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INTERVIEW OF

MR. & MRS. B. LEE CURREY

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

GEORGE K. VAPAA, NARRATOR
Vapaa: Well, it's 2:30 in the afternoon on the Saturday afternoon, August 31st at west of Wyoming, Delaware. And we're going to switch our programming, our oral history a little bit, instead of taking a person who was born out of Delaware we're going to take 2 that were born in Delaware. But who are planning to leave. And I'm going to ask them to introduce themselves. I don't care which does it first. You want--Nixie, you say Lee first?

N. Currey: Lee, you go ahead.

Vapaa: All right. So, Lee, if you'll give us your full name and--

L. Currey: Benjamin Lee Currey.

Vapaa: Un-hun. And your mailing address here?

L. Currey: It's Box 94, Wyoming.

Vapaa: R. D. 1, of course.

L. Currey: Yeah.

N. Currey: 2.

Vapaa: Box what?

N. Currey: R. D. 2, 94.

Vapaa: R. D. 2, 94. I had R. D. 1 written down. (laugh)

N. Currey: It was R. D. 1 once upon a time.

Vapaa: Yes. Well, they just ah,--

N. Currey: Uncle Sam changed it.

Vapaa: ...changed it. Oh. Just like you changed zip codes.

N. Currey: Yeah.

Vapaa: But ah, your zip code has been the same?

N. Currey: Yeah. Always, yeah.
Vapaa: 1934.
N. Currey: 34.
Vapaa: Wasn't I right?
N. Currey: That's right.
Vapaa: I don't know why I'm taking this because ah, you're going to be moving within a month now as I understand it. I guess--expect to be in Florida perhaps by then?
N. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: And ah, moving into a new home. All right now, Nixie, Let's get your name--your full name and so forth.
N. Currey: Just Nixie B. Currey.
Vapaa: And what was your maiden name?
N. Currey: Brown
Vapaa: And who was your father?
N. Currey: Noah.
Vapaa: Noah Brown. And where did you live?
N. Currey: West of Harrington.
Vapaa: Can you tell me exactly where it was west of Harrington?
N. Currey: Four miles west of Blades Crossroads.
Vapaa: Well, I think I know where that is. (laughter) And I think when I first u--met you you weren't even married, were you?
N. Currey: No.
Vapaa: So ah, let's get you married first. When were you married?
N. Currey: In June of 1939.
Vapaa: An--and I had gone to Harrington to teach school in March of 1938.
N. Currey: (murmer)
Vapaa: And ah, where were you married?

N. Currey: In Denton, Maryland.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Any particular reason why you got married in Denton?

N. Currey: I don't know. What was the reason? (laugh)

L. Currey: It is ah--I was working at ah, DuPonts at Seaford. And after I got through work that was the only place I could get marriage license that late in the day.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: So I just drove around by Denton instead of coming straight home to Harrington.

Vapaa: Well, I can't think of a better reason for going to Maryland to get married. (laughter) Ah, you say you worked at DuPonts, Lee. What did you do there?

L. Currey: I was a electrician helper--second class electrician.

Vapaa: Mmm. Now, had the plant been completed then?

L. Currey: No, it just--it was just under construction.

Vapaa: Um-hum. And so you were on the construction crew?

L. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: I started there in 1938 and worked approximately 4½ years there.

Vapaa: Well, let's see. Let's start back with your early education. Then we want yours, Nixie.

L. Currey: Well, I's--attended Felton High School. Ah, after I left country school went to Pratts Branch School and then I went to ah--I lived in the Felton area--then I went to Felton School. And I ah,
graduated there in 1929.

Vapaa: Incidentally, where was Pr--Pratts Branch? Pratts Branch School?

L. Currey: Ah, it's just ah, off from the Felton-Frederica Road. Ah--

N. Currey: Near Mr. Moore's canning place (?)

L. Currey: Yeah. Near Mr. Moore's cannery. The building is still standing there now.

Vapaa: Well, I think we are clear on this. And you said you graduated in what year?

L. Currey: 1929.

Vapaa: '29. All right now, Nixie, how about your schooling? And early history?

N. Currey: Oh, mine started at Potash School.

Vapaa: All right. Now w--

N. Currey: And ah--

Vapaa: ...you d--d--you better--we better tell people Potash School was.

N. Currey: Oh, my gracious. Potash School was farther out--about a mile out from my home going farther out in the country. And it was between ah, the Blades Crossroads road and ah, the Homenville road.

Vapaa: Do you happen to remember who your teacher was?

N. Currey: My first teacher was Miss Grace Masten.

Vapaa: Oh, yes.

N. Currey: And then ah, she ah, left the area and it was Olivia Warren. Enright it is now. And then ah, they only ah, went as far as sixth grades. Seventh grade I went to Harrington. There wasn't a school bus, so I drove horse and carriage for 5 years.

Vapaa: Um-hum.
N. Currey: (laugh) The senior year that I was at Harrington I rode the bus and walked a mile. In winter time the bus couldn't come around the normal route because of the bad roads. So I walked to--from my home to White's church. And Mr. Edgar Pearson was the bus driver.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Now Lee, did you ever ride a school bus?

L. Currey: Yeah. And they didn't have any school buses 'til ah--in our area until 1924. And ah, after we left Pratts Branch why ah, into Felton then we went on a school bus.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: And up until that time the ah--there was only 1 bus that came into Felton and it was horse drawn. Drove a pair of horses to something looked similar to a bus. It carried about 25 students (murmur) ...pair of horses.

Vapaa: Were they students really, or where they just cutups?

L. Currey: Well, (laugh) they were--they were students. They came from Black Swamp School. They closed that out ah--west of Felton. Then they ah, got a man that built this bus concern that they hooked horses to. And he sat in front of this bus and drove the horses to school every day.

Vapaa: You mean he made 2 trips--1 east of Felton and 1 west of Felton?

L. Currey: No, just 1 from west in to Felton and back.

Vapaa: But Pratts Branch is east of Felton.

L. Currey: Yeah. Well, he had a school bus the following year after that. And it was a Model T Ford. A fellow by the name of Alfred Dill drove the old Model T.
Vapaa: Are any of these people still living—as far as you know?
N. Currey: Mr. Edgar Pearson is. Oh, no he isn't.
L. Currey: No. None that I know of are still living.
N. Currey: un-un.
Vapaa: Are any of your early teachers or any of them still living?
N. Currey: Yes. Ah, Olivia Warren Enright is still living and was at the Alumni Association meeting a few years ago when the 50th anniversary was up. And she was in the same class as Mr. Elwood Gruwell whom I had quite a chat with at that time.
Vapaa: Um-hum. Of course, Elwood Gruwell too was ah, quite a figure in the Harrington Special School District.
N. Currey: Oh, yes. He was a member of the school board for a number of years and was its president. Had to take the bills to him to get 'em signed. (laugh)
Vapaa: Now you say you had to take the bills to get 'em signed. Now how did you happen to take the bills to get him sign? I don't think we've gotten into this yet.
N. Currey: Oh, I worked at the school—in the office.
Vapaa: Was that your first job?
N. Currey: No. Ah, after finishing ah, business school I worked ah, in a construction office, J. A. Bader, for ah, oh, several months. And then the First National Bank wanted someone. They wanted a young man, but they couldn't locate a suitable applicant. And so I worked there for more than a year. Two years maybe. Until Leonard Moreleman came along.
Vapaa: Um-hum.
N. Currey: And about that time Mr. Messner was needing a secretary.

Elizabeth Klettah--. What's her name now? ...ah, was

getting married--. It was Elizabeth Klett. And she

married ah--.

