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INTERVIEW OF
FRED AND ELVA STITES

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
GEORGE K. VAPAA, NARRATOR

Vapaa: And ah, it's now 7:30 in the evening and ah, we're at ah, south of Little Creek ah, Delaware. And we're going to do an oral interview ah, of ah, one of our farmers here in ah, Kent County. And I'll have these people introduce themselves-- a husband and wife. Fred.

F. Stites: My name is Fred Stites. Ah, I was born in Princeton, New Jersey. I went--

Vapaa: When?

F. Stites: In 19 ah, August 17th, 1927.

Vapaa: Un-hum.

F. Stites: I went to Princeton High School. I graduated from high school. I didn't go to college. Ah, from--when I got out of high school I went and lived with my brother, worked for him for 3 years. I got married--married in 1948. And I started farming in 1949 on shares and farmed on my wife's uncle's farm for 1 year.

Vapaa: Which is still in New Jersey.

F. Stites: Still in New Jersey. And then we moved from her uncle's farm down in , New Jersey.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: We was there for 2 years. And then we w--bought a farm down in Delaware--moved down in Delaware.

Vapaa: I see, Fred. Before we introduce your wife or have her introduce herself why ah, tell us a little bit about your parents. Where they came from and what they did.

F. Stites: Well, they were born in Princeton, New Jersey and lived there all their life--lives. They're still--

Vapaa: (murmur)

F. Stites: ...they-re still alive.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: And--and--

Vapaa: Retired?

F. Stites: Retired. And my father he ah, run a sand and gravel business.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: with ah--before he retired.

Vapaa: Um-hum. All right. Now, let's hear from your wife.

E. Stites: I'm ah, Elva Stites. Ah, the maiden name is Heil--H-e-i-l.
And ah, I'm from Alloway, New Jersey which is near Salem and
Woodstown. And I graduated from Woodstown High. And ah, my
father was a dairy farmer.

Vapaa: Did you happen to know Phil Alampi--

E. Stites: Ah, yes ah--

Vapaa: in Woodstown? Was he at Woodstown High School?

E. Stites: He was at Woodstown High School ah, my first year or second.
Maybe my first 2 years. But I think he left right after that.
He wasn't there when I graduated.

Vapaa: He was teaching vocational agriculture.

E. Stites: Yes, he was.

Vapaa: Do you know what he's doing today?

E. Stites: He's Secretary of State of New Jersey, isn't he? Or Secretary
of Agriculture, I guess.

Vapaa: Secretary of Agriculture

E. Stites: In New Jersey. I--

Vapaa: In the State of New Jersey.

E. Stites: Right.

Vapaa: And in between that time he's had a very interesting career. He started out, I believe, as a teacher of vocational agriculture in Woodstown High School.

E. Stites: Yes. I remember him.

Vapaa: I knew him when I was teaching in Harrington. And he knows me fortunately. And I've worked with him over the years ah, since he's been Secretary of Agriculture over at ah, New Jersey. And of course, I think he's almost Mr. Agriculture, wouldn't you say--in New Jersey?

E. Stites: I would say so. Um-hum.

F. Stites: (murmur)

Vapaa: Everybody knows Phil over there.

E. Stites: (murmur)

Vapaa: And I hope the people listening to this tape will ah, get the name down because ah,--. Let's see, he was partly Italian extraction, wasn't he? Alampi. Isn't that an Italian name?

E. Stites: I would think so. I'm not sure.

Vapaa: But his parents ah, didn't come from Italy. You don't know anything about that, do you?

E. Stites: No, I don't know anything. Un-un. I remember seeing him.

F. Stites: Didn't he have a radio program?

Vapaa: He had a radio program in New York City, Station WJZ, Fred. An interesting thing happened ah, during one of his broadcasts. He--his sponsors wondered whether he had any listeners because he came on early in the morning like I did when I was a County

Agent, you know.

F. Stites: Un-hun.

Vapaa: He says, "I'll prove it to you." He says, "Let's give away a can of paint." So he ah, made an announcement on the radio that anybody who sent in a card and requested a can of paint why they would get a can of paint free. And they gave so much paint away that-- (laughter) Well, it was finally, I guess ah-- They were very happy there wasn't any question about the fact that he had some listeners.

F. Stites: Un-hun.

Vapaa: And of course, Ph--Phil was a very human s--sort of a person. And ah, he ah, he gets a lot of enjoyment out of life. I remember one time I was seeing--saw him at a banquet where he made a presentation to ah, a couple of the guests on the stage. And I think one of them was a birthday cake--ah, one of the presentations. And ah, the--the time came to blow out the candles meantime the cake got the candles lit. And the person blew on the candles and the candles went out in one blow, but then they all came right back on again. Have you ever seen that, either of you?

E. Stites: No, I don't--

F. Stites: (murmur)

Vapaa: Um. Well, you can buy them. I mean in the novelty stores.

E. Stites: (voice overlap - unintelligible)

F. Stites: Like candles?

Vapaa: They're like candles. Yeah.

F. Stites: Oh. Oh.

Vapaa: And you can buy them--. Well, I know you can buy them in Dover. I've seen them here. Ah, in the Dover store. Incidentally, ah, I haven't even gotten your address yet-- your mailing address.

F. Stites: Well, it's R.D. 3, Dover, Delaware, Box 136.

Vapaa: And your zip code?

E. Stites: 19941

Vapaa: Un-hun. And since you're in the telephone book we might as well get your telephone number.

E. Stites: 734-9509

Vapaa: 9509.

E. Stites: Yeah.

Vapaa: And ah, something that people 50 years from now might not know is the fact that telephone companies have ah, area codes so that you can dial direct all over the country pretty nearly in most places. And ah, incidentally, have you tried it?

E. Stites: Oh, yeah.

Vapaa: Un-hum.

E. Stites: I've a--when Fred was in Georgia ah, in pilot training we always dialed direct with him.

Vapaa: Now, you're talking about your husband?

E. Stites: No. Fred, Jr.

Vapaa: Fred, Jr.

E. Stites: Our son.

Vapaa: Oh, tell us a little more about Fred, Jr. How old he is and so forth.

E. Stites: Ah, he's 24.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: And ah, he's a pilot in the Air Force flying the 141's--C141's.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: And ah--

Vapaa: That plane has another name. Do you know what it is?

E & F Stites: Starlifter.

Vapaa: Starlifter.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: In other words it's a ah--

F. Stites: It's a 4 engine.

Vapaa: ...a 4 engine ah--

F. Stites: Jet cargo, I guess.

Vapaa: ...cargo plane.

F. Stites: Jet cargo plane.

E. Stites: Yes. Yes.

Vapaa: Cargo plane. Yes. And ah--

E. Stites: It's really a graceful plane.

Vapaa: Now, how did Fred, Jr. get in the Air Force?

E. Stites: Well, he graduated from Delaware--University of Delaware--and--

Vapaa: Did he take ROTC for his 4 years?

E. Stites: No, he didn't.

F. Stites: No.

E. Stites: He took it for 1 year that he was required and after that they dropped--

Vapaa: The requirement.

E. Stites: ...the requirement.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: But after he graduated from college is that when he got his-- he got the bug to fly--urge to fly so he took flying lessons-- ah, lessons. And he bought his own little plane and got his pilot's license.

Vapaa: This is before he went into the Air Force?

F. Stites: Before he went in the Air Force. Yeah.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

F. Stites: And he just wanted to fly. He liked to fly. And he thought that was the place to do it--the Air Force. So he took the exam. Ah, he had to take an exam, didn't he?

E. Stites: Um-hum.

F. Stites: And passed real high and they sent him to pilot training.

Vapaa: Well, one of the reasons I asked you about ROTC whether he took 4 years or not, it would have made quite a bit of difference in the cost of his going to college, wouldn't it?

E. Stites: I'm sure it would because ah, they pay--they pay what is it, \$50 every month or so, I think.

Vapaa: I think it's more than that.

E. Stites: Is it more than that now?

Vapaa: It might have been that when I went to college. 'Cause I know when I went to college in 19--I graduated in 1937 believe it or

not, just an undergraduate. And it cost me for 4 years at college I think that wh--ah, \$2,000.

E. Stites: (murmur)

Vapaa: \$500 a year. Yeah. For 4 years of college. And that's counting all 12 months because I spent most of my summers during my college term in or near Newark.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Usually working and taking extension courses at the same time ah, during the mornings in the summertime.

E. Stites: Um-hum

Vapaa: You know, the same time teachers go to summer school or used to. They still do, I guess. And will continue to do so I imagine before the University changes it's program again.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And they keep changing it it seems like. And ah, ah, change to keep up with the times I think. Well, you also have one other child.

E. Stites: Yeah. A daughter, Patty. And ah, she had a birthday last week. She's 23.

Vapaa: Is that her full name, Patty? Patricia Ann.

E. Stites: Patricia Ann.

Vapaa: Patricia Ann.

E. Stites: Kafonzo (sp?) is her married name.

Vapaa: Kafonzo (sp?) . Does she have any children?

E. Stites: One little girl. Ah, Julie Ann.

Vapaa: How old?

E. Stites: She's 2.

F. Stites: She was 2 last week.

E. Stites: Two last week.

Vapaa: I might as well tell you that as of tonight I'm a grandfather for the first time.

E. Stites: Oh, really.

F. Stites: Are you?

Vapaa: Ah,--

F. Stites: Congratulations.

Vapaa: Just 2 weeks now I've been a grandfather.

E. Stites: It's nice. Is your son close to home?

Vapaa: Well he lives up at Talleyville.

E. Stites: That's not too far.

Vapaa: Which you may or may not know. It's just west of Wilmington.

E. Stites: (unintelligible murmurings)

F. Stites; That's not too bad.

Vapaa: No, it's just a matter of driving there.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

F. Stites: With Patty they live just about 100 mile away. With cows we just-- we just can't--can't make it.

E. Stites: It's a 2 hour drive and--

Vapaa: Yes.

E. Stites: ...just--just almost--we can't get off before it's 9 usually 8:30 9 in the morning and a 2 hour drive over there. And then you

gotta be home by 3 or--

F. Stites: And you got that--

E. Stites; Four at the latest and it doesn't give you much time.

F. Stites: ...you got that heavy bridge traffic and that scares me. I mean you get caught--what last weekend or Memorial weekend the back up 17 miles.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: And you get something like that why we couldn't get back.

Vapaa: Now, how long has Fred, Jr. been ah, finished with his pilot's training for the Air Force?

E. Stites: Since last November. He's stationed up at McGuire in New Jersey.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: Where he--

F. Stites: (unintelligible) ...since last November and then he went out ah, in December--

E. Stites: (murmur)

F. Stites: ...he went out ah, Oklahoma.

E. Stites: That's right.

F. Stites: For--

E. Stites: To learn the 141's

F. Stites: For 4 months to learn to fly 141's. And he finished there--he finished there survival training--

E. Stites: Took him to Washington and then down to Miami.

F. Stites: He's back--he's back here A--April 6th, wasn't he?

E. Stites: Um-hum. And--

Vapaa: Would he have been eligible for the draft otherwise?

F. Stites: No. His number was too high. He had no worries there.

E. Stites: He--he had a 300 and some number. No.

Vapaa: And you were hoping he would come back home to the farm?

F. Stites: Well Yeah, I had hoped he would. But he didn't want to so we didn't press it.

Vapaa: Un-hun. I see.

E. Stites: This--he was home for a year. He--

F. Stites: Yeah, he was here for a year.

E. Stites: And ah, he give it a try but he doesn't--he wasn't too crazy about cows. He's a night person. And to have a dairy you have to be a--

F. Stites: Well--

E. Stites: ...like to get up mornings I think--early.

F. Stites: Really he's changed now I think. He ah, he had never been off the farm, never been away much, and it's done him a lot of good. He--he's a changed person.

