

A -

TERM PAPER

by

Stephen Guptill

*Could have used a more searching
analysis, but nonetheless a good, carefully
made collection*

Edward Ives

FO - 179

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I

AREA

All of the stories mentioned in this paper took place in the part of Washington County in the State of Maine, known as Wesley. Thus the author devotes this section of his paper to a brief discussion and description of the area in which all of the following tales were alleged to have taken place.

Wesley, Maine covers approximately 25 square miles of wild timberland and is a town located approximately 20 miles N from the red fire-barn in the areal center of the town of Machias. Situated near the eastern boundary of the continental United States, Wesley, Maine is sometimes thought of as a stopping off place for tourists en route to Canada via the "airline" as it is located approximately 40 miles from Calais which is right on the Canadian Border. The town itself is composed of a store, one restaurant, one grange, one church and one dance hall; the last three all being located within the same building and the other businesses located about one quarter to three quarters of a mile apart with scattered farm houses in between.

At its only road junction where U.S. route 192 joins the so-called airline we find a Memorial dedicated to those brave men from Wesley who died in defense of their country in World War I; and almost without fail, on a clear day, one will

*Washington County
Wesley
Machias
Calais*

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find the American flag flying above this Memorial as a "silent tribute to those men who here gave their lives."

Most of Wesley's 300 inhabitants live along the airline which runs across the high razor back top of Wesley Ridge and use this road as a route to and from their work which consists of, primarily, vocational jobs such as logging and working on the highway. No one lives under what one might term poverty conditions, yet none of Wesley's occupants have extensive financial holdings other than the land which they own. About 1/3 of Wesley's land area is owned by Charles Guptill who now permanently resides in Cohoes, New York but who originally was born and raised in this town. A great part of the remaining land interest, especially the woods land, belongs to the St. Regis and Georgia-Pacific Paper Companies who, incidentally, provide most of the work for residents in the area.

Interestingly enough, Wesley is only active about two times during the year; however, during these two periods, the population in the town is said to almost triple. There are, of course, blueberry and hunting seasons. For, during blueberry season, the great influx of Canadian Micmac Indians to rake berries is unbelievable while during the hunting season the great hordes of hunters who arrive on the scene stimulate the economy of the area enough to keep the people going until next year comes around.

Wesley
Wesley Ridge
Cohoes NY

Consequently, the area, especially at this time of year, is rich in hunting tales and tellers - it only remained my problem to find them.

Before leaving our description of the town, some mention should perhaps be made of its most renowned business... the Thursday and Saturday night country dances. This does, in reality, account for one of the largest intakes of money in the area, for people come to these dances from all over Washington County. In fact, it has been documented as one of the few places left in the United States where the true old style country dance still exists in its original form.

Thus, Wesley, a small town located in Eastern Washington County, was the area in which the greatest number of my stories took place.

Washington Co.
Wesley

II

SOURCES

Harold Wallace Day

Harold Wallace Day was born in Wesley, Maine, May 7, 1892, the son of Corin J. and Carrie (Guptill) Day. He was the oldest of their seven children, four boys and three girls. Harold received his early education in the Wesley schools. Records show that he had high average in his classes, and was a model pupil as to attendance, dependability, and helpfulness, both in the classroom, and on the playground. These very same traits applied also, to his work with his father, on the large farm. Thru the years the Carrie and Corin J. Day Family was noted for hospitality to visitors - friends, relatives, and strangers. Also, thru the years, they became a family of noted singers. They were often requested to sing in public - together, in concerts, or quartets, trios, duets, and solos. They loved to sing, and guests in their home or in public loved to listen. This is true of the seven children today.

Harold received his training in business education at Shaw's Business College in Bangor. In April, 1918 he joined the armed forces in World War I. He was in Germany when the Armistice was signed November 11, 1918, and remained there with the Army of Occupation until August, 1919. After his discharge

Wesley
Bangor
Germany

Stephen Guptill - 5 -

he returned to the Day Farm to help with the work there.

In July, 1922, he, and Miss Ellen Grant of Columbia Falls Maine were married. In 1926 they bought the Air Line Inn Farm at Wesley Corner. The panorama from this farm is one of the most beautiful in Maine. Here he engaged in mixed farming, with a specialty in blueberry growing. One son, Ralph "Buddie" Day, now of Wesley and one daughter, Mrs. Mona Day Tingley, now of Bangor, when in their teens, became his helpers on his farm. Thru the years 1926 - 1960 Mr. and Mrs. Day entertained paying guests at their farm, for the fishing and hunting seasons. These guests, from far and near, returned year after year, to what they termed "ideal living" in an "ideal area."

In October, 1961, Mrs. Day passed away. Since then, Mr. Day has been semi-retired, engaged only in mixed farming, and blueberry growing. His four grandchildren, in their vacation time, frequently help him with this work.

In May, 1963 he and Mrs. Nellie Bonning of Boston were married. Mrs. Day is a charming hostess. Many guests (not paying guests, and not for just two seasons in the year) the year around, visit with them, and they too declare it "ideal living" in an "ideal area." As Harold has the "know how" with his farm work, with his singing, and with his wealth of stories based on his fishing and hunting experiences, Mrs. Day too, has the "know how" with her delicious foods, and with her art of home-making.

