

[Marie Haggerty--Worcester #7]

Mass. 1938-9 Mrs. Marie Haggerty - Paper?

State Massachusetts

Name of Worker Emily B. Moore

Address 84 Elm Street,

Worcester, Mass.

Date of Interview June 29, 1939

Subject Living Lore

Name of Informant Mrs. Marie Haggerty

Address Worcester, Mass.

Name: Emily B. Moore

Title: Living Lore

Assignment: Worcester

Topic: Mrs. Marie Haggerty - Paper 7

"I knowed Pa for three summers, before we got engaged, and I well remember that day. It was Sunday afternoon, and he come by with his horse and buggy. It was such a nice day, and hot, and the horse was all sweat, so he tied up the horse, and we went a-walkin'. We walked all down by the water, and he was very quiet, and there was people all around,

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so he said, 'Kitten', he always called me 'Kitten', 'Let's walk through this little woods, 'taint very thick,' Well, sir, I felt something was 'bout to come, and I didn't know what. Well, we walked for an hour or more, and then we set down on a tree stump, and while I was jest pickin' grass, and chewing on it, he outs with it, and asks me to get married. Mind you, first I was glad, and said I would, but next I got mad. 'twaren't like any proposal I'd ever heard of. It seemed like I was in a daze, and of a sudden I got scart to death, and I got up and run, with him after me, and 'fore I knowed it, we was at the water, and with the people lookin' at us.

"Well, we walked home, and me as quiet as a mouse. He didn't even try to kiss me. After he left I got to thinkin' about it, and I got sick to my stomach, for I had just about made up my mind never to get married, but to learn to be a real nurse. Well, I got over that! I made up my mind I'd be nice to him when I saw him next, and that wasn't for two days, but would you believe it, the next time I saw him I was stony cold, and my mouth was so dry I couldn't say even 'How-de-do' to him. Well, he said that was a pretty state of affairs for a future bride to act, and that made me laugh, so after 2 that, it was al / right. We went in the buggy this time, and then we made plans to get married.

"The lady I worked for let me go to Boston, and make the arrangements, for we was only [summer?] people at the Cape. Well, the next month we was married, but we had / to go to Boston to be married. She let us have the coachman and the best carriage to go in, and when we got back to the Cape that night, they had a big party. No, it wasn't exactly like the rich people, but nearly. You see, she had the gardners and coachmen clear the barn for dancing, and the cook made up all the refreshment, and she gave us all the punch we could drink, and then before the Mr. and Mrs. went to bed, they come out and drank to our health, and wished us their blessings and happiness. No, the only difference in my wedding and the rich people was that our party was in the barn, - but it was nice there, they had it all rid up, and we had an accordin accordion and a fiddler for music. All night long, as long as the party lasted, people come from all over with tins and pans and beat a serenade, and yelled for the bride and groom. Do you know I felt sorry for Poor Mrs. —

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——. She thought after I got married both Pa and me would stay with her, for she told me after , her husband liked Pa and he'd let him be their coachman.

“You know, I never thought I'd have to work, after I was married, and wouldn't have had to, if pa'd Pa'd lived. Not that I mind workin', but people are so different now. I could get lots of work, but I'm fussy where I work. Why not long since, a man came all the way from Southbridge to get me to keep house for him. He had good 3 recommendations (?) too, but it meant that I'd have to break up my house here, and I didn't want to leave poor Bill. (older son). You know Bill is the best fellow, - he should have been a girl, he likes staying 'round the house so much. (Bill is lazy). He never got over Pa dying. The children don't want me to work, but when I can work for nice people, I don't mind. Now, you take the rich people of today, they're tarters to work for, that is some of them. Why, the people I used to work for would have a decanter of wine of the table, and only the elders would take it, usually the men, and seldom the women, but now, my stars, - the young people now are usually 'stiff' before they reach a dinner table, that is if there's a dinner party. Of course, mind you, they're not all like that. Why, my mistress would consider it a favor if you would get her a glass of wine, if you thought she might not be feeling fit. Now-a-days, people think they do you a favor by even hiring you. I can tell when a person has something in back of her mind, - like that friend of yours, Mrs. B., she gives me a fur coat, that she had no earthly use for, one day, and the next day she wants me to work for her! Well, I'll swan, she can take the coat back, its just like when she give it to me, but I won't work for her, no siree!