Vapaa: Elizabeth who?


Vapaa: Good. Cause--

N. Currey: And she married the Mr. Moore who was in ah, State Highway

Department. And ah, he died very shortly after they were

married. Ah, she later married ah, Clarence Keys.

Vapaa: That's K-e-y-s?

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: All right.

N. Currey: So I was at the school during all those years.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Now you say all those years, Nixie. How many years

exactly? Do you know? I'm sure you know.

N. Currey: (laugh) Yes. I ha--

Vapaa: Cause you just retired.

N. Currey: (laugh) Yes. Ah, well the first stretch I was there 12 years.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: Then the war came along. And ah, Wayne came along. And I gave

up the work. Completely. Then Louise Burgess took my place.

And then Louise was expecting a family so I went out to finish--
went back from here to finish her year out. But she didn't come
back immediately. And the second child came along. So I stayed
6 more years. Six and a half I guess it was. Yes, it was.

Vapaa: Now you say from here. Do you mean this farm?
N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: So ah, after you—you were married, did you always live here?
N. Currey: There was 1 year.
L. Currey: All except 1 year.

Vapaa: And where was that? When was that approximately?
L. Currey: Ah--
N. Currey: '39 - '40 on the Frederica road.
Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: Ah, we were ah—George Cain. We farmed(?) him.
Vapaa: That close to Harrington?
N. Currey: Um-hum.

L. Currey: Yes. Just a mile out of town.
Vapaa: Do you remember who owned the farm at the time?
L. Currey: Yeah. My uncle owned it ah—. Ah, he lived in Milford. His name was Marion Gleason. And ah, we rented from him.

N. Currey: But he wanted to sell it. Which he did.
L. Currey: So he finally sold it and we bought this place. We moved here.
N. Currey: Well be here 34 years come December.

Vapaa: Have you ever been sorry you moved here?
L. Currey: No. It was a good investment. Lot of work.
N. Currey: Lot of work, but that didn't hurt.

Vapaa: Do you remember what you paid for the farm?
L. Currey: $4,500.
Vapaa: And it's how many acres?

Vapaa: And all tillable?

L. Currey: No. Ah, about 75 tillable.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: But it wasn't at that time.

Vapaa: No. Now, what changes did you make, Lee, when you came here as far as farming is concerned?

L. Currey: Well, it was a fruit farm when we came here. The entire farm was in fruit trees. Ah, principally apples. And we went about ah, removed all the apple trees. After a few years we got the holes all filled up and then we went to farming. (laughter)

Vapaa: Now ah, for as long as I've known you, I think, you've had a hired man on this farm, haven't you?

L. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: Do y--can you tell us who he is and what he does now?

L. Currey: Yeah, he's retired now. He was a colored man. A real--real good hired man.

N. Currey: Very dependable.

L. Currey: Worked for us 33 years.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: He was on the place when we bought it. And he's still on the place, but he's retired now. He was very dependable and did us a very good job.

Vapaa: Now you've sold this farm to someone else. Do you mind telling me who you sold it to?

L. Currey: We sold it to Nathan Sipple near Wyoming. He's a used car dealer.
We don't know what his--he said just for investment he's going to--

Vapaa: What's he going to do as far as your hired man is concerned?
L. Currey: Well, he's going to let him live in the tenant house until he wants. He's getting real old and feeble now and they might have to make a change in a year or two. But he's going to stay where he is now.

Vapaa: Is your tenant younger or older than you?
L. Currey: He's much older. He's 73 now. He's--

Vapaa: Now, why did you keep a tenant so many years, Lee?
L. Currey: Well, ah, it was just ah, too much to operate with one. It was always something to do. It took 2 men. And ah, it ah, worked much better and we thought it was possible to use a hired man. You could have--I could have done it all myself, but it would have been on a limited basis. I could do more with an extra hand than I could just myself.

Vapaa: How have you felt about farming all these years?
L. Currey: Oh, I've loved it. I think it's a good life. I don't think there's anything like it.

Vapaa: And how do you feel about going to Florida?
L. Currey: Well, I think it's time to go now. We've retired and ah, we're much older and we think a change in the climate would be better in the wintertime. We think we'll like it better. And someone said the fishings better down there than it is up here. (laughter)

Vapaa: You like to fish?
L. Currey: Yeah.
Vapaa: And Nixie, how do you feel about the move?
N. Currey: I go along with it.
Vapaa: Now did Wayne have anything to do with this--your son?
N. Currey: Well, yes. Wayne said that ah, we were getting older. It wasn't possible for him to come up as often as he likes. He only gets up about once a year. That we better, while we're active, come closer. So we have. (?)
Vapaa: Now you know, also, that your former boss, Mr. Messner--Jake Messner, has a home down in Florida.
N. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: Down near Orlando.
N. Currey: I talked with him last Christmas a year ago when we were down at Waynes. And ah, he had nothing but good things to say about the move he made.
Vapaa: Um-hum. Well, you know I saw him just last week ah, down at Rehoboth.
N. Currey: Umm.
Vapaa: And he says he was thinking about selling it and staying in Re-- in R--in ah, Florida all year round.
N. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: But of course, he's had this cottage in Rehoboth I don't know how many years.
N. Currey: Oh, I remember when he built it. Mr. Clarence Shockley and he did most of the carpenter work themselves.
Vapaa: They did?
N. Currey: Yes, they did.
Vapaa: Well, we'll never forget Clarence Shockley, will we?
N. Currey: mmmmm. He was just one of a kind.
Vapaa: Do you want to give us a description of how you regarded him?
N. Currey: Mr. Messner?
Vapaa: No. Ah, either one of them—both of them.
N. Currey: Clarence Shockley? Well, ah, it's hard to think of a word that would completely cover. I was a greenhorn from the farm and it took much patience to break me in to secretarial work.
So I ha--
Vapaa: I know better than that.
N. Currey: (laughter) So I had ah, gone to business school and come back and supposed to have been a finished product. But ah, (laugh) it was a very rough finish. And ah, suddenly I found myself working for Mr. Messner who was a wonderful boss. And Clarence Shockley sort of brought up the loose ends.
Vapaa: Yes.
N. Currey: If there was some ah, truant child down on the bank corner Clarence Shockley knew it. And he knew how to find him and how to get him and bring him in. And he did. (laughter)
Vapaa: That's right.
N. Currey: And he kept in those days—the furnaces were fired with coal and he also kept us in heat. And if ah, a pipe broke or a pipe burst or was frozen Clarence Shockley knew where it was cause he was there when it was put in.
Vapaa: um-hum.
N. Currey: And ah, he was the plumber too. And he did that as well.
And he was also the janitor. How did you carry him on the payroll?

As a janitor. In those days it was a janitor.

And he would have loved to have lived in this day cause Tody and I sure would (?) (laughter)

And he was the only one, wasn't he?

That's right.

He never had any help.

And it was e--it was enough work there for more than 1 man, wans't it?

Oh, yes. In the summertime he worked very hard. He ah, sanded those floors and waxed them himself. And he made sure they had a shine. They looked like mirrors. He took pride in his work. But he had a way of getting it done.

Yes. Now, let's talk a little bit about his ah, activities with the fire company. Do you remember any of this?

Yes. Oh, yes. He was fire chief.

And that fire whistle never blew that Clarence Shockley wasn't first one down there even though someone lived next door. (laughter) He was down there. He knew just how to manage that. And at the fire he seemed to know ah, who should hold what hose and get that fire put out. And he took delight in describing it when he came back.
Vapaa: That's right. (laughter) Ah, now Nixie, you remember his size a little bit. Ah, I weigh a 140 lbs. now and I think I was just about as tall as he was. How much would you say he weighed?