*Boston Mass
Columbia Falls
Wesley Corner
Wesley
Bangor*

Stephen Guptill - 6 -

Fred Perry Mawhinney

Fred Perry Mawhinney was born in Lynn, Mass., March 16, 1919, the son of Fred and Vivian (Perry) Mawhinney. His early education was completed in the Machias schools then he became a graduate of Bowdoin College. He returned to Machias to assist his father in managing the Mawhinney Motor Company. He married Helen Louise Wallingford on August 12, 1950. He has two children, David Ross, born November 15, 1951 and Jean Ellen, born September 21, 1955. At the present time he is the Manager of the Mawhinney Motor Company in Machias, Maine.

*Lynn Mass
Machias
Brunswick*

Stephen Guptill - 7 -

Robert Maxwell Guptill

Robert M. Guptill was born in Marshfield, Maine February 11th, 1914, the only child of Bernard and Hattie (Rogers) Guptill. He graduated from Machias High School in 1933 and became a representative of the J.R. Watkins Company of Winona, Minn. in the direct selling field, and later Sales Manager for Maine. He married Anita Kelley of Lubec, Maine on June 28th, 1938 and lived in Portland, Maine until 1945. During this period he operated a restaurant business until the 2nd World War started, whereupon he entered the employ of the shipyards in South Portland. At the close of the War he became an apprentice of Dental Technology in a Portland Dental Laboratory and later employed as a private Dental Technician to a well known dentist in that city. He became a Certified Dental Technician in 1944. In 1945 a son, Stephen, was born and shortly after the family moved to Machias, Maine where he established and has operated his own commercial Dental Laboratory to the present time.

South Portland
Portland
Marshfield
Machias
Minnesota
Lubec

III

THE COLLECTING SESSIONS

In the collecting of my stories I used the same approach for each of my 4 informants, as I found this to be the easiest and most accurate. Originally I tried using a tape recorder but none of my four informants would consent to telling stories to a microphone so I used the following method.

After inquiring rather skillfully if each informant would mind recording his stories and discovering by their reaction to the way our conversation was going that they didn't want to do this, I asked if they would mind if I had someone write down what they said in their stories. This they didn't seem to mind, so here was the method which I used.

Fortunately, I happened to have a very close friend who graduated with me from high school and who recently had just finished secretarial school where she had majored in shorthand. She agreed to accompany me on each of my four adventures and to write in shorthand every word which she was able to get. Although both of us were at first a little afraid that the presence of someone, writing "furiously" while the informer talks, might "throw him off" we had no problem whatsoever, for in the first informers case, my secretary was a close relative of my informer and in the other 3 cases the people had enough education (college for all 3) so that they could talk without being upset by someone writing down what was being said. So,

consequently we overcame the problem very easily.

At each of the 4 sessions with the exception of the first one with Harold Day, only the secretary, the informant and myself were present. The one exception was the presence of Harold's wife, Nellie, whose additions appear infrequently throughout Harold's stories.

The sessions themselves all took place in each of the informants respective homes, during the evenings of our Thanksgiving Vacation, with the exception of the Fred Mawhinney, Jr. contributions which were collected in his garage during the day while I was having some work done on my car.

All of my informants, for the most part, addressed their stories to me, although each of them every once in a while would turn his head to glance at my secretary "calmly" writing down what was being said. As I recall, none of my informers used gestures with the possible exception of occasional expressive hand movements, which incidentally are very common to this particular area.

Interestingly enough, when I asked each of them to tell me some stories I always received the same reply, "Oh, I don't know any stories". However, I found that by engaging in conversation with them I was able to bring out a few stories which would then lead to other stories and we would be off. A part of the technique which I used is included in my story

Stephen Guptill - 10

section in the first part dealing with Harold Day where I have presented, almost in complete verbatim, a description of the conversation which lead to many of the stories. This conversation section was included, not only to show the method used, but to give the 1st section of the paper added cohesiveness.

Thus, my stories, although not verbatim, are about as close to the informants words as one could get without recording them, as it is rather difficult to write down slang and expressions in shorthand as fast as many of them were coming.

Finally, a great deal of thanks and appreciation must be given to Mrs. Cheryl Fickett, my shorthand expert, without whose help I might never have been able to present the stories in near original form.

IV
STORIES

(A. Harold Day)

The following is a description of a conversation which was held in Harold Day's home that lead to the telling of the stories presented in this section. It is included both because of its importance to starting Harold on the story-telling trail and to the coherence of this first section.

Harold - Gee, I don't really know any stories!!! I been trying to think ever since you called 'bout some of the stories father used to tell. Too bad he's not 'round - he could help ya out good. (Rubs his face with his hands) There are so many, I can't think of a one.

Author - Well, that's all right. We just thought we'd breeze up and say hello anyway. Say, you don't know where I could get a deer before I go back to school, do you?

Harold - No, I don't. Ya see, I don't git 'round much no more so I don't see 'em 'round. But I hear from talking to Carl Day that they've only tagged 'bout 47 deer the whole season. Now that's not very many ... and I imagine 40 of them was tame.

Stephen Guptill - 12 -

Author - Tame?

Harold - Oh yes -- ya could walk right up to one, pat it and everything. Didn't you read 'bout that deer that someone stuck with a clamhoe and killed it here last summer?

Author - I didn't. When was this?

