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INTERVIEW WITH  
MR. & MRS. GEORGE BUTLER  
CAMDEN, DELAWARE

January 25, 1975

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

GEORGE K. VAPAA, NARRATOR

Vapaa: Ah, it's a cloudy Saturday afternoon, January the 25th, I guess about 1:30 P.M. Am I right? And ah, we're at ah, Camden, Delaware at the home of Mr. and Mrs. ah, George Butler. Ah, a couple that I've known for years and years. And always thought you were Delawareans, George, until recent years actually. And as I say we want to ah, do this tape recording with you ah, to ah, tell the students at the University of Delaware and wherever else this may go because it will be transcribed to ah, typing too. And ah, tell them just what went on in 1975. And what your experiences have been in this time. Now first of all, I'd like you to give me your full name and your mailing address.

G.Butler: My name is George Marker Butler. Mailing address is ah, Camden-Wyoming, Delaware.

Vapaa: And your zip code of course would be 11--

G.Butler: 9934.

Vapaa: ..34. And your telephone number?

G.Butler: It's ah, 697-7088.

Vapaa: 88. All right. Now George, ah, the first thing I think I want to know is--is when and where you were born.

G.Butler: I was born October 31st, 1888 in William (?) Township, Oswego County, New York.

Vapaa: What County was that?

G.Butler: Oswego.

Vapaa: Oswego.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: O-s-w-e-g-o. Yes. Was it on a farm, George?

G.Butler: Yeah, a farm.

Vapaa: What kind of a farm?

G.Butler: We had a hundred acres of land of which we self tilled about 75.  
It was a 3 horse farm which was the average for that section of the country.

Vapaa: I see. Well, we have your wife here sitting next to you. And I think it's time to get her into the act, George. Will you introduce yourself please, Mrs. Butler, and tell us where you--when and where you were born?

A.Butler: Well, my name is Annette Stoddart Butler. I was born in Jamaica, New York, February 21st, 1887.

Vapaa: I see. Now, is Stoddart your maiden name?

A.Butler: Yes. Stoddart was my maiden name.

Vapaa: I see. Did you have a middle name, Mrs.--

A.Butler: I didn't have a middle name. And that was my mother's ah, ah, maiden name, Tilly, T-i-l-l-y, that was my mother's sur--surname.

Vapaa: I see. Now ah--

A.Butler: My people ah, were--my grandparents ah, lived in Jamaica too, of course.

Vapaa: Is that right?

A.Butler: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Do you know when and where they might have been born--approximately?

A.Butler: My grandfather?

Vapaa: Yes.

A. Butler: My grandfather was born in ah, England and came here in ah, his early

teens. The ah, the name of the place they moved--Greenwood--Greenwood on the Avon. That--that's (unintelligible) country.

Vapaa: Yes. Have you ever been to England?

A.Butler: I have never been there.

Vapaa: Oh, well I've been to Stratford on Avon where Shakespeare of course ah, lived.

A.Butler: Lived, yeah.

Vapaa: And ah, I've been to the theater. I was there during World War touris-- II courtesy Uncle Sam. And ah, that's another story that we can't get into right now because we want to talk about you. But ah, what did your grandfather do in England, do you know?

A.Butler: Ah, my grandfather uh, ah, hadn't been out of school very long when he ah, when he decided he wanted to come to America. He was ah, apprentice to a baker. And ah, (cough) he realized that all he could ever be would be a baker if he stayed there. And he had some ideas ah, beyond that. So he got a chance to get aboard a boat to come to America at South Hampton. And ah, he washed dishes all across the ocean (laugh) to get--to get to New York.

Vapaa: Was this a sailing ship?

A.Butler: No. Ah--

Vapaa: Power machine.

A.Butler: Yes. Ah, ah, I do--I don't knew too much about the--about the voyage or anything but I do know that's how he got here. He did have some relatives here--some cousins. He was the youngest of 14 children.

And he had 7 sisters and 6 brothers. And he came to ah, New York City and came out on to Jamaica, Long Island and did any kind of work he could find at first. He worked for a farmer at first and then he ah, became a painter--a house painter. And later on he ah, after he'd been a house painter quite a long time ah, and a pretty good business--ah, he was a master painter--he ah, then went in real estate. And he studied for the ministry. But that's another--another ah, ah, story.

Vapaa: You mean--did he ever become a minister?

A.Butler: He did. He came--what was it they called a minister--those ministers who ah--

Vapaa: Was it the Anglican Church?

A.Butler: Ah, Methodist Church.

Vapaa: Oh.

A. Butler: Methodist ah, Church--

Vapaa: Episcopal?

A.Butler: Methodist Episcopal Church--

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: ...of England.

Vapaa: Of England.

A.Butler: He was all the rest of his life there in Jamaica. He was married 3 times.

Vapaa: He was.

A.Butler: First time he was ah, before the war between the States. And he ah, joined the New York regiment. He was a Master Seargent. Ah, what

was that they call 'em? In ah--

Vapaa: Top Sergeant. Yes.

A.Butler: Yes. Ah, in his ah, regiment. And ah--

Vapaa: Now that's the Civil War you're talking about?

A.Butler: Oh, yes.

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: The War Between the States. Oh, I forget, I believe the South they call it War Between the States--in the South. (laugh) And I just said war. Yes, and he was always very, very much interested in the GAR.

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: And ah, he became ah, chaplain of ah, GAR for New York State. Ah, you know ah, when they ah, that was later on. And he used to always go to the GAR encampments. I can remember when he--when I was a child he--he even perhaps been ah, ah, west or someplace with ah, Grandma. And he'd tell about the country out there.

Vapaa: Now you're talking about your grandfather.

A.Butler: My grandfather.

Vapaa: Now how does your father fit into this?

A.Butler: Now my father ah, was ah, the oldest of 6 children. His father died when he was 12 years old when he had to stop school and help take care of the family. His father and ah, my mother's father were buddies in the War Between the States. Ah, Grandpa Stoddart became a commissioned officer in the regiment he was in. I never knew this except I saw it on his gravestone. No one ever said anything about it because--

Vapaa: Where was he buried?

A.Butler: He's buried in Jamaica, New York.

Vapaa: Oh.

A.Butler: Prospect Cemetary. And ah, my Pa and his mother did all they could to bring up ah, younger children. He was only--only 12 years old when--and the youngest child was just a--almost a baby. Ah, Robert Stoddart. And they--Grandfather hadn't ah, accumulated anything except his home which was free and clear. That's all they had. And ah, my father was a very hard working young man. He had an uncle who ah, owned an express ah, company. Those days they were--they were horse drawn from Jamaica to Manhattan. They went--made a trip every day. And he--he worked for them. And that was the first work that he did. And then--

Vapaa: How much schooling did he have?

A.Butler: Ah, I--I--let me see. He must have had just about ah, 6 or 7 grades. That's about all. (cough) He attempted to go to ah, night school one time. And he didn't like it because it was too juvenile. And so he didn't try that anymore. But he had a good ah--he had a good ah, ah, idea of math for--for the work he did. He--he worked for my ah, Grandfather for awhile. And that was how he met my mother. And ah, he went into business for himself after awhile as ah--he owned a market ah, meat and vegetables and fruit. He did very well in fact financially. He'd always had a yen to be a farmer. So by that time my Grandfather had ah, ah, was in the real estate business and he had a farm that he--he ah, oh, he had very reasonably. And he went there and he used up all the money he had on it--his farm. Mother said she couldn't stand



it any longer. (laughter) She--she went back to Jamaica. It was on Long Island--Mariches, Long Island. And ah, he grew very fine vegetables I understand. And he had ah, cows and horses and pigs and chickens. But he was not near enough a market to make it profitable. So he came back and he went into business. Into the painting and decorating business for himself. And then--and he pursued that all the rest of his working life. And they ah, and I can remember when I was a child he and my mother ah, working and ah, figuring on plans at night after--after supper after we children were. I went to bed while they were setting in the other room. But ah, he did--he did all right at that. And I've been told by people since that the work that he did was excellent and held up for years.

Vapaa: Well, ah, let's get George alerted here again. George what do you remember about your grandparents? Do you remember anything at all?

G.Butler: My (unintelligible) grandparents on my mother's side were what you might call yeoman stock. They made their own food and processed everything for their own table. But they bought very little. For instance, they would bleach ashes, get soft soap, tramp forth about 12 miles by oxen to the city for sale where they could sell it for a little bit of cash. And if the children thought they could have as much as one quarter of one penny stick of candy, they'd sit up all night waiting for those oxen and the men to get back. (laugh) Well, that was an idea of the hardship that those men and women of--in that day had to endure. They thought they were happy--didn't know how miserable they were according to today's standards of living. They--of

course they had their own meat, butter, eggs, milk and all the vegetables. In those days if they had any vegetables or apples in the winter they had to be stored in their own cellar and periodically sorted over to get out the bad ones--rotten ones--which of course, went out to feed pigs. Nothing was wasted, absolutely nothing. They also had an income from their making maple syrup. In those days they had to chisel out wooden blocks to make the containers--tin was not used at that time--was carried by hand to the central point where the evaporator was. At that time it was the (unintelligible) kettle swung over poles--

Vapaa: What kind of a kettle?

G.Butler: Caldron.

A.Butler: Caldron.

G.Butler: Caldron kettle.

Vapaa: Caldron kettle.

G.Butler: Iron.

Vapaa: Iron. O.K.

A.Butler: It was a big black pot.

Vapaa: C-a-l-d-r-o-n. 50 gallon pot.

G.Butler: What it is, they had no conveyance. They didn't know how to gather it in tanks at the time and transport it to the sap house as it was called. But, with all it worked and the children had their maple syrup on their pancakes and (unintelligible) of sugared gum. Every Spring a party and they'd come for miles hoping to get some was. That was boiled down syrup to where it was poured on snow. It would make you a very stiff

wax. It was highly tolerable. It was enjoyed by everybody just to get there.

Vapaa: Well George, I happened to bring with me a copy of a book that Jerry Webb, our Extension Editor up at the University of Delaware, has referred to in one of his recent columns. I don't know whether you read the Morning News or not.

G.Butler: No.

Vapaa: But he writes a column every Monday morning. And ah, it's published every Monday morning in the Wilmington Morning News about something of interest to agriculture. And in this one particular date, I've got the article right here, on January 6th he referred to ah, this book, Farmer Boy by Laura Ingels Wilder. And ah, the headline--at the head of it it says, "Farmer Boy is a lovely book for annual fireplace (?) affairs." And if you don't mind, I'll let you--I'll leave it here and ask you to look through it. I haven't read it all entirely yet myself. But ah, I'm very grateful to Jerry for referring to this because it does talk about life in the days when you were actually a youngster too. So you were a farmer boy. And it talks about near Malone, New York which is not too far from where your--lived. Is that right? How close is Oswego from Malone?

G.Butler: (murmuring - unintelligible)

Vapaa: Un. 'Cause Malone as I understand it is up along--near the St. Lawrence Seaway near the Canadian border. Your wife's shaking her head so we must not be too far wrong, George.

A.Butler: Not too far from Thousand Islands.

Vapaa: Is that right? Well, I certainly hope that both of you will get some pleasure out of reading this book--

G.Butler: Sure (unintelligible)

Vapaa: ...'cause I do want to leave it with you. And I'm going to leave with you too some of the material that I've written over the years, and some of the material as a county agent, and some of the material that Dave Woodward writes as a county agent now. I get them--he sends them to me in the mail still. Ah, they go out to the newspapers, but I get it the same time the newspapers do. And so, they happened to miss a newspaper and I happen to take that particular newspaper and don't see it, why I'm tempted to call 'em up sometimes and say, "Hey, what happened to this ah, article?"

Well, anyway, we were talking about your grandparents. We've sugared off the maple trees now. Ah, what else did you do in those days when your grandfather was living?

G.Butler: Well, I could tell about the farm I grew up on.

