



Citation for this collection:

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Mrs. Amanda Vapaa

[0:00:00]

Interviewer: ...with a series on taped oral histories of people who have come to Delaware from other places. And I couldn't think of a more appropriate to talk to than my mother. Ma, I want you to tell me now, if you lean forward a little bit here, what your name is and your birthday and so forth.

Mrs. Vapaa: Amanda Josephine.

Interviewer: All right. And how about the last year.

Mrs. Vapaa: *[inaudible]* [0:00:42] to know right?

Interviewer: Yes.

Mrs. Vapaa: Gervin *[phonetic]* [0:00:44].

Interviewer: Gervin. And it used to be of course, Vapaa.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes.

Interviewer: When you married my father.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And when was that?

Mrs. Vapaa: Oh, it was...

Interviewer: Well, it had to be sometime before 1915 because I was born December 23rd, 1915. So where were you married?

Mrs. Vapaa: In New York.

Interviewer: In Febtown *[phonetic]* [0:01:13]?

Mrs. Vapaa: No. In New York in a minister's house, I think it was.

Interviewer: It was a minister?

Mrs. Vapaa: Minister, yes. It was a minister. Maki. Maki was his name.

Interviewer: Do you have a certificate at any place in your records? We pretty well pulled these records apart. So I have never seen one.

Mrs. Vapaa: I don't remember. If I had, I will have it now but I don't think I have any records any more.

Interviewer: Well now, there are a couple things...

Mrs. Vapaa: Because he was a minister in the *[inaudible]* **[0:01:59]** mission church, a *[inaudible]* **[0:02:01]** minister.

Interviewer: Do you remember how his name was spelled?

Mrs. Vapaa: Maki.

Interviewer: M-A-K-I.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Maki.

Interviewer: I see. You don't remember his first name.

Mrs. Vapaa: No. I don't remember.

Interviewer: But he was a Lutheran minister.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And he was in New York City.

Mrs. Vapaa: He was in New York.

Interviewer: New York City.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see.

Mrs. Vapaa: But the church was in Brooklyn where we used to go when we had to go from work. We used to go there with the girls and bought the coffee and *[inaudible]* **[0:02:33]** some in New York because we never did *[inaudible]* **[0:02:39]** gathered there. They have a pool downstairs in the church.

Interviewer: I see. Well, I think we're getting a little bit ahead of ourselves. First of all, how did you meet my father?

Mrs. Vapaa: He worked where I worked in Connecticut for a little while.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah, he worked there.

Interviewer: Where else did he work?

Mrs. Vapaa: Not *[inaudible]* **[0:03:06]** where he worked.

Interviewer: Well, now you showed me a picture of – it was Milford, Pennsylvania

Mrs. Vapaa: Well, we were at that boat. We were both – we were married then.

Interviewer: Oh I see.

Mrs. Vapaa: We were married then and *[inaudible]* **[0:03:22]** we got married; he got that shop down there. There's a garden there.

Interviewer: I see. So this would have been sometime before probably 1915, right.

Mrs. Vapaa: Then when I was expecting you we *[inaudible]* **[0:03:37]** there. We come to New York. And – no, through – Alfa *[phonetic]* **[0:03:46]** died – Mrs. Alfa died in Trent. She was a good friend for this baby that he worked in *[inaudible]* **[0:04:05]**. And this lady had a boy and her husband...

Interviewer: You don't remember their name.

Mrs. Vapaa: But *[inaudible]* **[0:04:20]** I think was her name. But what her name was before she married this man and he was a lawyer. But he didn't like that job. He worked in farming. He came to help the farmer and the way cotton farmers – he didn't like the lawyer's job.

Interviewer: You're talking about the man that dad worked for.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah, yeah. And...

[0:05:00]

Interviewer: But dad was quite a big help wasn't it?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. I suppose. And then, anyhow, this ladies – toward this **[inaudible]** **[0:05:14]** to leave to take New York because none of us have tried at the Broadman. And this lady had promised that her father that she would stay with her daughter and look after her daughter. The daughter wasn't very well. But she was rich. Her father left the money to her because her mother **[inaudible]** **[0:05:46]** too much. So the father left the money with the daughter, the daughter would give it to the mother so much money each month.

