

*Rev. Pike*

Really, we're sitting there, you'd be here.

**I would be. What do you mean exactly.**

Well

**Is that where he was sitting?**

Yes, that's where he was sitting. He came and talked all about Jon and put out the book. You know the book?

**I see your name in there. In the back. I've read parts of it. I'll explain why I didn't read it all. You know why? Bill and I do not want to be influenced by his point of view, that might sound silly but we don't ever want to be accused. We've got our own, he's got a southern historians point of view, we've got something else, so**

Well, it's a book that I think I went through very quickly after I got it, I had it out and you were coming. .... this morning in fact I didn't handle it, Louise did. The fellow sat right there on the couch, not the same couch, and he was there.

**So can you, do you have an idea now of certain ways in which you can help us clarify?**

I'll tell you.

**With the father being so busy, Jonathan needed someone to talk to. I wished**

Phil was tremendously overworked. He took on more than he should. He was so concerned about everyone that he touched so I can understand his not having the time.

**We've heard stories about him going out in the middle of the night taking care of patients.**

Yes. Indeed. He'd go out and I doubted Phil all the time even marked down. He never charged us, it was the practice of not charging clergymen unless. Now it's different because clergymen have their medical insurance. But in those days if you had a

clergyman that was in your parish or something, he'd never charge at that time. But Phil would do anything for anyone anytime. He was a very, very, very dedicated physician and he never had enough time for himself. His wife absorbed a lot of his energy and as we're discussing sometimes not to any great avail but he loved her and did all he could for her but they lived in different wave lengths.

**Did you know her father was a physician?**

I must have, but I didn't remember it. He always got along well with her. She's a nice person.

**Very attractive woman.**

Yes, very attractive and she really I didn't think had any resentment to the relationship that Jon and I had and it's a thing that I didn't hide. I would discuss it with Phil, see Jon and so forth excepting that when Jon came to me with something that was his thing, he was coming to me at that time to see me as a clergyman, and therefore I had no problem putting the seal around it, so I didn't have to communicate that.

**Could I just start with a couple of questions?**

Sure

**Then we'll ramble where we lead to**

Good

**You were the rector of St. James from '53-59. St James in Keene. How do you feel about just talking about Phil. I think that would be nice background. Just the kind of man he was and how you came to know him generally.**

Instinctively, he's the kind of person you love and accept and so forth and because he's done it for you before you can do it for yourself. And he was entirely genuine and he just liked everyone. He gave every sucker an even break

**....receive a bill**

Yes that's about as good a thing as you can say about anyone I think and he felt called as I felt called to the ministry to be a physician and he was a good one. And where I think his knowledge as a competent physician has to end somewhere, when he ended there and could do no more there he was still able to take himself and to communicate himself to the ill or the dying person in such a way that it was healing and uplifting and great. And he had a lot of things you know, home wasn't always people weren't always there when he got there and the meals weren't necessarily there or whatever it might be and I don't think any of this got him to uptight because on the other hand he was gone himself, giving himself to everyone who wanted him.

**How did you get from being his patient in the office to his friend which must have been a nice transition for you guys? I mean if you go from his patient to going hunting together something must have changed and you must have become friends.**

I really

**I'm just curious.**

I think was it early on that we had six shooters. It wasn't was it.

**Was he an original member of the six shooters?**

Yes it was early because Margaret the first year we went up there was a baby. I think we looked around for people to go. We looked around for people to go and there was a fellow who worked at the hardware store, Spencer's Hardware, which was not in the same place it used to be.

**I've seen pictures of it.**

Yes. It was up there in the old great old place up there, wonderful and they had a place down cellar and upstairs and what not. It was a wonderful place. And that's where Jon worked.

**Jon Daniels?**

No, no. John Cook worked there. He was one of the six shooters. And he and Phil had a very close relationship.

But Doc Adams was close to him

And Doc Adams was really close to him too. And he was our dentist and he belonged to the church and he was just as straight and old New Hampshire backwoods and smart and everything as you can get. He was really a wonderful person and he always felt an affection for Phil and I fell right in between the two of them so early on my going there. And the hardware store I went to and the hospital I saw Phil practically everyday because I would go sometimes twice a day to that hospital.