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Butler: I grew up on a hundred acre farm as I said. It was a 3 horse farm. In those days your farms--you measured them (unintelligible) your farm, why you might have up to 5 horses. Usually it was only 3--sometimes less 'cause the more they had the more they had to feed. And the getting the food was a big, big task--saving enough--trying to save enough hay. We didn't have rakes in those days--had to be gathered by hand mower--mulch mower. It was what we call the scattering. Two or three men was pitching the hay on the wagon. It was also raked--

boys would do that with wooden peg rakes. In one way or another they kept enough food on hand for about 12 cows and of course a bull too had to be kept. Because there was no (unintelligible) about artificial insemination of course. Well, the average farmer he lived--if he survived, he had to diversify--diversified. He's a say 10 acres of corn, 8 acres of oats, 1 acre of potatoes and beans every nook and cranny on the farm was your life--every square foot. It had to be. We could raise a few beans and few beans (unintelligible) put in. Flay 'em out in order by hand, of course. And ah, the milk, what there was of it, was produced in the summertime. In the winter-time the cows were all dried off except a little bit of strippings for the house use. But the milk in my time was 4 miles to a station. At first there was a creamery there, but competition from Wisconsin drove 'em out. And the milk station was turned into a station to collect milk to go to New York City where they--. And from that we got a little bit of cash. But our main living came from peddling produce in the City of Oswego, New York which was 12 miles from where I lived. And at Christmas time if we had enough poultry to turn off and pay \$100 on the small mortgage we had, we thought we had had a successful year. In that way, in microscopic fashion reduced our debt, we paid our bills and we were beholden to no one.

Vapaa: Well, that's very interesting, George, because I--well, I haven't gone very far in this book--. They talk about very much the same sort of situation. I think you will find in here that this ah, farm is a little larger than the one that you're talking about in your own ex-

perience. But because this man had ah, also driving team as well as a work team. Now did you have a driving team?

G.Butler: No. Had the utility horses. They had to serve--

Vapaa: Both purposes.

G.Butler: ...both purposes. Yes.

Vapaa: Both for driving and for farm work.

G.Butler: Yes, had to use--

A.Butler: You didn't mention your ah, maple syrup sap business. That was something.

G.Butler: Well, this could go on and on and on. I don't want--

Vapaa: Well, let's let it go on and on and on. That's all right, George, come on. We'll--we'll--go ahead and talk about your maple syrup business.

G.Butler: I had most of it done--the manufacture of maple syrup when they had home made containers. In my time we had vats to a what was known as a grid (?) evaporator. They were made in Vermont. It was as long as an average--oh, 20 feet long, say, about 5 feet wide, above a fire. Fired one end and of course the heat went out the other end. And that was--there were shallow pans say 4 inches deep and this sap was circulated from over the fire pot to the other end where it was heated and evaporated until it weighed 11 pounds to the gallon--which was what the law required to make it official. Then we could offer it for sale official--officially made maple syrup.

Vapaa: Are you telling me that you made this as a boy?

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: I see. This was your job--one of your jobs that--ways that you made money as a boy?

G.Butler: Every March. Yes.

Vapaa: Every March. And ah, what did you do with the syrup when you had it all made?

G.Butler: We offered it to the public for \$2 a gallon. I believe the market at the present time is around say \$12 anyway or \$14. And that shows the advance of everything plus the inflation. But it was good syrup. And we had our customers. We were pleased with the profits.

Vapaa: You know, George, just the other night--in fact, I guess it was the night before last--I saw a ah, an educational film on channel 4. Are you on the cable?

G.Butler: No.

Vapaa: You're not. So you can't get channel 4. But they had an educational film and one of the topics there was ah, making maple syrup and eating maple syrup in snow.

A.Butler: Um-hum.

Vapaa: I presume you did that when you were a boy.

G.Butler: No.

A.Butler: Yes you did.

Vapaa: Sure you did.

G.Butler: Syrup I sold.

A.Butler: Yes.

G.Butler: Yes, we would do that. Un-hun. That was a great treat. Un-hun. Every section has its specialty. In the south it's a (unintelligible).

In the north it's an election party. (unintelligible) scarce of people. If they knew there was to be one, they'd get themselves invited. (laughter) String it all out on the snow.

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Butler: And then go along with a stick and wind it up and that was an all day sucker.

Vapaa: All right. Now we haven't talked much about either one of your educations as your formal schooling. So let's start out with--well, I don't know--who wanted to start out? You start out.

A.Butler: Oh, all right.

Vapaa: All right. Annette.

A.Butler: Ah--

Vapaa: That's all right.

A.Butler: I went to ah, kindergarden for a few months. And ah, I always loved school and I wanted to go to school very badly. And ah, you couldn't go to public school until you were 5 years old those days. So ah, I used--I was 5 in February and from February until ah, June I went to a kindergarden and then the next fall I went to public school in ah, Jamaica, New York. And went through public school and high school there--Jamaica, New York. And ah, normal school--that was 2 years in teacher's college at--at that time.

Vapaa: And where was this?

A.Butler: In Jamaica. All of that was in Jamaica, Long Island.

Vapaa: And you lived at home?

A.Butler: Yes, I lived at home. And ah, then the rest of my education ah, I got my--I didn't go to ah--didn't get my degree until after I was



married. George had ah, wanted me to--he--he felt that ah, that I ah, enjoyed housework and all and it meant that I would enjoy home economics ah, education. So--so I went to ah--at that time he was teaching in Greenwich, Connecticut. And ah, I went to the University of Connecticut.

Vapaa: Estores (?)

A.Butler: Estores (?) Which is a great big place now.

Vapaa: Oh, yes.

A.Butler: Well, it wasn't so very great big then. But I guess I graduated from there in 1919. And then we came to ah, Delaware. George came to Delaware to teach here. And ah, Dr. Holloway was ah, ah, Kent County Superintendant. And I went to him and asked him if he had a job for me. And he did--at Felton. Felton had never had a hi--a home economics. And ah, I started it there--was given the job of ah, equipping the ah, ah, schoolroom, making a home economics room of it. I just taught there one year and then I came to Caesar Rodney for 9 years.

Vapaa: Well, that's--you said you graduated from the University of Connecticut. I thought you went to Cornell.

A.Butler: I went there summer school.

Vapaa: Oh. But George--now we got to catch up with George on his education. Where did you start out in school, George?

G.Butler: I started in a little crossroads place called Butterfly, New York right near our home of course--a one room school. And I went there until I was ready for high school--graduated in 1908. Then went on to Cornell University where I registered in the 4 year agricul--

agricultural course. Graduated in 1912 with a BS degree which qualified me for high school science and agriculture of course. And I turned to that for a good while. Then I tried other activities--farm managements. But all the while the lure to teach was strong. And I decided that I would do that. So the first teaching was science at Greenwich, Connecticut. Then tried--tried to be a principalship in a small school, but found I was not adequately equipped by nature to do that of work. So I applied for work down this way where I could escape the awful winters that we had up there. And I did. I landed here in Delaware. And very, very fortunately I landed in a fruit section. We had over 100 efficient fruit growers then. It was after World War I and the prices were still up. And the production of early apples beginning in July of every year was a bonanza. It went to my head. I was naive enough to think that without a nickel of money I could get into that kind of thing myself. Well of course, It never panned out. And I was--went back to teachers' college--Columbia--'31. I got a MA degree which was helpful in my teaching although it left much to be desired.

Well, I accepted an opportunity to go to Georgia--be the head of the agricultural department in a vocational school there. It was called the Georgia Vocational Trade School. We took care of children that come from (unintelligible) -- or boarded up (unintelligible) I should say. There were many of 'em malnourished. But they did have a generally high level of intelligence--more so than the average high school--

Vapaa: Let me interrupt you here a minute, George. Where was this school in Georgia?

G.Butler: It was ah, Monroe, Georgia.

Vapaa: Monroe, Georgia. M-o-n or M-u-n?

G.Butler: M-o-n. It was 25 miles from Athens--the State College there.

Vapaa: I see. Yes.

G.Butler: We were the county seat. (unintelligible)

Vapaa: Well, I didn't mean to interrupt you now.

G.Butler: Well, the job down there sort of folded up--lack of money due to the rise of the public schools in that section. And so we came back to Delaware--what we had started out 'til we could gain a foothold out on a 12--14 acre farm where we had gone in 1925 here in the Caesar Rodney School where we first taught in Delaware.

Vapaa: Well, now wait a minute, George. You hadn't even met--in this place at least--I haven't even got you meeting your wife yet. When did you meet her and where?

G.Butler: 1912 in summer school in New York.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Butler: So we were already married and all that.

(END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1)

Vapaa: Well, why ah, we got you to Caesar Rodney School. Now, what happened from there?

G.Butler: Well, our life was pretty much routine here for 10 years--here at Caesar Rodney. We bought this village (?) farm and we enjoyed it very much--liked it very much. But it seems to be the trait of human nature to want to wander. So we--at the end of 10 years we checked out from Caesar Rodney School and went to (unintelligible). It wasn't long. And I was studying at first for a Masters Degree at Columbia.

And right after that I went to Georgia teaching not a very exciting business and much of it--I'd say 90% is routine. And you don't hear much of it.

Vapaa: I'll disagree with you on that, George. But go ahead.

G.Butler: I ah, was always assigned to teaching of the chemistry and the physics particularly the physics. Somehow or other the women seem to shy at physics. I guess because the apparatus was strange to them--some of it. But they didn't seem to like to go to a garage and get brass and so forth and study the center of gravity. So it always came to me which I was glad to have because I enjoyed it. Very much. I also taught at times--various times ah, biology, general science--particularly the general science which was always a pleasure.

Vapaa: Who was the principal at that time, George?

G.Butler: Jump.

Vapaa: Wilbur Jump? I see. And he is still living too.

G.Butler: Yup. Um-hum.

A.Butler: We see him once or twice.

Vapaa: You do? I haven't seen him for years.

G.Butler: Houston.

Vapaa: At Houston, yeah. Not Houston, but Houston in Delaware.

G.Butler: He'd be awful glad to see you.

Vapaa: Well ah, I'll be glad to see him. And I think I will go down there sometime.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: Do you know where he came from originally?

A.Butler: Yes. Right down around there.

Vapaa: Oh, he's a native Delawarean.

A.Butler: He's a native Delawarean. His wife is too.

Vapaa: Oh.

A.Butler: Or--oh--eh, that's right. Denton. Is Denton Delawarean?

Vapaa: No, Denton is Maryland.

A.Butler: Maryland. Well, she gu--they met at ah, Wesley. Wesley Academy, you know.

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: That's where they met.

Vapaa: Well, I ah, was always very much interested in ah, Mr. Jump and his farm. You know, he had a farm down there south of Houston. And I guess he went to live there for a while himself.

G.Butler: He always lived Houston.

Vapaa: Un-hun.

A.Butler: He never lived on the farm.

Vapaa: He never lived on the farm. But he had a dairy herd on this farm.

G.Butler: Yes. Yes.

Vapaa: And tenant's on the dairy farm. He's one of the few dairy farmers I know in Delaware who could ever make a tenant farm pay as a dairy farm. And as a county agent over some m--18 years I know I ah, got some of these owners out of the dairy business because it's awfully hard to operate a dairy farm today particularly as a tenant farm.

G.Butler: Can't do it.

Vapaa: No. You just can't. It's too much investment involved.

G.Butler: George, you asked me a question (unintelligible). ...any questions you'd like to ask, feel free to do so. The life of a teacher is not very exciting.

Vapaa: On the other hand, George, I found it very exciting.

A.Butler: Oh, we had--we had lots of good times you know with ah--well, you used to ask your ah--you used to have your ah, out-of-town boys. And I had the out-of-town home--the home ec girls that used to stay here overnight. And we'd have a party with the girls. And one of the girls--I remember one time when the girls had--were making cakes ah, we ah, each girl made a--a full cake and we had a cake party. And the boys and girls eat cake until (laugh) it come out of their ears.