E. Stites: Um. For the best I think. Really.

Vapaa: I think it matures 'em.

F. Stites: Right.

Vapaa: I know we felt the same way about our son when he had his Army experience. He never really matured until he went into the Army.

E. Stites: That's right. They got to get away from hom.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: Break the ties.

Vapaa: Of course, our son had to go to Vietnam I guess to really mature you might say.

E. Stites: Um (unintelligible)

Vapaa: But he was lucky over there because he was an enlisted man in the Corps of Engineers. But he had a good job. I never worried about him especially because he was--. (clock chiming) There goes that--that clock, but we'll not worry about it. I'm sure this machine is picking it up.

E. Stites: I'm sure it is.

Vapaa: It picked it up the other day.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: I don't know whether it's keeping the right time or not. I haven't looked to see that. What's it ring--every 15 minutes?

E. Stites: (murmur) Yes. (murmur)

F. Stites: Yes. It's accurate. Their--their--clock there is the same as that one. It's accurate.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: Listen--listen in bed and listen for the time to get up. (laugh) When it strikes 4 it's getting close.

F. Stites: I hear it strike 4 every morning.

Vapaa: You do?

F. Stites: Yes.

Vapaa: You don't use an alarm clock?

F. Stites: Yeah, I--I set the alarm clock. But ah, I'm usually awake before it goes off.

Vapaa: Fred, you haven't always been in the dairy business. Ah, how did you get interested in it in the first place?

F. Stites: Well, I--

E. Stites: Your brother.

F. Stites: ...my brother had cows when I was with him. He had dairy cows.

And the first year I farmed with--with ah, with Harold he had cows.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: And ah--

Vapaa: Still in New Jersey?

F. Stites: In New Jersey, yeah. And the 2 years he was in business. We didn't have cows. We had asparagus and beans. And we--when we moved down here we ah, what--we raised peas, baby limas, tomatoes--

E. Stites: Second year. (murmur)

F. Stites: Un-hun. Then eventually we went into potatoes. But ah, the reason I got out of 'em is ah--. What year was it (word unintelligible) that it was so wet.

E. Stites: '55 or--

F. Stites: '55? I--I don't remember.

Vapaa: '56. It was only a year or two. (voices overlapping)

E. Stites: 1955. '56 I believe was the potatoe year, though.

F. Stites: '56

Vapaa: Was the potatoe year.

E. Stites: Yeah, it was.

F. Stites: '57 or '58, I don't know. Un, but we started with cows in '59. So it must have been that year. But the--the pea season--. We had a good pea crop that year. And ah, come along and we started hiring the potatoes and it rained for th--. We started digging and dug for a couple of days and it started raining. And we didn't dig no more for what--a month? When we went back most of them

were rotten--or half of them were rotten.

Vapaa: I'd forgotten you were in the potato business.

F. Stites: Yeah.

E. Stites: We--we didn't raise too many of them.

F. Stites: Well, 5--50 acres.

E. Stites: 50--

F. Stites: 60 acres.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: And then ah, we started picking tomatoes and they--they all rotted. We never hardly picked a tomato that year. And we lost all of our baby limas. It was too wet. We couldn't harvest them.

E. Stites: (voice overlap with F. Stites - unintelligible)

F. Stites: So I made up my mind then if ah--if I had cows, grass would grow, they would eat it and they'd make some milk. So that's what we started to do.

Vapaa: How about mosquitos, now. You're down in mosquito heaven here.

F. Stites: Mos--mosquitos aren't bad. I don't think we have as many here as you have in Dover.

Vapaa: I hope not.

F. Stites: Not since they impounded here and impounded these marshes.

Vapaa: Oh, yeah.

F. Stites: The mosquitos are no problem. Now greens(?) is and marsh flys.

Vapaa: Green head flys, yes.

F. Stites: They're a little problem. But ah, mosquitos, no, they're no problem.

- Vapaa: Do you notice with--with--in your cows--. I mean when these flys and things are around does it affect their milk production at all?
- F. Stites: Yeah, it affect it a little bit. But ah, we use a lot of spray and dust on 'em. And we--they stay up around the buildings. And it doesn't bother them that much. They--cows kind of get used to 'em. They're hardened to it.
- Vapaa: How about pasture? Do you use any pasture?
- F. Stites: No, no pasture at all. We feed silage year round.
- Vapaa: Doesn't it seem kind a strange now that after years and years and years of people using pasture as part of their livestock operation--not limited to dairy, but any livestock operation--. I think most people figured they had to have pasture. And we always did figure you never got more than 3 adults to make a return on pasture. And I doubt if you get more than that today.
- F. Stites: Right. Well--
- Vapaa: And your land you've got to get a better return that's in your land right. (?)
- F. Stites: Well pasture--I think your cows trample too much of it down. Un, you know, where I put it in the silo and then--and then feed my (?) there's no waste to it at all. And I think if we had pasture we would have more of a problem with green heads and mosquitos. And out there have--pasture very easy.
- Vapaa: Now you had quite a time getting set up in this dairy business, didn't you? I mean, you weren't even living on this particular farm when you came here.

F. Stites: Yeah, this--this is where we--.

Vapaa: Not this house though?

F. Stites: No. No. Not this house.

E. Stites: We build this in '68--1968.

Vapaa: Why did you pick this particular farm?

F. Stites: Well--

E. Stites: 'Cause it was only \$17,000--

F. Stites: Right.

E. Stites: ...and we only had \$3,000 down payment. (laugh)

F. Stites: It's the only one we could afford. I looked at a lot of farms. She didn't even come down with me. She never seen the farm 'til I--I had bought it. And I come down with Walter Dodd.(?) I--

Vapaa: I talked to him today.

F. Stites: Did you? I knew him and ah--

Vapaa: He's from New Jersey.

F. Stites: Yeah. And his friend, ah, Nora Riggins.(?) Brought me down. Walter Dodd went around with us. And ah--

E. Stites: Real estate.

F. Stites: Real estate man. They took us to a lot of different farms. I seen a lot of nice farms I'd love to have . But they was--

E. Stites: \$24,000

F. Stites: 24 - \$30,000. That was way out of my--

Vapaa: So you felt that price as much as anything, George, when you bought this one?

F. Stites: Right. I had--that's all I could afford.

Vapaa: And was--did the soil itself make any difference to you? I mean, was it similar to what you had been working with in New Jersey?

F. Stites: It's similar to my brothers, yeah. Where he lived.

E. Stites: Or Greenwich (?) right across the bay. It's similar.

F. Stites: Some similar.

E. Stites: This was good land here and that's one of the reasons--price of the land.

F. Stites: Set a--wasn't as big a farm as I'd like to have. But had to buy what I could afford.

E. Stites: There's a 100 here--80 tillable.

Vapaa: 80 tillable on this farm?

F. Stites: Yeah.

Vapaa: Are you renting any?

E. Stites: No.

F. Stites: And then in 19--

E. Stites: '55

F. Stites: ...55 we bought the adjoining farm off the same man, and that was 140 acres. And that made us 240. Well, 200 clear tillable land.

Vapaa: 200 clear. That's what you have today?

F. Stites: That's what we have today.

Vapaa: And you don't rent any?

F. Stites: No. We used to years ago. Then we farmed 4-500 acres.

E. Stites: In vegetables.

F. Stites: We only just hang on an--an--it's--it's a lot for us. I mean--

Vapaa: How do you manage to keep her looking so nice after working so hard (voice overlap - unintelligible)

F. Stites: I don't know.

E. Stites: That's getting up early.

F. Stites: (unintelligible)

Vapaa: You always look as though you've just come out of the beauty shop or something.

E. Stites: Umm. Well, I don't have any weight problem. Let's put it that way. I (voice overlap, unintelligible)

Vapaa: It doesn't show. It doesn't show.

E. Stites: No. I--

F. Stites: She keeps busy. She takes care of the garden.

Vapaa: And the house.

F. Stites: Yeah, and the house. And--

E. Stites: Anything that needs doing.

F. Stites: Painting the house outside--all the paint on the outside the house.

Vapaa: I have some questions about ah, your moving around the house with you--or around the building so much where the livestock are--your tracking in manure and things like this. Do you have Do you have any house rules or things like this as far as what you do when you come in the house?

F. Stites: Well, I--I--when I get done milking nights I--when I come in the back--of course, you see we have a bath on the back of the house--

and utility room--. We built it that way special. And I'll take my dirty clothes off and leave them there and--and put clean ones on. I mean, even before I come in to eat supper. And then after supper I usually always get my bath then shaved--cleaned up.

E. Stites: He--he can come as far as the kitchen utility room with boots on, but that's it. You know I--(voice overlap)

Vapaa: I figured you must have some sort rule (unintelligible)

E. Stites: Yes. I, you know, you can clean up--

Vapaa: "Cause I remember when this house was brand new. And ah, I was still working at the time. I know I didn't feel quite comfortable myself coming in here because I was worrying about scratching something, you know.

E. Stites: Yes. Well we've got quite a few scratches now. We've been in here 6--6 years.

F. Stites: It'll be 6 years this--

E. Stites: 6 years this fall.

F. Stites: ...this fall.

Vapaa: How'd you happen to decide on this particular plan?

E. Stites: Well, we--we liked this ah, utility room and the bath in the back where you can come in and keep the dirt in the back and then all the front is your living ah--well, I call it good entertaining area. Your living room and dining room is right in the front and foyer. And--

Vapaa: Your house faces the east which is tighter than it would have been if it faced north for example. You'd have been where the

cold winter winds would have come down and give you some trouble.

F. Stites: We don't--cold don't make any difference in this house. You--you don't feel any difference. When we get up mornings in winter first thing I--first thing I do is look at the thermometer. We got an indoor outdoor thermometer--see how cold it is, know how to dress, because you can't tell in the house. There's--no matter how cold it is it's--

E. Stites: The old farmhouse--it was over 100 years old I guess--we tore down. We lived in 'til '68. It--you never had to look at the thermometer to see how cold it was outside. You could feel it. (laugh) We never had a heater in there. I wouldn't let him put a heater in because--

F. Stites: Not central heat.

E. Stites: ...I wanted a new home. Not central heat.

Vapaa: Space heater.

F. Stites: Space heater. Yeah.

E. Stites: Space heater.

F. Stites: But you couldn't heat it. When that wind blew it just went in one side and out the other. And we spent a lot of money on that house too. But--

E. Stites: We ah--

Vapaa: I think a space heater are even illegal now in a new home.

E. Stites: Are they?

Vapaa: I believe they are in Delaware.

E. Stites: I didn't know that.

Vapaa: I think I'm right now. I'd hate to be held to it. But ah, the reason being that it's so hard to ah, insulate a new home from--

to the--around the chimney and this kind of thing.

E. Stites: They're dangerous. There's no doubt about it. I--I've seen ours rumble a few times.

F. Stites: Wind blow and get a back draft down the chimney. They scare you.

E. Stites: Or if store(?)--get too much fuel in there before you light it, then--

Vapaa: What do you use for heat?

F. Stites: We got hot water heat--oil.

Vapaa: Oil heat.

F. Stites: Um-hum. Um-hum.

Vapaa: And your ah--

F. Stites: Base hot water (voice overlap)

Vapaa: ..oil heaters--

F. Stites: It's all ah--

Vapaa: ...winter-summer hookup?

F. Stites: Winter-summer hookup. Um-hum.

Vapaa: Do you have air conditioning at all?

F. Stites: No. We ah, have window units.

Vapaa: Umm.

