

Page 23 - With Ella Smith and Joanne Donovan ISSUE : <u>Issue 52</u> Published by Ronald Caplan on 1989/8/1

With Ella Smith and Joanne Donovan Ella Smith. Neil's Harbour: My father used to--(and) the old people--they'd take a (key) and they'd tie it in the Bible (with string)--into the sign of a cross, they'd do it. (Tie the string in the sign of a cross?) Yeah. Around the key. (You have a Bible. Do you stick the key in any page, or is there a certain page?) No. I remember very well, if you wanted to find out who was going to marry you, you'd put that to (the chapter called) "Ruth." And this is what you would say: "Ruth said, 'Entreat me not to leave thee. Or to return from following after thee. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God." And the Bible would turn--would open up--(when you came) to the first letter. But what you would do--like, if you wanted to know who you were going to marry, you would ask the Bible who you were going to marry, and you would say this verse. And you'd start from A. And you'd say this over and over: "Ruth said...." If it didn't go, you'd go until the Bible opened. Well, we all knew that Dad and them used to do it. But the kids weren't allowed. So, there were some young fellows home from overseas. And Reuben Dowling was going with a girl here. He was crazy about her. So, we got to him. Her name was Phyllis--and when we came to G, that Bible opened just the same, like that. (You mean the Bible opened, the book opened.) Yeah. And the first word on top of the page started with a G. (Nobody was holding the Bible.) No, the Bible was tied up. (Did it break the string?) No, it wouldn't break the string. (You) would just make the string (so it) would just more or less open by itself. And when that Bible opened, we were under the table, over the table--going. We were pet? rified. We didn't think it was possible for it to happen, but it did. Now, this was the one about trying to find a wife or a husband. I know it was "Ruth," I remember that very well. (And then they would just go through the alphabet?) We'd start from A. But if they were pretty sure, they'd start on the girl they were going with or something. But it was so funny-- this girl, he was just nuts about her. And (the Bible) opened on G. And the girl he married was Greta. He never did marry Phyl? lis. He left here, went to Toronto, and years later he married this Greta. (But that Bible would really open up. No trick to it.) Oh, it opened. No, nobody was touching it. It would be in the middle of, the table. We were around, and you put the Bible in the middle of the table. No? body touched it and nobody opened it. (Was there ever any other kind of question you would ask, besides who you were going to marry?) Well, sometimes if--I remember --oh, I was about 16 years old when I went down. They had a lot of house parties. And they'd have singsongs. And this man lost some money--\$10 or something, which was a lot of money then. So he just got the Bible and he put it on the table. Now I can't remember what was it he said, but he