And then the mother came to New York and wanted me to come with to New York. Then your father didn't like it down there in Pennsylvania when she had to take – she wanted me to stay with her in New York. In the farm, I didn't have to stay with them. We had the house to ourselves.

So then we left from there and through this lady that was with her daughter, she was a friend of Mrs. Alfa who died. And she had told Mrs. Alfa that she had a good plan for her. She said something about the gardener. She says I have a good man for you and **[inaudible]** **[0:07:13]**. He came to work with very good reference.

Interviewer: Alfa died in Dupont estate, out there by the experimental station.

Mrs. Vapaa: Where at the **[inaudible]** **[0:07:24]** like what's now – even through down there.

Interviewer: Yes. Now, that's where you came after I was born.

Mrs. Vapaa: He was a gardener at Race and Roses. She wanted a garden at Race and Roses. And she's sad to see a good man that Race and Roses has a underground **[inaudible]** **[0:07:45]** and things like that. She didn't have anything to do with anything else but roses.

Interviewer: Now, when you went Alfa **[inaudible]** **[0:07:56]** Dupont estate this was right after I was born wasn't it?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see.

Mrs. Vapaa: You were born then. Mrs. Alfa died **[inaudible]** **[0:08:04]** enough to be bring me in down the quandary the year you were born. And so, I stayed in New York a few days in the hospital. I mean, coming out the hospital, I came down the...

Interviewer: So we never really lived in New York right?

Mrs. Vapaa: No, no. We didn't live in New York.

Interviewer: And you remember the hospital where I was born?

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: Was it in Harlem?

Mrs. Vapaa: It was a hospital. It was – what is the big hospital there was – we were in 120th Street and that hospital was there. I think we walked in the hospital that night. I felt so good. I feel that being *[inaudible]* **[0:09:03]** so good so I wanted to walk. And we walked in there and that's where you were born.

Interviewer: I see. Was I born that night?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah or early in the morning.

Interviewer: Early in the morning.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Well, anyway, you moved down to the *[inaudible]* **[0:09:25]** state. Now, what did you like or didn't you like about the *[inaudible]* **[0:09:29]** department state.

Mrs. Vapaa: Well, I liked it all right but then everyone in the house where the Murphy's lived, they have a lot of parties at the house. They were very nice, brother and sister. They were very nice people and we liked there. Then...

Interviewer: Could you speak very much English then?

[0:10:00]

Mrs. Vapaa: Well, I speak almost the same thing as I do now.

Interviewer: Well, now you have come over to this country though not too far than that. Do you remember when you came over?

Mrs. Vapaa: I came – it was 1909 or...

Interviewer: 1909, I think it was.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see. And you came from here, Turku?

Mrs. Vapaa: I'll *[inaudible]* **[0:10:39]**.

Interviewer: How much of that do you remember? It's just a small town.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And Turku is the harbor city and...

Mrs. Vapaa: Through land, they say that *[inaudible]* **[0:10:58]** the longest time there. Like the famous state of Delaware.

Interviewer: Oh, you don't know how that's spelled I guess. Can you spell it in Finnish?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. But just that when you write you put a T *[inaudible]* **[0:11:19]** in a letter. Minnathras *[phonetic]* **[0:11:22]**. That means two *[inaudible]* **[0:11:24]**. That means that it's like a state, same as a state.

Interviewer: It's the same as Delaware.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see. And this of course is in Finland.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you also put Alastaro *[inaudible]* **[0:11:37]**.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes, you had to put Alastaro in it.

Interviewer: Yeah. I think one thing we better tell whoever may be listening to this tape is that the accent in Finnish is always of the first syllable. And you pronounce every letter and every word.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And one of the words Mom, that fascinates me and gets me excited is the word for no. You want to tell us what it is.

Mrs. Vapaa: No.

Interviewer: No.

Mrs. Vapaa: No. No.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: No, what's ei?

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: The letter E-I.

Mrs. Vapaa: E-I. Eli.