F. Stites: I--

E. Stites: Two.

F. Stites: They wanted at the time they built the house--I thought--about 26 or \$2700 to put central in. And I just--for the few days that you need it, I couldn't see that. So--

Vapaa: I'm afraid that you made a wise decision, Fred. 'Cause we put one in 2 years ago. And we knew when we put it in we'd only use it 2 or 3 days a year, you know. The rest of the time--. We live in a woods. Why, we knew that ah, you just wouldn't need the ah, air conditioning.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: It hasn't been on yet. We've had a few warm days

F. Stites: Yeah. (voice overlap)

Vapaa: Today was a warm day.

F. Stites: We haven't even had ours in--our window units put in yet.

E. Stites: No.

F. Stites: We--we hardly run 'em. Not too much. I--I couldn't see that central air. Besides, when we built the house we got the basic plan, got a price on it, it was so high we had to start cutting some place, so--. We cut--cut out the air conditioning for one thing.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: Central air conditioning.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well, I think you probably made a wise decision in that respect. Ah, although I wouldn't want to be the one to make it.(?)

E. Stites: It's nice to have. I think we're all used to too much. I mean--

Vapaa: How about in your automobile? Do you have air conditioning in your car?

F. Stites: Yes.

E. Stites: Our new one. We just bought a new one last December of '74. First

one in 10 years. We have our old '64 out there yet.

Vapaa: What kind of a car is it?

E. Stites: Oldsmobile.

Vapaa: A big one?

F. Stites: Well, it's a Delta '88, 2 door-- (voice overlap)

E. Stites: Two door. Royale

F. Stites: It's not the biggest you can get, but it's the biggest '88.

Vapaa: Do you worry about getting gas?

F. Stites: Well--well, no. It's--

E. Stites: As long as you have money--. We've never--.

F. Stites: I--I don't think we're--too much of a problem getting gas.

E. Stites: We don't ah,--we only put about 6,000 miles per year on our car.
We feel that we can--

Vapaa: That's more than I think--no, it's not as many--not quite as many
as we do. Our car is 2 years old, I think. I looked today--while
I was in the shop today--had 22,000 miles on it.

E. Stites: Two years old.

Vapaa: Two years old. Really just broken in good.

E. Stites: Umm. Right.

Vapaa: And my son's--I've been talking about trading it off for a smaller
car. You know, because of this energy crisis. And says, we don't
really need a car. Ours is a Chevelle. It's still a fairly small
car.

E. Stites: It is.

Vapaa: Ah, on this type country traveling such short distances--mostly that

we do most of the time why I could stand riding in a small car even though I'm crippled up with this bad left leg here.

F. Stites: I think if anybody is going to do a lot of driving though why they--they need a--

Vapaa: Larger car.

F. Stites: Well, I don't know about that whether they want a large car. Whether they--. No more driving than we do we feel that we can afford what little gas we burn in a larger car. We get about 12 mile to a gallon which it's not bad I don't think.

Vapaa: No.

F. Stites: It's better than a pickup. I just bought me a '74 Chevy pickup and it only gets 8 - 9 mile to a gallon.

Vapaa: Empty?

F. Stites: Yeah, empty.

E. Stites: Our son took our old '64 Oldsmobile to Florida and he averaged 17 miles per gallon on the old '64.

Vapaa: Well, even an older car will do better mi--mileage if it's properly maintained and cared for and serviced and so forth like this. I think we've found this over the years.

F. Stites: They have this pollution control on them. That's what's killing the gas mileage.

Vapaa: Well now ah, do you mind if I ask you where you get your fuel?

F. Stites: Well, we get it from Clements Supply. We started dealing there when we moved down in '52.

Vapaa: And their located--?

F. Stites: In ah, Clayton, Delaware.

Vapaa: Clayton. And they service you from there?

F. Stites: Yeah, they--

Vapaa: That's with both fuel oil and with ah, gasoline?

F. Stites: Gas. Yeah, gasoline, fuel oil and fur--furnace oil for the house and the trailers.

Vapaa: Now how about your tractor equipment. I mean ah, what do you use for a tractor today?

F. Stites: Well, I've got all John Deeres now. They're all but one--old Oliver. And I'm just about to get rid of it. I just bought a new John Deere to replace it.

Vapaa: Are they gasoline powered?

F. Stites: No. Let's see, I got 1, 2, 3, I got 4 diesels and 2 gas jobs.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: That I--got 1 fairly big John Deere gas job and we haven't run it--very, very little since this gas went up. I think I'll get rid of it next year. We kind of parked it. An use it maybe once every 2 weeks or something. Use the diesels.

Vapaa: What's comparison cost between diesel fuel and gasoline fuel?

F. Stites: (clock chiming - words hard to understand) Well, gasoline lasted-- what--was it 15, was it 54.7?

E. Stites: 51.7.

F. Stites: 51 point 7 and diesel fuel was 36.7. Was that right?

E. Stites: I think it was 37.6 for the house. Was that any cheaper out there?

F. Stites: Yeah, I think so. Diesel fuel was--

E. Stites: Might be 36--

F. Stites: And the diesel tractor don't burn near as much as a gas tractor--burn as much fuel. And whereas the diesel tractor if you don't work it hard--why in raking hay or something--why it burns hardly nothing.

Vapaa: Let's assume the secretary has just been listening to this tape and I wonder if she was getting the time.

E. Stites: I bet she was.

Vapaa: 8 o'clock. Well, we can almost keep track of the tape by ah, listening to the clock so to speak. Ah, let's see, yeah, 'cause ah, well, we're a little better than half gone now. I'd say we have 45 minutes of tape on the side here. And ah, I don't think we'll have too much trouble filling up the sides. Like to talk about anything you want to talk about.

I notice your ducks here ah, Fred. Are you a hunter?

F. Stites: Well, I do a little bit of hunting but not too much because when it's fit for hunting, I'm milking cows. When it's time to go duck hunting. They ah--they give 'em--give me them ceramic ducks for ah--for my birthday. I always--everytime I went in the gift shop I seen 'em and always liked 'em, so--. Who did give 'em--you or Patty give 'em to me?

E. Stites: (murmur)

F. Stites: Patty. (murmur)

Vapaa: Do you rent out any ah, ah, pits to ah, hunters at all?

F. Stites: No, we--I don't rent it out, but my son-in-law and his brother-in-law and another fellow they dug a pit over on the other farm. And they--they hunt quite a bit out on it. We--we--

E. Stites: We figured we killed about 7 or 8 during the seas--during the season.

F. Stites: During the season.

E. Stites: Out of that one pit.

F. Stites: I think there was more than that killed out of there.

E. Stites: Do you?

F. Stites: Yeah.

Vapaa: Now, how many do you put in the freezer? I'm sure you have a freezer.

E. Stites: (laugh) Yes, I have 2 freezers. And we keep it full. We just killed a calf last month. First calf though. We don't usually eat too much veal. We kill beef every year. And ah, all vegetables. I --I never buy any vegetables out of the stores. We get it all out of the garden.

Vapaa: Do you can 'em and fr--or freeze 'em?

E. Stites: Freeze 'em. Um-hum. Can tomatoes and beets and everything else I freeze. Um-hum.

Vapaa: When do you find time to do all this? Help Fred too?

E. Stites: Well, last night--

F. Stites: Last night she hulled strawberries--. Weren't you--freezing strawberries?

E. Stites: Yeah. Well ah, I don't know ah, ah, lot's of time I'll look out on weekends and see all these cars riding by. They're goi--got--

towing their boats, you know. And they're going to the beach for the weekend. I'm out in the garden picking strawberries or picking lima beans and shelling 'em. I sometimes think it--what a good time they're having and I'm just--

Vapaa: Work.

E. Stites: ...just here.

Vapaa: You're at home.

E. Stites: You know, ah--

F. Stites: After doing a day in the garden. Till--she's tilling in the garden. Has a garden tractor out there tilling in the garden.

E. Stites: But I get satisfaction out of it. Seeing it grow. I guess I got green--got the green thumb. I got--I got farming in me. I was born and raised on a farm. And my father always made me go out and help in the fields.

F. Stites: She's an outdoors gal. I mean she--

E. Stites: Always had to drive the horses to the hay wagon and--

Vapaa: Do you make any of your clothing?

E. Stites: Yes. No so much since we got this new home. Seems like we--

F. Stites: Doesn't have time.

E. Stites: I haven't had much time. We--ah, Fred was in College I always had to milk night and morning. And ah, then I--well, last fall we finally found a nice man. So he's milking mornings and--

Vapaa: So Fred does let you go to town once in awhile to buy some clothes?

E. Stites: Oh, yes. Yes.

F. Stites: Then there's fair time she redoes furniture when she--. She done a few chairs. Shes got several rockers now. She helped her daughter-in-law. They just done this chair.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: Over there (murmur)

E. Stites: (murmur) ...a hobby.

Vapaa: Now let's see. This is maple, isn't it?

E. Stites: Yes, it is.

Vapaa: It's a ah, cane seat, maple?

F. Stites: She caned those in--

E. Stites: Just a little side chair.

Vapaa: And your TV set there is a maple cabinet, isn't it?

E. Stites: Yes.

Vapaa: And basically, it looks like you use an awful lot of maple. And you have maple paneling on the wall here.

F. Stites: In this--in this den. In this family room, yes.

E. Stites: In the family room.

Vapaa: Family room.

F. Stites: This is the room we live in really. This--

E. Stites: The living room has cherry. We got cherry in there.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well, I'm not running out of questions but I am a little bit concerned about the time here. See where we're running.

F. Stites: I don't think--I think you got another 10 minutes.

Vapaa: O.K. I'll forget it. I think you're about right, Fred.

F. Stites: We--I looked at the time when we (voice overlap)

Vapaa: It was 7:30 I think about when we started.

F. Stites: Right. Right.

Vapaa: It's 5 minutes after 8 now.

F. Stites: Right. That clock right there is--

Vapaa: According to this ah, ah--

F. Stites: It'll strike and tell you anyway.

Vapaa: What are your hopes for the future on this farm?

F. Stites: Well, I--

Vapaa: The future of anything?

F. Stites: I--I had hoped that before Freddy went in the Air Force that he would take over. I never even give a thought about having to sell out. And I just want him to take over. I kind of like to maybe 4 or 5 more years milk cows and then get out of the cows and then just kind of semi retire--raise grain or something like that.

Vapaa: You like to milk cows?

F. Stites: Well,--

E. Stites: No one likes to milk cows.

F. Stites: No, I don't think anyone really loves it. It's too confining. But ah, yeah, I--I--. It's a living. I mean--

Vapaa: Well, it's 7 days a week and it's twice a day.

F. Stites: Right. It's--it's--

Vapaa: And you get up at what time?

F. Stites: Quarter past 4.

Vapaa: And you milk at ah--(cough) before breakfast?

F. Stites: Yeah. We're back in by 7 o'clock and eat breakfast. Always-- always in by 7 o'clock. And ah, if we milk a few more cows, we

just get up and go on. We never get up before quarter past 4.

Vapaa: How many cows ah, do you have on the average in milking?

F. Stites: We usually ah, got 80 milk cows. We're milking maybe 70 right now--a few dry ones. Try to run around 80 - 85, round that.

Vapaa: How about young stock?

F. Stites: Keep just about the same amount, about 80 or 85.

Vapaa: And how long does a cow last in your herd would you say?

F. Stites: She knows more about that. She keeps all the records. Hon, ah, what would you say--

E. Stites: Well, I--I'd say 5 years I should think.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well, the cow might be 7 years old then.

F&E Stites: (voice over lap, unintelligible)

Vapaa: On the average then because--

E. Stites: We had one--one year there that I think ah, I was looking at--. We don't have any--maybe 1 cow left out of all 20 or 30 heifers.