“You know when I worked, and the rich people would give a party, and give us extra work, and keep us up late, why, would you believe it, the very next night, they'd give us a party, and we'd have 4 just the same as they had to eat and drink. The only thing we never could do was to ask outsiders in, but they's always enuf there to have fun. The best parties we ever had was in the winter, when my cousin, that's the cop, well, he got lots of invitations to parties and dances, and before I get engaged, he'd always take me. Yes, indeedie, we danced and played games, and the like, and I always had a good time. Oh, yes, there

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were fresh smart girls went, too, but we always knowed how to get rid of them. Onct when I was at a party over in Cambridge, we took the cook and two of the other girls with us. Well, it was like this, the cook was a good woman, but the other two girls was always fighting over their gentleman friends. Annie was the nicest girl, but Jenny was prettier and bold and forward, and she always would do something to make the other girls mad. She got Annie's boy friend away from her and was having the time of her life when the cook took a hand. She marched right over and took Jenny by the shoulders and started shaking her. Well, as far as I could see, she didn't hurt her none, but Jenny, being tricky, didn't know what to do, so she just pretended, and fainted away. Well, I can tell you, we all got skart to death. The cook took one look at her, and marched away, but come back in a minute with a long pen-knife, and before anyone could do anything, she pulled up Jenny's waist at the back, and before we knowed anything, she cut Jenny's corset strings. Well, Jenny went flub-dub, and there was no party for her the rest 5 of the night. The gentlemen all praised the cook, but Jenny had to go home. Them days everybody wore big heavy corsets, laced in the back, and onct you loosed the laces, - why you'd be twice the size you was, no matter how thin you looked.

“We often went to shows in Boston, but they was not like the shows now. Onct the ‘Black Crooks’ was playing in Boston, and the antics of them actresses was somethin' awful. The bold things had nothin' on but long black tights. Nice people never went to them kind of shows. We liked shows like ‘Uncle Tom's Cabin’, and the like, for them shows had lessons and morals to them. Then there was Operas, and sometimes they had funny men that told jokes. I was never much of a hand for shows, and after I got engaged to Pa we didn't go out much. After we got married, it was different, for we had babies, and them days when a woman had got married, she just stayed home, and did her house work and took care of the babies. Pa never wanted m e to join things. He said women that belonged to clubs and lodges just went there to gossip. I never belonged to a club in my life, and the only things I did was go to church and take care of the house. Funny, I never enjoyed women coming in my house when Pa lived, but now I like to have people come. Sometimes I think

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I'd like to belong to clubs or lodges but then, I don't like people to know my business, and women have a way of prying at your affairs. John and Bill never want me to go to clubs, but Marie says many's the time, it would be nice for me. Then I hear they talk about things I wouldn't know about, for most of the club ladies are educated, and I'm not, that is in that way. I was raised allright, with a regular school education, and know what's goin' on about me, but, - still, I dunno.

“Oh, yes, I believe in education, the beet you can afford, - but I'm talkin' about when I was a girl, - women weren't educated then, unless they was rich. Not very many went to college them days. Why, I know a lot of people that could send their daughters to college, but didn't, because they didn't think women ought to be educated. More than one rich woman that I knowed, didn't have as much schoolin' as I had, but it didn't seem important them days. I well remember one family I worked for, the son was gettin' married to a girl that was second girl for a friend of his mother, and I couldn't help but hear his father and mother talkin' about it, and both of them was pleased. Now-a-days, a rich man or woman would hit-the roof if their sons didn't marry one of their own kind.

“I never worked at a place before I was married that they didn't treat me as good as any one in the family. Maybe the difference was that I never said [‘marm’?] or never had no brogue. The only thing that I can remember about, that I didn't like about working for people — we did have to wear uniforms, usually dark blue, and stiff white collars, depending on what kind of work you had to do. Bein' next a nurse, I wore about the same as she did, and if there wasn't any nurse in the 7 family, I wore about the same as a parlor maid. We could frizz our hair, or wear it like we wanted to, just so it was neat. No, I guess I never minded being a maid, and to tell the truth, I'd rather my Marie was in some nice family, looking after babies, or the like, than working as a waitress. She'd be better off. I don't think I'd like her to work for rich people, the way they live nowadays, but say, like here with you, taking care of the boys, or gettin' your supper, while you worked, or something like that. Kitty would never have made a maid, - she's too fly-by-night and

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independent, but she's a good girl. I think Marie takes after me, in a way, - she's contented with her job. Oh, well, the poor girl, - I suppose she could have a worse one!”