G.Butler: (unintelligible)

Vapaa: What kind of cake was that?

A.Butler: All kinds of cakes.

Vapaa: You said flow (?) cake or something. Did you?

A.Butler: No. Ah, about the time we were making cakes. I don't think--

Vapaa: Oh.

A.Butler: No. I--I guess I was not very clear--my speech (laugh).

Vapaa: Well, it's--it's mine.

A.Butler: Whole cakes. W-h-o-l-e.

Vapaa: Oh, all right.

A.Butler: You know, when you--when you're teaching home economics you don't use the ah, a whole ah, quantities very often--just use small quantities because of the expense. So often girls would bring their materials from home--while I was teaching--and make their cakes and take 'em home. Or sometimes they'd make them and just go have a party there at school. (laugh)

Vapaa: They'd never get home with 'em.

A.Butler: That's right. And when we had ah, did our canning ah, they would bring things from home or if they didn't want to, we'd ask one of the teachers--one of the married teachers--if she'd like us to can things for her. And ah, very often they did. Of course, they were very glad to have the opportunity. And the girls were glad to do it. One time ah, there was--we did a lot of canning for the ah, Methodist Home in Philadelphia. Mary ah, Simpson was in the class at that time.

Vapaa: That's Walton's wife?

A.Butler: Walton--no.

Vapaa: I mean not Walton, but Vernan.

A.Butler: Vernan's wife. Vernon was in--she was in my class. So was--so was Annalee, Walton's wife. They were there different times. Mary did a very fine management problem. And she--she was able to get all the empty jars and we--I don't know how much we did, but it was a--it was enough to make a big exhibit. They ah, they exhibited in the Sunday School room ah, Methodist Sunday School room just before they packed it. Eh, and it went to the ah, went to the Methodist Home in ah, Philadelphia.

I used to have several girls whose mothers were invalids who were excellent managers. They ah, these girls carried on the work of the home and came to school and did good jobs of both.

Vapaa: Well, you know, Mrs. Butler, I never saw you teaching but I did see George a time or two teach. And I never in my life, George, heard you raise your voice to anybody. Now, is this why you felt that you ah, probably weren't too good as a principal--or ah--?

G.Butler: It's a long, long story, George. If I were to go into it, you'd have to stay all night.

Vapaa: Well, we're not going to do that.

G.Butler: I found myself when I graduated--we thought--life's (?) greatest thought I would achieve something in life. I threw myself into my first job in Western New York--is that thing on?

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Butler: ...with missionary zeal. And well, without my knowing I was ahead of me. At the end of my first teaching work I was selected to be a county agent. One of the first I guess in New York State. Well, above all things so utterly stimulating--

Vapaa: What county? Chataukua (?)

G.Butler: No the one next to it this way.

Vapaa: Oh, I don't know, but we can look it up.

A.Butler: Chemung (?)

Vapaa: Chemung (?) County?

G.Butler: Wellsville.

Vapaa: Wellsville is the town--county seat. Yes, I've been to Wellsville.

G.Butler: Well, anyhow the whole thing was so stimulating to me that without warning I found myself in the throes of a neurosis. Of all the hells I think there is to endure on earth, I think that that perhaps is the worse. So it became the ban of my existence. And it's held me ever since. And like an alcoholic once you're a victim of that you never get over it. You're never free of it. You never know when it's going to come back. So if there's anything you need about my life, that's it. Of course, you don't mention this to the general public. You don't say



anything about it. You live with it. You control it when you can, but it's with you. You've got it. There's no cure.

Vapaa: Well now, George, ah, ah, or Annette either one ah, you taught here in Caesar Rodney School too and you talked about the girls so--. And you taught down in Lord Baltimore?

A.Butler: I--I was just substitute there.

Vapaa: Substitute down there.

A.Butler: Substitute in--

Vapaa: In Rehoboth?

A.Butler: In--in Rehoboth too. Ah, any--any of the--whatever they wanted a substitute in the grades or in the high school. I ah, at one time I was the only qualified ah, high school substitute in that part of the State. And ah, I also taught home bound children. Go to their homes, you know, when they were sick.

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: I had a number of ch--a number of youngsters who had ah, rheumatic fever and they had to stay in bed. But they were not sick--they were not really in pain or sick. They needed rest. Bed rest. I had one little girl the whole year. And ah--

Vapaa: I guess you knew Russell Wilkins' wife did the same thing?

A. Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: And there were several other people in the county that I can't--

A.Butler: Yes. And Mary Hart.

Vapaa: Hart? H-a-r-t?

A.Butler: H-a-r-t. You know the music ah--

Vapaa: Supervisor's wife.

A.Butler: Wife.

Vapaa: Oh, I didn't know she--

A.Butler: Yeah, I think she's--I think--she's ah,--she is ah, retired or not. If she has, then it's just been very recently.

Vapaa: Well, I have seen him in the last year I think.

A.Butler: Well, he retired.

Vapaa: He's retired, yes. And ah, I guess we're all getting a little bit older.

A.Butler: Oh, yes.

Vapaa: And we're all--we're all very definitely retired anyway.

A.Butler: Well, Floyd--Floyd Hart is a Quaker you know. He belongs to our meeting.

Vapaa: All right, now, you bring up the subject that I've been wanting to get on for the last few minutes. This ah--you said that you're ah, Grandfather was a Methodist--

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: ...minister in Jamaica. But then you became a Quaker. Now how--what--how did you and George become Quakers?

A.Butler: Well, we ah--when we first came to ah, Delaware ah, we had ah, a neighbor right next door--Mr. Ted Emerson--

Vapaa: Oh, yes.

A.Butler: It's ah--

Vapaa: Ralph

A.Butler: Ralph's--

Vapaa: Father, yeah.

A.Butler: Ralph's father.

Vapaa: And Sud's grandfather.

A.Butler: That's right. And then right--another neighbor was ah, Willis Jenkins'

mother ah, Miss Mary Jenkins. And they were--they were very cordial to us. They invited us to come to the Meeting. And they had a--what they call a Happy every Meeting which--which we have ah--which Quakers still have there. And ah, we enjoyed it very much. And so we ah, continued and joined.

Vapaa: Now ah, let me ask you what you particularly liked about the Quaker ah, faith.

A.Butler: The Quakers don't have ah, ah, any ah, creed. There's no creed. And we--we liked that very much. And we like--love very much their ah, ah, advanced social thinking. It has been since the beginning you know. But ah, the first people who would ah, been very interested in woman's suffrage for instance. And their interested in common cause and women's lib nowadays.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Now, I might ask George this question too as long as we're talking about this. George, you've been quite active in our Dover Chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Now, do you feel that this ties in pretty close with what your--Quaker belief?

G.Butler: George, the Christian-Jew group is a national movement. The Quakers can be morally isolated I would say. Of course, we belong to a national group. But we're autonomous in the--no one can tell us what we're going to do or how we're going to do it. No one speaks officially for the Quakers. They all sort of haggle--stay together and still we're united. I don't know that there's any greater connection between the Christian and the Jews than **the** Quaker faith except that it's all--

A.Butler: Brotherhood.

G.Butler: Or brotherhood and the good of mankind.

Vapaa: Well ah, you know I ah, have to think questions here too. I've pretty much run out of things I had on my outline here. Ah, but ah, there is an awful lot that we can talk about that we still have plenty of time here on this ah, recording. So ah, ah, now you never had any children?

A.Butler: No.

Vapaa: And ah, did you ever have any occasion to raise any children at all-- adopted or anything like that?

A.Butler: No, ah, but when we--when they used to have the ah--they still do-- have these children come down from the city. You know, fresh air children?

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: Well, we--we did have fresh air children here summertimes. Ah, there weren't very many summertimes when ah, I wasn't going to summer school. When we--when I was summer school we had fresh air children.

Vapaa: Um-hum. And that program is still very active.

A.Butler: Oh, yes. And it's headed by a Quaker you know. Ah--

Vapaa: Who is it?

A.Butler: Kaspar. Ah, Barbara--

Vapaa: Pete Kaspar.

A.Butler: Peter's wife, Barbara. Barbara Kaspar.

Vapaa: Yes. That's K-a-s-p-e-r.

A.Butler: p-a-r.

Vapaa: p-a-r.

A.Butler: p-a-a.

Vapaa: Oh, yes. Well, the reason I'm spelling it is for the typist's benefit, you know.

A.Butler: Well, sure.

Vapaa: And for my own benefit too, because I'm going to have to proofread the copy after she types off the--

A.Butler: Um-hum.

Vapaa: ...what we're talking about. And ah, yes ah, and Pete of course, is ah,--did you say he's a Quaker?

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: Now ah, was he born a Quaker? Do you know? Or--

A.Butler: Why, I think so.

Vapaa: He or his wife? Pete or his wife?

A.Butler: I think ah--I think (unintelligible). I don't know. I know they went to George School which is ah, a Quaker ah, co-educational high school--boarding school. I know that's where they met.

Vapaa: Now that's in New York State, isn't it?

A.Butler: No. It's in ah, Pennsylvania.

Vapaa: It is. So that Pete is not a Delawarean either.

A.Butler: No.

Vapaa: So he perhaps would be another person that I should interview. And ah, I think I will because Pete and I get along real well together. And ah, we agree and we disagree.

A.Butler: Umm. Pete's a--he's a real smart man.

Vapaa: He's a real smart man. And he works for ah, I guess International Playtex Corporation as a chemist I believe.

A.Butler: No ah, he's an inventor.

Vapaa: Oh, machines and dying (?). Oh. Do you happen to know what he's working on right now? Any idea? Say he doesn't talk much about his work, does he?

A.Butler: No.

G.Butler: He will if you ask him.

A.Butler: He will if you ask him.

Vapaa: He will if you ask him. Oh.

A.Butler: Now that's material that's used in ah, foundation garments.

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: Is one of his fabrics.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

A. Butler: And ah, he's made some patents of--independant of the ah, ah, ah, Laytex people too. But they're not money making ones. He's very interested in ah, yachting. And there's some kind of a, a insurance that he was in--navigation.

Vapaa: And you know too he's very much interested in bicycling too. Say, you know about a month ago why I was driving in town to go swimming at the YMCA. And I swim at noon. And here comes Pete pedaling down the street from ILC to his home at Huntly Circle. Now that's a distance I would guess perhaps of--oh, it's at least half a mile. And I'm sure it must be a mile by the time you get way back in the back of Huntly Circle. And he has a beautiful home back there.

A.Butler: Umm.

Vapaa: Have you been in there lately?

A.Butler: Oh, yes. Just a couple of weeks ago.

Vapaa: Well, that's good--because it's a easy house to get in an out of, isn't it?

A.Butler: Yes, all on one floor.

G.Butler: Yes.

A.Butler: Particularly nice now. I know when ah, Barbara broke her ankle and ah, she's--it's very good that she's all on one floor.

Vapaa: Now, you say all on one floor. And yet, I think if you get in the back of the house, it's on a hill.

A.Butler: Well, they do have a basement too. But I mean that ah, the living part--

Vapaa: The living part of the house is on the first floor, yes.

A.Butler: And bedrooms too.

Vapaa: Yes. And of course, Jim Miller that works for the State News is their neighbor right across the street. And ah, between Jim and Pete why they kind of keep Huntly Circle alive I believe.

A.Butler: Yeah. They have a swimming pool there. And last summer Peter and ah, Barbara had a very nice vegetable garden. They ah--some years ago their boys built a bicycle for their parents for Christmas. They took two old bicycles and somehow put 'em together so it--it made one of those bicycles for two. It worked.

Vapaa: Now, didn't one of those boys just get married recently?

A.Butler: One of 'em just lost his wife just ah--

Vapaa: Oh, that's what it was.

A. Butler: Yes. January the 1st she died.

Vapaa: Oh, do you mind telling me what it--

A.Butler: What it was she--

Vapaa: What it was.