F. Stites: All year's heifers.

E. Stites: But ah, just didn't, you know, just didn't pan out. Or they--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: We had some high strung heifers there for a couple of years and--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: That was when ah, he--

F. Stites: They didn't work out.

E. Stites: Got out of DHIA. Seemed like they wouldn't let their milk down when a strange--when a stranger come in the milking parlor.

Vapaa: We better define DHIA before we go any further--Dairy Herd Improvement Association. And this is ah, an automated system

of bookkeeping of production. And your records today if you're on official tests, so called, why you not only get a record of the amount of milk that a cow produces--each cow produces--but you also get a recommendation for feed and ah, time to breed, time to dry a cow and this sort of thing.

Now ah, Fred, you can be perfectly frank with me. I'm no longer a County Agent. Ah, how much did you use your DHIA records?

F. Stites: I don't think that--that much. Just really--

E. Stites: It's 500. It averaged us \$500 a year

F. Stites: That's ah, cost.

Vapaa: Cost.

E. Stites: Cost us, yes.

F. Stites: How--how much did we use it in ah--

Vapaa: The records.

F. Stites: We didn't--we didn't go by feeding that much, did we?

Vapaa: You didn't use the feed recommendations?

F. Stites: No, not too much. Ah, with my set up it just didn't work out.

Vapaa: Um-hum. That's right. You have a loose housing system--

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: ...and it's pretty hard to determine how much each cow will need.

F. Stites: Right. And ah, especially at milking time--well, we--

Vapaa: And the system was based on knowing what each cow is producing and taking in in feed. And of course ah, I think ah, the tester--the official herd tester--has to estimate this. And he can do a fairly decent job if the herd is pretty uniform.

F. Stites: Umm-hum.

- Vapaa: If you come up with a pretty fair average about how much each cow is getting by just looking at the feed and the quality of the feed, all of this goes into the computer and comes out with a recommendation of how much each cow should have.
- F. Stites: Um-hum.
- Vapaa: Incidentally, your alfalfa up there--I noticed when I came in the ah, lane--looked very nice. It didn't bloom and ah--
- F. Stites: Yes. It should have been cut. But as you know, the kind of weather it's been why--
- Vapaa: That's the first cutting?
- F. Stites: That's the first cutting.
- E. Stites: Umm. He cut 2 weeks ago--
- Vapaa: Oh, great.
- E. Stites: ...first about what, 5 or 6 acres you cut?
- F. Stites: Yes. And I cut on a Monday. Didn't do no more that week. I don't know how many times I raked it. And then ah, Memorial Day, that was the following Monday it rained and Tuesday, the next day, it was a nice day so I raked it over and ah,--. I thought it was almost ready to bail that night. And I didn't bail it anyway. And the next morning I got up and it was spittin a little bit of rain. So--
- Vapaa: Did you read the story in today's paper about the shortage of bailing wire and bailing twine over the country?
- F. Stites: No. Twine is just ah--last year I give--. What did we give-- \$8 a ball and this year I give \$20. And had to order early. And lucky to get it.

- E. Stites: He got--he got his about a month ago. Made sure we had a year's supply.
- Vapaa: Well, I use a little bit of bailing twine in my Christmas tree business. I sell Christmas trees, you know. I'm a share cropper so to speak. Four and a half acres of Christmas trees--5,000 trees. But we don't use very much ah, twine, you know, to tie the tree on to a person's car.
- E. Stites: Oh, (murmur - voice overlap)
- Vapaa: They come and cut their own tree and then take it home.
- F. Stites: Well, why don't you come out here--. We cut strings. We--they're perfectly good only they're what, how long are they? --8 foot long?
- Vapaa: Just about the right length.
- F. Stites: Only--I give you all them you want. And they're--
- E. Stites: Just the (voice overlap, unintelligible) ...that's all.
- F. Stites: ...just like new except. I mean, when we feed the cows we cut-- we save 'em and--
- E. Stites: We (murmur unintelligible)
- F. Stites: ...rather than burn 'em up.
- Vapaa: Well, that would keep tighter than mine because ah,--. Well, with the cost of this ah--
- F. Stites: \$20 a ball, well ah--
- E. Stites: Bale.
- F. Stites: Bale for--or 2 balls, yeah.
- E. Stites: Two balls.

Vapaa: Two balls, why it's worth 16 a pound. (?) Because your margin of your cost of production is really what you have to watch, isn't it?

E. Stites: That's right. And alfalfa seed has doubled too this year.

F. Stites: Yeah, I just--I want to plant some--I plant some every year.

E. Stites: (voice overlap) ...this fall.

F. Stites: Last year I--I believe I give--

E. Stites: \$48

F. Stites: ...\$48 and this spring \$98.

E. Stites: \$98

F. Stites: I just called today.

Vapaa: Did I ask you what crops you're growing on this farm?

F. Stites: No, you didn't. But ah, we just raise ah, corn and hay, that's--that's all.

E. Stites: We got 150 corn?

F. Stites: About 150 corn, yeah, and the rest in--

E. Stites: And about 30 in hay.

F. Stites: 30 in hay.

Vapaa: Do you sell any of either of those?

F. Stites: Yeah, this year I had ah,--. What did I sell? I sold 4600 bushels of corn this time. Had that much to sell.

E. Stites: We got a nice check. Got over \$1,000.

F. Stites: Little better than that it was.

E. Stites: Paid our farm off and finally after--how many years--25 years of married life we come out of debt.

Vapaa: Free and clear on the farm.

E. Stites: Free and clear on the farm.

F. Stites: We had--

Vapaa: On this farm.

F. Stites: ...enough corn because we--we started from--like she said, we had \$3,000 was all. We started from scratch. We had no machinery, no nothing. At one time we was \$60,000 in debt. That was back in--

E. Stites: Well, in '50--when we bought the farm--the other farm in '55 we--

F. Stites: That was a lot of money back then--'65.

Vapaa: Did you borrow for your machinery at the same time you borrowed for your farm?

F. Stites: Well--

E. Stites: Well, we were buying it on time.

F. Stites: Buying it on--

Vapaa: Oh.

E. Stites: Like the ge--the tractor we get it financed through John Deere Company or something like that. Yes. Um-hum.

F. Stites: We just didn't have to look (?) for machinery back then. We made out when--

E. Stites: Neighbors helped us too a little bit. Mike Cartanza I remember when he sprayed our tomatoes one year for us and--

Vapaa: Now, since you been ah, down here how many different crops have you grown? You said peas and tomatoes and what else?

F&E Stites: Potatoes.

F. Stites: And baby limas. That's--that was all of it.

E. Stites: Well, our son he raised hot peppers.

F. Stites: Well, half acre or so.

E. Stites: Half acre of hot peppers and sweet corn. They had a little produce stand here--

Vapaa: Oh.

E. Stites: ...when he was in high school.

Vapaa: Do you ever sell any strawberries?

E. Stites: No. I just have a row in the garden.

Vapaa: Just enough for your own use.

E. Stites: That's right.

F. Stites: Well, we usually give some away to the neighbors and stuff. But we never sold any strawberries.

E. Stites: Umm.

Vapaa: Well, I think this is a pretty good crop for ah, Delaware. I know people are looking now for--. They're keeping--they still ask me, where can I go ah, to pick some strawberries. And I'm at a loss where almost to tell 'em where to go to pick any strawberries.

F. Stites: David Roland (?) he has a lot of 'em. David over there--. We-- oh, I got a small bed this year. And I'm sure we would have enough--. Oh, we have enough for us, but my son they want to freeze some.

E. Stites: Three families now. We have our daughter and our son. We try to get enough out of our garden for all 3 now that Freds close up in New Jersey.

F. Stites: So then we (unintelligible) ...on Saturday--

E. Stites: Um-hum.

F. Stites: ...picked a few.

Vapaa: Now I forget, did I ask you what family Fred has--Fred, Jr?

E. Stites: What?

F. Stites: Family.

Vapaa: What family he has?

F. Stites: Just--just the wife.

Vapaa: Just the wife.

E. Stites: One wife. Un-hun. One wife, yes. (laugh)

Vapaa: Nothing only one wife?

F. Stites: No, not yet. No, nochildren. No.

E. Stites: No. He's uh ah--. His wife hasn't finished college yet and he's wanting her to get her degree.

Vapaa: Yes.

E. Stites: So he can ah, get her teaching.

Vapaa: Yes.

E. Stites: There's (unintelligible , clock striking)

F. Stites: ...you're off.

Vapaa: Yeah. Well, I'm gonna look at this think now if I can find the flashlight. I put it in my pocket. Here it is. And ah, funny thing this things so hard to see.

F. Stites: It's still running. I can hear something.

Vapaa: Yes. Yeah, it's still running. And as long as it's running why I'd just as soon let it go.

E. Stites: Maybe we'll hear it click.

Vapaa: You'll hear it click. And ah, we'll know whether we've got anything on here. Well, I'm sure we're getting--

F. Stites: Fred, he's got the bees on the side now. It's gonna be--.
Well, not really--

E. Stites: Hobby.

F. Stites: Ho--hobby--well, I guess it is a hobby, but he's going to try to make it a paying hobby.

Vapaa: Up at McGuire? Or here?

E & F Stites: Here.

F. Stites: He keeps 'em here.

Vapaa: Oh.

E. Stites: His bee hives. He started that --

F. Stites: Bee hives.

E. Stites: ...he sent--he sent to ah, where was it, Sears and Roebuck. He sent and got a hive of bees when he was in high school. And ah, so--

Vapaa: Believe it or not I just gave my bee keeping equipment away.

F. Stites: You did?

Vapaa: Yeah. I had--I had a couple of hives. And I had a, you know, a net and--

F. Stites: Un-hun.

E. Stites: Un-hun.

Vapaa: My dad used to have bees, used to grow mushrooms. This was up in around Wilmington.

F. Stites: Un-hun.

Vapaa: When I was little.

F. Stites: Un-hun.

Vapaa: And ah, I've always been very much interested in it myself.

E. Stites: Yeah. We had a swarm over there at the trailers today. So we took one of the hives that didn't have--very few in--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: ...and we took it over there. But I don't believe they went in. He was telling me tonight on the phone how I should have gotten, you know, the netting on them and everything.

F. Stites: We didn't know how to do it.

E. Stites: So ah--
(F. Stites and Vapaa spoke at same time - unintelligible)

Vapaa: You have--

F. Stites: Yeah, he has--he has--

E. Stites: He has one here. (F. Stites & E. Stites speaking at same time - unintelligible)

F. Stites: He has everything he needs.

E. Stites: I guess I'm going to have to learn because every time he's off--away--that's when someone calls and says there's a swarm of bees--

Vapaa: Bees.

E. Stites: ...somewhere and he'd like to have 'em. You know.

Vapaa: That's something else people still call me upp about and want to know.

E. Stites: Bees.

Vapaa: I've got some bees, who would take 'em. I don't know whether you

know it or not but ah, Fifer Brothers over at Wyoming have quite a few bees.

E. Stites: On their fruit trees?

F. Stites: It figures they would have for pollination, wouldn't it?

Vapaa: Yeah. And they bought 'em from a man over near ah, let's see, not Magnolia but ah, east of there.

E. Stites: (unintelligible)

Vapaa: North of there. Lebanon.

F. Stites: Lebanon.

Vapaa: Um-hum. But he started to have trouble with them and he just let them go. Real old man, I can't even tell you his name. But it is very interesting work.

F. Stites: Fifer is probably using them strictly for pollination, don't they or do they?

Vapaa: Yes. They move them around. They move them around too so that ah--. You know this thing should be just about run out and I think I'm just going to wait it out now. See what we've got on here. Just as a matter of fact, let's see what we do have.