N. Currey: Oh--

Vapaa: On the average?

N. Currey: It was not much more than a speck. He was very tall, but he didn't weight very much.

Vapaa: No. I don't think he weighed as much as I do.

N. Currey: I don't think so either.

Vapaa: Even now.

N. Currey: No. But--

Vapaa: But he was very active.

N. Currey: Very active. He could cover the ground. And even after he retired something happened to one of the sewage pipes out from the cafeteria. Clarence Shockley was the only one who knew right where they should dig that ditch to find that pipe. And I can remember the day he came down there. He stood in the cafeteria and sighted right down by that old Powell school building. (laughter) And the ah, fellows were out there with their shovels and he told them right where to shovel that dirt and there's where it was. It's amazing. There were a lot of things bound up in that man.

Vapaa: Well, you know, Nixie, in our lives I think we meet people of all sorts. And ah, who would you say is the most interesting person that you've known--either at Harrington or someplace else?
Have you ever thought about it?

N. Currey: That's rather hard to say because I found ah, each person with whom I worked a challenge each day. Some of them--it was just like the threads of a cloth.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: (laugh) Some of 'em were the dark threads and some of 'em were the very bright threads. And I enjoyed 'em all. I believe I can truthfully say I did.

Vapaa: I think you did. Because your--you have a sunny disposition. You always have had. And I suspect you always will, if you can.

N. Currey: Yes, if something doesn't change. (laugh)

Vapaa: Now, Lee looks a little bit sour most of the time. But ah, I know he's one of the calmest people that I've ever met. And ah, one of the easiest to get along with that I know of.

N. Currey: Yes, the good Lord has a way of putting 2 together. (laughter) Lee is the calm one. (laugh) And I'm the stormy one. And I guess it takes that really. (laugh)

Vapaa: Yeah, but when you say stormy you don't mean mad, Nixie, or anything like that.

N. Currey: Oh, no. But ah, he takes things more in stride, I guess, than I do.

Vapaa: So you feel that the move to Florida may be easier for him than it is for you?

N. Currey: Yes. I think so. Ah, retirement ah, wasn't easy. I've made many ah, remarks about retirement and what I would do. And I remember what I said when I left Harrington School and I've not lived up to it yet. When I left Harrington School I said when I retire
I was going to crochet bibs for peoples' babies as they came along. And to this day I haven't found the instructions for one that I can do. (laughter)

Vapaa: Well, you gon--you think you'll do it in Florida?

N. Currey: I doubt it.

Vapaa: I doubt it too. (laughter) What are you--plan to do in Florida--do you have any idea?

N. Currey: I don't know. I'll watch him fish I guess. (laughter)

Vapaa: Do you like to fish yourself?

N. Currey: No.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: Ah, I share many things that Lee likes to do, but boating and fishing is not one of them. But I can sit on the bank. (laughter)

Vapaa: Who plays this piano?

N. Currey: Oh, I--I've been trying to play a little bit to keep my fingers in practice--Our Delaware.

Vapaa: Or is it our--an organ?

N. Currey: I did have an organ. It's in the shop right now.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: And I'm going to sell it. Well I--in going through the things I found this old folder that has the ah, words and music to Our Delaware. So I think I'll take that to Florida with me. (laugh)

Vapaa: Well, you know you know Our Delaware by heart.

N. Currey: Oh, yes. (laughter) But I was just practicing the music to it. I think it's quite pretty.

Vapaa: Um-hum. And I'm looking at some of these other music that's up
N. Currey: Yes. I like that.

Vapaa: That's from the Sound of Music, I guess.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Except ah,--I mean, that's the modern form now.

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: You got that before the Sound of Music ever came out.

N. Currey: Oh, many years. Many years. I wouldn't know. (laugh) I'm sure I had that when we were married.

Vapaa: Edelweiss Glide.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: An interesting title, and let's see who wrote it.

N. Currey: Le--it's ah--


N. Currey: Don't that go back? (laugh)

Vapaa: It goes back a ways, Nixie.

N. Currey: Oh, yes.

Vapaa: Now incidentally, what kind of music do you two prefer?

L. Currey: I like country music. (laughter)

N. Currey: I don't go--. Well, some of its all right. I think some of its corny. (laugh)

Vapaa: Ah, would you say you're the generation of the big band? Did you like the big band?

N. Currey: Yes, I did.

Vapaa: In the '20's.

N. Currey: Um-hum. Very much so.
Vapaa: Um-hum. And ah, so that as far as your extracurricular interests are concerned away from work and so forth, you've been interested in music?

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: Do you do much reading?

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: Does Lee do much reading?

N. Currey: Well ah, not--he has been busy with his work. He keeps up with the farm papers.

Vapaa: Um-hum

N. Currey: And to find out when he gets to Florida, it'll be interesting to see which way he turns. (laugh)

Vapaa: Are you going to have a garden, Lee?

L. Currey: Yes. A small garden. We won't have too much.

Vapaa: How much ground will you have down there?

L. Currey: Oh, well, the lots 3/4 of an acre.

Vapaa: Um-hum

L. Currey: And the house will take up quite a bit of it. We'll have enough for a garden for two.

Vapaa: Have you picked out the site for it yet? Have you been--. You haven't even seen this house yet, have you?

L. Currey: No. I've seen the model home. But, I--

Vapaa: Oh.

L. Currey: ...picked the lot out.

N. Currey: No we haven't.
L. Currey: Picked the lot out--know where it's going to be.
Vapaa: Have you been by the property yet?
L. Currey: Ah, yes. Before the house was started I was by there.
Vapaa: You made a special trip?
L. Currey: Yeah. The ah, streets all in, the curb was all in.
Vapaa: Did you go with him, Nixie?
N. Currey: No, I had to stay home.
Vapaa: And work?
N. Currey: No, I was retired at that time. But the--
Vapaa: When did you retire?
N. Currey: Ah, the end of December in '72.
Vapaa: Um-hum. And how many years did you have with the State?
N. Currey: Thirty-four years and 4 months.
Vapaa: Well, you beat me by a couple of years.
N. Currey: Really.
Vapaa: I had 33 years and 2 months.
N. Currey: I knew you had--should have had--
Vapaa: And of course ah, I think I'm a little older than you are. But
I'm still not 59 years of age.
N. Currey: Yeah.
Vapaa: So it does feel good to be able to retire.
N. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: At an earlier age, don't you think?
N. Currey: Mmmm. Yes, I think so. Ah, I'm all for retirement. I think too
many people work too long--in this day.
Vapaa: Um-hum.
N. Currey: This is a different age than our parents--his parents or mine--
who always wanted to work up to the day that they died. I think when 65 comes it's time to give up and relax a little bit. Enjoy what you have done.

Vapaa: Now you've always been very much interested in working with figures.

N. Currey: Oh, yes.

Vapaa: In fact, I think that's why you stopped working for me was because I didn't have enough ah--

N. Currey: You loaded up--me up with shorthand. I can shut my eyes and see that old shorthand book right now. (laughter) Yes, I--when I was in school--when I was in, you know, business school I--I never thought that I would be much interested in figures. But it's funny how things change as you go along. And ah, I enjoyed it.

Vapaa: And that's the thing you enjoyed after you left--

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: ...our extension office.

N. Currey: That's right. Completely.

Vapaa: And where did you go from there?

N. Currey: Well, I worked at Southern States until ah, a position opened at Caesar Rodney.

Vapaa: You always liked the schools, didn't you?