Interviewer: You pronounce that ei. And what does it mean?

Mrs. Vapaa: Ei means like a – ei means – well, ei means same as no.

Interviewer: That's what I thought. And it's spelled E-I.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: But you say it – you spell it in Finnish A-E, but it's actually E-I. The letter E-I, the way we use the American language.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah, yeah. You go with the – I say E-I.

Interviewer: What's the word for yes in Finnish?

Mrs. Vapaa: E-E – E-E...

Interviewer: Say it in Finnish.

Mrs. Vapaa: J-A-I.

Interviewer: J-A-I.

Mrs. Vapaa: Hmm-mm.

Interviewer: I see. That would be just like a yes in English. I mean, the way you spell it in English.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see. Well, let's talk a little about Finland. In Alastero, you lived on a farm. You want to tell us a little bit about what you had on that farm and how many brothers and sisters you had and who was your mother and father? Those kinds of things. Tell us, first of all, who was your mother and father?

Mrs. Vapaa: My father was a man that – they were from that neighborhood too. But I couldn't tell anything about that because you wouldn't understand it anyhow.

Interviewer: Try me.

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: Try.

Mrs. Vapaa: It wasn't far from my home.

Interviewer: But what were their names – your mother and father?

Mrs. Vapaa: My father's name was John.

Interviewer: John.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah, Johann.

Interviewer: Does he have a middle name?

Mrs. Vapaa: My mother's name was same as my name.

Interviewer: Mandi.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And you spell it M-A-N-D-I.

Mrs. Vapaa: Amanda.

Interviewer: Amanda.

Mrs. Vapaa: Manda.

Interviewer: Manda. M-A-N-D-A.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Manda.

Interviewer: Amanda.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes.

Interviewer: Now, let's see. I'm running out of questions although I got lots of questions. Now, do you remember when your mother and father were born or where they were born?

[0:15:03]

Mrs. Vapaa: Well, I couldn't remember anymore. I think when he died, I think he was 56, if I remember right. And my mother was young and I was so young that I can't remember.

Interviewer: Did my grandfather ever have to go into the Finnish army?

Mrs. Vapaa: I don't know. He can but I don't know anything about it.

Interviewer: No. That would be your father. You know about your father.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. No, he was never in the army.

Interviewer: I see. What kind of work did he do in Finland?

Mrs. Vapaa: Farming. Farming.

Interviewer: What did you farm? What did you grow? What did you raise?

Mrs. Vapaa: Grows rice, oats, barley and wheat. Although *[inaudible]* **[0:15:55]** not much wheat.

Interviewer: Did you have any livestock?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: What did you have?

Mrs. Vapaa: We had milking cows. We have five milking cows.

Interviewer: Did you sell milk?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes.

Interviewer: And how many horses?

Mrs. Vapaa: Two horses.

Interviewer: How did you go from one place to another? Did you have a buggy or a wagon?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. We have a buggy and a sled during the winter time and carriage and some of them.

Interviewer: Did it get cold the winter time?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. It gets cold.

Interviewer: Do you know how cold it gets?

Mrs. Vapaa: And snow.

Interviewer: You don't know how cold though it got.

Mrs. Vapaa: No. I don't know. I don't know if we had *[inaudible]* **[0:16:55]** outside or not.

Interviewer: Well, you didn't use the English measure. You use centigrade.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And 0 degrees was freezing.

Mrs. Vapaa: They didn't have that – they didn't seem – we didn't seem to have a cold when we're freezing. It was just freezing. We didn't think that was any cold yet. We were used to that.

Interviewer: Well of course, Finland is located up near the north – I mean, the Arctic Circle. And in the summer time, how long are your days?

Mrs. Vapaa: We have longer days.

Interviewer: The day – how long that you have lights.

Mrs. Vapaa: Oh, my god, we have long days. We don't have *[inaudible]* [0:17:43]. But that summer time, days are long.

Interviewer: I see. And in the winter time, how long were the days?

Mrs. Vapaa: Winter time, then the days were short.