**On what occasion? To see patients?**

To see patients, yes and of course there. I saw Phil very often because Phil's clientele were duplicates of a lot of the parishioners. And so that he so I got to know him and have coffee with him in the coffee shop and so forth and he I think well I think he worked out his clerygman had not been there terribly long and I think he worked out a better relationship with me than he had with him but we never talked religion. But as human beings you know we had a good relationship and I loved him and he was a sort of a brother and but so

**So the six shooters club. What was the name of that lake again you guys went to? Little, First Connecticut Lake.**

First Connecticut Lake. It's seven miles long and

**Tammy: A source for the river.**

Yes. That's where the river starts. It's the headwater of the river and

**What time of year would you six men go up there?**

Deer season. Yes deer season. And we'd leave on Sunday or early Monday and not come back until the next Saturday. And

Pittsburg New Hampshire

So I got to know Phil and got to know his family out of this and Jon and I just Jon. I don't think Jon really wanted to leave the Congregational Church and be an Episcopalian as much as the fact as he would very quickly on felt that he would like to have me as his pastor. I think I was the clergyman to him and I think that Jon loved his father but didn't know how to communicate with him sometimes. I'm not sure whether this is so or not, but I think it is. And I could communicate with both Jon and his father so instead of being hurtful in the situation by being another man that was in opposition or something in competition with him there was no I don't think any of us had any feelings about this about the division of relationships or anything at all. So I never became Jon's father.

**Did Phil know that Jon would come down and visit you sometimes and hang out in your office and chat with you?**

I didn't hang out in my office at the church. Oh no it was home. He came to the house at night and he generally came to the house at night after Louise had gone to bed and I was still down in the study and

**Do you remember the nature of any of the conversations? That's too hard a question for so many years ago.**

Well I think that it early on it became religious because Jon had a lot of questions and I think that Jon's mother who was a fine and great person and what not was also sort of she was scattered a little bit and sometimes you know that makes a person more delightful and so that and Jon's father loved Jon and he had great responsibilities just as I had in my life in my thing he gave himself to his patients, he really did, perhaps too much.

**So when Jon would come to your house and visit you it would often be in the evening. Would it be...Now we know that Jon liked the company of adults. A lot of adults have said that Jonathan actually got along better with older people than he did with people of his own age although that**

**changed later on. So did you sense that that was. He wasn't looking for your approval was he? Or**

No. I don't think so. No. He I think he sort of got satisfaction out of discussing and communicating with me at one level. At the other level he was taking a sort of second look at religion. I think he had been a kid and I don't think a kid has God and Jesus and so forth given to him.

**I think your right.**

The given. Their a given thing. And so some kids can just go along and never question this and accept the given and live their lives the rest of the way with this but Jon was more inquisitive than that. And perhaps he didn't like the givenness of it. He wanted it tilted around his way. So that we talk about it. It was no I wasn't taking the part of his father or mother. Communicate with him religiously and it was a situation where it was he pop in and I didn't say Episcopalian, Roman Catholic or so forth and he wanted to talk so he would.

**Did Jonathan ever ask about the role of the Christian church in dealing with the ills of society or what's the connection between religion and the world other than metaphysical? I was wondering if he**

I think it was Jon's own, as we all do, and we never can completely leave this situation, whether we are very devout people or whether we are people who think about Jesus and his life or whether we're people who think about God and who he is or what it is that we still haven't got around that for God but and Jon I think had all of these questions and I think the Congregational Church in Keene was a good church and they had at that point a clergyman who knew everything and he was very capable and he thought he knew everything well he might know everything but your never believe you know everything. When you do that you get the feet of clay. And so forth so I don't think Jon could buy this and felt in me a place where he could come and he knew I was not going to talk to anyone else and it was like talking

to God I think and in knowing that he was a friend. I think that was the relationship after a while it got so that it wasn't mixed up with his own church life or anything else at this point. Then there came another point later on but that was the point when I was leaving anyhow that he decided what he was going to do and where he was going.

**Sounds to me like you humanized religion for Jon. Made it accessible to him**

Well I don't know how else you can do it, because I don't have any magic. P'll I can do is talk at a level of being a human being.

**But that might have been a first for Jon.**

Yes, it might have been.