Harold - Well, I don't know the exact details, but I don't know what ever could lead someone do such a thing -- but they did -- 'bout the same idea as them four fellers from Eastport stealing that 42 pound turkey that John Hawkins was raising down in Calais. You hear 'bout that?

Author - No.

Harold - Well, seems John Hawkins was raising some turkeys I guess to sell 'round Thanksgiving. He's quite an elderly man. Don't get out much and I imagine that was about the only source of income he and his wife had -- he had this old Tom turkey they say weighed some 42 pounds. Oh, guess he was a bruiser. But he was tame as the day is long and his little grandson used to ride 'im 'round the barnyard. He had pictures and everything. "Course he was the pride of the family.

So it seems that one day here couple weeks ago, these four fellers came in. He said afterwards

*Eastport
Calais*

Stephen Guptill - 13 -

that they acted kind o' funny but 'course he didn't 'spect nothing. People was coming into his farm all time 'bout somethin'. So they says they wanted to look at some turkeys. Well, he showed 'em 'round and then showed 'em ol' Tom.

Well, they left and he never seen nothing of 'em again 'til one night he heard this awful commotion out in the barnyard. Next morning when he went out there was feathers scattered all over the yard - looked like thered been a horrible fight an' ol' Tom was gone.

Of course, he felt pretty bad and went back in and told his wife what had happened and then he got on the 'phone and called up ol' Tracy down there in the jail and told him what had happened and told him 'bout them four men. So ol' Tracy gets his men 'gether and they head right down to Eastport. Don't ask me how come Tracy knew where to go but he hain't been County Shëriff 20 years fer nothin' and sure 'nough he found ol' Tom dead in the trunk of one of them fellers cars. They aught to throw the book at them characters and I sure hope they do -- you know that bird weighed when it was all dressed out to 'bout 38 pounds?

Author -

And it was tame, too --

Harold - Tame? I guess it was else them guys never could have gotten near ol' Tom -- yep, he was tame jest 'bout like them deer I started to tell ya 'bout.

Author - Yes, what did you say happened to the tame deer?

Harold's wife - Oh, that was a horrible thing. Tell him about it, Harold.

Harold - Yes, I can't see for the life of me, how people could be so cruel. These deer was so tame you could walk right up to 'em and feed 'em apples right out of ya hand.

 In fact last summer, when Charles was down here, he come over the house early one morning. I was getting ready to go out dusting berries and we was talking and looked up and there not more'n 50 foot 'way was this deer - standing there a-lookin' right at us. Well, 'course I knowed he was a tame one 'cause I'd walked up to him couple times 'fore and fed him apples 'n sugar 'n stuff like that right out of my hand.

 So I thought I'd have some fun with Charles, so I says to him ... "Charles, why'nt ya see how close you can git to him afore he takes off?" So Charlie starts walking toward him and I says very quietly so he never suspects, "Charlie, pick up an

Stephen Guptill - 15 -

apple and feed 'im." So Charles picks up an apple an' started walking in baby steps right up to 'im. "Course Charlie 'spected 'im to run any minute and we was having a hard job to keep from saying something that would give it 'way 'fore he got up there. Ya shoulda seen the look on his face as he was astalking this tame deer and then ya shoulda seen his old face fall when I told him ta hold out the apple and let the deer take it. So he did and the deer just reached over very gently and pulled that apple right out of his palm just as gently as if he would break. Well, 'course, you know Charles -- he was really shook up. So 'bout this time Peggy goes a riding by and she looks in and sees Charles out there in the middle of my barnyard with his hand round that tame deer. Well, she didn't know it was tame either and she come a runnin' in -- couldn't believe her eyes. She said she thought sure'n heck she was 'seein' things but she want. But that just goes to show ya how tame they really was.

So, after a spell, word 'gin get 'round 'bout these tame deer we had up here ta Wesley and people was comin' up left and right - 'course them deer didn't mind at all cause they was used to people

Wesley

Stephen Guptill - 16 -

'n cars, being brought up on, I think it was them Grey Stone Farms somewheres down south, 'round Portland and that area. So them deer was just as tame as they could be. But you'd athought them people who'd put 'em out would at least put 'em back in the woods aways but no, they put 'em out right here along the airline. Well, anyway, word got 'bout them tame deer and then one morning real early long t'wards dawn I was just going out git some kindling for my fire so Nellie could make some biscuits, and I heard a shot -- then I heard another one about five minutes later. "Theresa," I says to to Nellie, "didn't I tell ya that some one was going to shoot them tame deer."

So, oh, 'bout half an hour later I looked out the window and I seen this car coming out the ridd/ It was the warden and he pulled in my driveway and he had Otis Carlo with 'im. So I went out and was goin' ta tell 'em 'bout hearing them shots when the warden says, "Want you to see something." And he pulls back the covers of his pick-up and here was that tame deer with a clamhoe, one of them long forks looks something like a potato hoe, driven right down through that deers nose and through one eye. Warden said that yesterday noon 'bout, someone

Stephen Guptill - 17 -

evidently had tried to kill that deer with the hoe and instead of hitting him across the neck so that he might break it's neck he stuck it in the fact -- it was in the papers -- and of course that deer takes off and someone seen the deer that afternoon and reported it. Well, them two shots that I mentioned was fired by the game warden 'cause naturally that deer wasn't so tame no more and he couldn't git close 'nough to him to give him a shoot and put him out. But the warden shot the first shot and never touched him and so that second shot which I heard 'bout five minutes later was fired by Otis -- 'course Otis is a good shot anyway but you'd thought that warden could've hit him the first time -- but weren't that a cruel thing -- you didn't see that in the papers?