(tape ends)

All right. We have the machine going again so we'll ah, pick up where we left off. I think Fred, we were talking something about your future plans ah, either here or someplace else. You told me that ah, you had kind a hoped to have Fred, Jr. come home and take over the farm here--

F. Stites: He was--

Vapaa: ...sometime.

F. Stites: That's what I had hoped. He tells some people that that's what he wants to go to farming again someday. But ah, I-- I haven't heard him say it. Have you, Elva?

E. Stites: No. Un-un.

F. Stites: But ah--

Vapaa: Do you know whether he's going to be career Air Force or not?

E. Stites: No, I don't. I don't think he really--. He hasn't said any-- been in it long enough to make up his mind yet. Like I say, it's been all schooling now for him til this last couple months. He--he's made 1 trip to Europe. And ah--

Vapaa: How far has he been so far with the Air Force besides Europe? You said 1 trip to Europe. Has he been out of the country?

E. Stites: About the only time he's been out of the country--

Vapaa: So far.

E. Stites: ...was that 1 trip.

F. Stites: He went to Germany, didn't he?

E. Stites: That was his dollar ride. What they call dollar ride. He goes along for the ride and--and ah--

F. Stites: When they come back in be checked out in 141's. He's been checked out now for to go I guess as a co-pilot. Next time--

E. Stites: Right. Next time he'll be--

Vapaa: A co-pilot.

E. Stites: ...a co-pilot.

Vapaa: The number two pilot.

F. Stites: Um-hum. Right.

E. Stites: Two or 3--I guess they carry 3--3 pilots on this plane too--
9 crewmen.

Vapaa: Nine crewmen. Well, they must have more than 2 pilots.

F. Stites: Well, yeah, they have 3 pilots and--

E. Stites: One navigator.

F. Stites: ...1 navigator.

F. Stites: One navigator is all.

Vapaa: One navigator.

F. Stites: He does all the work. Fred says he all--

Vapaa: That's right. He helps the pilot and--

F. Stites: He--he has to stay with him the whole time. Where--

Vapaa: And really what he has to do is to ah, make sure they stay on
the beam--the radio beam.

E. Stites: Right.

F. Stites: He makes the corrections, Fred said, and then the corrections--

E. Stites: Computer--

F. Stites: ...computer corrects the automatic pilot and you just sit there and--

E. Stites: Pilot sits--sits there and--

F. Stites: ...sit there and watch, make sure everythings working. He's the
one gotta keep--

Vapaa: Take on and take off and landing.

F. Stites: Right.

Vapaa: Now, is that 141 a jet plane or prop plane?

F. Stites: Jet.

Vapaa: I've forgotten. They used to be here at Dover. Now we have the ah--

F. Stites: It--baby brother to the C5A.

Vapaa: C5A

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: The galaxy.

F. Stites: Right.

Vapaa: But ah, and that I should think is a--world widest airplane at the present time er--

E. Stites: Yes, it is.

Vapaa: I believe--. Does he have hopes of flying that?

E. Stites: I haven't heard him say. They had his--. Pilots has to have 2,000 hours to--to go in to the C5A. I do know that.

F. Stites: He ah--he--

E. Stites: He loves this star duster. I mean it's really a--

F. Stites: That's what he wanted.

E. Stites: ...very nice plane. He--he was top--graduated top of his class in flight training and--

F. Stites: He had his pick.

E. Stites: ...he had his pick of assignments. And ah--

F. Stites: Pick of assignments and--

E. Stites: Picked--picked the 141 in McGuire. There was an opening up in McGuire for--

F. Stites: (unintelligible) California. Wanted to get as close to home as he could.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: I don't think he's forgot the farm. I mean, he still loves it.

Vapaa: Well, he's fortunate he's stationed so close to home. 'Cause usually the Air Force--and it used to be the Army Air Force--didn't--try to get you as far away from home as they could.

E. Stites: Um-hum. I think they've changed though. They don't move 'em--the men around as much either I don't think as they used to.

Vapaa: I think they're usually 3 or 4 years in a station now.

F. Stites: That's what he figures--3 years up at McGuire.

Vapaa: Um-hum. And then he'll have a period of time overseas.

E. Stites: Yes.

Vapaa: And perhaps there'll be a grandchild along by that time and--

E. Stites: Well we hope so. (laugh)

F. Stites: They say they're in no hurry. But we kind a hope they have one.

Vapaa: Well, our son is 28 and ah, has been married almost 6 years. And on their 5th wedding anniversary they told us that our daughter-in-law was pregnant--was going to have a baby in May. So it happened May the 22nd.

E. Stites: When was it?

Vapaa: 11:47 at night, a boy 7 lb. and 13 oz.

E. Stites: Nice size.

Vapaa: Nice size baby.

E. Stites: Umm.

Vapaa: He looks just like your son.

E. Stites: Humm.

Vapaa: Really does. I mean it makes you feel kind a different, you know, to have a grandchild.

E. Stites: It does. It--

Vapaa: Of course, my first experience.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: My brother has a daughter--who's my niece of course--who's grown. In fact, she's 31 years old, I think--has a daughter 13 and a son who's 12. And ah, just getting into the teen period you know. Very active in boy scout and girl scout work and this kind of thing.

E. Stites: Umm.

Vapaa: And ah, I don't know, up in New Castle County where they live why ah, 4-H doesn't have quite the strong hold that it does down here in Kent and Sussex Counties--ah, the youth programs ah, of the extension service.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Now ah, Elva I believe over a period of years you had been quite active ah, some time at least in ah, home economics extension work, weren't you?

E. Stites: Yes.

Vapaa: Work?

E. Stites: Ah, I still belong to Cowgills Home Economics Club. And they meet once a month--a month. But ah--

F. Stites: She looks forward to that.

E. Stites: Yes.

Vapaa: I think we better spell Cowgills. Some people won't know how. Cow-gill.

E. Stites: Right. It's--

Vapaa: C-o-w-g-i-l-l.

E. Stites: That's the way it should be pronounced, I guess.

Vapaa: But Cowgill, no--. Everybody in Dover pronounces Cow-gill, Cowgill. In--in fact, I had a Cowgill boy in college with me. And he lives in Milford today. Sells insurance down there.

E. Stites: Is that right?

F. Stites: At one time you held your meetings in the schoolhouse, didn't you? That octagonal--

E. Stites: Yeah. The octagonal--

F. Stites: It--was it the state--. Didn't--didn't your club do this for the state?

E. Stites: Yeah. It was--

F. Stites: Ummm.

E. Stites: Was it in--was it in--?

F. Stites: I don't know. I--I--you--

E. Stites: Our club--

F. Stites: ...youse had electric put in it and then youse turned it over to the state. Somehow.

Vapaa: Well, I think this is right. The state used it as a school building--a one room schoolhouse for years and years. And then when they got rid of the one room schoolhouses, I think the--

E. Stites: Community clubs.

Vapaa: ...community clubs took them over.

E&F Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And your home economics extension club must have gotten one of these. I remember John Tarburton--. Do you remember John Tarburton?

F. Stites: Right.

E. Stites: Yes.

F. Stites: Right.

E. Stites: Right.

Vapaa: He used to be the man who tried to look after them as well as the grange--the Capital Grange in Dover which he helped to ah-- he and Leon helped to build, as I remember.

F&E Stites: Umm. Right.

Vapaa: Of course, John G. was quite a gentleman. And he has been dead down a couple of years. And one of the finest men I ever knew was that man.

E. Stites: He certainly was.

F. Stites: He was.

Vapaa: Had a good time too.

F. Stites: That's right.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: He ah--

E. Stites: He give his grandson a nice start on a farm.

Vapaa: Yes, Jack. And Jack is doing pretty good now with his ah, potatoes and corn and I don't know what else he's growing.

E. Stites: That's the only way for a young--for a young man to get started today with farms bringing--. What did Phil just give ah--Phil Cartanza just gave--

F. Stites: \$355,000 for the farm over here this year.

Vapaa: How many acres?

F. Stites: I don't believe there's much over ah, 230 something like that.

Vapaa: I believe you're right. That's the Bilbrough farm?

F. Stites: No. This is the Smith--Gordon Smith farm. He just bought.

Vapaa: Oh.

F. Stites: He tore all the buildings down.

Vapaa: Who bought the Bilbrough farm?

F. Stites: He did. He bought that last year. He gave 'em \$3 hundred and I think \$50,000 for it.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Of course, Mr. Bilbrough himself is quite a character.

F. Stites: He sure was. He was quite a farmer. Quite an operator.

E. Stites: He got out of farming 1 year too early. Last year was such a good year for farmers that he--

F. Stites: Well, it's--

Vapaa: You know it's surprising how many people have told--Walter Dodd told me today he wish he'd been farming last year.

F. Stites: Is that right?

Vapaa: He got out a year too early.

E. Stites: All bus us--all but us dairy farmers. It was--wasn't exactly the year for us.

Vapaa: But you can't shift either back and forth the way ah, a crop farmer can.

F. Stites: Right. We have--we've had several good years before that. We're--we've--grain fellows didn't have too good years. So we've come out OK. Oh, I mean we started with nothing and we got it all paid for and then a new house. We--we're doing all right.

E. Stites: As Fred says he's--it's all he's dreamt about, you know, owning a farm and--

F. Stites: Getting paid--

E. Stites: ...here he owns 2 farms. And it's--

Vapaa: Did you ever think you'd have this many problems, Fred?

F. Stites: No.

E. Stites: Never.

F. Stites: But ah-- (laughter)

E. Stites: Never., No, we just love this home. I mean--. You can't appreciate--I don't think anybody can appreciate a--a nice, new home until they've lived in some of these old farmhouses. In--

F. Stites: That--

E. Stites: ...the wintertime when it's about 10 degrees above zero out.

F. Stites: Where--

E. Stites: That wind blowing.

F. Stites: Where it would be easy for Freddy now if he was to come back and take over--. I mean, we're--we're already living up there, we're--

Vapaa: Yes.

F. Stites: ...you know what I mean. And he could take o--over from there. We started right down at the bottom and we paid a lot of interest. And really it was a struggle to get up. And once you get up here you can make money a lot easier, a lot faster. I mean--

Vapaa: What would you do as far as housing was concerned if Fred did come home?

F. Stites: (cough) Well--

E. Stites: As far as what?

F. Stites: Housing.

Vapaa: Housing.

F. Stites: We--we'd move--

Vapaa: A--a place for him to live.

F. Stites: Well, I--I don't know. We'd--I don't think we'd move out of here for awhile. We'd have to build another one.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: But ah, I don't think we got that worry really. "Cause he's got what, 5 more years in the Air Force.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

F. Stites: Maybe 5 years I'll be ready to move out anyway, I don't know.

Vapaa: Well, that's 5 more if he ah, re--I mean--

F. Stites: No, he--

Vapaa: ...finishes this enlistment.

F. Stites: Yeah.

Vapaa: Then if he reenlists and has 20 years he's a career man then, he could retire at what, about 40 years of age?

F. Stites: No, he--

E. Stites: He'll be ah, about 42.

F. Stites: 42.

Vapaa: 42.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Years of age. And I don't know, I never did hear of a man who's (bell strikes on clock - unintelligible) There's the clock again. Are you keeping time of it?

E. Stites: 1:30

F. Stites: Ah--

Vapaa: I think it's been running about 15 minutes.

E. Stites: Yes. It has.

Vapaa: Well, anyway, I hate to tell you but I washed out of flying school. I was the last man in my class to wash. And ah, ah, this was 1941 right after Pearl Harbor. I enlisted just ahead of the draft. The draft just caught me in 1941. So I took the physic for the draft. And ah, then a week later I took it for the Air Force. And oddly enough the 3 of us that took that passed it up at the University of Delaware. I guess there were more than--oh, I know there were--maybe 60 or 70 of us that took the exam. And maybe some of the others passed it, but ah, 3 of us went to ah, Oklahoma City--the flying school--together.