N. Currey: Oh, yes. The school th--there's nothing like it.

Vapaa: And you always liked the job of handling payrolls and things like this.

N. Currey: Oh, yes. Un-hun. When I went there I did mostly all the Air Base
work. And that was bills, invoices, payrolls and budget. And I enjoyed the budget very much, too. It was a lot of routine, but I kinda enjoyed it.

Vapaa: And the auditors never worried you?
N. Currey: Well, I had federal auditors and state auditors. No, I think sometimes I worried them. (laughter)

Vapaa: You mean because they couldn't find anything wrong?
N. Currey: Well ah, they had to trace my figures back. (laugh)

Vapaa: Well, let's see, where do we go from here? Ah, let's stay with the figures just a little bit here.
N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Ah, how long did you work in my extension office?
N. Currey: Umm--4 years and some months. Four years--

Vapaa: And that all counted towards your retirement?
N. Currey: Yes, it did. Thanks to the ah, the letter which you wrote. And when the retirement time came that was all taken care of--recorded in the ah--. Well, at the time you wrote the letter they did not have the Office of Pensions that they have now. And it had to be recorded over in the State Board of Education Office. And ah, thanks to all of that it was all recorded and everything was in order. All I had to do was say I'm retiring. (laughter) Which was very nice.

Vapaa: Are you going to take your so--social security at 62 or 65?
N. Currey: I took it at 63.

Vapaa: 63.

N. Currey: I retired at 63 and I took it then. But he waited until 65.
Vapaa: Let's see, I'm trying to figure a little bit. Now Lee says he was born in 1929.

L. Currey: 9 -- 09.

Vapaa: 1909? Oh.

L. Currey: Yeah.

Vapaa: Oh, I thought you--

N. Currey: Lee can only be boss from January to March.

Vapaa: I see.

N. Currey: He's from January to March older than I am. And that's the only period every year that he can be boss. (laugh)

Vapaa: Well, I just told him that I was older than he was. But I find that I'm not because I was born in 1915.

N. Currey: I didn't think you were because I'd been to Harrington School--

L. Currey: No, I graduated from high school in 1929. But I was born in 1909.

Vapaa: At where again?

L. Currey: Harrington.

Vapaa: Find out the street?

L. Currey: Oh, it was called Gimlet Street at that time.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L Currey: Ah--

N. Currey: Is it Wolcott Street now?

L. Currey: I don't know.

N. Currey: It's been renamed. But all the old folks said Gimlet Street. And why I don't know.

Vapaa: Well, I ca--I don't know either, Nixie. I'm no (laughter) help to you because I came after you did. If you remember, I didn't
come until 1938 to Harrington--

N. Currey: Yes. Well, see I had been to Harrington since June of 1930.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: I remember.

Vapaa: Working you mean?

N. Currey: Yes. I go back aways. (laugh)

Vapaa: Well, I think we're all beginning to go back aways.

N. Currey: Yes, well--

Vapaa: And I'm finding this a very interesting project to attempt to carry out.

N. Currey: I'm sure so.

Vapaa: Ah--

N. Currey: Well, when you get to this age ah, memories--you have many pleasant memories and funny ones and it kinda breaks the monotony of things.

Vapaa: Um-hum. How do you like your new car?

N. Currey: Fine, when I get to drive it. (laugh)

Vapaa: Let's ask Lee what kind it is and so forth.

L. Currey: It's a Mercedes.

Vapaa: Mercedes-Benz--a German car.

L. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: And ah, is it a '74 model?

L. Currey: Yeah. It's a '74 model.

Vapaa: And what other designation would you know it by? Do you know the model number or such?

L. Currey: Yeah. It's model 230--

N. Currey: 230.

L. Currey: ...gas model. It's not a diesel. It's a gas model.
Vapaa: And what kind of mileage do you get with that?

L. Currey: About 21.2 now, I believe it is the last--figured last week.

Vapaa: And what kind of service do you expect to get in Florida, if you need it?

L. Currey: Ah, they have a place down there that have a dealership. And ah,--

Vapaa: At Ocala?

N. Currey: Um-hum.

L. Currey: They promised us ah, good service down there.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: We got a letter from the company up in New York to that effect. And ah, they send us a card good deal like a Bank Americard and you just take this card in and they ah, put it in the machine and stamp your--with your name right on it.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: And that's good anywhere in the United States. It's ah--it's you-stop at a Mercedes dealer.

Vapaa: Course there aren't too many of them. But it is nice to know that you can get service from someone who is close by where you live.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

L. Currey: Yeah. That's right.

N. Currey: And in Gainesville too, we were told.

Vapaa: Yes.

N. Currey: But Ocala will be near.

Vapaa: You remember Hayward Quillen, of course?

N. Currey: Oh, sure.

Vapaa: He's the one who told me that you had the Mercedes. (laugh)
N. Currey: Oh, yes. I saw Hayward over there and George Paskey. Them fellows were in school there when--

Vapaa: Yes.

N. Currey: ...I worked there. I remember them very well.

Vapaa: Um-hum. In fact, all of the Quillen--

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: ...children

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: How many children were there in that particular--Harry Quillen's family?

N. Currey: Must have been 5 or 6. I can remember on a Easter Sunday morning down at Asbury Methodist Church--it was quite a scene. All the children came home dressed up in their Sunday best and marched their mother down the aisle on Easter Sunday morning. And it was quite a sight to see.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well, we're about to run out of tape. And I'm going to have to turn it over in just a minute here. So ah, I think what I'll do is just let it run out and then turn it over. And ah, we'll start again on another aspect. We haven't gotten into DHIA or anything else, Lee. And I--I do want to get into that. And ah--and the part that both you and Nixie have played in running our association.

N. Currey: Well, mine was background. (laugh) He did the going and coming.

Vapaa: (first side of tape ended)

Vapaa: Lee, let's start over again with your farming practices since
you've been on this farm. You said you had fruit trees in the beginning and you gradually took them out. Why?

L. Currey: They are ah--outlived their usefulness. They were no longer productive and the--the expense of caring for 'em was too much for the profit you got.

Vapaa: Do you remember what varieties of apples you grew?

L. Currey: Ah, they were early varieties and (murmuring sounds) ah, transparent and ah (voice overlap - unintelligible)

Vapaa: (voice overlap - unintelligible)

L. Currey: ... another kind they call Early Reds and then the later variety was the Stamens at that time. And the ah--they had some Delicious but not too many. So ah, the ah, price was low at that time and spray material and caring for 'em was ah--there wasn't any profit in that. So we just taken them all out.

Vapaa: And then you said you ah--how did you put it?

L. Currey: Ah, started in to remove the trees and they were so large we had to get a--a man with a big ah--it was a converted World War II tank--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: ...and he pulled them out by the roots. They left such holes--

N. Currey: World War I tank.

L. Currey: Eh--yeah, World War I tank. That's right.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: And ah, they ah--

Vapaa: Do you remember who the man was?

L. Currey: Ralph Vincent was the man.
L. Currey: And they left such big holes in the ground that it took about 5 years to get the holes all filled up and--
N. Currey: And the roots removed.
L. Currey: Roots removed and the trees cleared up, so we finally made it.
    Then we got some dairy cows and went into the dairy business in a small way, not too big, about 35 cows. And we had hatching eggs and laying hens and soy beans and--and ah, had a variety of things to make payment(?)