Harold's wife - Oh, yes, and Bud Leavitt even had a big show on it -- all 'bout this tame deer someone killed with a clamhoe.

Harold -

Yes, them deer was so tame that one story even has it -- don't know how true this one is but that them deer was so tame that one day there was two of them out here on the airline standing right in the middle of that picnic area out by Oldstream, you

Old Stream

Stephen Guptill - 18 -

probably know where that is, and people was
astopping and taking pictures and everything.
Well, got to be quite a line and traffic was
really gitting slowed up -- so the warden comes
along 'bout this time and one of the people says,
"Are deer as plentiful 'round here as all that?"
and the warden just smiles, whistles at them two
tame deer, they gits in the jeep and away the all
go -- deer and everyone.

Now I don't know how true all that is, but I
do know that story 'bout that deer and the clamhoe
is true cause I seen that myself.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

Stephen Guptill - 19 -

(Albino)

Harold -

But, talking 'bout deer being plentiful, 'minds me of when Uncle Bernard was just a young boy -- prob'ly he told ya 'bout him seeing the big herd of deer.

Author -

No.

Harold -

Well, of course Barnard was quite a hunter but just when he's 'bout 12 or 13 he was down on the Barrens down here on Old Stream - you know where ya' take that road just the other side of Old Stream? Well, he was down in there one day and he hadn't seen nothing all day - not even a squirrel. It was a bad day to hunt anyway, as the wind was a-blowing and it was cloudy an' I guess it was getting ready to storm but it was 'bout this time of year.

So he comes walking out of the woods out onto them Barrens down there and he looks up and all of a sudden he sees some 35-40 deer all standing feeding out here on the Barrens just like cattle. Wellsa 'course he hadn't seen a thing all day an' he got pretty excited - but he kept his head and circled 'round trying to pick out one to shoot and then he saw it - a white albino one - "~~theresa~~", he says, "that's the one for me." So he started trying to get somewheres where he'd git a good shot at it -

*Old Stream
Barrens*

Stephen Guptill - 20 -

- but while he was doing this he forgot all about the other deer and I'll be dog-goned if he didn't walk right 'round into the wind, afore he realized it - well, when them first two or three deers got wind of 'im and took off the whole herd was gone like a flash and he didn't even get a shot off.

Author - Never got a thing, huh?

Harold - Nope, and he was good hunter too, even at that age, but he just lost his head I guess.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

Stephen Guptill - 21 -

(THREE IN ONE)

Harold -

But I 'member another time Bernard and me was up here on the Bastow Ridge - this was when he was in his 20's or 30's and we was lighting.

Well, he shines his ol' light out there in the field and there was a set of eyes - so he had me hold that light right on them eyes whilst he drew a bead and fired. Well, just soon as he did that o' course I had put ma hand over the light 'cause we was afeared someone might a heard the shot or the warden might be 'round. But no one came so I shown the light back on the same place agin and there was them eyes right in the same place - so old Bernard fires 'gin - well, this time I left the light right on them eyes and we looked and by God, he hadn't touched that deer 'cause them eyes was still there so he fires 'gin and this time he got 'em and I took the light off. We laid low while just to make sure no one was coming and then we went up and there was three deer, "all dead as a door nail" laying almost on top of one 'nother. He'd been shooting at three different deer and had got all three of 'em. Well, Bernard had to go to work 'bout then, cause 'twas getting dawn and so I had to stay and dress out them three deer, which I did. But all the time we thought

Bastow Ridge

Stephen Guphill - 22 -

he was shooting at the same deer.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

Stephen Guptill - 23 -

(LEAVE IT TO A WOMAN)

Harold - You know Peggy, Charles' wife, well she was quite a hunger, too, and this just happened a little while ago. Seems that the deer been getting into the blueberries and Dean hadn't been able to take care of 'em so ole Peggy says "Give me the gun and I'll go down and shoot 'em." Well, 'course everyone laughed but I'll be dog-gonned if she didn't go down, set on a stump right plum in the middle of that field that next morning and the big old buck walks right out and she ups and downs him with one shot. He'd no more'n fallen down then a doe walks out and she downs him with the next shot and then out comes 'nother buck and she shoots him as well; and all during this time she never left that stump in the middle of the field. "Course that took care of the deer problem and also shut ole Dean up.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

Stephen Guptill - 24 -

Author:-

Guess I won't take any more of your time as
Cheryl and I have got to get going. (We start out
and they see us to the door when Harold says ...)

Stephen Guptill - 25 -

(ONLY GIVE ME ONE EYE)

Harold -

See that big ole apple tree right there?...

Well, Charles and I see the biggest buck I ever seen right there one night. We was just coming home from work and it was dark when we drove in the yard; 'course I didn't have ma rifle with me as it was the end of the summer and besides that we already had one deer in our storage (chuckles a little under breath) so as I was saying, we was just coming in the yard and as our lights shown up there we see this big deer standing underneath that apple tree a'filling his belly with them apples. So I tells Charles to stay put but keep the lights on the buck so's he wouldn't run whiles I went and got my rifle. But the old fella was pretty smart and when he see me go into the house he must've knowed what I was up to 'cause he started to walk away. Well, 'course Charles couldn't let 'im along and started following 'im with the flashlight. (Oh, come on back in, you got me started and it's cold out here - 'sides I just thought of 'nother one.)