**You'll have to excuse my ignorance though. Many aspects of the Protestant faith I don't know much about it. I was raised a Roman Catholic but one distinction I see between the Congregational Church and the Episcopal Church is that the Episcopal Church has a willingness to become involved in the ills of the world that I don't think the Congregational Church is doing. Missionaries in foreign countries and the late 50s they had the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity. I'm just wondering if that aspect of the Episcopal Church, it's willingness to work in the real world had anything to do with Jonathan curiosity about. The reason I mention this is because I discovered that Jonathan read and review the book when he was 14 years old called *The Chain* by Paul Wellman about Episcopal clergymen and the mythical town of Jericho Kansas whom the Bishop puts in place there to make sure the problems of the rich Episcopalians and the poor Episcopalians get aggravated and this handsome, intense young Episcopalian priest Fr. Carlisle goes to Jericho. I read the book because I knew Jonathan read**

it. Jonathan gave this rave review of this book in the school creative publication called *The Enterprise* at the high school. So I saw in one of the books young, handsome, intense priest who comes to town and takes care of the problems that were developing. He read that when he was just talking to you at the same time. The book review came out in '35. Excuse my long windedness here but I'm trying to figure out, just trying to see the facts that's all. You may have had much more of an influence on him than you realize.

Oh I think I had a big influence on him. Yes.

And again why was that so? Just so I can get that clear in my head.

Well, let me see, religion is metaphysical you call it in a human term. It's a reality that isn't a reality. It's a reality for the believer but it is not a reality for the person who is not the believer. And I think that this is a thing people have to recognize and live with if they're going to communicate and I think the poor old Roman church over there who should be ahead of all of us misses out because they're not ready to accept this thing and so they place their mythology, if you want to call it that, which is to the non believer a mythology, they make that the focal thing instead of taking that and making it symbolic. They got the thing twisted around. **Jonathan wouldn't have been able to accept anything like that.**

So Jonathan probably recognized this in me that I admitted I didn't know all the answers. I knew enough to be able to commit my life to what it was and believe in it but I didn't know all the answers.

**Where as the Congregational Church it sounds to me as if the tradition were a little bit different.**

I was thinking of the Roman

**I know but also earlier you mentioned the pastor of the Congregational Church was a much more absolutist type of individual.**



Yes, because he was absolute himself about himself too. See I if you believe in God than you have to say before you go to bed at night, Good night God. You've got to take all your problems till I get up tomorrow morning. I'm going to go to sleep.

**People must have come to you as the head of their church often hoping you were going to be a magic man with a magic wand and they couldn't help it.**

But if your straight I think people respect you and you get the best people around supportive of you instead the queers and the cracks and all the rest of it.

**Right. All the crackpots. So when Jonathan, it comes as no surprise then after hearing all of this, that Jonathan would become an Episcopalian. Talk a little bit about when he started asking you and when you finally urged him and said it really was all right. Just a couple minutes if you don't mind. You in the beginning dissuaded him till he were older.**

Oh the thing about it.

**Confirmed in the Episcopal**

This is not early on with Jon. This is were down to a couple of years before he well is it was before he started toward the ministry or anything but so that he. What was the question?

**I guess he was about 16 years old when he came to you and said I'd like to be confirmed in Episcopalian faith. At what how did you handle that?**

Oh I can do that very quickly. Jon we lived in a small community and we not only have responsibilities to ourselves we have a responsibility to our families, we have a responsibility to the community. And I said if you suddenly come into the Episcopal Church and leave the church, every old lady at the Congregational Church is going to go buzzzzzzz. And how can he do that? Your father is well known in town and I

said all the Episcopalians are going to say we got him. And I said we can't go through this stuff. And I accept you as an adult and as a friend and everything I will communicate with you but I'm not going to accept you into the church because when you really look at it that church that you are going to is the church of almighty God and of Jesus Christ and the Episcopal Church is the same thing. We have different approaches and what not but you know it's there, it's not that different. You don't like the minister there. He can't serve you and I said I can't become your clergyman. I can be a friend and I can talk with you but no I'm not going to

**But eventually you in 1958 he was confirmed in your church.**

Oh that's after I left.

No

Oh yes, yes.

**So mentally it must have been when**

Yes when he was ready to go to college I would do it. So that when he left the community I would do it and square with his parents and we'd do the whole thing and what not.