A.Butler: Cancer. She ah, they had it--a baby. The baby is 2 years old--a beautiful child. Lovely girl. They met in college--Bryson. That's the older one. The younger one is married too. And after the baby came this cancer developed and she's been a victim for the last 2 years.

Vapaa: So Barbara's raising another family then?

A.Butler: No. Ah, Barbara isn't. Brice's ah, sister-in-law who has a couple of children wanted the baby. And ah, Brice's other mother-in-law wanted the--to raise the baby. But the sister-in-law because she had a couple of babies--or had a couple of young children. The young ch--ah, the ah, children--she will bring little Brice up with her children.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Now George, there's one question I've been wanting to ask you for a number of years. You had a reputation when you were an ag teacher in the State of being the best teacher ah, to tell boys how to select onions. (laughter) Now ah, tell me, what do you consider what is the best way to select a sample of onions for a judging now. We had how many for in a class usually? Six wasn't it? Six or eight?

G.Butler: Ten.

Vapaa: Ten. All right. Now suppose you have a basket of onions. Now ah, tell me, did you grow onions when you were a boy?

G.Butler: No, we didn't.

Vapaa: Because they do grow a lot of onions in parts of New York State.



A.Butler: Eastern part

Vapa: In the up land.

G.Butler: I learned that the climate is a very, very critical thing. That one farm can grow one thing and the next farm has to grow something else. The climate is that critical. But it happened that I be there (unintelligible) . Things were just about right. And it come fair time. And I don't know--you know how hard it was sometimes to get material. But I could always get onions in just about every farm and we would take the prizes in onions.

Vapa: You could tell me that again, George. (laugh) I know that--you don't have to tell me really that--

A.Butler: His pickle (?) and onions (laugh)

Vapaa: He had to have a new game (?)

G.Butler: And nothing--I can't say that I can claim any particular credit. The mothers were the ones of course went ahead with the garden. And I don't know, it just clicked. There was another thing that was outstanding there--the loblolly pine--such ran from Texas up through the coast states to the southern part of Delaware to the Lord Baltimore School District. There it ended on a certain farm.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Butler: That shows the decision part of the climate. And I guess every crop that I was involved was governed by that. While one farmer can do it, maybe his neighbor can't. That's something we--you have to--you should reconcile yourself to. And why fight it, 'cause you can't change the weather.

Vapaa: George, do you remember anything about your onion varieties--the

varieties you liked to work with best--so forth.

G.Butler: They came from the hardware stores that buy those onions in the spring you know (laugh).

Vapaa: Onion sets.

A.Butler: Un-hun.

G.Butler: Yeah.

Vapaa: Yes. That's all we did. Put 'em in the ground.

Vapaa: But I think you'll find--and most of 'em were the sweet Spanish varieties. They were not the big Bermuda onions.

G.Butler: No.

Vapaa: That ah, that we know of that you can buy in the chain stores. They come from Puerto Rico or someplace over--. Maybe even Bermuda I don't know. But ah, they probably had to because--

A.Butler: Texas they come from.

Vapaa: Had a lot of them from Texas, yes. But the sweet Spanish onion-- a kind of a flat, roundish onion relatively smooth, but if I remember right--am I right?

G.Butler: I think so.

Vapaa: And ah, as I say you were the onion king at the Delaware State Fair. Well, it was Kent and Sussex Fair then when you were--

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: ...when you were teaching. Yes, but ah, now it is the Delaware State Fair. And George, (unintelligible) down at--your still down at Lord Baltimore ah--

A.Butler: (unintelligible)

Vapaa: (unintelligible) Selbyville rather, yes. Why ah, he credits you with ah, teaching us all how (unintelligible) exhibits at the Fair.

G.Butler: Well, I'm (unintelligible) of it. The weather just happened (unintelliible)

Vapaa: But George, in order to select a--a sample of let's say 10 onions for exhibit, what do you look for first?

G.Butler: Size, uniformity, size, blemishes.

Vapaa: Not necessarily the biggest onions.

G.Butler: No. Oh, no. That's out (unintelligible). The quickest way to lost is to put in assorted sizes. You lose every time. So you pay attention to the size--uniform size, free from blemishes, the variety of same.

Vapaa: How about maturity?

G.Butler: Well, if you live in an onion country they mature--the sometimes maturing of them is a little bit hard. We found that the onions should be put preferably in a garage with some old screen doors to put them on so the ventilation under them and above providing any marks show the wire anything.

Vapaa: Did you ever hang any onions?

G.Butler: Yes. On the side of a building like the garage away from the rain. But when you've got several bushels to take care of why it seems easier to spread them out--ventilation above and below. And that seemed to be in that school district all you had to do.

Vapaa: You know, George, I bet you now--50 years from now people will still be selecting onions the same way that you did it down at Lord Baltimore School District.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: Because ah, you're right. You've got to have these onions separated. And they've got to b--got to have ventilation top and bottom and you can't have too much variation in temperature which is why you'd put 'em in the garage. Right?

A.Butler: Um-hum.

Vapa: And all of this. Well ah, now, how about the broiler business in-- in Delaware, George? You kinda grew up with it, didn't you?

G.Butler: Well, I was there--Tyson and Lewis (?). The top and the bottom.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Do you want to describe it a little bit? I mean how much it (unintelligible)

G.Butler: It so developed that--

A.Butler: (unintelligible)

G.Butler: ...there was cut throat competition, of course. And they would drive the market---the market would go up to a low time once or twice--snap out of it, go up to the top and everybody'd go crazy--get into it. The thing to do was--I thought--was to go in when they were--I don't want to say that--go in when the market was--

A.Butler: Stable.

G.Butler: ...low.

Vapaa: Low. Low.

G.Butler: Yes, go in low, sell out when it was high--stay out. Get out and stay out. Save your money. Save your suicide which was--sometimes occurred. Terrible fluctuations. Right now I understand that there's a slight increase. And it's hoped, of course, that it will continue. The price is going up slightly and people are going back in again. That's the way it goes.

Vapa: Yes they are, George. Of course, I think everybody in Delaware now that the broiler industry started in Delaware.

G.Butler: I think--

Vapaa: ...in the 1920's if I'm not mistaken.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: Mrs. Steele.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: She was where--Selbyville?

G.Butler: No, right there in Ocean View.

A.Butler: Ocean View.

Vapaa: Ocean View.

G.Butler: That's where I was right there.

A.Butler: We knew her.

G.Butler: Right there. Inside the school. Her husband was in the Coast Guard. But she was making more money out of broilers, so he quit. (laugh) He went into one of the few and he was the largest.

Vapaa: Um-hum. And of course it is--it has become a highly specialized business.

G.Butler: Surely so.

Vapaa: And where it used to take what--14 weeks to get a 3 pound bird--

G.Butler: Sixteen.

Vapaa: Sixteen weeks to get a 3 pound broiler?

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: And 4 pounds of feed for a pound of gain. Today we can get a pound of gain on a pound of feed--2 pounds of feed. Excuse me. No it's not quite that good. Two pounds of feed with a pound of gain. If you can't do this today in the broiler business, why you might as well forget it.

G.Butler: You're out.

Vapaa: You're out.

G.Butler: You're out.

Vapaa: Because ah, we've ah, developed a--a highly ah, professionalized, you might say, ah, business where the serviceman who's the contractor-- works for the contractor, the feed man, also comes around and tells you what to do.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: And most of the broiler people today are not so called independants. They may own their own broiler houses but they don't ah; they don't own the chickens; they don't own the feed; they don't own the birds. In fact, today they don't even worry about selling them. The contractor sells them.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: Often times he has a processing plant and does the processing of these birds.

G.Butler: I think you're very wise to go in on that deal. Avoid that terrible responsibility--money.

Vapaa: Um-hum. And of course, it has been a highly risky business over the years.

G.Butler: Oh, yes. Yes, has been.

Vapaa: And ah,--

A.Butler: Ye--

Vapaa: I knew--. Go ahead.

A.Butler: It ah, is not too difficult now for a woman to be in the business. Because they ah, have the ah, feed delivered and ah, ah, measured for-- for the ends and ah--

G.Butler: You're talking about layers.

Vapaa: You're talking about layers. Yes, but don't say hens.

A.Butler: No, poultry.

Vapaa: Poultry. Yes, for broilers.

A.Butler: For broilers, yes.

Vapaa: For chicks.

A.Butler: Yes, for broilers.

Vapaa: All right, let's go with the chicks. All right.

A.Butler: Ah, I--I knew a woman whose ah--whose husband had been in the business. He died. And she carried on the business very well. It always ah, equipment that makes it a little easier. That was--didn't have to carry ah, the stuff you know--so hard. I had ah, couple a hundred of laying hens here one time--500 laying hens. I had to carry all the feed out. Almost broke my back. (laugh) We had 3--the barns were fixed in 3 ah,--

Vapaa: Stories.

A.Butler: Stories.

Vapaa: Yeah.

A.Butler: And ah, George had fixed drinkers for--for it, but there was no--we didn't know anyway to ah, distribute the food that time--the mash and the grain. And yes, I used to h--h--haul every week or so.

G.Butler: (unintelligible) that Diamond State Chick Factory at Ocean View.

Vapaa: I haven't done it lately, George.

G.Butler: You know that man?

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Butler: I guess he's doing pretty well, eh?

Vapaa: I think so, yes. Diamond State Egg Factory. It's not as prosperous

as it was at one time, but it's still going.

A.Butler: Who was it?

G.Butler: Harry Cook.

A.Butler: Oh, Har--yeah, Harry, Jr.

Vapaa: Yes. And of course as far as the broiler business is concerned why there are probably--

A.Butler: Bill Murray.

Vapaa: Bill Murray is out of it now.

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: He got in the restaurant business. Has a restaurant down there near the beach.

G.Butler: Sandy Landing.

Vapaa: Sandy Landing, yes. And ah, has done very well with that. But I think he misses the broiler business. I'm sure he does. Just like ah, Charlie Marker. I think this is one of the things that kept Charlie alive all these years. He's been sicker than any farmer I've ever known I think--

(END TAPE 1, SIDE 2)

Vapaa: That's Charlie Marker up to Dover with his hatchery. He started out, of course, hatching ah, laying hens--

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: ...years and years ago. I don't remember exactly when. But ah, used to have Leghorns. And then when the broiler business came into existence he saw his opportunity for broilers and realized that the market egg business--most of it was over in New Jersey anyway--that he'd



probably do better in the broiler business. So he went into broilers. And as I say I think this broiler industry has actually kept Charlie's interest in life going over all these years.

G.Butler: Um-hum. Tell us of his ailments. You spoke of his ah, sick--

Vapaa: Oh, frankly I don't know what to tell you, George. He's always been rather--

A.Butler: Delicate?

Vapaa: ...delicate in--you know--he's a lightweight man. I don't think he weighs a 120 lbs. hardly. And ah, he said he's always been very natty in his appearance and in the way he does things. And you don't dare go into his hatchery, by the way, unless you tell him ahead of time that you're coming. Because ah, he doesn't like to be surprised by visitors. And when you go into that hatchery it has to be spotless. And his men that he has working this hatchery do an exceptionally good job I think of ah, maintaining cleanliness. And this of course is one of essentials in the broiler business today and probably will continue to be for years to come. If you don't have good sanitation in the hatchery and all the way through the operation, why ah, you better get out of the business. And ah, Charles of course has a son now ah, who is kinda taking over. He has an older da--he has a daughter who is a little bit older than the son. I'm trying to think of his son's first name. Ah, he goes to our church too. But ah, his daughter actually I thought ah, would probably be better to run the hatchery. But Charlie's son seems to be coming along pretty well and is doing very well, so I suppose that's the way it'll m--the business will continue to operate. But for the most part--for example, in ah, selling

chicks today where the--. Charlie used to have a salesman on the road--Frank Gordy. You know Frank. Used to be a salesman for him for a little while. Why ah, the salesman used to go out and sell the chicks for delivery on a given date. And ah, of course they go into these little crates--a hundred to a crate or a box--

A.Butler: We had 'em.