Wellsa, that ole deer just kept out of what he must've figgered was good rifle range and when we'd stop he'd stop - but he wouldn't give me one decent shot - he'd only give me one eye. Then just as I was just a'ready to fire I see these lights

Stephen Guptill - 26 -

acoming up the road and it was sure a good thing I didn't 'cause they turns in our driveway, drives right up into the yard and who gets out but ole Feeney, the warden. I whispers to Charles ta jest act natural-like and I throwed the rifle in that clump of bushes out 'hind the shed and we come on in just as if nothin' had happened. But ole Feeney was a sly one and asked me how the hunting was. I just smiled 'n invited him in for coffee and biscuits.

Oh, we had a quite a few close calls like that.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

(ALMOST)

Harold -

One I 'member 'specially which Charles' Father, Pearly almost turned us both in for happened down here at the foot of Wesley Hill in that field where Hawkin's Store is now. Yep, we had quite a night that night - matter o' fact was the same night which we seen that big buck and the game warden in ~~the~~ ^{yard} ~~May~~ and I was just telling ya about.

Just after the warden left we was all setting, eating supper and talking 'bout how close we come ta getting caught when Irma said that May had been up that afternoon and had said she'd seen 8 or 9 deer down there in back of her house every night for the last week or two.

So we decided (Charles and me) that come midnight we'd take a little walk down to May's with the light 'n rifle to see what we could see - pretty soon midnight come and off we goes.

Well, 'cause of the wind we had to sneak down 'round the back side of the hill, ~~and we also found~~ ^{as we were afraid} we'd start the deer 'fore we got close 'nough.

But anyway, we got down there and sure enough there was the deer. So Charles shines the light out there and I takes aim on them eyes and fires - we

Wesley Hill

Stephen Guptill - 28 -

didn't see the eyes nor noise and we didn't hear nothin' so we figgered we'd gotten 'im.

Just as we was getting up off the ground to go up and see what we got we hears ~~the~~ car stopping out by the rudd and we see a light comin' t'ward us. I says, "Charles, we're in trouble." So I gives ma rifle a heave and we hit the ground and never moved a muscle. Sure 'nough it was the warden and he walked right by us up t'ward where we'd shot the deer. I says to mysef, he's goin' ta find that deer and then eventually find us, - but he didn't and he walks right back by us agin and leaves.

Well, we lay low for 'bout a half hour after he'd left and then we started looking for ma' rifle but couldn't find it - so we decided we'd better go see if we'd hit the deer. We found the deer and when we shown the light on it the deer was still alive 'cause I'd only grazed her a'hind the ear. 'Course I didn't have no gun but I 'membered where May always kept an ax out by her shed so I decided ta go get that and kill the deer with that - but on the way I guess I walked right into a whole herd of deer, 'cause all at once they ~~was~~ all around me, running every which way. 'Course I was trying to be pretty careful 'bout getting stepped on by one of them deer and evidently forgot where I was 'cause I walked

Stephen Guptill - 29 -

right into May's barbed wire fence, fell over it, got all tangled up in it. Now if you've ever been tangled up in a barbed wire fence even in the day time you'd know what a scrape I was in. Well, I finally got away but I had to leave ma pants back there on the fence 'cause them barbs was all tangled up in the cloth - so I got the ax and got back ta Charles and the deer, took one swing at its head and killed it. 'Course we still had ta git it up ta the car but since I didn't have no pants on we figured it ud be easier to dress her out down here in the field. So Charles goes up to his house and gets an old butcher knife and we dressed her out - but I was really getting cold 'cause I didn't have no long pants on. After we'd got 'er dressed out and hidden we took off for home to get the car and come down ta get the meat. Well, so this is 'bout 3 o'clock in the morning and in I comes walking into the kitchen, all blood and deer hair, with no pants on and who is sitting there at the kitchen table drinking coffee with Irma but ole Feeney with ma rifle.

"Well, well, well," ole Feeney says - "Where you been to lose your pants?" Well, that almost cost me \$25 but ole Feeney couldn't prove nothin' 'cause

he couldn't find the deer.

In the meantime Charles, of course, had gone home and went to bed and seeing next day was Sunday didn't git up 'till late. But when he did old Percy was waiting for him downstairs with the butcher knife we'd used which Charles had forgotten to clean and had left right on the front doorstep. Percy threatened to turn us both in but we gave him a nice steak of that deer and he was okay - but I think that was 'bout the closest I ever come to gettin' caught.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

Stephen Guptill - 31 -

(THE POLE)

Harold

'Course you knowed that we used ta run a hunting lodge here and used to board up all the hunters who didn't live 'round here? Well, this one year, 'bout Thanksgiving Eve and we told 'em we didn't have no more room but we finally let 'em in and give 'em our bed and we slept on the floor. Well, Thanksgiving morning we was up afore dawn, of course, and I told everyone where to go. We told them two young fellers to go over on Hayward Ridge and they'd find a path blazed out with red markers - to stay right on that path and when they come to the big meadow clearing to find a good spot an' sit and wait. We also told 'em that iffën they got lost to build a fire afore it got too dark, stay put and save their ammo 'til they heard us shoot and then ta only answer us with one shot.