F. Stites: Um-hun.

Vapaa; And one of 'em was a local down-state boy, Bill Walker. Do you know Sam Walker? Fruit farmer?

E & F Stites: Yeah. Yeah. Sam.

Vapaa: His brother. And ah, well, what was the other fellows' name. I can't think of it, but it started with a W too. Something like Wilkins, but that's not it either. It's not too important, but--. The funny thing was we all went to flying school together. Went through primary. And then in basic I got sent to San Angelo, Texas and Walker got--and the other fellow got sent to ah, San Antonio, Texas for basic flying training. And I started having

trouble with my formation flying. And I, too, had had some flying experience before I went into the Air Force under what they call the civilian--civilian pilot training program. And ah, this was up ah--you know where the bowling lane is--

F&E Stites: Yeah.

Vapaa: ...up on Route 13?

F&E Stites: Yeah.

F. Stites: There was an air--

Vapaa: I mean North Division Street. Right in back of the ah, Esso Exxon station.

E&F Stites: Um-hum. Um-hum.

Vapaa: And ah, that ah, roller rink was a hangar at the time.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

E. Stites: It was that way when we moved down in '52.

Vapaa: It was?

E. Stites: Um-hum

Vapaa: I remember one day when I was flying--this was about 19--. Let's see, you say this was '52. Well, let's see. I--I didn't realize it was still there then.

F. Stites: I don't think it was.

E. Stites: It wasn't? But the strip was there then.

F. Stites: Huh?

E. Stites: The strip was still there then.

F. Stites: No, no, I don't think so. I think the--

Vapaa: Being (?)

F. Stites: No, I don't think so. I think it was built in houses in there.

Vapaa: Oh. You mean Greenhill?

F. Stites: I'm--I don't think the airport was still there, was it. Would that be (?)

Vapaa: Well, it doesn't make a whole lot of difference.

E. Stites: No.

Vapaa: But ah, I mean there have been a tremendous number of changes in Kent County that most--all of us have seen. And I think we'll continue to see a lot of other changes that as time--time goes by. And particularly so in farming. What do you consider your big problems today to be, Fred, on the farm?

F. Stites: Well, the biggest problem is labor.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: That's on a dairy farm. Keeping good labor that's--that's the biggest problem.

Vapaa: How long have you had this man?

F. Stites: He--la--ah, last of July.

E. Stites: July. He's a young fellow.

F. Stites: 20 - 21 year old.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Is he married?

F. Stites: Married.

E. Stites: Yes.

F. Stites: And got a little 3 year old daughter.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: What kind of wages do you have to pay 'em, if I can ask?

F. Stites: I'm paying him \$100 a week plus house. And I pay all--furnish electric and heat--everything in the house. And I pay the social security and I give him 2 gallon of milk a week--a weeks vacation with pay.

Vapaa: And on the basis of this, he's really doing better than he could do out in industry, isn't he?

F. Stites: Well, I--I would say he--he's doing all right because ah--

E. Stites: He's putting in more hours though.

F. Stites: Umm, a few more hours.

E. Stites: He's putting in more hours.

F. Stites: But he--

E. Stites: If we were to pay him per hour he would be. But I believe he's-- he's living as well as, if not better.

Vapaa: And he does seem to enjoy it?

F. Stites: Yes.

Vapaa: That's important.

F. Stites: He--

E. Stites: Seems to like it.

F. Stites: ..fixed his house all up. He's got a nice house there. He put ah, heater in--central heat ah--

Vapaa: How big is it?

F. Stites: It's not a real big house. It's ah, let's see--1, 2--

E. Stites: About 3 rooms--4 rooms.

F. Stites: Four rooms plus a bath.

- E. Stites: Um-hum.
- F. Stites: And ah, we paneled it. It's--it's--he's got a real nice-- nice place there. And ah, I kept telling him all winter, he got a--had a raise every other week. 'Cause everyother week seemed like the fuel bi--fuel went up, you know. And when I hired him why--
- E. Stites: And propane went up.
- F. Stites: And to him a \$100 a week why, you know, fuel and propane and stuff wasn't too high.
- Vapaa: He cooks with gas then?
- F. Stites: He cooks with gas and heats with gas.
- Vapaa: Heats with it.
- F. Stites: Um-hum. And--
- Vapaa: And the gas heats the house pretty well?
- F. Stites: Yeah. Yeah, it's--it's an easy house to heat. Of course, we in--we insulated it and ah, paneled it.
- Vapaa: What kind of siding does it have? I can see it from here.
- F. Stites: Well, it--it's a cement block house. And then we put styrofoam-- stripped it and put styrofoam insulation and paneling. All new ceilings and new light fixtures. Every--the whole think was new inside. Every--all new carpet--wall to wall carpet.
- E. Stites: We do it all ourself. We do most all maintenance on the farm.
- Vapaa: You have to almost, don't you?
- E. Stites: Yes, you do.
- Vapaa: Now, who built this house for you?

- E. Stites: Harry Reed and son built the house. But outside of that the milking parlar was built
- F. Stites: We--we hired. We didn't have time.
- E. Stites: We've built everything else on the farm ourself--farm buildings.
- F. Stites: We done all this house. We done all the painting inside.
- E. Stites: All the painting and--
- F. Stites: And I've done all the grading, all the back filling, the grading. We--we done all the--on this house (?)
- E. Stites: Landscaping and everything we done ourselves.
- Vapaa: Well, it certainly is attractive and ah, I haven't seen your garden, but I assume it's right back here somewhere.
- E. Stites: Yes. It's--
- F. Stites: Just west of his house.
- E. Stites: (voice overlap) ...right there.
- Vapaa: Just west of his house.
- E. Stites: Um-hum. Right. Um-hum.
- Vapaa: Where you're on your short road and it doesn't bother you too much so that--
- F. Stites: It was--always been a garden and hasn't ever--. Ah, we--why we took it when we first come--we took it as a garden 20--20 some year ago and it's always been a garden.
- Vapaa: Well, isn't this kind of unusual for farmers to have gardens today, don't you think? I mean--
- E&F Stites: (both voices together - unintelligible)
- E. Stites: It's a way of life for us. It isn't--parents always had a garden and my parents always had a garden. And it wouldn't be a farm

to us without a garden.

F. Stites: I mean, in the summer--

E. Stites: But yes, all of our neighbors they don't have gardens. I mean--

Vapaa: That's what I'm asking you.

E. Stites: They are farmers--don't seem to have gardens. Now I can't--

F. Stites: (unintelligible)

E. Stites: We're so used to sweet corn pulled and eaten within a half hour--

F. Stites: She--(unintelligible)

E. Stites: and I couldn't--I couldn't buy it out of the store. I--it would be very hard for me to change my way.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: I could, but it--

F. Stites: I--we could--I think we could--

E. Stites: Fred--

F. Stites: ...get a kick out of watching it grow too really. We--

E. Stites: Freddy really missed it. He was in Texas last summer, I think-- summer before last--of course, time sweet corn gets down there to them he says it's 3 days old, you know, and--

Vapaa: Yes.

E. Stites: He couldn't wait to get home and get some fresh vegetables out of the garden.

Vapaa: Well of course, I'm going to do the Papen Brothers farm ah--

E. Stites: I thought you might.

Vapaa: ...sometime before I finish this taping series. I think that's one of the best vegetable farms I've ever seen.

E. Stites: I think that's an operation there.

Vapaa: Yeah. There are 2 brothers that actually run it. And did you know there's a third brother?

F. Stites: No, I didn't.

Vapaa: John.

E. Stites: Un-un.

F. Stites: No, I didn't.

Vapaa: Who's--they're from Summerville, New Jersey

F. Stites: (unintelligible)

E. Stites: Right. I knew they were from New Jersey.

Vapaa: And they moved down here from Somerville when land got high priced up there. And John still maintains a residence up in Somerville. And he has an interest in this farm down here-- financial interest.

F. Stites: Oh.

Vapaa: But ah, he doesn't do any work on this farm. Now, I have seen him down here. And I have seen him put his hand in, you know, ah, when they needed to have somebody load something on a wagon, on a truck, or a wagon or something--

E. Stites: Um-hum

Vapaa: ...like this done.

F. Stites: Speaking of gardens, I don't know whether I should say it or not, but what do you think when Freddy took a flight over Germany--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: That's not where they--they stopped there first, but then they went on to ah, Iran was it?

E. Stites: Yeah, Iran.

F. Stites: Is where they--

E. Stites: Ethiopia.

F. Stites: ...unloaded the load. What do you think they took over? 20 ton. 20--

Vapaa: (voice overlap, unintelligible)

F. Stites: ...20 ton of lettuce.

Vapaa: Huh?

E. Stites: They picked it up here in Dover.

F. Stites: Picked it up here at Dover Air Force Base and took 20 ton of lettuce over.

E. Stites: So it may have come from Papens. I don't know where it--

Vapaa: I don't think Papen grows any lettuce.

F. Stites: Well, (voice overlap, unintelligible)

E. Stites: They don't raise any lettuce?

Vapaa: No, they don't raise any lettuce.

F. Stites: Cabbage.

Vapaa: I have a clipboard that tells the crops that Papens grow and the season that they normally are harvesting.

E. Stites: Oh.

Vapaa: For instance right now I talked to Sud Emerson who helps him sell. You know Howard does most of the selling.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

E. Stites: (unintelligible)

Vapaa: But Sud Emerson is a broker--vegetable broker. And he tries to help him sell too. And Howards just starting to sell cabbage. Well, today I think is the first day they started selling it.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: So whether I get any taping done with him any time soon, I don't know. He practically lives on the telephone.

F. Stites: He does?

E. Stites: (murmur)

Vapaa: He does all of his business on the telephone.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: He handles all the selling and George handles all the growing of the crops.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And George's son handles the sales out in the packing shed to the hucksters and people like this, you know.

F. Stites: Un-hun.

Vapaa: And people come in--. They don't retail much. Ah, most of it's wholesale.

F. Stites: Un-hun.

Vapaa: And it's all fresh country vegetables. Although for the first time that I know of, Sud told me that ah, they're growing peas this year--

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: ...under contract. And they have 900 acres under cultivation.

And they double crop and triple crop--2 or 3 crops a year, you know.

F. Stites: Um-hum. That--that's quite an operation there.

Vapaa: They certainly do. Do you know how many tractors they have on that farm?

F. Stites: No, no I don't. I have no idea.

E. Stites: No.

Vapaa: I counted 'em one day--29.

F. Stites: Did you?

Vapaa: Um-hum. And ah, they never turn any tractor. They set 'em up for 1 job yields.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And use 'em for that 1 job. And they're usually doing that 1 job often enough so that they really need the tractor set up for that 1 piece of equipment. They do all their own maintenance. They have a nice shop--farm shop. You have a nice farm shop as I remember.

F. Stites: Well--

Vapaa: You built it yourself?

F. Stites: Um-hum. Yeah.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And you also store hay in your shop, don't you?

F. Stites: No.

Vapaa: Don't you? You used to, didn't you?

F. Stites: Not--not in the shop. Un-un.

Vapaa: Not in the shop, but in the--in part of the building?

E. Stites: In the big barn out there--

F. Stites: In the barn, not--not in the same--

E. Stites: ...is where we store hay.

F. Stites: ...same building as the shops in.

Vapaa: Oh.

F. Stites: There is machinery. Now there is machinery.

E. Stites: Just machine--machinery.

Vapaa: Oh, machinery.

