the field at all until he came to dinner. Well, the next day, he and my cousin left. He was going to teach school, and my cousin was going the opposite way to go to school. As they left, my grandmother said good-bye to them and told them to be very careful, as something was going to happen to one of them. They left. My father got to the place where he was going all right, but when he got there, he had a message waiting for him. My cousin had been killed in a train accident.

Coll. Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf. Mrs. Frances Wakefield

B

Columbia

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-49-

[ES30.1.6]
[D1812.5] When my oldest brother was ill, just before his death, my uncle was coming home from Cherryfield with a team of horses. It was late and darkness had come. The cemetery is a short distance from the house where we lived. As he neared the cemetery, he saw a light leave the house and come down the road toward him. Before it reached him, it turned from the road and went in to the cemetery. When my uncle reached it, he stopped and shouted, as he thought that it was someone from the house who had come down to meet him. He called out several times, but received no answer. When he came to our house he stopped and asked who had left there with a light. The answer was "No one." Within a few days, my brother was dead. The light had stopped at our family lot where my brother was soon to be buried.

This story was told to me many times by my mother when I was a child. She firmly believed in forerunners.

Coll. Deblois, Maine

Years ago.

Inf.: My memory

C

Deblois

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-50-

BIOGRAPHY

My Sons

I have three Sons and a Daughter-in-law who are living with us at present. The Sons ages are, Twenty-one, Nineteen, and Fourteen. The Daughter-in-law is Twenty-one.

As they are ~~in~~ contact with other young ones, they collect many jokes for me.

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-51-

QUESTION:

[X]

What did Tarzan say when he saw the elephant coming through the jungle with sun glasses on?

ANSWER:

Nothing---he didn't recognize him.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

QUESTION:

[X] Why wasn't Tarzan's tree house on the ground?

ANSWER:

Because it wouldn't have been a tree house.

Coll.:Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -53-

151 5

Question:

[X] When is Tarzan most likely to come into your home?

Answer:

When the door is open.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-53-

QUESTION:

[x] Why are elephants and monkeys alike?

ANSWER:

They both live in trees.

Coll.:Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.:My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -54-

[x] Question: Why does the elephant have wrinkled knees?

Answer: From shooting marbles.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-55-

(x) Why do the elephants have wrinkled knees?

Ans. He tied his sneakers too tight.

Coll.:Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.:My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-56-

151 5

[x] Why did the elephant wear his red sneakers?

Because he got his green ones dirty playing in the grass.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My sons

A

Columbia Falls

G.9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-57-

QUESTION:

[x] Why did the little moron take a knife and bread down town?

ANSWER:

He heard there was going to be a traffic jam.

Coll.:Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -58-

QUESTION:

[X] Why did the little moron throw his clock out the window?

ANSWER:

He wanted to see time fly.

Coll.; Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-59-

QUESTION:

[X] There was a little moron and a big moron standing on a cliff. One of them fell off. Which one stayed on, and why?

ANSWER:

The little moron, because he was a little more on.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-60-

QUESTION:

[X] Why did the little moron drive his new car off the cliff?

ANSWER:

He wanted to test the air brakes.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G.9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-61-

QUESTION:

[X] Why did the little moron sneak past the medecin cabinet?

ANSWER:

He didn't want to embarass the Bayer (bare) aspirin.

Coll.:Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-62-

151 62

QUESTION:

(X) Why did the little moron sneak past the medecin cabinet?

ANSWER:

He didn't want to wake up the sleeping pills.

Coll.:Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.:My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -63-

151 63

Question:

[x] Why did the little moron throw butter out the window?

Answer:

So he could see the butter fly.

Coll.:Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-64-

QUESTION:

[X] If a rooster laid an egg on top of the roof, which side
would it roll down?

ANSWER:

Neither, a rooster doesn't lay eggs.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

151-64A

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-65-

QUESTION:

[X] Why did the chicken cross the road?

ANSWER:

To get to the other side.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -66-

151 65

One neighbor said to another over the back fence, "Did you hear the latest? Mr Jones has left his wife."

(X) Friend, "Why did he do that?"

First neighbor, "He came home the other morning and found her in the bathroom with MR. CLEAN!"

Coll. Columbia Falls, Maine

October, 1963

Inf. Mrs. Robert Gray

C

Columbia Falls

[X] Mommy was entertaining friends one day and little Johnny was asked to get a glass of water for some of them. He faithfully and carefully brought in glass after glass. Finally Mommy asked him to get another.

"I can't, Mommy. The water is all gone!"

"What do you mean, all gone?" She followed him to the bathroom and, sure enough, it was! The flush had been dipped dry!

Coll. Columbia Falls, Maine

October, 1963

Inf. Mrs. Robert Gray

C

Columbia Falls

Three old hermits were sitting in their cave one day when a dog walked by.

[X] Ten years later one hermit said to the other, "That was a nice looking Collie, wasn't it?"

Ten years later another hermit replied, "That wasn't a Collie. It was a Police dog."

Ten more years passed. The third hermit got up to leave and said, "If you two are going to keep up this constant bickering, I'M LEAVING!"

Coll. Columbia Falls, Maine Oct

October, 1963

Inf. Robert Gray

D

Columbia Falls

Women drivers seem to have a lot said about them. The other day, one of them just naturally got by the place that she wanted to stop. Leaning out of the window, she called to the policeman and asked, "Can I turn here?"

(X) The policeman shook his head sadly (like a teacher who has spent hours trying futilely to impress a simple fact upon his pupil). Then, sarcastically, he replied, "Yes, Ma'am, you MAY if you CAN!"

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

October, 1963

Inf.: Robert Gray

D

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -70-

A little boy was singing the song he had heard at the
Christmas services. He was, however, singing his own version:

Hark, the Herald Angels sing

(X) Glory to the newborn King!