So they takes off for Hayward Ridge where they found the path - come noon they was where I'd told 'em ta go, at the clearing, and they set down just like I told 'em. They hadn't been sitting there half-hour when a big buck walks right out into the meadow and they downs him. Well, 'course being from the city they didn't know nothing 'bout deer 'cept what they looked like, so they didn't know what ta do with this deer now they'd gotten him. But anyway

Stephen Guptill - 32 -

they cut this great long pole and strung the deer, not even dressed out, by his legs, to the pole and started up the path with one of 'em on each end of the pole.

Now, you've been on them blazed trails before, so you know how crooked they are - so naturally, they gut off the trail 'cause they couldn't get 'round corners with this long pole. Well, night was 'ginning to come and it looked like it was agetting ready to storm so they decided to do like I told 'em and built a fire and wait for us to find 'em. So they builds this tremendous bonfire.

"Bout this time thos of us that was back at the house 'gin figgered they'd gotten lost so we started out after 'em. We went up to Hayward's Ridge and looks down into the valley and sees this immense fire which we figured must be them. So we goes down and fires a shot afore we get there and they answered so we knowed it was them. When I see the way they was carrying that deer I wasn't surprised they'd gotten offern the path. Matter of fact, the path was only 'bout 20 feet to their right so they wasn't even lost. Well, anyway, we untied the deer, dressed her out and I carried her out on

Hayward's R

Stephen Guptill - 33 -

my back. But o' course no-one could keep on a crooked path like that with a pole as long as they had.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

(THE CONNECTICUT HUNTER)

Harold -

Oh, yes, then there was the time your grandfather, me, Percy and another Connecticut hunter went over to Alexander deer hunting. This was one of the coldest days I think I ever 'member and it was a-blowing up a real storm. So we gut to the rudd we was all going to go down and started ta git out of the car but as the snow was so deep we could only get out on one side and since it was only a two door car we only had one door we could get out off. Well, this Connecticut hunter, as he was doing the driving, got out first and we looks up the rudd and there was this big buck deer with his head high in the air smelling the breeze. Well, sa, George stood right by the door so we couldn't get out, loaded six shells into that rifle and without firing a shot, jacked all six shells right out **again**; buck fever.

Finally, the rest of us gut out but that deer was long gone. I warn't long picking up his trail when I looks up and see this patch fur dead ahead in the swamp but it was so thick and snowing so hard I couldn't see well 'nough ta make out what part of the deer it was - but I took bead on it, fires and drops him and then I hears this awful commotion and

*Connecticut
Alexander*

Stephen Gupilli - 35 -

the big buck went tearing by me and back out onto the rudd where the other guys was supposed to be but they'd gone down into the swamp also and so he got away - but I did get the doe.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

Stephen Guphill - 36 -

Author -

Well, I guess I'll be going.

Harold -

Oh, no, I'd rather tell tales than go to bed
and besides I just thought of a couple more.

Nellie -

Now that doesn't sound just right, but you
know what he means?

Stephen Guptill - 37 -

(HOT WHISKEY)

Harold -

There was this cop who had this lady friend up here to Hawkins - used to be Christine Hawkins? So anyway, he had a terrible fear of the woods and wouldn't for the life of him if he even went into the woods go very far and almost never off the path he was on.

So one Saturday afternoon he was on his way up to see Christine; seems he had a date with her for that evening and he had his rifle with him. Well, 'twas 'round noontime 'n he was just coming over Barstow Ridge when he see this monstrous big black bear across the rudd in front of him and stop just aways down in the woods.

'Course he was no coward and so he grabs his rifle, loads it and takes a shot at that bear. 'Course he didn't stand a chance o' hitting him but he thought he did, forgot himself and started chasing ol' mister bear down in the woods...further'n he intended and when he realized what he'd done he panicked and gut himself lost - instead of just following his tracks out backward (that reminds me of one on Wilbur Day) he went right out of his head, tore off all his clothes and burried his head in a snow bank and that's the way they found him 'bout

*Nawkins.
Barstow Ridge*

half hour later as someone recognized his car and followed his tracks into the woods. So they took him back to Christine's house and give 'im a good shot of hot whiskey and put 'im to bed. Doc came in later 'n said if they hadn't done that (the whiskey) he'd sure died of pneumonia. He didn't make his date either - matter-of-fact Christine went out with someone else that night anyway.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

Stephen Guptill - 39 -

(NIGGERS)

Harold -

Then 'nother time these two fellows was chasing a bear they'd wounded and he run through where that big forest fire went through in 1949. Well, we'd had to go a-looking for these two guys too, 'cause they gut lost and when we finally found 'em they was covered with smut from head to toe - completely black! When we brough 'em out ole Percy comes up, looks at 'em and didn't recognize 'em and says "Where da Hell did you get 'dem two niggers up here in the middle o' nowhere?" They was black from head to toe.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

(WILBUR DAY)

Harold -

You said when you called 'bout wanting ta know some stories 'bout Wilbur Day - 'Course that was before my time but I do 'member my father telling o' him one time up in his house and ole Sheriff Tracey coming to lock him up in jail. Seem's he'd been seen by wardens jacking moose but they hadn't been able ta catch him in the act so they shot at him and wounded him but he got away. Well, they figured he'd probably head for home so they all went up to wait for him. But ole Wilbur gut there first, see'm coming, and up and jumped out the L window in the back of the barn, walked 'long one of the fences so he wouldn't leave no tracks and ran into the woods backwards so the sheriff'd think he was coming 'stead o' goin'.