G.Butler: Carton.

Vapaa: Carton, yes. And ah, they still go out that way and probably will continue to go out because those cartons are (unintelligible) cardboard affair that have just enough hold in there to provide ventilation for the newly hatched chicks. I don't know whether--I guess I've never told you, George, that I worked in a hatchery myself at one time.

G.Butler: Un-un.

Vapaa: My first job out of the University of Delaware--1930--was out--mid '37--was out at Marshall, Minnesota, that's Lyons County, southwestern Minnesota. And I worked for Swift and Company. And ah, I used to ah, pull (?) chicks twice a week. Which is a customary practice in most hatcheries to ah--they take 21 days of course for a baby chick to hatch. And ah, we used to pull these chicks from the incubators twice a week. And I pulled the night shift out at Minnesota to the extent that I worked all night. At midnight I'd go downtown to the restaurant in Marshall and ah, what do you suppose I'd order to eat?

A.Butler: Chicken?

Vapaa: An egg sandwich. (laughter) And anybody that's ever worked in a hatchery knows that ah, when you're pulling baby chicks that you never

expect to get a hundred percent hatched. You get maybe 60-70% often-times is pretty good. Now ah, and ah, the rest of the chicks of course that don't hatch they just die off. Normally you start to pull those after the eighteenth day in the incubator and on the twenty-first day you pull the chicks that have hatched. If they haven't hatched by the twenty-second day, why you just incinerate--

A.Butler: Incinerate 'em.

Vapaa: ...incinerate 'em, yes. Well, I didn't like this hatchery business in Minnesota. And it got to be 125° in the shade in the summertime. I says, "How cold does it get here in the wintertime?" They said, "Forty below."

A.Butler: Oh, for goodness sake!

Vapaa: So I said, "Oh, well, I've had enough of Minnesota." And I came back and went to work for Swift and Company in Wilmington as beef (unintelligible). And ah, I worked for them for ah, probably 8 months. And this was back during the depression. It was still depression in 1938. And ah, one day at noontime I went across to the restaurant that was across the street--that was Front and Madison Street, Wilmington. And ah, a Greek restaurant, and ordered a hamburger with a Bermuda onion, piece of cherry pie and a cup of coffee.

A.Butler: (words spoken with laughter, unintelligible)

Vapaa: Well, anyway--no, I'll never forget what I had for lunch that day because when I got home that night I had appendicitus.

A.Butler: Oh.

Vapaa: And I went into the hospital. And I can still see the doctor saying, "Why, you've got an acute case of appendicitus." And probably that

hamburger and Bermuda onion and cherry pie that did it. So ah, he took out my appendics. And while I was recuperating, George--it was in 1938 in January I guess--Lyle Molds came into the hospital to see me. 'Course, Lyle's gone now. And ah, he said, "Would you like to teach down at Harrington?" So I had two majors when I was in college, Agriculture and--I mean ah, Ag Education and Horticulture. But I took my first job with Swift and Company--a meat packer. Now that seems to sound so funny. But ah, they paid the best money--a hundred dollars a month. So I made \$1200 a year with them. And when Lyle came to me and asked if I wanted to teach he offered me \$1800 a year in March 1938. So I told my boss in--I was getting out of the hospital in Wilmington about that time. I told my boss at Swift and Company that I had a chance to take another job at half again as much money--would it be all right. He says, "Sure." So ah, I went to work for Jake Messner down at the Harrington High School. He was Superintendent of Schools as you know. And frankly, there was never a better man that I had to work for.

G.Butler: That's right.

Vapaa: Who was your best man that you ever worked for?

GButler: Well, it was up in Connecticut.

Vapaa: Oh. Where?

G.Butler: Greenwich (?). It's just outside of New York.

Vapaa: Do you remember the man's name?

G.Butler: Paulson.

Vapaa: Paulson?

G.Butler: Paulson. Harry D. Paulson.

A.Butler: Academic High School--it wasn't ah--

Vapaa: Oh. Now, George, you were around pretty nearly too when ah, the ah, Smith Lever Act was started weren't you?

A.Butler: Smith Hughes.

Vapaa: Smith Hughes. Excuse me.

G.Butler: 1917.

A.Butler: I was in the first class ah, that Smith Hughes was ever graduated from ah, Connecticut.

Vapaa: Connecticut.

A.Butler: That was the first class that was--I was Smith Hughes.

Vapaa: Oh. Well, didn't they have a--well, let's see, it was out in the country?

A.Butler: That was--well, from there it was the first part--it was ah, the first time they ever had it there or they started it here in Delaware--it was just starting--Home Economics--and had ah--they had had some Home economics, but the girls had--were--had been to technical colleges like Pratt, you know.

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: But they--course then they ah, demanded Bachelor's Degrees in their college education.

Vapaa: Well ah, --

A.Butler: No trouble at all to get a General because--

Vapaa: I've always heard that Cornell is the kind of a ah, what shall we say, the kingdom (?) where the Smith Hughes law was first adopted, now, or perfected ah--

A.Butler: Well, ah, ah--

Vapaa: ...assured (?).

AButler: It was--it was actually--that was ah--that was just about that same time.

Vapaa: 'Course the law was passed in 1917 I think. I think they already had an Ag School of sorts up at Cornell. And they probably graduated their first one in--. Frankly, I don't know anyone who graduated about that time. Incidentally, most of the things that you're talking about happened before I was born.

A.Butler: Why, I'm sure.

Vapaa: So, I feel very honored really to (laugh) be able to talk with you.

G.Butler: Well, George, tell us more about your experience. You mentioned one time you had studied fencing.

Vapaa: Oh, when I was in college, yes. I had a reputation as a fencer.

A.Butler: Oh, my that's--that--ah--I--

Vapaa: Ah--

A.Butler: ...wanted to do some of that once.

Vapaa: And ah, I just gave my fencing equipment away to my ah, nephew. I don't know--I don't believe you know Bill Griffith but ah, he has a son who is going to school out in St. Cloud, Minnesota right now. And incidentally, it's 50 below degrees--

A.Butler: Oh!

Vapaa: ...50 below zero today--

A.Butler: Imagine it.

Vapaa: ...in Minnesota.

A.Butler: Can't imagine it.

Vapaa: And ah, he hauled--I gave him my fencing equipment and he's learning

to fence in Minnesota. But the reason that I learned to fence was that ah, we had a fencing team up at the University of Delaware. And the lawyer, Henry Ridgely, here in town was the captain of the team. Ah, Henry was a senior when I was a freshman. And ah, I had to learn--we didn't have a coach up at the University. And we had to beg, borrow and steal our equipment so to speak from ah, the University. And we begged funds to get gas to go to different places to fence. And we taught ourselves actually how to fence. I remember Henry Ridgely's specialty was sabers. Now in sabers you use the cutting edge as well as the point and the target is anyplace above the waist. And of course you fence with a mask on. And you're supposed to have a jacket and you're supposed to have a ah--

A.Butler: I had all that.

Vapaa: ...lot of gear you know and gloves and all of this. But Henry and I used to fence saber bareback so to speak. So--and he really (unintelligible) . Oh my. And he kinda gloried in it. So we had a lot of fun. And actually ah, over the 4 years that I went to the University why ah, I learned to fence all 3 weapons--the foil, the epee (?) and the saber. Now the epee is the true dueling sword. You touch only with the point. And ah, in some cases in a bout it's one point and your out--it's out. Well, in my case ah, ah, we--when we fenced in other schools say like John Hopkins or Haverford or University of Pennsylvania--schools in the immediate area--why we even went up to Rutgers and ah, up to New York City. I fenced N.Y.U. and Columbia and places like this. And they all had coaches, but we never did. But we benefited from the coaching that we got from the--from our

competition you see. And we won our share of bouts. And ah, actually I was very much interested in this, George, up until the end of the ah--'til the start of World War II when I--I went in in 1941 before Pearl Harbor. But by that time I had already competed in the quarter finals in the Olympics up in New York City--up in New York Athletic Club. Well, this is about May. It should be about June. And ah, anyway, the only person I beat was a man from California. And he won the ah, finals. He got to be on the Olympic team. And the only reason I beat him was because there were 3 touches that tipping--but the scoring there was--and we used what was called an electrical epee. When you touched the other person why a buzzer would sound. Well, the first time we fenced--I'll never forget this either--why ah, we got into position--fencing position--on guard position, you see. He lunged at me and I parried it. And then I think I lunged at him and he parried that. We went back and forth like this a little bit. And nobody in New York had ever seen me fence before, but by that time they were all getting around there looking at both of us. They hadn't seen either one of us. He was from the West Coast and I of course, was from down here. And ah, anyway, he made a lunge at me finally and I parried it and I touched him. That meant I scored a point. Well, so I was one ahead of him. So then he got en gu--en guard position again and the judge says, "Fence." And we fenced. Then both this fellow and I attacked at the same time. In other words, we lunged at the same time and we had--both lights came on and the buzzer sounded. So it meant we had a double touch. Well, in fencing with the epee a double touch counts as a loss. A point (unintelligible). And be-



cause there were only a total of 3 points anyway--I had 1 point already and we had a double touch so I couldn't lose. So actually I beat him. And ah, but that's the only bout I won because by the time I finished that 1 bout everybody had seen how little I knew about the sport--even though I was the Delaware State Champion at the time--and ah, they all handled me rather readily. And ah, I had a lot of fun. I was out of college by that time. And I had a lot of fun. I was teaching down at Harrington. (unintelligible) ....tested New York Athletic Club and then came home. But ah, I fenced a little bit after the War--World War II--but ah--some out at the Air Base because there's several people out there who still fence out there. There's one artist who lives down at Andrews Lake-- you know it's ah--

A.Butler: I know where Andrews Lake is.

Vapaa: Andrews Lake is down near Frederica--between Frederica and Felton. And ah,

A.Butler: I have friends living out in that neighborhood. Do you know the Johnsons? Ralph Johnson?

Vapaa: Yes. Yeah, he works for the Farm--I mean ah, Farm and Home Administration.

A.Butler: Yes. Yes. They're Quakers too.

Vapaa: They are? Um, I'll have to talk to him a little more about it. Because ah, yes, I know Ralph. And I was thinking of Dean Brearey (?) Eugene Brearey (?) He's an artist. His wife is Joan. Beautiful gal. And he's a good artist. I was talking with him on the phone the other day. In fact, I've got an appointment with him Tuesday afternoon at 1 o'clock. And ah, so ah, we'll ah, be talking about ah, (background

noises) things that are of mutual interest to us, because I'm also interested in art after a fashion. I don't consider myself an artist at all.

A.Butler: Like to sketch though?

Vapaa: No, I don't really sketch too much. My son is really the sketcher.

A.Butler: Is that right?

Vapaa: And when he grew up he used to draw automobiles all the time--all the time. When we went to Europe in 1961--I took my family to Europe--my Mother and (unintelligible) went--we took her back to the home farm in Finland. And here I am talking about myself again.

A.Butler: Well, that's all ri--we--

Vapaa: Well, what do you think--. We took her back to the home farm at a place called Alastaro--A-l-a-s-t-a-r-o--which is in southwestern Finland. And I have a cousin that lives close to there. But we took my Mother back to the home farm. And she looked around and she looked at the old house and she says, "It's just like it used to be except everything is smaller." (laughter) And I can remember when I was growing up, she used to talk about the big river that went by the back door. Oh, it was a big river. She always impressed this on me. How--how wide do you think that river is?

A.Butler: Umm--

Vapaa: Twenty feet wide.

A.Butler: Oh. (laugh) It was big to her then.

Vapaa: It was big to her then because of course she was younger.

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: She left home when she was in her teens and came to America. And ah, married my father here. And of course ah, I was born in New York City

of all places.

A.Butler: You was?

Vapaa: Yes. Harlem Hospital.

A.Butler: Oh, yes. I know where that is.