Vapaa: Now,--
L. Currey: Tomatoes.
Vapaa: Tomatoes?
N. Currey: Um-hum.
L. Currey: Yeah, we grew tomatoes.
Vapaa: Now, was that for a cannery?
L. Currey: Yes.
N. Currey: Um-hum.
Vapaa: And who did you c--grow them for?
L. Currey: We grew for Libby Canning Company for several years.
Vapaa: Um. Do you remember Ralph Draper the ah, field man for Libby?
L. Currey: No. Is a Walter Ake was the ah--
Vapaa: Field man then.
L. Currey: Field man then.
Vapaa: Well, that was before Ralph's time.
N. Currey: That was before Ralph.
L. Currey: Yeah.
Vapaa: Cause Ralph came from Greenwood and Oscar Draper, his father, lived north of Greenwood. And Ralph went to Greenwood School and finished there--
N. Currey: He's married to ah, Martha Peck.
Vapaa: Married to Martha Peck, yes, at Harrington.
N. Currey: Um-hum.
Vapaa: And ah, guess where they're living now?
N. Currey: Clearmont, Florida
L. Currey: Florida
Vapaa: Yes.
N. Currey: We saw Thomas Peck and he was telling us.
Vapaa: Un-hum.
N. Currey: (voice overlapped - unintelligible)
Vapaa: Well of course, Tom is Martha's--
N. Currey: Martha's brother.
Vapaa: Brother.
N. Currey: Martha's older brother. One of them.
Vapaa: Yes. But she had 2 older brothers.
N. Currey: That's right. Ah, Charles--
Vapaa: Charles Peck, Jr.
N. Currey: Um-hum. I knew all of them because they didn't live too far my father--eh, their father when he was living.
Vapaa: Um-hum. And before they went into business in Harrington.
N. Currey: Yes, before they ca--went into Harrington they lived on a large
farm not too far from my folks. And we were very--well, friendly at that time.

L. Currey: Yeah. We grew wheat and corn and ah, soy beans. And what we didn't use for the dairy herd why we sold on the grain market. We sold all the soy beans. We didn't use any of those. But we used most of the corn and wheat.

Vapaa: When did you get your chickens? Do you remember?
L. Currey: I started with chickens in '43--laying hens for market eggs. And then in '45 I went into the hatching egg business.

N. Currey: With Marker.
Vapaa: Charlie Marker?
N. Currey: Um-hum.
L. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: Um-hum.
L. Currey: And I was with that 14 years. One time we had about 1800 layers for a number of years. Then after the--along in '55 - '56 ah, especially '57, hatching egg business got so bad that they ah, wasn't any sale for 'em. So then we went into the broiler business. Converted the houses to broilers. And ah, we did that for 12 years.

Vapaa: And who did you grow for then?
Vapaa: George Short.
L. Currey: George Short. Yeah.

Vapaa: I was at a party with him last Saturday night.

N. Currey: Was you?

Vapaa: Oh, we had a ball.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

L. Currey: Yeah, he's--

Vapaa: Talking about most of the people we know together, you know.

N. Currey: Yes and he knows many.

Vapaa: And I didn't realize, Nixie, until last Saturday night that he's been--had this Wyoming Mill for better than 30 years. And that he's been living in Milford all this time.

L. Currey: Mmmm.

N. Currey: That's right.

Vapaa: Coming back and forth. And that he's a bachelor.

N. Currey: Yes, he's a bachelor. Goes to Florida every winter.

Vapaa: Un-hun. (laugh)

L. Currey: He's--

Vapaa: He said he has the time of his life.

N. Currey: Yes.

L. Currey: He's in his 80's now.

Vapaa: That's what they tell me.

L. Currey: About 83 I believe he is.

N. Currey: Selda Newset (?) doesn't have anything on Mr. Short.

Vapaa: No, they don't. (laughter) You know they were kidding him last week about driving into the Wyoming Mill. The mud puddle they
called it. And he kept insisting it was the Wyoming Mill.

Did you ever hear the story?

N. Currey: No.

Vapaa: Well, it seems--I don't know where he was or what the occasion was--but he probably forgot to set his brake. And the car started to roll and it rolled right on in to the Wyoming Mill Pond.

L. Currey: Yeah.

N. Currey: Oh. (laughter)

Vapaa: Did you hear about it, Lee?

L. Currey: Yeah, I saw it.

Vapaa: You saw it.

L. Currey: Yeah, the car went down--

N. Currey: You were down there, wasn't you?

L. Currey: Completely submerged under the water. He--he swam out. He just barely got out before it went down.

Vapaa: Well, I heard that Reynolds Kemp helped to get him out.

L. Currey: Yeah.

Vapaa: That's his ah, number 2 man, isn't it?


N. Currey: Un-hum. Has been for many years, I guess.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: They got a tow truck and finally got a chain hooked under it and raised it up and pulled it up. Hun. That was quite a--
Vapaa: Well, he didn't tell us about that. (laughter)

L. Currey: Yeah, it completely--was completely submerged under water. It--

Vapaa: How deep is that Wyoming Mill Pond?

L. Currey: What say?

Vapaa: How deep is that Wyoming Mill Pond?

L. Currey: Well ah--it's ah--I would say 12 - 15 ft. deep. But ah, where he went in was the mill race where the water that went into the mill--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

L. Currey: It's about 40 ft. wide, I guess, and quite deep there.

Vapaa: Now he still can grind grain at that mill, can't he?

L. Currey: Yeah, that's--

Vapaa: But he doesn't do it, does he?

L. Currey: Yeah, he still--ah, he doesn't make flour anymore. But he can ah, he just more or less grinds commercial feed.

N. Currey: For cattle and things like that.

L. Currey: Cattle and ah--

Vapaa: Yes, He told me he grind cattle feed.

N. Currey: Yeah.

Vapaa: And he has quite a business still--ah, with cow feed.

L. Currey: Yeah, he grinds the farmers grain mix with concentrate. He has big mixers there.

Vapaa: Do you know why he got out of the broiler business?

L. Currey: Eh, he said he lost too much money. Said ah, he was ah, putting more in it than he was getting out. A few years he made good. Then ah, the last 3 or 4 years it ah--he didn't even break even.
Vapaa: Did you ever grow broilers independently yourself. In other words, where you paid for the feed?

L. Currey: No.

Vapaa: And sold the chickens yourself?

L. Currey: No, I never did.

Vapaa: Do you think it's possible for a person to do this?

L. Currey: Ah, I don't think so.

N. Currey: If he owns a part of the bank. (laughter)

L. Currey: I think ah, ah, the cost of feed and the uncertainty of the market I think would be very risky to do it.

Vapaa: And you have to have a large enough flock don't you to make it profitable?

L. Currey: Yeah, that's right.

Vapaa: And what would you say would be a large enough flock?

L. Currey: Oh, I would say 10 to 12,000.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: That would be at the bottom, wouldn't it?

L. Currey: Yeah, that would be at the bottom.

Vapaa: Now, as I was driving up here today I came by Ed Larrimores. And there's a new house right near him.

N. Currey: That's right.

Vapaa: Is that Eds?

N. Currey: No. Mr. Larrimore has sold his farm.

Vapaa: Yes.

N. Currey: And he's living in the original house. This house has been built new by someone else who bought that section of the land.

Vapaa: Do you know who that is?
N. Currey: I don't know his name.
L. Currey: He's from New Jersey.
N. Currey: And he has that field of peppers--
Vapaa: Um-hum.
N. Currey: ...which he's trying to train the family to like to pick.
(laughter)
L. Currey: He's a part time minister. I don't know what ah--
N. Currey: We (voice overlap - unintelligible)
Vapaa: Denomination.
L. Currey: Yeah.
N. Currey: I don't know. Baptist, I believe some said. Now that's gossip. I don't know.
Vapaa: Well, that's better (laughter) than nothing, Nixie.
N. Currey: Nothing. That's right.
L. Currey: They sold everything and they get to live in the house their lifetime.
Vapaa: Um-hum.
L. Currey: Completely tax free.
Vapaa: Now you also had another neighbor that I admired for years because he could always manage to keep up his work and still have time to go fishing or hunting or doving or--
N. Currey: (murmur) Ducking or something.
Vapaa: Yeah. Now, let's mention his name.
L. Currey: Harry Meredith.
Vapaa: Yes. Course he died at ha--at what age?
L. Currey: Ah, 82.

