

Ray's third and last general story category is hunting stories. Going by the amount of time spent on this particular subject, it is by far his most extensive area.

Hunting Stories

These stories do not have a very long extension on the time continuum. Yet I was able to motif all of them and I believe they fulfill several functions of folklore, the least of which is not psychological release.

Although Ray clearly enjoys telling these stories and will tell them at the drop of a hat, I regret the situation in which they were collected as I am sure it effected the way they were told. To hear them in ideal form would mean to be at Warren Mattoon's farm, in the kitchen, at about 10:00 in the morning during deer season or to be at Ray's camp just after dinner during deer season. The style is definately more bawdy and the atmosphere is male and has a touch of one-up-manship to it.

Ray's background in hunting goes back to his childhood and has been primarily in Chelsea. His main hunting partner is Warren Mattoon, his cousin. Again a verbatim quote from Ray is in order. "Hunting in most Vermonters that have lived in small towns and follow the seasons for different animals is a different kind of thing than it is to, what people now do will have a trip to go hunting for a week, because they really lived the year round with the animals, particularly if they were farmers. They watched them and observed them and alot of them were, are real conservationists. And it

becomes really a part of the social part of a community and that's why in deer season you used to see everybody that would shoot a deer would hang their deer up in the tree in front of their house. It was a kind of social thing." It was a kind of social thing and in many instances it contributed to your reputation. So therefore stories about hunting and the storytellers were and are a very important part of this culture.

Thus the time continuum is not important. Another aspect of these stories that I feel is important and that I cannot document at this time, is the psychological release these stories allow. This is purely from personal experience but I have seen a pattern developing in the past years that the hunting has been poor. On the days that the hunting is poor, either no buck shot or no deer sighted, the extra time during the day is used purely for planning. But on the days the deer is shot everybody is the storyteller and the atmosphere is gay. Although hunting is no longer a means of livelihood, within the family, at least part of the meat is usually given to the youngest couple or the person who needs it the most.

These stories also help to maintain conformity by placing high regard on hunting and also serve to entertain and in part educate. As I have said before, judging by the amount of time spent in each area, I believe this is Ray's most extensive category, perhaps because this is the area he is most interested in. Following are three stories that illustrate some of my points. Illustrated also is the importance of a dog to a hunter.

"He (Warren Mattoon) had a another dog, Smokey. Smokey was a little beagle dog and his hunting dogs weren't allowed in the house but Smokey was kind of a pet and he was always in the and going with Warren. And he had one trick he used to do if they were eating and wanted to give Smokey alittle something to eat, all you'd have to say is 'O.K., Smokey, sneeze' and Smokey would sneeze and then Warren would give Smokey something to eat. But Smokey was supposed to be a rabbit dog because she was a beagle. And Warren had some other rabbit dogs so they'd go out hunting rabbits and Smokey got alittle heavy and she didn't think it was too great a deal running after those rabbits. She found out that usually if she stayed with Warren that the rabbit would come by sooner or later 'cause of course that's what you do in rabbit hunting try to find a place and let the dog run the rabbit by. She learned that so when they'd go rabbit hunting Smokey'd follow Warren sitting on the back of his snowshoes and wait for the rabbit. Yeah, but she'd usually see the rabbit coming before Warren would and she'd start to whine and scare the rabbit away. Warren thought so much of his dog he'd let Smokey go rabbit hunting with him, sitting on the back of his snowshoes." This story includes several motifs, A2465, A2537, A2494.4.4 and A524.1.1.

"Then we went coon hunting one night, Smokey went along. though she wasn't any coon dog. And we did it mainly 'cause the coon was bothering a person's sweet corn. We wnt to, we got a coon out of the sweet corn, coon ran down into alittle brook area and there was alittle bit of a fight going on and

a coon can kill a dog in water. Well, Smokey heard the ruckus and she got alot of strength of heart and decided she'd join in and off she went down to the ruckus in the brook. The first thing we heard was a very high pitched squeal and bark of pain and the coon had grabbed Smokey by the nose. And Smokey didn't realize that the coon might fight back and she was crying as if you thought she was going to be killed. Warren says, "The coon's got my dog.". We headed down. Well apparently the big coon dog got, distracted the coon so he let go of Smokey. And Smokey came right back up over that bank going 90 miles an hour and headed for Warren. Saw Warren, got behind him and then started peeking around over the bank of the brook to see where that coon was. She was quite a dog." Incorporated into this story are the following motifs, A2493.4, A2465, A2537, A524.1.1, B262.

This last story is the recollection of a joke my parents played on some of the out of state deer hunters in Chelsea. It includes at least the following motifs, A526.2 and J2346.

"We got so there for awhile there was alot of, still are alot of people from out of state, others that came into town to go (deer) hunting. Your mother and I had been out to Colorado elk hunting a year or so before and we'd got a six point elk, six on a side. And course the horns on an elk are about as big around as your wrist and they stand in the air 'bout $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 feet, they're big set of horns compared to a white tailed deer. So there wasn't much going on one day in the middle of the day so, I had a little jeep, so we took the elk horns and we just stuck them up out of the back of the jeep and closed the thing on it so just the horns were sticking out. Looked like the animal was in the back of the jeep with

just the horns sticking out. And of course had our hunting stuff, we'd been hunting all morning. Drove down into the village and we drove very slowly by the resteraunt. There were alot of these other hunters in there and they were watching and they saw these horns go by, not knowing what an elk was. And we turned around and came by and the whole resteraunt had emptied and everybody was jumping into their cars to see this big deer. Course we just kept going and went up by one of the general stores and the owner of the general store and all his customers came out on the steps to see this big deer. We didn't stop, we just kept going, went around the park and by the drug store and headed up Rt. 113 out of town, the Vershire Road. And in the process, had about twelve cars following us up the road all wanting to see this big deer. 'Til somebody finally realized that was a set of elk horns. But they thought that must have been a big deer and I guess it would have been a pretty good one to have those horns on it."

It is interesting to note the pattern of three that Ray used in the telling of this story, three places in the town where mentioned, "to see this big deer" was used three times and the numbers used in the story are multiples of three.

Summary

As can be seen from the three categories discussed, Ray is a rich source of folklore for many areas in Vermont. I do not know how his participation in mass culture through