Yes, he was famous in his own time - he'd fight his own cases down here in court, represent himself and win 'em on some Tom-fool technicality, like using two different hides whose bullet holes wouldn't match up or two different horns. Everyone knew he was guilty and he even used to sell deer and moose meat year 'round; but no one could figure out where he was hiding it and come find out he'd built a freezer in his woodpile where he kept the meat and would just go get it when he wanted it. He also used

to have 'bout 35-40 dogs which were just like them timber wolves they got out West; in fact, they was born and brought up on nothing but raw venison 'n he used to put 'em on the deer up 'round Chain Lakes and knowing that them deer would eventually take to the water to get rid o' the dogs, he'd take his hunters 'n go up to one o' the lakes with a boat and kill 'em when they was swimming in the water. He used to ship meat out to Boston, New York and all them places. Made lot o' money for himself that way and never got caught.

Yes, he was quite a boy.

Author -

Well, we gotta get going.

Coll.: Wesley, Nov. 23, 1967

Inf.: Harold Day

Wesley

Stephen Guptill - 42 -

(B. Fred Mawhinney, Jr.)

The following stories were collected at Mawhinney's Ford Garage in Machias.

Teller was Fred Mawhinney, Jr.

(HELP)

Father and George Armstrong used to be great hunting pals and one day they were up to Great Falls out on Graperock Meadow walking across on the ice when all of a sudden George fell through. Well, he commences to scream and yell for help and thought he couldn't stay up much longer; so father went and cut a couple of poles while he was screaming and yelling for help and started to crawl out onto the ice - but when he got out there, he looked down and George was standing in about a half inch of water on solid meadow bottom - hadn't fallen anywhere but through some two inches of shell ice.

Coll.: Machias, Nov. 25, 1967

Inf.: Fred Mawhinney, Jr.

*Machias
Great Falls
Graperock Meadow*

Stephen Guptill - 43 -

(YOU NEVER TOUCHED 'IM)

Then there was the time myself, Eggie Magee and Harold Stewart were hunting up at my camp on 3rd Machias. We'd been hunting all day and none of us had seen a thing so we decided to go back to the camp early and get a good start next morning. Well, Eggie is as "deaf as a haddock" anyway, but we were walking along one behind the other with Harold leading, Eggie next, then myself. All of a sudden we started this buck. 'Course we all saw it but couldn't see it well enough to get a good shot at it. So Harold, being in the lead, drew a bead on him but didn't fire as he was waiting for the deer to stop so he could get a clear shot. Just as the deer stops and Harold gets ready to shoot, Eggie hollars out "You never touched him!" The deer, of course, took off like a bolt of lightning, and Harold just turned to Eggie and says, "Ya damn fool, I never even fired!" Wasn't Harold mad!

Coll.: Machias, Nov. 25, 1967

Inf.: Fred Mawhinney, Jr.

*Machias
Third Machias
Lake*

Stephen Guptill - 44 -

(HOT KEROSENE)

Then another time the three of us were up to the camp and Eggie's watch stopped. So Eggie takes it off and says, "Guess I'll have to give it the hot kerosene treatment." Of course we didn't know what that was, but Eggie assured us it would work and that he'd one it before. So he dipped the watch in some hot kerosene and as this didn't seem to work he started taking it all apart. Well, everyone else went out hunting and we left Eggie there at the camp with his watch. When we came back he had every screw, nut and wheel laid out on the table. So I said to him, "Eggie, you're never going to get that back together again," and he says, "Oh, yes, I am," and he scoops all the little pieces together, walks to the door, opens it and throws 'em all out into the snow. "There sa," he says, "Who says I can't put it all together?"

Coll.: Machias, Nov. 25, 1967

Inf.: Fred Mawhinney, Jr.*Machias*

Stephen Guptill - 45 -

(RARE AND WELL DONE)

You know where Sullivan's store is up here on the airline? ... Well, back before the airline was completed there used to be two old codgers who lived all by themselves up there in two separate cabins and every Christmas and Thanksgiving Bill used to come over to Thatcher's for dinner and vice versa. So this one Thanksgiving Bill went over to Thatcher's for dinner and they were just sitting down to their salt pork and beans when Thatcher remembered he had biscuits in the oven. Well, Bill said, he thought it was a little early to get them out as Thatcher had just put 'em in a few minutes ago, but Thatcher took 'em out anyway, and started serving them; naturally, they were hard on top and all doughy in the middle. So Bill says, "Thatcher, if you don't mind I'd like my biscuits well done," and Thatcher replies, "If you don't mind, I like my biscuits tender."

You'd really have to know those two old fellows to appreciate that one I guess.

But here's another one.

Coll.: Machias, Nov. 25, 1967

Inf.: Fred Mawhinney, Jr.