N. Currey: 80--82 or 3, I don't know.

Vapaa: And he was active right up until the time he died.

N. Currey: Yes. He'd been to Florida and was on his way home.

Vapaa: Is that what it was?

N. Currey: Um-hum. And--

Vapaa: What's his wife doing now?

N. Currey: (laugh) His--of course, they've sold the farm and his wife is living over in ah, Mayfair Apartments. And this summer she's been working at Woodside. She had always for a number of years worked in the summertime in the Green Giant office. And she has worked this summer as well. I've talked to her.

Vapaa: You mean she's not old enough to retire?

N. Currey: Well, maybe so, but she's young enough to keep going. (laugh)

Vapaa: Keep going, yes. You know--

N. Currey: And she enjoys it.

Vapaa: I have the feeling, Nixie, that when you get to Florida someone's going to come to you with a tax report or something and want you to help figure out the income tax (laughter).

N. Currey: No. I don't know about that income tax business.

Vapaa: Why.

N. Currey: All right. I told Lee I don't think so. Though ah, guess I could work it.

Vapaa: Um-hum. No, I can't imagine you stopping entirely. I mean--

N. Currey: Well, I crocheted until I got tired. And I looked at the tele-
vision, all the day shows for awhile. That was wonderful. I had never seen them, you know. Knew about 'em, but never saw 'em. Well, that was--no challenge to that. And I still love to work and I still do. It's ah, I still think it's the thing that--that younger folks come--are coming along and they need their chance at the things.

Vapaa: Right.

N. Currey: And you should find other things to do. And it's up to you to do it.

Vapaa: Well of course, that's what the doctors told me when I had my stroke. That--

N. Currey: Yeah.

Vapaa: ...I got myself into this mess and it was up to me to get myself out of it.

N. Currey: (laughter) That's what Mrs. Hopkins said one time to the girls down on ah, Weiner Avenue. Mr. Hopkins worked on the railroad and Mrs. Hopkins was home. And they had two older boys in high school who took the garden land and they had a ball game every ye--every day out in the garden.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: The front yard the--their were 2 much younger girls--Sidosia (?) and Florence. And they had all the little girls up and down Weiner Avenue on the front lawn. So no grass ever grew because they played hopscotch. One day a battle ensued. And they ran down to a side window. And she was always cooking or darning socks. (laugh) She was cooking this morning. And one of the girls run in,
"Mom, so and so--somebody threw so and so." She said, "Now, you got yourself in that fight. Now get yourself out."
(laughter) And I though she was very wise.

Vapaa: Yes. Well--

N. Currey: So in the afternoon they all made up and they were all playing hopscotch again.

Vapaa: Let's talk a little bit about our extension experiences. That'll be all the 3 of us, because we're all--

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: ...involved, I think. Ah, particularly about the Dairy Herd Improvement Association, Nixie. You were there when Delmar Young died, weren't you?

N. Currey: Yes. I was.

Vapaa: And--and Delmar Young was our dairy specialist at the University at the time.

N. Currey: Yes, and loved Guernsey cows.

Vapaa: Yes.

N. Currey: They always kidded him about every place--every turn of the road that he went out in the country (laugh) he saw a nice Jersey cow. Oh, Guernsey cow.

Vapaa: Guernsey cow, yes.

N. Currey: Guernsey cow.

Vapaa: Well of course, he was from somewhere up in New England. I don't know exactly where.

N. Currey: He was a nice person.
Vapaa: Yes, he was. He was a Cornell graduate and ah--

N. Currey: He had his little Monroe calculator and he saw everything was just right.

Vapaa: That's right. And ah, I know that ah, about the time that he died we had just lost a milk tester.

N. Currey: That's right.

Vapaa: Who was it? Was it ah, the fellow living with Ed Larri--

N. Currey: Samuel Weaver.

Vapaa: Sam Weaver.

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: He was a Mennonite.

N. Currey: Yes. And he was a conscientious objector. And he had served his time. He was going back home. Two years he was there.

Vapaa: Right.

N. Currey: And November 1st of 1957 that was the end for Sammy and Sarah. So he was going back to Virginia.

Vapaa: I'm glad you can remember these dates, Nixie, because I can't. (laughter) Ah--

N. Currey: Oh, I remember it like--I was so close to it. (laughter)

Vapaa: Well, you remember we were looking for a tester and then somehow along the way why you said something about we--asked whether Lee would be interested.

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: Do you remember what you said then or anything?

N. Currey: No. I--I felt--I don't know how it was. (laughter) The farm
wasn't producing too—too much. And Lee and I had separate accounts because I declared I never would work to make this farm go. It had to pay it's way.

Vapaa: Pay it's way. O.K.

N. Currey: And so ah—mm—Wayne was growing up and I knew we would need money to ah, give him a fair education should he ah, ever want it. So ah, Lee and I talked it over and we decided that something on the side might help. And of course, the dairy herd supervisor was leaving. You had contacted ah, Albert Attix—was there a—

L. Currey: Dixon.

N. Currey: --Albert Dixon. And he was going to take it. Well, before he got going he just found something else he liked better. Which was horses, I think or something.

Vapaa: Yes. He's still working with horses by the way.

N. Currey: Yeah. A—-and he thought that he was better suited for that and would like that better. And you still didn't have anybody. And here the month was going by. So Lee volunteered to ah, do it if you thought he could.

Vapaa: Right. And Delmar came down.

N. Currey: That's right.

Vapaa: And worked with you.

L. Currey: Yeah. He worked with me the—-and mother fixed lunch for us. And ah, he ah, worked until 4 o'clock. We were in that other room there working. And ah, ah, he was explaining the program to me. I'd only been with it a few days. And going over everything he—
ah, Thanksgiving was coming up--

N. Currey: This was on a Wednesday. Thanksgiving was--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: ...next day.

Vapaa: Next day. Right.

L. Currey: He was going to ah, New York that night with his wi--to his wife's people. So he left here at 4 o'clock. And he died that evening it seems.

Vapaa: Yeah. The story was that he got to New York to his--I think it was his wife's sister. I'm not sure.

N. Currey: Um-hum. I believe it was.

Vapaa: And ah, he sat down in the chair, just folded his arms, and just--

N. Currey: Collapsed an--

Vapaa: Collapsed with a heart attack.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And ah, of course, then we didn't have a dairy--an extension dairyman for a long time.

N. Currey: And so you were the Kent County one, I guess. (laughter)

Vapaa: Well, that's when I got into trouble with George Worrilow, our Director.

N. Currey: Yes, un-hun. I know.

Vapaa: Because he said to me one day--. I told him, I says, "Now, I can't run this Dairy Herd Improvement Association in Kent County unless we go to this new IBM record."

N. Currey: Um-hum.
Vapaa: I says, "I think I've got a man who can do it. And ah, Delmars worked with him. And ah, so we'd like to have him ah, as a tester." So I said ah, "How about if I go up to ah, Cornell which does the processing of the records and I'll take Ed Shavinger (?) with me because he was acting as the State dairyman."

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Extension dairyman at the time, although he was New Castle County Agent. He was a cow man.