Vapaa: Yes. I don't. I--they tell me it's on 120th Street, is that right?

A.Butler: Yes. It's up--it's up near--it's not too far from Columbia University.

Vapaa: Right. 115th Street.

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: Now, I know in high school too in--when I was in high school--I went to Wilmington High School as did Dr. Monroe up at the University. We both had the same ah, English teacher, Emily Ward. She'd never gotten married. She was a little teeny thing--red hair, very lively sort of a person. And we thoroughly enjoyed her in--she ah, seemed to enjoy teaching. And ah, she saw to it that some of her students would get up to New York and see plays, you know. So ah, we took a train. And I remember this one time we went up on the Pennsylvania Railroad to the Pennsylvania Station in New York City, walked the tunnel to the New Astor Hotel which was brand new at the time or very nearly new--

A.Butler: Oh.

Vapaa: ...and ah,--

A.Butler: Great big old thing.

Vapaa: Yes. Oh, it's old, but it's ah, very comfortable.

A.Butler: It's old now, but it wasn't then.

Vapaa: It's old now, but it wasn't then. No. And they had a very good restaurant of course. Oh, we thought we were living.

A.Butler: Well, you were.

Vapaa: And in fact, it was quite cheap ah, for us then compared to prices today.

A.Butler: Well, of course. But th--even then we expected--expected--we'd think it was ah, expensive.

Vapaa: Yes. Well, what we went up for primarily was not just to see the plays, but also to the Columbia School and it's (unintelligible) Association.

A.Butler: Oh, yes.

Vapaa: Have you ever heard of it?

A.Butler: Oh, yes. Ah, that we're--the boys and girls from Caesar Rodney always went to the--to the ah--ah, to it. When ah, Elizabeth Taylor started it when they had ah,ah--they used to be--I guess the Board or whatever you called it--the Editorial Board would go--would go for--it was nearly a week--about 3 days, wasn't it?

Vapaa: Yes, that's right. And of course they arranged the program in such a way that you could see plays and social events. And we got a chance to go to the Metropolitan Museum. And ah, I've always been very grateful to Miss Ward. And Dr. Monroe and I still talk about it.

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: --about her, because I don't know whether she's still living or not. But ah, she was certainly a good English teacher.

A.Butler: Elizabeth Taylor was just that kind of person too. She taught here at ah, Caesar Rodney a number of years. She started ah, teaching in Dover then she came over here then went to Media, Pennsylvania and taught there and she was retired about 2 years ago.

Vapaa: Don't you feel, Mrs. Butler, that you have to enjoy teaching in order

to be able to do it professionally (?) ?

A.Butler: I should think so. I--I do--I should think anything you do you've got to enjoy--any--anything that you do well. Ah, George--George said he--he isn't telling the truth. He--he enjoyed it too.

Vapaa: I'm sure he enjoyed teaching.

G.Butler: (voice overlap, unintelligible)

Vapaa: And he was a good teacher. And as I say I'm sure he never had any trouble with the boys that he taught or the girls either, if he taught the girls. Because ah, I never heard you raise your voice. And I doubt if you ever raised your voice to anybody, did you--too much?

G.Butler: No, I didn't. No, I didn't. I connived to get along without outbursts (unintelligible) . And for 38 years I don't--never have had anything of that sort. I like to say I didn't kill anybody and I didn't get killed.

A.Butler: You al--you always had a sense of humor and could--. I never--I never observed George teaching. But other people who have had--observed him speak of the ah, little ah, jokes he eh, put in with his--. That's something I never could do. And well, the thing I would have loved to have done. But that's very good--very helpful. He ah,ah--the boys that he had at first here at Caesar Rodney come around. We see them now. Of course, they're all--well, they're all past middle age.

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: And they tell about those trips they had in the summertime you know. Sometimes the boys wo--one boy would maybe bring a crate of chickens to take along on their trip. Tell 'em something about it, George.

G.Butler: Well ah, the Board of Education would let me use the bus (unintelligible). And then we would go and camp for part of a week at least.

Vapaa: Where would you camp usually?

G.Butler: We loved to go to New Jersey--the Vineland poultry section there.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Butler: And ah, like that--Atlantic City once--so forth.

A.Butler: Some of the boys'd take ah, farm products you know and some of 'em would pay money for their food.

G.Butler: We took in anything they wanted to bring.

Vapaa: Well, George ah, oddly enough I had somewhat a similar experience when I started to teach down in Harrington there. The boys had been used to--. Do you remember Whitey Harvard (?) ?

G.Butler: Don't seem to.

Vapaa: Well, he was a Maryland graduate and he was the one I followed in Harrington. And ah, Bill Harvard (?) was his name. But everybody called him Whitey because he had white hair. And ah, he's just retired I think from the Department of Agriculture. He ah, didn't seem to want to stay in teaching. And that's the reason I got the job for the opening in Harrington. And the reason I had to go in March was because his job started in March. And he was--eh, handling eggs I think for the Department of Agriculture in Washington. And ah, but anyway one of the things I inherited was these trips that the FFA boys would take--Future Farmers would take each summer some place. And ah, we did as you said except that I--the first year I think we had 2 cars. We didn't use the school bus. And I don't know how we

got away with it because ah, we never thought about liability. And if something had ever happened to one of these boys, I don't know what we would have done. Did you--did this ever occur to you, George, in those days?

A.Butler: Oh, yes. Yes, it did. We--when you--you took a--George always had a--ah, chauffer's license--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

A.Butler: ...and beca--if he took more than--and ah,--yes, he always thought of insurance. He's great on insurance man (?)

Vapaa: Well, I thought of insurance too. In fact ah--

A.Butler: Well, that's liability insurance.

Vapaa: Yes, I know. And ah, I used to--you're talking about insurance--I used to deal with Ernest Raughley down at Harrington. And ah, one day I went in to Ernest and I said, "Ernest," I says, "I'm a little bit concerned about these boys I'm taking around the country like I do." I says, "I'm going to go to Kansas City with a bunch of 'em. I'm going to take 2 cars. And I haven't got a bit of liability insurance to ah, protect me if something should happen to these boys." He looked at me and he says, "George, you're the first person who's ever come in to talk to me about liability insurance." He says, "I don't think there's any better coverage that anybody can have." And of course, he sold me liability insurance coverage. I think I insured myself for \$100,000 for something like that. And I still carry that insurance. "Course I don't need it now to that-- to that great an extent, because I'm no longer hauling boys or even farmers or anybody else. So I don't

worry about ah, liability insurance. But ah, I think if I had it to do over again as a teacher I certainly would ah, do what we did--some of the things that we did as far as liability was concerned back in those days. 'Cause it just never occurred to me that you co--that you might get into trouble.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: And ah, did you ever go to Kansas City with any boys?

G.Butler: No, I didn't. No, I missed that.

A.Butler: Went to Iowa.

Vapaa: Iowa. Waterloo? For the Dairy--te--National Dairy Conference.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: Yes. And the dairy judging theme (?)

G.Butler: Yes, I was out there.

Vapaa: Well, I never got to Waterloo. But I did get to Kansas City several times.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: And I remember one time Lyle Molds and I drove separate cars. And I had an old 1936 Ford at the time I believe. And ah, it was a convertible sedan. The kids loved it because it was a convertible. And we drove this car to ah, Kansas City. And Lyle and I stayed pretty much together on the way out. We both had our cars loaded up with boys from different schools. I happened to have a few more of my boys I think than I did of boys from other schools. But Lyle would take the boys from the other schools pretty much. Anyway, we got to Kansas City on ah--I can't remember the year now, but it must have been in the early--it had to be in the '40's--probably the late '40's after World



War II. Because ah, they were having celebrations--Future Farmers' celebrations in Kansas City. And I believe the President of the United States was there at that particular time. And ah, this was one of the reasons we wanted to get the boys out there to hear the President. And ah, I don't even remember who was President at the time. See how far back I c--I go on this.

A.Butler: Roosevelt or Truman.

Vapaa: Well, it wasn't--it must have been Truman. No, no, Truman was a little later than that. I think he was--no, no, that's about right. You're right. Ah, because Roosevelt died during you remember--during the World War II. That would have been about '44. So this was at least '46 and certainly before 1949. And ah, anyway ah, we heard the President. We had a good time that week at the FFA Convention. And as you know, the boys always have a good time. And then we managed to get put up in a very fine hotel at a very reasonable rate. Do you know what it cost those boys and spend a week in ah, Kansas City, George?

G.Butler: No.

Vapaa: Forty dollars for the week.

G.Butler: Forty.

Vapaa: And that paid for their food, paid for their transportation, paid for everything. And ah, we--and ah, yeah, and for their rooms too, yes. And of course, we bunked--we ah, bundled up--I say bundled up I mean we ah, busted up--doubled up in a room and managed very well. But ah, ah, had a lot of fun.

A.Butler: How'd the boys get the \$40?

Vapaa: They either earned it--. You know, it's a funny thing after the War one of the biggest things I noticed about kids was that they started to have a lot of money. They'd always have enough if they wanted to go someplace, they could always find the money--

GButler: (voice overlap, unintelligible)

A.Butler: 'Course when we were coming along we never had any money.

Vapaa: No. That's right. And when we were taking our boys on a camping trip we didn't have any money. I remember when we went down to Oak Orchard, George--and this was in 1938, the summer of 1938--Oak Orchard--why ah, Edward Legates was the smartest student I ever taught. I don't know if you ever heard of him or not. But he's now Dr. Edward Legates. And he's the Dean of the School of Agriculture at the University of North Carolina at Raleigh. I think I'm right. Maybe it's at N.C. State. I don't know. But anyway ah, Edward was a high school student at the time. And we had a chicken like you say. But this was a tough old hen that we were (laughter) trying to get ready to cook. Do you know how we got that thing cooked? We skinned it. (laughter) And boiled it.

A.Butler: We had a--a--at the time we were going to be married I--my mother had a--had one of those ah, ah, fireless cookers. And I thought that if I were married, I'd have to have a fireless cooker. So we got a fireless cooker. And you know, George, that I--that I never used it ah, except for those camping trips. And they--they always ah, boys always enjoyed ah, having their ah, meal being cooked while they were taking a ride.

Vapaa: Um-hum. So you went on the camping trips too?

A.Butler: No, no. No, I used to--they ah--George used to get me to ah, give him recipes and fix up ah--

G.Butler: George (unintelligible) the Ag teacher dying--Bridgeville. His first name--

(END TAPE 2, SIDE 1)

Vapaa: All right, George, you've just asked me the question of ah, who was Lee at Bridgeville. And if I'm not mistaken, I believe his name was Millspaw (?).

G.Butler: That's right.

Vapaa: And ah, he taught not only at Bridgeville, but he also taught at Harrington. But when he went to Harrington I don't believe he taught Vocational Agriculture. He taught Ag at Bridgeville, but not at--but not at Harrington. He went at Harrington after I left by the way. I think he actually taught in the grades more. He--he dropped back to say fifth and sixth grades and ah, taught them. And ah, as far as I know is still down in the--. He lives you know between Greenwood and Bridgeville. Has a little bungalow on the dual highway. And as far as I know he--far as I know he still lives there. 'Cause I haven't seen Lee for a number of years. But he is a very fine man. And ah, I was always sorry to see him leave ah, teaching vocational agriculture because I think ah, I think a person who teaches vocational agriculture really learns to ah, work with people like you can't learn in any other way. And perhaps the same thing's true in home economics.

A.Butler: Well, we eh, ah, home economics ah, teachers didn't know how--didn't ah, visit the homes the way the ag men did. So ah, it wasn't quite

so much.

Vapaa: You're saying that all the girls project work was done at school?

A.Butler: Well, you--you go visit the project ah, would probably only be once a year--something like that. There was no--there never was--as far as I know any ah, appropriation for ah, even gasoline to go any time that I ah, visited home projects. It was ah, on my own ah--

Vapaa: Initiative.

A.Butler: ...initiative--own money.