Machias

(GRRRRRR - WASN'T HE UGLY)

This one happened up on Maine River. Seems Joe Mealey and Oscar Wright were in the bear trapping business and that all the logging crews whenever they ran across a den would come tell these two fellows and they'd go kill the bear. But the thing about these two was that they didn't do it like everyone else. Oscar used to cut a long pole and go into the den and poke the bears until they came out and then ol' Joe would shoot them. Of course Oscar was pretty proud of himself for he was one of the few men alive who could say that he'd ever been in the den of a live bear with the bear; (but actually he'd never really gone in). However, it seems that on this one occasion the logging men found this huge den and the two men went up - so Oscar did just like he always had - poking around in the den until the bear came out and Joe shot him. Then another one came out and Joe dropped him. Well, these bear just kept coming out until he had four bear piled up out front of this den. So Oscar figured that was all there were in there and thought he'd like to see what the den was like so in he goes --

Mr. Mawhinney starts to walk away, and I said, "What happened?"

So he comes back and says --

"Well Oscar came barrelling out of that den with this ol' bear right on his tail - Joe drops him and asked him what happened --

Maine River

Stephen Guptill - 47 -

Oscar just looked at him, smiled, and said -- "Grrrrrr,
wasn't he ugly!!!"

Coll.: Machias, Nov. 25, 1967

Inf.: Fred Mawhinney, Jr.*Machias*

Stephen Guptill ~ 48 -

(E. Robert M. Guptill)

These last couple of stories were some that were told to me by my father, Robert M. Guptill.

(MAGOON)

Seems that this fellow they call Magoon up in Wesley was an awful poacher. Hunted year 'round with this Wilbur Day that you heard Harold mention. So, anyway, seems ol' Magoon got lost in the fog one night down in back of his place up there in Wesley. Well, as he'd been lighting all evening and hadn't seen anything, he still had his light with him and was using it to try to find his way out of the swamp he was in.

All of a sudden he looks up and sees this pair of eyes dead ahead - so he takes aim, fires and drops it dead. Well, he went up to see it and when he got up to where he'd seen the eyes he found this shack which turned out to be his hovel and inside, his own horse - deader than a doornail. He'd shot his own horse in his own hovel, thinking it a deer.

Coll.: Marshfield, Nov. 27, 1967

Inf.: Robert M. Guptill

Wesley
Marshfield

(Anonymous)

This final story was told by one who wished to remain anonymous thus no biography is given.

(THE YANKEE TRADER)

Now take old Uncle Forrest Rogers. Well, he was the Meat Peddler. Although his meat was for the most part legal (every now and then he'd pad the wagon with a little venison or possibly a neighbor's stray calf that had wandered into his pasture) but anyway, one day when he was peddling around Machias, poor old Widder Higgens thought she'd get a bone for a soup (couldn't afford any more). She used to do pretty good on what she was able to make on her boarders but as time went by and she lost her bonnie looks and her board money dwindled in proportion as she was far more noted for her entertainment than her cooking abilities. Well, as I was saying, old Widder Higgens stopped Rogers' meat cart to buy a bone. Rogers cut the bone and trimmed it very neatly. When came time to pay for the bone the poor old Widder Higgens got quite a jolt. Seems that Rogers had charged her as much for the bone per pound as he did for his other meat. When she asked him why he charged such a price for a bone that most meat men gave away, he allowed that the bone came from the same critter that

Stephen Gupill - 50 -

the rest of the meat came from and it cost him just as much to raise the bone as it did the meat, so he ought to get as much for it.

Coll.: Machias, Nov. 26, 1967

Inf.: Wishes to remain unknown

Machias

V

EVALUATION

Having thus attempted to present a collection of hunting stories which all took place in the general area of Wesley, Maine I should like to conclude my paper with a brief evaluation of my work.

I cannot help but feel I was extremely fortunate to have the facilities which I had to collect my stories (referring, of course, to the time of years when hunting was at its peak, the help and understanding of my informants who I had known most of my life, and the help of the shorthand expert who was able to record almost everything that was said.) I can easily see how much of a problem a project such as this could be should one have problems which my facilities seemed to solve. The experiences were extremely enjoyable as all I had to do was to get the informants telling stories and then simply sit back and listen. As mentioned earlier note taking did not bother but I think if one were to collect stories from the informer, especially my informants, and were he not to know them well personally, this method could definitely present a problem.

Although I have not included all of the stories collected, the ones I have presented I feel are very representative of the informants who gave them. It is rather interesting to notice the difference a good education makes in ones language; as three of my four informants had been to college while the other had simply had only a high school education. Perhaps the one

Wesley

without the college education told better stories but I feel this simply to be a matter of opinion as to ~~want~~ constitutes a good story. Certainly the stories told by the three college graduates were a bit shorter than most of Harold's stories, but I felt that for the most part they were equally well told and in equal taste. I did find myself however, able to listen more easily to the three college educated informants than to Harold. Why, I do not know, except that perhaps I was more used to that particular level of conversation.

Thus, in conclusion, I must say that I found this experience very worthwhile, interesting and especially entertaining; for it allowed me to return, not only in body, but in mind, to a facet of life which in the college community is so often forgotten in ones rush to do and get things done. It allowed me then to revert back to an environment where one was not on the go all the time and the entire pace of living was cut almost in half. In short, it gave me a chance to examine life more fully and realize for the first time what tremendous advances technology and education has made since the time of my parents, but more especially since the time of my grandparents. (Harold's generation.)

I am extremely glad that I have done this paper for I am afraid that in another ten years there will be none, or even fewer, of the old folks left who can tell us what life was and used to be like as they lived it and thus made us aware and more appreciative of the life and the conditions we live under today.