F&E Stites: machinery, um-hum.

E. Stites: Papens probably moved down from New Jersey--one reason is--is taxes. They're so high up in New Jersey.

Vapaa: Yes.

E. Stites: My brother he's paying what--\$3500 for a 160 acre farm.

F. Stites: Um-hum. And it's not too good a land there.

E. Stites: And it's ah--I don't know what the assessed value ration is. And ah--but we're only paying what--\$970?

Vapaa: Is that one of the reasons you came to Delaware? Taxes?

E. Stites: Well, taxes and--

F. Stites: Well, there wasn't so much to buy up there.

E. Stites: There weren't--. There wasn't anything.

F. Stites: There--.

E. Stites: Seabrook had so many farms at that time.

F. Stites: There were just more opportunities here in Delaware.

Vapaa: Well you knew Seabrook owned some land in this county at one time?

F. Stites: Yeah. Um-hum.

Vapaa: Up here at Cowgills Corner.

F. Stites: Yeah.

E. Stites: Right.

Vapaa: And ah, one day one of their field men--I forget his name now, doesn't make any difference--he called me up from Bridgeton, New Jersey, says, "How about having lunch with me?" It was 11 o'clock in the morning.

F. Stites: Um-hun.

Vapaa: I thought how in the world is he going to get over here from Bridgeton and be here by noon time--cause he said he would meet me at noon time in my office which was in the old post office in Dover, you know. But right at the crack of noon in he walks. And then it came to me how he got over here.

F. Stites: Airplane.

Vapaa: Yeah, they had an airplane on the farm and he just flew across in an airplane.

F. Stites: They had a strip-up there on the farm.

Vapaa: Yes.

E. Stites: Fred has flown us over to his--to ah, Fred's mothers. And it takes-- Time we left the house and Fred got up there and warmed his plane up 15--it was a half hour 'til the time we landed in Bridgeton.

F. Stites: He kept his at Shenandoah. That's right close to where Seabrook run.

E. Stites: It takes an hour ah--and 45 minutes to run up by car.

F. Stites: Up to mothers.

E. Stites: And about 15 minutes flying time.is all to get over the bay.

Vapaa: I know I've flown from Dover to ah, Atlantic City. I think they used to run a shuttle plane from ah, Cheswold and ah--. As you say, it's just a mere--real short hop.

E. Stites: Um-hum. Yes.

Vapaa: And you're hardly across the bay before you realize it. You see a lot of marsh land over there in Jersey.

F&E Stites: Um-hum. Right.

F. Stites: Right. Well, he--he done a lot of flying at night when we--we usually went at night, didn't we?

E. Stites: Um-hum.

F. Stites: Come back 10 - 11 o'clock at night. Freddy was never afraid to fly at night. He liked night flying. He took us up to--we landed at Wilmington ah, airport--

Vapaa: Airport.

F. Stites: ...one night. Um-hum. And he--he liked night flying.

Vapaa: Well, it's fun. I mean, I like it too.

F. Stites: You could see a good ways in them on a clear night, couldn't you? You could see Atlantic City lights and--. It's real nice.

Vapaa: 'Course I didn't tell you, but one reason I washed out was because of night formation and instrument ratings and this kind of thing. I just couldn't seem to handle 'em. And ah, the doctor said I had vertigo. And when I went up on my wash line, so called, I knew

that I was washed out. But I--he wouldn't have to tell me. He said, "Stick your wings in between the wings of the tail of the plane up ahead of you. There was a check pilot in it too."

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: So he says, "Stay in stable wing (?) one." So I did that and then all of a sudden he just took me right out. And he said, "Take me home." He didn't have to tell me I was washed. He says, "You want to be a navigator or bombardier?" See this was during World War II. It was almost Pearl Harbor Day then. I says, "Nope." I says, "If I can't fly," I says, "I'll try for a commission in the ground officers. I'll go to army school up in Lowry Field." That was in Denver. And that's where I got my commission.

F. Stites: Um-hum. Was you afraid? Was that what it was?

Vapaa: No, I wasn't afraid. I enjoyed flying. I had 150 aerial army time. It wasn't a matter of fear. As a matter of fact, I think that they felt that I might have been too confident, you know,--

F. Stites: Un-hum.

Vapaa: ...for my own good.

F. Stites: Un-hum.

Vapaa: Because he says, "Mr. Vapaa," he says, "You can fly for yourself ah, but you can't fly for the Army." He says, "If you fly for the Army, you gotta fly (unintelligible - clock striking) There's the clock again.

F. Stites: (unintelligible - clock striking)

E. Stites: Well, yeah, he washed against--. That was formation flying too.

F. Stites: Formation flying. He said that was the hardest.

E. Stites: Yeah, he--that's scared--well, not scared him--

F. Stites: Because ah--

E. Stites: He didn't like that much.

F. Stites: ...these--these ah, jets well they move fairly fast. And about 3 foot--wing tips 3 foot apart. And that's getting pretty close. And ah, it wasn't his--they weren't blaming him. The instructor was with him. And they brushed another--the tail of another plane. Well, there was very little damage done but ah--. Nobody got hurt.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: It kind a scared him. I'm sure it would.

Vapaa: I never particularly like formation flying either. And ah--

F. Stites: Well ah, at them speeds you fly 3 foot apart, I mean that's--that's getting pretty close at them speeds. There's not much margin there--there.

Vapaa: No.

E. Stites: And they were Mach II planes too.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

E. Stites: They're ah, twice the speed of sound those planes that he was flying at that time. Of course, I'm sure they probably didn't fly in formation at that speed but--

Vapaa: No. I don't think so.

E. Stites: No.

Vapaa: I think even today they don't fly formation at any very fast speed.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Ah, during World War II they'd get in real close. Of course, they weren't going anywhere near as fast as they do today. And they were all propellor planes at the time.

E. Stites: Yes.

Vapaa: And ah, a lot different.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

F. Stites: Here's a picture of him. His plane's sitting there. That's granddaughter--a picture of our granddaughter.

Vapaa: Un-hun.

F. Stites: (unintelligible) This is a 1100 mile an hour plane--1000 mile. He--he had been a 1000 mile an hour in this plane.

Vapaa: Yes. This is still a jet trainer, isn't it?

E. Stites: Yes.

F. Stites: Yeah. That's what?--a T30, was it?

E. Stites: T30. Um-hum.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: Same as in that file I think--I think he said.

Vapaa: Has he had any gunnery yet, do you know? Has he shot any guns out of an airplane? Do you know?

F. Stites: I don't think so.

E. Stites: I don't know. No, I don't think so.

Vapaa: Apparently he's going to be a plane driver. What do you call 'em-- that's ah--

F. Stites: Cargo?

Vapaa: Cargo pilot.

F. Stites: Right. When he--when he finished--

E. Stites: He's in heavies. The call 'em heavies. That's your cargo plane.

F. Stites: And he stuck in the assignment. I mean, some of 'em moved to F-5's and ah--. He--

E. Stites: (unintelligible)

F. Stites: He had a choice and he went with 141's so that's what he got.

E. Stites: As a matter of fact, his--his class was called the peace keepers. The top 4--top 4 men in the class picked the 141's--the cargo rather than the fighters.

Vapaa: Well, I think most people like the big planes, although we had one fellow in flying school was kicked out of flying school because we had a cross country flight one day--. This was down in Texas. Down near the Mexican border. And this one fellow, I've forgotten his name doesn't make any difference, but he was from Texas anyway. But he went down and buzzed a train. (laughter) Scared the poor engineer to death. And they kept track of him the whole time by the way the--. See the engineer as he got to a town would point out the fact that this plane was following him. Well, when this fellow got back to the base why they washed him out of flying school. I thought it was too bad in a way they did. Oh, his name was Corey. I remember. And whether he ever got a commission or not, I don't know. But he was a wild one. They used to be a lot wilder than they are today.

F. Stites: Think so?

Vapaa: I think.

F. Stites: Well, they tried to get away with it back then maybe more than--

Vapaa: Well of course, it was war time. Yeah.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: No, you couldn't get--

F. Stites: ...away with it now. Right. You'd be out in a minute. What ah, did Freddy say his squadron or his crew is on alert. And when-- when he's going to be on alert and ah--

E. Stites: Well, there's Moscow--President Nixon goes to Moscow.

F. Stites: Washington--

E. Stites: Um-hum.

F. Stites: His crew have a proper chance of going. His--his crew--

Vapaa: Well, this would be nice, I think.

F. Stites: Be different anyway. Yeah, eh--

Vapaa: Be (voice overlap unintelligible)

F. Stites: Be the only way he--he'll ever get there. You know what I mean. Really you can't blame him. He's--he'll see the world. If he decides after 6 years he wants to farm, we'll still farm.

Vapaa: Elva, did I ask you what your--Elva ah, what Patty's husband does?

E. Stites: He's with the FBI in--in Washington. He's waiting to get into agents' school really what he wants. He wants to be an FBI agent.

F. Stites: Right now he's (?) Department. Right?

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: In downtown Washington?

E. Stites: Yes. Um-hum.

F. Stites: He was--

E. Stites: He's been there about 3 years now I think.

F. Stites: Last summer he was a tour guide, wasn't he?

E. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Well, it's been a number of years since I made that tour in the FBI.

E. Stites: I'd like to go there.

Vapaa: In fact, I think I was a kid. But it's a real experience.

E. Stites: Yeah.

Vapaa: 'Cause they'll fingerprint you and everything else.

E. Stites: Um-hum (murmur) Oh, will they?

Vapaa: Put you on record.

F. Stites: Well, have you ever been up in the new building? When they built it?

Vapaa: I don't know when they built it. This is a new one. And I--it was new when I went into it, I think. So it's probably the same building.

F. Stites: How many year ago is that then?

Vapaa: Well, let's see, I'm 58 years now an--

F. Stites: This new ones within the last, what--6 or 7 years or so.

Vapaa: Oh, no. I haven't been in that one. This was right on Pennsylvania Avenue.

F. Stites: It's not too many years this new ones been built. It was pert near the most expensive building in Washington. Wasn't it or not?

E. Stites: I don't know.

Vapaa: Well, we're getting away from the farm and I hate to do that. But ah, now ah, suppose you had to sell this farm. Would it bother

you too much?

F. Stites: I--I think it would really. Although I say I'd like to quit.
I mean, the--I--I--

Vapaa: Do something else?

F. Stites: Yeah, when you get up 4 o'clock in the morning and you don't feel--or it's quarter past 4 and you don't feel too good some mornings. Why things don't go too good, why, you kinda wished you'd gone to something else. But ah, it's--I've always had a love of land I guess. In the spring I always had spring fever when I was in school.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

F. Stites: I guess you'd call it spring fever. I just couldn't wait to get outside.

Vapaa: Yeah.

F. Stites: I guess it's in our blood. We would really miss it. But I suppose that some of these days if Freddy don't take over, we'll--we'll eventually sell.

Vapaa: Were you a pretty good student in school?

F. Stites: Well, I--I wasn't exactly--I wasn't maybe that good, but I don't--. My marks were all right. I--I was just a B average. She was--you graduated--

E. Stites: Salutatorian. I was--

F. Stites: Second.

E. Stites: ...second in the high school class out of--I think there was 65 in the class.

Vapaa: Sixty-five in your graduation class?

E. Stites: Yes.

F. Stites: She was pretty good. Now, Freddy has always been smart in high school.

Vapaa: Good Student.

F. Stites: Yeah. He's--

E. Stites: Very good student. Very outstanding--Freddy.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

E. Stites: Very good.

F. Stites: Was he a A student--graduated A student or ah, uh, college or--

E. Stites: I forget what his index was.

F. Stites: He was--he was on the Deans List all the time.

Vapaa: Now, let's see, he was in the Ag School too.