Vapaa: Yes. Ah, did you ever know Helen Clayton? She used to teach at Harrington and also at Dover.

A.Butler: No.

Vapaa: Home economics.

A.Butler: No, I didn't know her.

Vapaa: Well, she was a country girl from up across the line in ah, Pennsylvania. Ah, and ah, her father used to sell ah, produce up at the Chester Market. As a matter of fact, one day he went up to the Chester Market down near the docks and ah, he got hit over the head and was killed. And Helen herself finally married ah, Ed Ladshaw (?) and they lived on a farm near Concordville, Pennsylvania and raised beef cattle. And Ed worked as a carpenter and he also--. 'Course he taught at Dover School too. He taught ah--he was the manual training teacher. And he used to teach ah, ah, carpentry and all of this. And ah, a very fine teacher. But ah, they lived on this farm in Concordville and one day ah, they had this ah, Ford tractor--a little tractor. You--you know what I'm talking about, George.

G.Butler: Cub.

Vapaa: No, that's a Farmall--cub. But the Ford was a little gray tractor. Anyway, h--you would sit right ahead of the ah, rear wheels and if you'd hit anything, the front end was likely to bounce off the ground quite easily. Anyway, they had a pole ah--one of these banked barns on their farm at Concordville. And ah, one day I guess Ed had parked the tractor on the bank of the barn--that goes into the barn you know--

A.Butler: Un-hun.

Vapaa: ...and ah, the tractor started to go backwards. And ah, Helen without thinking got on that thing and this thing backed up and turned over backwards and she was killed. And ah, one of the finest home economics teachers really that it was ever my pleasure to work with. And ah, I never taught with her too long. I think she was only at Harrington a couple of years before she came to Dover. 'Course she came to Dover because she made more money. They paid more money you know in some of the districts than they did others. And ah, I never felt myself that ah, it paid to move around too much in teaching. 'Cause that's one of the reasons all of my teaching work was down in Harrington--in high school teaching. And I never taught high school anyplace else. But I did go into some substitute teaching there at Harrington. That's on the order of what you've been talking about, Mrs. Butler. I remember when I came out of the army why ah, Miss Dickregor--Miss Leona Dickregor--was the physics and the geometry and the math teacher. She taught ah, algebra and chemistry these topics. And she was out sick. And I came out of the army in September and--of 1945--and Mr. Cain was

teaching agriculture--still teaching when I came back. Lawrence Cain. Did you ever know him--at Felton?

G.Butler: No.

Vapaa: Anyway, he had a farm east of Felton. He was a University of Delaware graduate. And ah, he graduated in 1905. And he's still living.

A.Butler: Is he the man who ah, broke his neck when he went--

G.Butler: No. Noah Cain.

A.Butler: His name was Cain.

Vapaa: No, that's Noah Cain.

A.Butler: Noah, ah.

Vapaa: No relation. No, there's no relationship there between those 2 Cains as far as I know. Lawrence Cain ah, was ah, a dairy farmer and he had come--ah, ca--from a farm very much like what you're talking about in New York State, George, except that he ah, he went back to the farm after he graduated from college. And he didn't do any teaching work at all until during the War--World War II. And the only reason he went to do some teaching work then was because they couldn't get any Ag teachers. And because he was a college graduate and because he had been a farmer all his life why they asked him to teach vocational agriculture. Now he's not the man that replaced me when I went in the service. The man that replaced me when I went in the service was ah, gosh I can't--Lewis Carmean. Did you ever know Lewis?

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: And he's a broiler grower you know down east of ah, Laurel. He still grows broilers down there.

G.Butler: Yeah.

Vapaa: Doing very well I understand. And his brother, Bayard, has the hatchery in Laurel itself--Carmean's Hatchery. And he sold it out several years ago to another ah, one of these big companies--Purina or one of the companies like this--and bought 2 farms over in Maryland. Is living over in Maryland doing that. He also--Bayard also taught vocational agriculture. Did you know that?

G.Butler: No, sir.

Vapaa: And ah, I can't tell you where he taught. You know Sam Sloan of course.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: Sam Sloan still lives down near ah--

A.Butler: Indian River?

Vapaa: ...Indian River, yes.

G.Butler: Angola.

Vapaa: Angola, yes. And ah, he's selling off building lot now. His farm is going into building lots. And ah--

A.Butler: Had a lot of acreage there.

Vapaa: Yes. And ah, I don't think he tills the land itself at all now.

A.Butler: I don't think he ever did very much.

Vapaa: No. No, but he did teach up at Dover school. And he taught there I think just before Frank Gordy went there. And ah--to Dover School. You know it's always amazed me why Dover's never been able to keep an ag department in their high school. Do you know why, George?

G.Butler: No, I don't.

A.Butler: And I don't think they have respect for it for one thing. And another

they're ah--they're so ah--so interested in their little community.  
They're not interested in the farming--eh, the land.

G.Butler: Well, if Frank Gordy couldn't keep it going, you couldn't get anybody.

Vapaa: Well, I think you've about said it, George. Because ah, ah, this is not meant to be a criticism of the Dover Schools because I am in the-- well, I am in the Caesar Rodney District, but I have a Dover address. And I know--I knew ah, Mr. Green who was the Superintendant of the Dover Schools for a number of years. And a number of people I knew-- the Superintendant there now and--

A.Butler: Mr. Powell.

Vapaa: Mr. Powell. (cough, unintelligible) Powell. And ah, but ah, they've always considered themselves to be academically inclined and that vocational work was more or less beneath the--

A.Butler: (unintelligible)

Vapaa: ...level of interest of people. And ah, I always felt that I would take anybody in my ag classes--town or country boy. It didn't make any difference.

G.Butler: You had to.

Vapaa: Because most of those kids still live in the community where they are raised in. I can go in--down Commerce Street in Harrington and about every other person I meet will be a person that I've taught sometime or another.

G.Butler: Sure enough.

Vapaa: ..in school. That is if they're of the age that I'm talking about.

A.Butler: Yes.



Vapaa: When I was teaching down there.

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: And some of their children now are being taught at the Harrington School--or at the Lake Forest School it is now you know.

A.Butler: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Between Harrington and Felton because the Harrington High School was changed into the ah--

A.Butler: Junior High.

Vapaa: ...Junior High.

G.Butler: Tell us of your son, George.

Vapaa: Well, my son is an electrical engineer, George. He works for Delmarva Power and Light Company. He's 29 years old. And he married a girl from up in New Jersey--Warwick, New Jersey. They have--we have a grandson now. He's just turned 8 months old on the 22nd of the month. He weighed 21 lbs.--

A.Butler: (murmer)

Vapaa: ...at 8 months--

A.Butler: Ah (laugh)

Vapaa: ...and he's--and yes, he is a wopper as you say or Woppah. That's actually how you say my name in Finnish, you know.

A.Butler: What? Boppah?

Vapaa: Boppah. Yeah. The accent in Finnish--the Finnish alphabet is different from most any other. A in Finnish is ah. Then there's no b, c or d. The letter e you say as a. The letter i you say as e. The letter o is o and u is ue like that. And my name in Finnish is spelled Y-r-j-er.

Now that er is an o with 2 dots over it. I call it omage (?).

A.Butler: That's the way--that's what we always called it.

Vapaa: Yes. And there are only 23 letters in the Finnish alphabet. And my full name in Finnish--I'll give it to you in Finnish and English--is Ulyer (?) (unintelligible) Vapaa or Ulyer (?) (unintelligible) Free. It means Free in English. And if you go to Finland and you look on the top of taxicabs--you know where they have these lights--when they turn the light on it says that you can get the taxicab--well, if it says Vapaa on the top of it it means that it's available. And ah, you can get a ride. Well, you know, I've dragged this thing on a long time. We still have a little bit of tape on here and if you're not too tired yet, why I'm still going to go a little bit more with it.

A.Butler: No, that's fine.

Vapaa: My wife will fuss with me, but ah (laugh)--. 'Cause I told her I didn't want to keep George awake too long. And I need a nap too. Now, George, we haven't talked at all about your stroke--when it happened or why it happened.

G.Butler: The stroke occurred about 12--15 years ago. I had taken on late in life the hobby of photography. Went into it quite seriously and built up several hundred dollars worth of gear--joined the Photographers' Society of America. I used to work faithfully at my school work all day long and then I felt that at 4 o'clock I should be entitled to time. Then I put in 2 hours after that after school in the darkroom and so forth. Came home usually after dark. I was not considerate or

thoughtful about exercise as I should have been. And that may have been the accumulation of those years that I put in there at work there.

A.Butler: Sedentary.

G.Butler: Sedentary work you might call it.

Vapaa: How about your high blood pressure?

G.Butler: The doctors will never tell you the truth. They never look you in the eye and tell you the truth. Always good, good, good. But for some reason or the other I have not been a victim high blood pressure. I don't know why.

Vapaa: Well, that's what triggered mine, George.

A.Butler: My brother--

G.Butler: (unintelligible) my blood pressure.

Vapaa: I take 22 pills a day now. How many do you take?

G.Butler: One.

Vapaa: One. What do you take?

G.Butler: Digitalis for my heart.

Vapaa: Oh, yes.

A.Butler: One of those little ole things Doctor when he--

G.Butler: Wh--what brought on your high blood pressure?

Vapaa: High blood pressure. And I knew it, George. And I think you probably realized you weren't feeling too well, didn't you?

G.Butler: No, I never realized it.

Vapaa: You didn't?

G.Butler: No.

Vapaa: Well, I did.

G.Butler: We were--we were tired and back here (murmur)

Vapaa: Well, what I was doing of course ah, when I was a county agent I used to run all the time. I used to run all the time when I was teaching. I was always in a hurry.

A.Butler: Un-hun. Too much.

Vapaa: And--oh, I wouldn't say it was too much. I enjoyed it.

A.Butler: Oh, you mean you--you ran for exercise.

Vapaa: No, no, no, I was running to--

A.Butler: Just--

Vapaa: ...on the job.

A.Butler: Yeah, yeah.

Vapaa: I was in such a hurry. And in some of the cases used to get so disappointed in. I mean provoked with me I guess, because I'd get annoyed you know when they wouldn't do something when I wanted it done. Or if I told them once I didn't think I should have to tell them a second time. This kind of thing. And this would be annoying, you see. And this built up tension. Well, this tension kept gradually building up. And this of course ah, was happening even while I was in Harrington, but I wasn't too aware of it then. But then when I came up on the job here in Har--in Dover as a county agent why ah, I still--I was in the habit of running so much that I still ran. And when you're a county agent today you never seem to get a job done. There's always work to be done you know.

G.Butler: Sure.

Vapaa: And you're always thinking and planning ahead what's coming next. You try to plan your day and sometimes you have to reverse the whole schedule in a day. And--but I thoroughly enjoyed my work. But then I started getting headaches. And this was the clue. And one day I went to the doctor here in Dover--Dr. Spong, George Spong. I said, "Doc, I've got a headache." He said, "Let me see your arm. Roll up your sleeve." And he put this blood pressure--

A.Butler: Spaganometer.

Vapaa: Spell it for me, if you can.

A.Butler: S-p-a-g-a-n-o-m-e-t-e-r, I think it is.

Vapaa: Ay, I think you're probably right. I'm not going to argue with you (laugh)

A.Butler: I won't be sure of the spelling.