**Did you talk to his parents about it?**

I had to. I can't remember whether I did or not. But I'm sure I did. I did yes it was it would undermine everything I ever told Jon if I didn't do it.

You wouldn't have done that without talking to Phil and Connie about it.

No, I had to have talked to them. I cannot remember the specific talking to them but

I had to do it. I wouldn't be myself. Yes.

**Did they mind?**

I don't think so because I think Phil because I was Phil's friend and Phil would rather have me taking care of his son than the other fellow there who posed for the ladies.

Well you know this helps me a lot trying to get to the answer the question that's been on my mind now for about five years, Why did Jonathan become an Episcopalian? I kind of got a handle on it, I can certainly understand his relationship with you. I can also understand the kind of negative reaction to the Congregational Church and the pastor. But what I want to get at was there something about the Episcopal Church that drew him in as opposed to being Congregationalist. What was it you guys had that encouraged him? No.

I think he liked the ritual. But I think you've got to feel that no, Doctor Daniels he became our doctor early on and and the thing is that Phil had all the Episcopalians that amounted to anything in his pocket. He was ministering to them.

**From a physician's point of view.**

I'm not talking religious. From a physician's point of view. So that he knew them all and I went into the hospital everyday I'd see him at the hospital and he'd see the other guy that was there that went around as Jesus Christ. It's nothing. Most Congregational Churches are not like that. There are Episcopalians that are like this too. But the fellow went there with power you know he could do it. And of course the ladies know I'm handsome and beautiful. I'm exaggerating but you know. This is the type thing.

**I know don't worry.**

And he wasn't stupid. He wasn't stupid at all. He was a capable man but he had this kind of a flaw and he had to have his way and his will.

**So Jonathan might have sensed that arrogance.**

Oh sure he did.

**Jonathan I don't think would stand arrogance. Even though at times I think he could be a little arrogant himself.**

Yes.

**Well here I am fishing for a metaphysical reason that he became an Episcopalian and I'm falling. But that's okay any port in a storm any reason .**

No. Because you've got to. Figure it out. Look, I think you know by now that I could have gone into business, made a hell of a lot more money, **I thought the same about being college teacher.**

Okay all right.

**We make certain choices in our life**

You make certain choices right. Yes and so the thing is that why has to be you may get a few more bucks out of it. But I'm not going to do that. And I never wanted to go to a big church. I wanted to be there where I could, I once had the chance to go to the real the place with the biggest parish church with the most money in the Episcopal Church. It's on Fifth Avenue overlooking the Central Park and two kids-- they be sent to private school--pickup the bill.

**You don't regret not having made that decision?**

Never.

**How come?**

*The kids, we couldn't do that to them, New York*

**Do you think Jonathan sensed that side of you?**

Probably because I think that the clergyman he was with would say "Hello Jon How are you, Jon." you know and I don't think there would be any caring.

**And to Jon that would be intolerable.**

Yes. Yes and Jon and I said 'Now Jon look, we're, I will not become your clergyman but I will give you any help I can. You want to come and talk to me. I won't seek you out, I won't have any responsibility towards me at all what not.' Your all interested in the Episcopal Church and so forth and I told his father.

Now when we spoke with Fritz Geller I asked Fritz what the procedure was for becoming confirmed in the Episcopal Church and he said one had to have a series of religious lessons to know the nature of the Episcopal Church. So Jonathan must have met with you .

Well Fritz Geller and I are on completely different wavelengths.

**Do you want me to turn this off for a second?**

No. We're on different wave lengths because I'm a lot more elastic than he is. And therefore you know it says this and this is what he goes by and this is wonderful because it makes your life very easy in some ways.

**It's in keeping with the job the man has.**

Right.

**When you were with Jonathan I was just wondering what it was like teaching Jonathan about religion. It must have been interesting.**

But it wouldn't be. It wasn't every Sunday or something like that.

No, no, no. I wouldn't do that.

*You would do that most of the time with your parishioners.*

Yes. I'd do that for parishioners.

**If someone's going to become confirmed in the church, I thought they had not to memorize the catechism but know.**

I'd talk to Jon about religion, about God and about faith.

**As a part of his preparation for confirmation.**

No.

**Just in general? So he was ready to go.**

I was so

*Most people do what you're*

Yes. But this was different.