Peace on earth and mercy mild

God and SITTERS reconciled!

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

October, 1963

Inf. : Robert Gray

D

Columbia Falls

Two teachers were walking down the corridor, when they met two small boys. They seemed very excited about something and were talking very loudly. One little boy was saying, "Sometimes my gran'mudder makes me so mad I feel like cutting (x350) her t'roat!"

This was too much for one of the teachers. She stopped abruptly, eyed the little boy with the glare that only a schoolteacher has and said sternly, "The word is THROAT!"

Coll. : Columbia Falls, Maine

October, 1963

Inf.: Robert Gray

D

Columbia Fa

One night at the movies, I overheard this exchange between a teenager and his date. The boy spoke, evidently concerned with the comfort of his friend:

"Can you see all right?"

[x] "Yes."

"Are you in a draft?"

"No."

"Does the man in back of you have his feet on your chair?"

"No."

"Mind changing places with me?"

Coll. : Columbia Falls, Maine

October, 1963

Inf.: Robert Gray

D

Columbia Falls

A friend told me that on a trip through the western part
(x332) of our country he saw a sign that amused him very much. The
sign read: SCHOOL ZONE---DON'T KILL A CHILD. Someone had added
in a childish scrawl: WAIT FOR A TEACHER!

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

October, 1963

Inf.: Robert Gray

D

Columbia Falls

The doctors were hovering anxiously about a small boy who had left his wheel chair (at their direction) and begun to walk, clutching both hands tight against his waist.

(x300) "Can't you move your hands, Sonny?" asked the doctors.

"No," said the boy.

"Do they hurt?" queried the doctors.

"No," answered the boy.

"Will you try to move them for me?" asked one of the doctors kindly.

"No," was the reply. "I've got to hold up my pajamas!"

Coll.:Columbia Falls, Maine

October, 1963

Inf.:Robert Gray

D

Columbia Falls

G. 9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-75-

(X) Why does a duck have webbed feet?

(To stamp out forest fires.)

Why does an elephant have flat feet?

(To stamp out burning ducks.)

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-76-

If you had six elephants in a car, how would you
put a giraffe in?

(x)

(Take one of the elephants out.)

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-77-

What did the hunter say when he saw the elephant?

(x)

(There is an elephant.)

What did the elephant say when he saw the hunter?

(He didn't say anything--elephants can't talk.)

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

151 77

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-78-

QUESTION:

(x) Why does an elephant have flat feet?

ANSWER:

From jumping out of trees.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-79-

QUESTION:

(x) Why did the elephant wear his green sneakers to the baseball game?

ANSWER:

Because his red ones are in the wash.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -80-

QUESTION:

(1) What is purple and puts out forest fires?

ANSWER:

Smoky the Grape.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-81-

151 80

QUESTION:

(v)
How can you tell when an elephant is taking a bath?

ANSWER:

You can smell peanuts on his breath.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-82-

QUESTION:

(x) What is purple and stands in water?

ANSWER:

A color-blind flamingo.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G.9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-83-

151 82

QUESTION:

[x] What did the hen say when she laid the square egg?

ANSWER:

Cluck, cluck, cluck, OUCH!

Coll.:Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9
Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-84-

151 83

QUESTION:

Why are monkeys and elephants alike?

(x)

ANSWER:

Because they both use their tails to hang from trees.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia

QUESTION:

(X) One day a little moron was out walking and he passed a church.
He came to a bridge that was washed out. How did he get across?

ANSWER:

He went into the church and got a cross.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -86-

Why does an elephant wear green sneakers?

(x)

So you can't see him when he is walking in the
grass.

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

151 86

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -87-

(x) Why does an elephant have a long trunk?

(To swing from tree to tree.)

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

151 8

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-88-

What does an elephant and a flea have in common?

Cx

(Neither one can ride a bicycle.)

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G-9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-89-

What is purple, hangs from a tree, and is
dangerous?

(x)

(A grape with a machine gun.)

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-90-

What is the difference between an elephant and a
canary?

(X)

(A canary is yellow.)

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia Falls

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray -91-

There was an elephant and a raisin coming through
the jungle.

What did Tarzan say when he saw the elephant coming?

(Here comes the elephant.)

(r)

What did Jane say when she saw the raisin?

(Here comes the elephant. ---She was color-bländ.)

Coll.: Columbia Falls, Maine

November, 1963

Inf.: My Sons

A

Columbia

In Cody's, New Brunswick, Canada, where I used to live, I remember of a fire in which three children and their mother [S12.2] were burned to death. The father and the other two children were away at the time. It has been said that the mother killed the oldest one that was at home that day, then locked the little [E402.11.3] ones in the room and set the house on fire. It is said that when you go by the place where the house was, you can still hear the children hollering.

Coll. Columbia Falls, Maine

October, 1963

Inf. Mrs. Robert Gray

C

Columbia Falls

G. 9

Mrs. Jennie M. Gray-93-

EVALUATION

Had I known as much about collecting these stories when I first started this course as I do now, I would have had much more than I do. It is very interesting, and I have enjoyed^{it}. I realize that I have not had the time to put on this course as I would like, due to my teaching duties as well as home and other courses which I am taking.

Folklore is an interesting subject. I did not realize until I started on my collection that so many of the happenings of our own past are soon going to be forgotten, or soon, unknown, if something is not done to preserve the memories of them. Youngsters of today are not told of these as they were long ago. I feel that there are many more stories that could come out of the area that I worked in. I am sure that the few informants that I have could give much more material. Time did not permit me to get them.

My advice to any future collectors would be to take time to get the stories. Many people must get "warmed up" to the subject. They, themselves must have time to listen to much that can not be used in order to get a few good items that can be.