N. Currey: (voice overlap) ...was it because too his office was right there.

Vapaa: Right. At the University.

N. Currey: Eh, eh, they had call.

Vapaa: Right. So Ed and I were supposed to go up to Cornell. And we actually started one day. We'd made all our arrangements by telephone and letter with ah--and I don't remember the man's name, but it's not important, up at Cornell. And ah, we started off in a snowstorm. And ah, I say we, I drove from Dover up to Eds. And it was snowing so hard that I barely got in to Ed's farm house. Farm, you know, yard. And then we backed out of the drive and started up from--. He lives at Pleasant Valley which is just below Summit Bridge. And we got on that first turn and got stuck in the snow. Well, the only thing that was getting through the road by that time were snow plows. And ah, a snow plow came along and he plowed the road out for us in front of us. And we got on it and as soon as we hit the canal and got
across the bridge why the roads were clear.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: So we drove on up to ah, Newark, New Jersey to the airport and got in the Mo--to the Mohawk Airlines only to learn that the flights into Ithica had been cancelled because they also had a snowstorm up there. (laughter)

N. Currey: Snowstorm up there.

Vapaa: And so we stayed overnight there at the Airport motel, came back home. Well, we waited awhile the next day, but it was obvious we couldn't do anything so we came on home. Then eventually we did go back the same route a couple of weeks later, caught the plane to Ithica, and spent 2 days up at Ithica. Now I had taken enough time by that time to read up what this ah, IBM processing--electronic processing of records was all about. And we spent the whole first day asking questions of this man up at ah, Cornell.

N. Currey: Cornell.

Vapaa: And his job was to train ah, agents and herd supervisors anyway. So ah, we didn't feel guilty about taking up his time. (laughter) And when we came back I told Ed, I said, "Ed, we're going to change over within a month entirely to IBM record." And don't you know it was a very easy change. Do you remember it?

N. Currey: Yes, I do remember. It was marvelous that you were able to sell the farmers on the change and get it done and they not realize what they had left. Because I think some of them were so satisfied with they had.
Vapaa: You wondered why they were testing at all.

N. Currey: Yes. Un-hum.

Vapaa: Yes. But with this electronic processing of records why they
not only got the record of milk production and their butterfat
tests, but also a recommendation for grain feeding and for—

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: ...feeding of whatever solids or hay or whatever they did.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: At that time we were feeding a lot of hay I know.

N. Currey: Yes. They also ah, ah, there were many things pointed out on
this IBM record whereby there was an overall picture where was
that herd really paying in comparison to what you fed 'em in
comparison to the number of employees it took.

Vapaa: Right.

N. Currey: All this was given and telling the owner is this herd paying on
that basis—on the basis of any business. Which they weren't
getting. Before what they were getting before was butterfat
and weight.

Vapaa: Um-hum. And a one annual summary.

N. Currey: Yes. Um-hum.

Vapaa: And I think our testing year at that time ended in January, if
I'm not mistaken.

N. Currey: Yes, the end of January I believe. And—

Vapaa: Then we had our annual meeting.

N. Currey: Eh, the 1st of March

Vapaa: First of March.
N. Currey: First ah--
Vapaa: To give Delmar time enough to get the records all--
N. Currey: Yes. Sometimes he'd send--
Vapaa: ...checked.
N. Currey: ...all those things down to us for us girls to type. (laughter) The University was famous for that.
Vapaa: But he would figure it.
N. Currey: Oh, yeah, he had the figures all there. We didn't have to do a thing but copy 'em.
Vapaa: And he--. No. No, I always admired Delmar and--
N. Currey: He was a very nice person with him to work. I thought he was very fair minded too.
Vapaa: He just couldn't push himself away from the table, could he?
N. Currey: No.
Vapaa: And I think that was his trouble. He smoked a lot too. I don't know whether that had anything to do with his heart attack or not. But I'm quite sure of the fact that he ate so much and carried so much weight around--
N. Currey: Um-hum.
Vapaa: ...that that was the cause of his heart attack.
N. Currey: No doubt so. Because he was quite young. Too young to have left this world at that time.
Vapaa: Yes. Um-hum. I think he was a little older than I am, but not much.
N. Currey: Mmmm.
Vapaa: And ah, as you say too young to leave the world.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Well, now Nixie, when did you come into the picture as far as--well, you started in the picture working with Lee as far as handling--helping him with the records after work.

N. Currey: Oh, yes. As I said ah, I had a date every night. Every night! Do those books. (laughter) Well, at first it was awful cause I didn't know what I was doing. Only that I knew I was adding 2 and 3 and I was supposed to get 5. But after awhile after you did it a month or two it became interesting. Eh, eh, each herd became unique within itself. Then you began to look for certain things. And I got as interesting in it, I think, as he did. Maybe that's sounding bragadocia a little bit, but--

Vapaa: No.

N. Currey: ...I enjoyed it. I really did. It was a lot of work. And maybe I grumbled and complained a little bit sometimes. (laugh)

Vapaa: And you'd had--just finished a full day's work in the office.

N. Currey: Yes. I had. But I got to the place where I really enjoyed it. Cause it was figures. And I had all this shorthand. My land, I never saw so much shorthand. (laughter) I had to really learn my shorthand because I hadn't had a job up to that time--

L. Currey: She was doing 27 herds at that time. And they was just piled up if she didn't get the job done.

N. Currey: Oh, eh, you had to do it every night. If it ever got ahead of you--
Vapaa: And you had to visit these herds once a month, morning and night.

L. Currey: (murmur)

Vapaa: And I think it was about that time we decided too that it was easier to test at home than it was at the farm, didn't we?

L. Currey: Yes.

N. Currey: Yes. Un-hum. Now ah, Sammy Weaver stayed over night in some of them. No he didn't. The person before him did. But ah, Sammy did the other. Where, you know, he had to test it--

Vapaa: Yes.

N. Currey: ...at the place. And sometimes it was not very good, because there wasn't any heat. And all this thing in a bitter morning--it was a bitter thing to do.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

N. Currey: And the people couldn't provide the really necessary warm water and the various things at the time. It wasn't convenient anyway.

Vapaa: So ah, when Lee started to test he began running his samples--

N. Currey: Here.

Vapaa: ...for butterfat right here.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And you know where they're run now?

N. Currey: Ummm, Pennsylvania?

Vapaa: Pennsylvania State University.

N. Currey: (murmur) ...U, Um-hum.

Vapaa: And they take the information at Penn State University and send it on up to Cornell.
N. Currey: Cornell and they prepare the records.
Vapaa: And they prepare the electronic records, yes.
N. Currey: Well, I think the farmer is getting much more for his money--much more.
Vapaa: I think they realize this.
N. Currey: Yes, I think they do. And as far as I can think back over it in this sudden change--. Eh, with every change there's so much pain and complaint--complaint--but I can't remember that there was.
Vapaa: No. No, there wasn't any complaint there. I don't think we lost a herd.
N. Currey: No. But with many changes whatever it is there's always, you know, a lot of pain and complaining and all of this. I can't recall that there was.
Vapaa: I know this, the farmers always liked to see Lee come out to the farm because he could work so well with the cows. You know, you've got to be quiet and move easily and slowly and you can't make any sudden moves to scare the cows.
N. Currey: No.
Vapaa: Because if you scare the cows they tend to hold up their milk.
N. Currey: That's right.
L. Currey: That's right.
Vapaa: And ah, Lee al--the farmers always like to have Lee come around on their farm.
N. Currey: Well, I--
L. Currey: Well, I was always (?)
N. Currey: ...think Lee liked to go. I think ah, Lee would come home with
some fantastic tales. (laughter) I think he had a marvelous time (laughter)

L. Currey: Sixteen years and 3 months.

Vapaa: I think that's the longest time, Lee, that I know of ever having a dairy herd supervisor in the State of Delaware. I don't know of anyone who's been here any longer than that. And--

L. Currey: (murmur)

N. Currey: And even yet, it's nice to see ah, some of the ones who where he went.

Vapaa: Right.