**I thought Jonathan would sit down and you would say, "Jonathan, tonight we're going to talk about."**

No. I was just free for Jonathan to come to. Not the other way around.

**So Jonathan didn't have to do anything specific to become confirmed.**

This is different. I didn't accept him into the church as such. I told him that

*Yes you did before you left.*

Yes.

*He's talking preparation you gave him for confirmation.*

**That preparation.**

Oh. Yes. I saw him individually and then it was all out in the open.

**Now at that point what was that instruction like for you or for Jon? Was it**

It would be the same as it would be for anyone.

**See I wouldn't know what that would be. How would that be? If we agree that I wanted to be an Episcopalian and I had to be confirmed on, what would be the steps I would take in order to become an**

**Episcopalian? I would come to you in your rectory and we would talk?**

Or generally once an adult confirmation class and if there's some problem that a person can't come to that and not have to answer or get into it but if a person, he or she doesn't want to reveal ignorance or whatever it might be, we would work it out some how.

**So did Jonathan go to such a class or did he meet with you separately?**

No at this point, you see this was just his promise.

**No. When he was about to be confirmed? Whatever he needed to do.**

Well we had worked it out by that time. He had worked it so the parents knew and everything known and what not.

**You went off to Concord and the bishop**

I put him in the car and we went over to Concord and I told the bishop that I didn't want any big thing done of this and what the story was.

**Who was the bishop at the time?**

Todd Hall.

**His son I met at ETS**

I go back with him a long way and I knew Todd before I went to seminary.

**He lived up this way.**

Yes and he what I did was go down to the church on Fifth Avenue there. He got me to go over to Keene.

.....

Ecclesiastical

**That's what my mother said when I went to KSC.**

And

*Keene was a great place to bring up the kids.*

Wonderful place to bring up the kids. Just the greatest place. I could take the kids and go out fish with them, five or ten minutes from the house. All that type of thing. In addition to everything else.

.....

Did you know Ozzie Wade? Because he had gone. He was the guy at the station.

Everyone knew and loved him.

**Was he one of the six shooters?**

No. But he was there.

**I'm intrigued by the six shooters I must say.**

So he I took the two boys out, we went out to the Dublin Lake and they caught bigger fish than I did and brought them in and Ozzie Wade and everyone listened to Ozzie. I went in and "What are you doing here?" He's talking on the air and I said "Well Ozzie I thought you'd like to know that we've been out fishing and the two boys are here

and look at what they have." So they pulled them out and Ozzie described them. He was that was duck soup for him in his day all the people are at home and wanting to be out fishing at this point. All the men. So we always found it real good to get along with the announcers

*Did you want to ask about Jon and the cross?*

**Yes. We'd like you to tell that story. Jon at VMI and his not being allowed to have any religious things. The other things I'd like to ask about are when you drove down to deliver the money for Gary Mitchner and how you ran into Jon. There's few more little anecdotes if you don't mind. But if you wouldn't mind talking about the cross and the chewing gum.**

No problem. I have to figure out at this point Jon had now we had worked it out that he would go to the Congregational Church, he would go to the youth group there, he would shut his mouth, and that I would act as his pastor is what it amounted to. Because with his father being a doctor, being so prominent in town the whole town would buzz about this and why should he be responsible for causing this kind of an explosion in the community. So, we

**Now when you went on to VMI he wrote to you and said that the problem was he was not allowed any religious things.**

Oh yes. This is after he went down to school down there and he wrote to me, occasionally called, and about things down there and he was really I think he had taken all these things he couldn't and wanted to do and wasn't being satisfied in and he put them all over on the back of this business where in the school your room was exactly like the fellows next door. There were no crosses on the walls, there were no pictures, you didn't have a picture of your girlfriend on your bureau anything. It was just sterile like army on the march and so Jon found this sort of intolerable and he said I can't have anything out in view or hung on the wall. A picture of Jesus or



nothing. I can't have anything. I said well Jon let me work on it. I'll see if we can work out something. But I said it's going to be difficult. So I got a luminous cross. It looked like cardboard but actually when you put it in the dark it shines and so I took one of them and I always kept group of these. I had them. And then I enclosed some gum and told Jon to go out in the hall somewhere he'd find a broom and to take gum and chew it and when he had it nice and sticky to put it right where the intersection in the cross came and stick that on top of the end of the broom and then push it up on the ceiling directly over where his head was in his bed. The chances are they won't notice that white cross up against the ceiling and this was about four and one-half inches by three inches. Then on the back of it were four big dabs of gum. and it holds. It may be still there. I don't know.