F. Stites: Um-hum. Um-hum.

E. Stites: Yes.

Vapaa: The whole 4 years?

F. Stites: Yup.

E. Stites: He took Ag Engineering.

Vapaa: I notice ah--I was talking with Jake Zimmerman. He said his boy is finishing up as an Ag Engineering Major.

E. Stites: Oh, is he?

Vapaa: And he's hoping he'll come back home to the farm because--

E. Stites: Up at Delaware?

Vapaa: In Delaware, yes. In fact, Jake has 3 children up at Delaware now.

E. Stites: Oh, does he?

Vapaa: Two daughters and a son. And he's got 1 son that's going to the 2 year program next September. And--in the Ag School.

E. Stites: Um-hum.

F. Stites: Well, has he got a son home with him now? Jake?

Vapaa: Oh, yeah. He--he has 7 children.

F. Stites: I knew he had several.

Vapaa: And he's still only 44 years old I think. And ah, you know when he was about 30--no, I think he was still in his 20's--he was named Young Farmer of the Year in Delaware.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And ah, Jake has quite an interesting story in many respects. I mean ah--. I know one time he called me up. And he said that the Air Base wanted a clearance to spray for mosquitos, you know, around the base. And they wanted to use BHC. I don't know whether you ever heard of it or not benzene hexachlorine.

F. Stites: Yeah, I've heard of it.

Vapaa: Well, anyway, you don't use it on potatoes.

F. Stites: Oh, you don't?

Vapaa: Because if you use it on potatoes why ah, it tends to ah, blacken them when they're cooked and they taste bad. He happened to remember that. And then he went back to a American Potato Year Book which I didn't even know existed. And ah, it's a rather ah, obscure magazine. And found this reference about some research that had been done on, I believe, in Long Island.

E. Stites: Umm.

Vapaa: And ah, so ah, with this evidence why we went out to the base and

got it stopped. And we suggested some other material to spray with. He wasn't against their spraying for mosquitos, of course. Because, I mean, you know what your problem is for your workers when you have a lot of mosquitos.

F. Stites: Right.

Vapaa: And you had that problem at one time didn't you when you were growing potatos?

F. Stites: Yes. Right. And tomatos

E. Stites: Right.

F. Stites: Back--back them days why we had to spray ahead of the tomato pickers. I mean if they was picking 1 block or 2 blocks you sprayed them.

Vapaa: Did you ever have the--have mosquitoes drive you out of the field?

F. Stites: Back when we first moved out here they were--they were bad. They--if you go out and work on a tractor, and if you happened to stand up a little bit and then sit down, why you--you'd be covered with big mosquitoes when you--were you sit down. Mashed them on the--They--last what, 5 or 6 years, mosquitoes just haven't been nothing of a problem. I mean, we just don't have many.

Vapaa: Are you doing any spraying at all now?

F. Stites: No. (unintelligible) ...weeds that's all.

Vapaa: How do you spray your alfalfa, or don't you?

F. Stites: I haven't had to for what, 5 or 6 years.

E. Stites: They've got some wasps out here.

F. Stites: We got 'em--

Vapaa: To control the alfalfa weevil.

E. Stites: Yes, evidently it's really done the job.

F. Stites: Um-hum. It--

Vapaa: Done the job.

E. Stites: Um-hum. Cause we don't have 'em.

Vapaa: Often times some of these insects ah, become a pest in themselves sometimes you know. Then you have to control them again. I'm not trying to wish you any hard luck or anything like that, but ah--

E. Stites: We don't see many wasps though.

Vapaa: No.

F. Stites: Yeah, we didn't even see 'em when we let 'em out.

Vapaa: I haven't heard anybody complain about the alfalfa weevil.

F. Stites: Yeah, lot of 'em had to spray this time.

Vapaa: Did they?

E. Stites: This year?

F. Stites: Yeah, they're up in New Jersey stuff. Yeah. They just ah--I was over to the John Deere place yesterday and this has been since--farmer was telling me this--weevils was eating them up. Eating the alfalfa up.

Vapaa: Now ah, I know you're not spraying, but have you noticed any farmers spraying around here.

F. Stites: Well, Tony Jackewicz is spraying potatos today.

Vapaa: With ground equipment?

F. Stites: With ground equipment. I noticed Ernie Zimmerman went back to ground equipment this year too.

Vapaa: When I came down here today, or tonight, why I--Al Johnson was flying over Jake Zimmerman's farm spraying his potatoes.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And Jake tells me he's doing all aerial spraying now.

E. Stites: Phil Cartanza is too I believe.

Vapaa: Yes.

E. Stites: Um-hum. And they all done it last year though. Every--all the potato farmers.

Vapaa: Shifted?

F. Stites: Well, they used--

E. Stites: Shifted to aerial.

F. Stites: The--they figured the damage to the wheels--tractor wheels--the spreader wheels done to the 2 rows that you straddle why it more than paid for the airplane fee. Eh, uh, besides with the airplane company you don't have to be pilot. That's why most of 'em changed.

Vapaa: Plus the fact, I mean, if you talk to any of these farmers about equipment--buying equipment--. Have you tried to buy any farm equipment lately?

F. Stites: Yeah, it's scarce.

E. Stites: Very scarce.

F. Stites: Very scarce. In fact, (cough) I buy a little tractor that I use out back to scrape up and deliver manure with. It's about wore out. It was made--it's 1957. And I been wanting to replace it. I just found a--I bought a new John Deere tractor this fall that I can't get the scoop to work. It's ordered. They don't know

when I--when I'll get it. But I thought I better take the tractor. Then I can get the tractor--get the scoop when I get the scoop.

Vapaa: Yes.

F. Stites: But yeah, it's--it's machinery is scarce. Quality is scarce too.

Vapaa: Why don't you try down at Harrington? Do you know Taylor & Messick?

F. Stites: Yeah.

Vapaa: Talk to Walter Messick. He ought to be able to locate one for you. Because see he sells a lot of 'em to the racetrack.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: They use 'em down there to ah, smooth the track up.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And for the harness racing and just anything as well as to clean up manure and ah, (unintelligible) ...things of this nature.

E. Stites: They won't give you any discount on tractors here at all.

Vapaa: No.

E. Stites: He had to pay \$8400 for--

F. Stites: Well, he give me a little discount.

E. Stites: ...a small tractor. Very little though.

F. Stites: Not--not much discount. Seems like every tractor I get--been buying here lately is a small one. And it's price gets higher. It's higher. That's the highest priced one I ever bought. It's the small--the smallest tractor I've ever bought, but the highest priced one.

Vapaa: Now, Joe Jackewicz has a son who is a student at Notre Dame in Mechanical Engineering. He'll be a senior next year. He'll graduate. And he's just aching to get back to the farm.

F. Stites: Gonna come back.

Vapaa: Gonna come back. And he really is--. He says that the farmers out in Indiana are buying Russian tractors because they can't get American tractors.

F. Stites: Right. It was on television um, couple of weeks ago.

E. Stites: That was up in Maine--

F. Stites: Up in Bo--Boston. Up in there somewheres. There's a big machinery dealer. He's importing 'em. And ah, showed the farmers that had 'em. And their just about half price for the same sized tractor as a--I mean a 70 horsepower and all that. It's just half price of what Americans is.

Vapaa: This is primarily due to the difference in labor, would you say?

F. Stites: It must be. Umm. Difference in labor, Yeah, umm.

Vapaa: But isn't--

E. Stites: They don't have air conditioning in the cab and--

F. Stites: Oh, no, they don't have the comfort, you see. But they have all your other, I mean, live PTO and hydraulic and all that.

Vapaa: You better define PTO--power take off.

F. Stites: Right. Power take off.

Vapaa: For which your--drive your own sheet (?).

F. Stites: Right.

Vapaa: And ah, Joe's boy said that ah, with this Russian equipment if

they have a problem sometimes hooking up the various equipment to ah, (clock striking) to the rest of the equipment. And part of the problem is (unintelligible) . Part of the problem why is that they--Russians use the metric system, you know for their equipment so that the fittings on the American equipment don't fit Russian made fittings.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Which are under the metric system. Now, I ah, asked young Joe how soon he thought we would go to the metric system. He said he thought we'd be on it 2 years--within 2 years as a general practice. And ah, he said there was a bill in the Congress. And whether the bill went through or not he says he felt that people would go to the metric system because it's so much easier to use than the English system. This thing still running? Yes, it is.

E. Stites: It's getting near.

Vapaa: Yes, well, it's just--

F. Stites: It's not time yet (very loud vibrating static - unintelligible)

Vapaa: I don't want to get home too early because my wife's entertaining a bridge club meeting and ah, this is one of the reasons I wanted to come here tonight. I didn't want to be home to talk with a bunch of ladies. Not that I object to talking to ladies.

E. Stites: No.

F. Stites: I bet that recorder picked that airplane up.

Vapaa: Oh, you can be--you can believe it. In fact, if you want to hear it, we can hear it. Ah, we'll play these when it runs out. We

won't play it all. Let's see, this thing here it--it still has--I think you're right.

F. Stites: Got 5 more minutes I'd say.

Vapaa: Five or 10 more minutes, yes. It could even be 10 minutes. But just looking--just looking at this (unintelligible) . I mean, I never worry too much about a tape recorder because I used a ah, a reel machine. I mean a r-e-e-l--

F. Stites: Un-hun.

Vapaa: ...rather than a cassette which is what this is.

F. Stites: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And with a cassette when you run out of tape you're done. With a reel machine you can splice on another tape and go a little further if you still have room on your spindle. But ah, with this ah, cassette you do have to worry about putting a tag on it. And I think of all the tapes I've done so far I've run out of time each time.

F. Stites: You have?

Vapaa: Before I'm finished.

F. Stites: Un-hun.

Vapaa: Well, on the first reel of yours we did stop in time, I think, to make the change over. And a fairly smooth transition you might say. But ah, I don't know whether we're going to run out or not. I'm--I don't really care. I mean ah--it ah--it'll work out either way. The important thing is that we get a reasonably good picture of what you're doing here on the farm and what you're hopes are

and so forth like this. Suppose you were retired, what would you have in mind doing? If you weren't on a farm?

F. Stites: Gosh, I--I ah, have no idea.

E. Stites: We're not that close to retiring that we even think about it.
(laugh)

F. Stites: I tell you, I haven't given it much though.

Vapaa: Let's see, you're how old now?

F. Stites: Well, I'm 46. I'll be 47. I figure I'm good for a few more years yet. I--I--

Vapaa: I believe you are.

F. Stites: I--I don't want a milk cows 'til I'm 60 or 62. I mean that's--

Vapaa: Do you remember Charlie ~~Bryant~~ ^{BLENDT} ?

F. Stites: Yeah.

Vapaa: He gave up milking cows.

F. Stites: Yeah.

Vapaa: And I think he's 63.

F. Stites: Is he? Un-hun.

Vapaa: Do you know he hadn't been away from home overnight except for a time in the hospital. He's been in the hospital twice in the last few years. A bull got after him. He used to use a bull rather than artificial breeding. And ah, got him down twice. And I thought when he--the bull got him down the first time that would fix him for keeping bulls, but it didn't. He went and got another bull and the second bull got him.

F. Stites: I heard that.

Vapaa: Finally he just ah--he hasn't--he's still living on the farm.
But ah, he's ah, nephew I guess--the ah, Let's see, I'm
trying to think of the name. Well anyway, they leased his farm--
are pasturing or grazing animals. I don't know whether they
use-- *ARTIFICIAL BREEDING OR NOT. (LNU)*

(tape ended)

T H E E N D