N. Currey: And we have seen several recently. And it's kinda nice.

Vapaa: Have you been to Woody Haas lately?

L. Currey: No. I haven't been over to Woody's lately. I never had a disagreement. We had problems, but never had a disagreement with one of the farmers in 16 years.

N. Currey: Yeah, they were very nice to you, Lee.

Vapaa: Well, you were nice to them so they reciprocated.

L. Currey: Ah, yeah, they were nice to me. They always paid their testing bill. We lost very few dollars.

Vapaa: You know, I can't remember losing any money really. Ah, in the DHIA.

L. Currey: Well, ah, got a couple of bad checks from ah--

N. Currey: But they made them good.

Vapaa: Made 'em--

L. Currey: Yeah.

N. Currey: They came back eh--when was it? Not too--well, I don't know how many years ago. A--and made every penney good. Ah, people aren't
ah,--basically honest.

Vapaa: I think so, yes. And particularly when they know it's a co-operative which it--this was--

N. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: ...incorporated in the State of Delaware--

N. Currey: Delaware. Um-hum.

Vapaa: ...as a Delaware Herd Improvement Association. And we were the Kent County branch of one of 3 upgrading units.

N. Currey: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Well, actually there was more than that, I guess, because Sussex, I mean New Castle County had 2 subjects for awhile.

N. Currey: Yes, it did. Well ah, Kent had 2 for awhile.

Vapaa: Yes, for awhile.

N. Currey: Ah, Virgil what? Virgil and Sammy were along. Virgil had ah, before Mr. Cyrils (?)

Vapaa: Oh, I know who you mean. Yes.

L. Currey: But ah--

Vapaa: Virgil Ritchie, was it?

N. Currey: Yes, Virgil Ritchie. It was--

Vapaa: R-i-t-c-h-i-e.

N. Currey: Yeah. Um-hum.

Vapaa: And then he decided he'd rather go and breed cows.

N. Currey: Yes, so he went in Pennsylvania.

Vapaa: With Southeastern Pennsylvania--

N. Currey: Southeastern. Um-hum.

Vapaa: Ar--Artificial Breeders Cooperative.
N. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: And it's since been changed now to the American Breeders Cooperative.
N. Currey: Oh, American. Has it?
N. Currey: Yeah. Well ah, that's where Virgil went.
Vapaa: And Dave Yoder--
N. Currey: I was working in your office when he came to say goodbye.
Vapaa: And you remember poor old Virgil--he could never get done on time.
N. Currey: Yes. (laughter) He was as nice as he could be, but--. (laughter)
Vapaa: He would go on a farm and he'd work so slow that--
N. Currey: Yes, he--
Vapaa: ...even some of the farmers would get a little bit annoyed with him.
N. Currey: Annoyed, yes.
Vapaa: But they put up with him because they knew he meant well--
N. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: ...and he was interested in what he was doing.
N. Currey: He tried to do a good job and he ah, I guess a little slow with it.
Vapaa: Um-hum.
N. Currey: Then Mr. Sells came along after that.
Vapaa: Of course, Frank, you know, had a problem ah, with his health.
N. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: ...he came on.
Vapaa: And he had the same doctor I did and I said, "Well, I've got a job that I think I can use him."

N. Currey: Un-hun.

Vapaa: And Dr. Spong said, "Well, if ah, he doesn't have to carry milk buckets, why it'd probably be all right."

N. Currey: Un-hun

Vapaa: And so he had home boys--

N. Currey: Yeah. The boys would go with him.

Vapaa: ...and they would go with him. Yes.

N. Currey: Which was good for him anyway.

Vapaa: Yes. And some of the farmers complained about this, but ah--

N. Currey: I liked Mr. Cyrils though.

Vapaa: I did to.

N. Currey: Yes. I liked Mr. Cyrils very much.

Vapaa: I think we kept him alive at least 10 more years.

N. Currey: I'm sure so. Because he was--

Vapaa: Than he might have lived otherwise.

N. Currey: ...busy and ah, his mind.

Vapaa: Yes. And he had been a farmer too. But he had had to give up one farm and he bought this other farm and he got tied up with the Farmers Home Administration.

N. Currey: Yes, I can recall that.

Vapaa: And I worked with the herd su--I mean with the farm supervisor. I'm trying to think of his name. He's still living.

N. Currey: Fred Records?
Vapaa: Fred Records, yes.
N. Currey: Mmmm. Um-hum.
Vapaa: And ah, Fred didn't want to ah, refinance the farm with DHIA money. And I said-- Or ah, government money.
N. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: And I says ah, "Well, who's your boss? I'm going over your head." So ah, he told me his name. I've forgotten it. It doesn't make any difference. And ah, the boss came down and we got the loan. And Frank paid for that farm over the period of 10 years.
N. Currey: Yeah. With h--working as he--
Vapaa: With the working as in DHIA.
N. Currey: And you got him to dispose of ah, the few cows he had. He didn't--
Vapaa: Yes.
N. Currey: ...have ah, enough facilities there--
Vapaa: No.
N. Currey: ...to make his way.
Vapaa: But what he did have was enough pasture there--
N. Currey: Yes.
Vapaa: ...to graze horses--
N. Currey: Um-hum.
Vapaa: ...and young stock and things like this.
N. Currey: Well, that's the thing that I thought you did for him that was really marvelous. (voice overlap - unintelligible)
Vapaa: Well, I'm telling you I enjoyed it too, Nixie. As much as ah, he did.
N. Currey: Yeah. And he--
Vapaa: And he was very--
N. Currey: ...was eternally grateful. I've never seen--
Vapaa: I know he was too. And ah, even though I haven't seen his wife lately why--
N. Currey: She is gone. She died too.
Vapaa: She died too?
N. Currey: Um-hum.
Vapaa: I didn't know this.
N. Currey: She's been gone about a year, hasn't she, Lee?
L. Currey: She only lived 2 years after he did.
Vapaa: Um-hum. Well, she was about as old as he was anyway.
L. & N. Currey: Yes.
N. Currey: That's true.
Vapaa: And of course, taking care of those home youngsters why--
N. Currey: Wasn't any easy thing.
Vapaa: No, it wasn't
N. Currey: Umm.
Vapaa: Ah, ummm. She had a job, I think, trying to get them to do the chores that are normally done on a farm--
N. Currey: Yeah.
Vapaa: ...by youngsters.
N. Currey: Yeah.
Vapaa: Or used to be done by youngsters.
N. Currey: Used to be. (laughter)
Vapaa: That's not--

N. Currey: It still is a good idea. (laughter)

Vapaa: Well, we're about to run out of tape here--

N. Currey: O.K.

Vapaa: ...again, I'm afraid. I hate to stop this thing, but I think we're probably covered--

N. Currey: We've covered--

Vapaa: ...the ground that ah,--

N. Currey: the reviews (voice overlap) ... up (laughter)

Vapaa: Yes, we have.

L. Currey: Yes.

Vapaa: The name is George, isn't it, Lee?

L. Currey: That's right. (laughter)

Vapaa: All right. So I do want to thank you for helping me prepare this tape. And I'm sure that the University also--

(End of tape)

THE END