**He got away with that?**

He got away with it and they never found it. And this sort of satisfied him somehow and he would look up and there it was up above and

**When he was at VMI, he went to the Episcopal Church there. We talked to a friend of his that went with him. Did he ever write to you about that when he was at VMI?**

Yes. I can't remember anything about a friend there.

**No. Did he talk about besides how did he feel about VMI?**

I think he was miserable when he went there and I think he'd much rather have been somewhere else I think. But he

**He didn't talk about his religious inclinations while he was there?**

Because his father died in 1959, he was a junior. And I want to tell you a little story that Fritz Geller told me. I don't know if it triggers anything. He ran into Jonathan a few months after his father died.

This must have been in the summer of 1960 when he was back from school. He saw Jonathan walking down the street and he said Jon how

are you, how's things going? In the course of the conversation Jonathan told him that he didn't have the same strong feelings about religion that he had before. That he was not inclined to be involved in it. I asked Fritz, No I think it had to do with his father. ...

Well when was it, the VMI thing was after I left Keene wasn't it?

*No it was before. That was when you were going to confirm him.*

Right.

*I don't think you were in touch with him as much.*

No it couldn't be. He would have come home to Keene not gone to Andover. Did he ever come to visit you in Andover? Did he?

Yes. It was a. Todd Hall was a great person and he'd go along with anything.

When Jonathan made his decision to become an Episcopal minister, which happened according to Jonathan happened in 1962 did he come and talk to you about it? It seems that you would be a logical person to talk to. You would have been in Andover. He was at home. He was at Harvard. He was unhappy at Harvard, his sister had been institutionalized, his mother was running out of money, his mother was studying at UNH to become a teacher.

I don't think he did.

Did you know when he went to the seminary? Do you remember when you heard of it?

Oh I knew he had gone to the seminary. Yes. And Louise's backdoor relatives from up in Walpole that all is part of this string too so that we're on the same wave length there.

Could you talk a little bit about when you went, that day when you went down to ETS to deliver the money for Gary Mitchner and you ran into Jon before he got on the airplane to go to Selma.

I gave the money to him to bring back that day.

**Did you see Jon before he went to Selma?**

Yes. I think it was two or three days before he went and I think that I think he was having a hard time with his studies at that point. I believe. Do you have any indication that that might be so?

**A little. But your's is the strongest evidence.**

Yes. He was having ...I'm trying to recollect. And so he was having some things and whatnot about it and I thought that this was wrapped up in this desire to go , that thing. I think that the chances are probably if everything had been hunky dory and he had no problems at that time, I sort of doubt whether he would have gone.

**when he made that decision to go.**

Yes. But he might have come back like the others did if he hadn't been having difficulty in the seminary. Yes.

**He got permission to continue his work by correspondence. He would do the papers at the West house in Selma and mail them. He would get his grades. We have some of his papers. He and Judith had permission to do them that way. It's unusual. It was a special vote of the teachers.**

Yes. that is unusual.

**But regardless, do you remember anything he said about going south?**

**Cause I'm not quite sure if he talked to you about that.**

Yes. He talked to me before he left. Yes.

**It must have been the Sunday, it had to be because he was gone the next night.**

Right before he went. This was two days before he left that I was down to the seminary.

*That was after he decided to go. Larry thinks he knows when he decided to go. It had to be after that. He was going when you talked to him.*

When I was down at the seminary he was already. It was two days after that he was going.

**It makes sense so far. Did he say anything about his going? Anything at all?**

I can't remember, but I had the distinct feeling myself that he was lousing himself up in his studies and that this was a good cop out. That was my opinion. I think you've listened to enough by now to know that when I say something like that I'm just not pulling that out. I think

**I mean you knew Jon really well. No reason to think**

I think that that was and I think the whole business of his not coming back you know staying down there was I don't know what the seminary was thinking or saying or anything to him at this point either.

*You never heard from him after he went down there.*

No.