Vapaa: All right. Maybe the typist will look it up. She has a dictionary anyway. Spaganometer. Well anyway, he put it on there and he looked at the reading and said, "210 over 130." He says, "No wonder you got a headache. You're at stroke level." He says, "You go back an--go right home. Don't go back to the office." Says, "You go right home and stay in bed for 4 days. And then come and see me again." Says, "Don't do a blessed thing between now and then." This was on a week-end you know. It was on a Friday afternoon. So, it didn't make much difference anyway so I went right on home. Went to bed like he told me to. Then went back I think about Tuesday. And he checked me again. And my blood pressure was still up. So, in the meantime he had started to give me some medication. He says ah, "George," he says ah, Do you

know," he says ah, "Have you had these headaches very long?" I says, "Yes,,quite some time." He says, well he says, "You could have a stroke, you know." And ah, so ah, I wasn't paying much attention to him. But I took his pills for awhile. And then after a bit I got a little bit careless. I went to him--I started going to him once a month. This has been--well, let's see, it's been 5 years since I've had the stroke and it's been at least 15 years since I knew I had high blood pressure. So ah, one day before I had--actually had the stroke I went to see him. And I said, "Doc, I don't know much about human medicine, but I know just enough about animal medicine that if ah, you mix too many pills together--" and I was taking about 6 or 7 a day at the time,--"If you mix too many pills together they're going to assassinate one another--give one another a kick." I said ah, "You scare me." He said, "Will you let me worry about this. I'm doing it on purpose."

Well, I didn't take him seriously. I tried to--what I was doing, I was taking half a dose and trying to get by, you see.

G.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: And ah, about that time too why I got to be National Northeast Director and National County Agent Association. (fire alarm sounds) We won't worry about that fire alarm. It'll--it'll go on. And I think this ah, machine'll pick up over the fire alarm. And I'll talk loud enough for you.

But anyway, ah, I got to be a Director and National County Agent Association and ah, over a period of 4 years. And during this time why the

blood pressure was building up. And I wasn't paying too much attention to it. You don't pay too much attention to this kind of thing. And I wasn't thinking about stroke. And ah, it happened that in October the 1st, 1969 right after our National Convention at Atlantic City. I happened to be sitting watching television--the late news--ah, in Dover here--at home and decided it was time to go to bed--11:30 at night. So--humph, listen to that thing go.

A.Butler: We're so--we're so close to it.

Vapaa: Yes, you are. Well, don't feel badly about it, because I've had ah, cuckoo clocks ah, all kinds of clocks go off and telephones ring--this kind of thing. I usually don't let it worry me. And it doesn't bother the typist because she just makes a note in the sheet that it's a fire alarm, if I tell her that this is what it is.

Well, anyway right after this Atlantic City Convention, October the 1st, 1969, I got up out of my chair--. I thought I was pretty well relaxed and ready for bed. And I stood up and started to walk--to turn the light off to go to bed. And my wife had just gone to bed. And I stumbled over the footstool. When I stumbled I fell, of course, on the floor. And our floors are carpeted so I just can't really say I got hurt. But she heard--I made quite a noise of course when I hit the wooden floor. And she says, "What happened?" I says, "I fell." She said, "Well, you stay there." She knew something was wrong. And I didn't know what was wrong. Anyway she says, "I'm going to get the doctor. You stay right there till he gets here." So she went next door and g--looked and thought the neighbors were still awake. And

she got them. They came over. And they called the doctor. And the doctor says, "Get him in the hospital." So they called the ambulance. And I don't know which ambulance they got whether it was the Camden-Wyoming or Dover. It doesn't make any difference 'cause I don't remember going anyway. And went to the hospital. And ah, by the time I got there I was asleep--perfectly relaxed. And ah, the next thing I remember was I was in the hospital in Wilmington. They had taken me to the hospital in Dover. But ah, I didn't remember going to the hospital--. I guess I remember the hospital in Dover, but I don't remember going from the hospital in Dover to the hospital in Wilmington. They took me up to the General Division. And ah, I was there for i--in the Delaware Division, Eugene duPont Center--. Have you been there?

A.Butler: I have--I've been there to ah, ah, visit people or see 'em.

Vapaa: Yes, yes. It's a wonderful convalescent center, George. They on-- they only have room for 60 beds in the place and there are no operating facilities. And if you really get sick, they just push you back in the ambulance and take you back in town to one of the bigger hospitals, you see.

Well, I was at the Delaware Division for about 2 months and then they took me out to Eugene duPont for a month. So I got back from Eugene duPont the 21st of January 1970. And the reason I remember the date was that ah, they had told me before I left Eugene duPont, "Do you have any steps to get in and out of your house." I said, "No, but I'll get 'em in." And the therapist said to me, "That's what they all say." And he says, "But they never do it."



Anyway, my wife brought me back home. And she'd been staying in Wilmington all the time with some friends. And ah, my son was in college at the time. And ah, his last year in school and doing very well and working for the power company even then. Because he used to work in the summertime for them too. And--as a student engineer. But anyway my mother brought me home--I mean my wife brought me home to Dover. And we started up the back steps to get into the kitchen, you see. Well, there are 4 steps to get up into the kitchen. Something like yours.

A.Butler: Steps are bad.

Vapaa: But anyway I stepped up the first step and I fell down.

G.Butler: Umm.

Vapaa: And I was all wrapped up. It was a n--it was a cold day. A lot colder than today. And I was bundled up real good so I didn't get hurt. And my wife started to cry 'cause she thought I was going to have to go back in hospital you see. But nothing happened--just called the doctor. And he said, "Just go to bed and you'll probably be all right." And actually he did come out and see me. And ah--

A.Butler: I think he usually doesn't make calls.

Vapaa: He doesn't. No. What doctor does today?

A.Butler: Ah--

G.Butler: That's right.

A.Butler: When ah--Dr. Bishoff.

Vapaa: Dr. Bishoff will and Dr. Neese will--

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: ...if you really need 'em. But they will both come for either my wife or myself at one time or another.

A.Butler: We--we had to stop going to Dr. Bishoff because we couldn't negotiate those steps. We don't go up and down steps except those--

Vapaa: Yes.

A.Butler: Neither one of us.

Vapaa: Well, it's better that you don't.

A.Butler: I had ah, high blood pressure 240 over 100.

Vapaa: Oh, my. That's awful.

A.Butler: And I didn't have headaches at all.

Vapaa: Oh, you didn't?

A.Butler: No.

Vapaa: Well, I don't have any headaches now.

A.Butler: I don't--

Vapaa: But that's because my blood pressures down.

A.Butler: Oh, my blood pressures all right too. I only take 1 pill a day.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Butler: George, 40 years ago a physician told me that if I would take hydrachloric acid drops that would cure or eliminate dizziness which had come (unintelligible). And I started in taking it. I've taken it every day since. Found it quite helpful.

A.Butler: See he does it as a stomach preservation--hydrachloric acid.

G.Butler: This is not (unintelligible) Victorian (?). It's what I need. These hydrachloric acid drops is safe--a day--twice a day and more if I have to.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

A.Butler: Um, my you slide on my hand (?).

G.Butler: Shove your chair over and I've got to--

A.Butler: No, but--

Vapaa: Well, we're talking about the cat here in case anybody's wondering. He set on Mrs. Butler's ah, lap most of the time while we've been talking. But ah, down on the floor now. And ah, what's she going to do now?

A.Butler: Going to mess the (unintelligible)--. Going to sit there.

Vapaa: Oh.

A.Butler: He likes company.

G.Butler: You.

A.Butler: We've only had him a week.

G.Butler: George, you'll excuse me if I go to bed now (?)

Vapaa: Well, I tell you, I'm going to wind this thing up right now, George. This is (background noise, unintelligible)

G.Butler: Well, I've got very tired. (?)

Vapaa: Now, I do want to say in closing, George, that I certainly want to thank you and I want to thank your wife for letting me come out here and ah, do this interview.

G.Butler: Thanks are the other way, George.

A.Butler: Oh, we've--we've enjoyed it, too. We've become better acquainted with you.

Vapaa: (laugh) O.K. Does George need any help?

G.Butler: No. No.

Vapaa: O.K.

A.Butler: No, he does quite a lot of things for himself.

Vapaa: Yes. How about that hand? His right hand?

A.Butler: It's a right--his right arm and hand are all right. You see he had an operation. He cut 'em both you know one time. (unintelligible) But he uses that hand--I don't know what he'd do without that hand. The other hand is useless.

Vapaa: Oh, the left hand is the one that's useless.

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: So the stroke was on his left side?

A.Butler: Yes.

Vapaa: Un-hun.

A.Butler: Was yours too, wasn't it?

Vapaa: Yes, was on the left side. See, I have my brace on now.

A.Butler: Yeah.

Vapaa: And ah--

A.Butler: George has never worn a brace. And he--and his wasn't so severe a--

Vapaa: Stroke.

A.Butler: ...stroke as yours. Not nearly so severe.

Vapaa: Well, you know something, Mrs. Butler ah, I'm going to let this thing run.  
But it never occurred to me the whole time I was in the hospital that I might die from that stroke. And yet they tell me it was about like this.

A.Butler: I bet.

Vapaa: Two fingers put together, you see. Ah, see it was just awfully, awfully close. And I did have to have an operation to have the blood clot taken out of my head.

A.Butler: Umph.

Vapaa: In the Delaware Division.

A.Butler: Umph.

Vapaa: And ah, so with this blood clot out of there the surgeon is quite happy with it. And everytime he sees me he says, "Let me see that--"

A.Butler: (voice overlap, unintelligible)

Vapaa: He says, "Let me see that suture." And ah, what he's talking about of course is ah, where he operated. So he's kinda happy about the fact that I have this hole in my head and that it is healed over as well as it has.

A.Butler: Well, I would say.

Vapaa: Because unless you would look under my hair why--

A.Butler: Nobody'd ever realize--

Vapaa: ...real--realizes that--that I had an operation on my hair. And incidentally, I might as well tell you this too. I'm talking again about myself. But ah, when I was in the hospital and my hair was-- they had to shave all the hair off my head you know--

A.Butler: Sure.

Vapaa: And ah, in doing so why the hair started to grow back after the operation--and I had real fine hair. So the nurses used to come up to me and they'd rub my head like this. And I used to wonder why--

A.Butler: Why.

Vapaa: And ah, well, they used to like--they said, "Your hair's so fine, that we just like to rub it."

A.Butler: They (voice overlap, unintelligible)

Vapaa: Yeah. Anyway, that's the story of my operation and my stroke and we've got something of the story of you, George. I don't know whether you've ever thought of doing a book or not. But if you'd like to on some of the things in your life, why I'd be glad to ah, help you put some of the material together. You could tape it and we could get it perhaps ah, typed. And if you felt that you had something that you'd like to write about.

G.Butler: No.

A.Butler: He didn't ah--didn't mention the fact that he did write a book on marketing eh, during the depression for the State of Delaware. And it was used as a textbook.

Vapaa: Is that the red cover book?

A.Butler: Yeah.

Vapaa: Oh, I know that book. Sure.

A.Butler: His name isn't on it.

Vapaa: No, it's not on it.

A.Butler: But he wrote it. And we had a--oh, we used to go all over the State to take pictures.

G.Butler: I've tried to get my nerve up to ask you a favor.

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Butler: Take one of those books and maybe get it somewhere where it'll be preserved. The way things--time are published (?) I insisted that

they have it bound to show what it was then. Well, that was back in the '30's you see.

Vapaa: I'm sure we can do this, George. Because ah, I know right where it is or I knew where it was in the Harrington High School. And John Curtis was the Ag teacher there. And I never threw anything away when I was to Harrington High School. John kept my files for years. And you know for 10 years after I left Harrington School why I could go in that Ag department. I could look in the files and find something I'd filed away years ago.

A.Butler: (murmur)

Vapaa: John just never fooled with my files. No, I had a lousy filing system. I'll admit that. But I did know where things were.

G.Butler: Did--did you (unintelligible) to Dover did you see the records of Russell Wilson very much?

Vapaa: Oh, yes. All of the annual reports for county agents in Delaware are found in the county agents' offices in each county, I guess. I know they're here in Dover because I filed 'em here before I left 5 years ago. And I looked up in the closet there oh, a couple of months ago and I saw the boxes still up there. So that the annual reports that we had to write are still up there ah, in the extension office. And ah, of course, as you might think this is information that we like to see kept on record. Our file someplace. You know, I've never bought--

(END TAPE 2, SIDE 2)

T H E   E N D