Interviewer: Well, now, we were in Finland, you remember in 1961. She said *[inaudible]* [0:18:04]. All right. Now, mom, before I turn the tape off, we were talking about the lengths of the days in the summer and in the winter. You remember we went to Finland in 1961 and you went again in 1962 with Morris, my stepfather. Now, the sun went down at what time in the evening when you there. That was in July, I think. Midsummer's day.

Mrs. Vapaa: I stayed up *[inaudible]* [0:18:40]. I think it's after 10 o'clock.

Interviewer: 10 o'clock at night.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And what time did it get light?

Mrs. Vapaa: In the morning, I think at 3 o'clock.

Interviewer: 3 o'clock in the morning. And if you went up to Northern Finland, well the sun never set, did it.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: But we never went up there. And I think that's real interesting. Now, that made your flowers grow a lot better than the summer time didn't it, the long days?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And we were talking about temperatures too but we don't have to go into any detail about that except that I know that they read temperature differently in Finland than they do here in the United States or in England, which is the measure that we use, Fahrenheit and centigrade.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, let's talk a little bit about the farm. What do you remember about the farm?

Mrs. Vapaa: Well, oh boy. [Laughter]

Interviewer: What kind of work did you do?

Mrs. Vapaa: All kinds of work. You know, they have to have *[inaudible]* [0:19:49]. Then when they work on – with the horses and the machinery, the third *[inaudible]* [0:20:03].

[0:20:03]

And you have to get them clean. And the kitchen, the women have to do that work to keep them clean.

Interviewer: Do you remember about the big river you used to tell me about when I was little. It went by the back door?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. It wasn't anything *[inaudible]* [0:20:23].

Interviewer: Oh, yeah. The road was still there.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah, it was still there but was that like a big *[inaudible]* [0:20:32].

Interviewer: About 20 feet wide I think.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Yeah.

Interviewer: Now – and do you remember what you said when we took you back to the old farm? You'd been away for 52 years?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: What did you say?

Mrs. Vapaa: I don't remember anymore.

Interviewer: You said something about that everything was the same as when left except one. Except it was smaller.

Mrs. Vapaa: It was so small. Yes. It was so small. Everything looked so small.

Interviewer: Compared to what it was when you left home.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes.

Interviewer: I think this is a normal reaction even in this country. You would find that people as they get older, and think back when they were smaller, they would tend to have this kind of a reaction.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Everything was the same.

Interviewer: Now, you told me too, you just told me that you've gotten a letter from your neighbor that you used to have in Finland. Incidentally, let's talk first of all about what she said when you went up to see her the first time you went there.

Mrs. Vapaa: Oh, she said, right away, "Oh, Mandy." Yeah, because she knows whatever *[inaudible]* **[0:21:46]** and she would recognize me but she was expecting. And she knows from that that it was me. Yeah. I guess this is her daughter. It was somebody that worked for me now, in front of me. The *[inaudible]* **[0:22:03]** live there with them all the time.

Interviewer: But you're not particularly at *[inaudible]* **[0:22:10]**.

Mrs. Vapaa: No.

Interviewer: Had enough of Finland?

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: You had enough of Finland?

Mrs. Vapaa: I had enough of Finland. How could I go and leave the USA. I couldn't do that. I couldn't stay. That was a wonderful trip but it didn't – not to stay.

Interviewer: Well, is there anything else about the farm that you want to talk about beside the fact that it was hard work?

Mrs. Vapaa: Well, it wasn't anything but it was hard work. We *[inaudible]* **[0:22:46]** expect the summer time, it's hard work.

Interviewer: What kind of work did you do?

Mrs. Vapaa: First, you have to work. We had to farm. We have what – or you have to get the read up *[inaudible]* **[0:23:05]** farm. Hard work.

Interviewer: It's very sweet.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes, you have to use them things that you beat...

Interviewer: You beat the straw.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. You beat and you shake them and oh, it was so much work.

Interviewer: Of they don't do the...

Mrs. Vapaa: Very big work.

Interviewer: Yes. And they don't do this anymore.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, I was in Finland, I noticed that the women took care of all the livestock. Do you remember that?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Yes.

Interviewer: Was there any special reason why?

Mrs. Vapaa: I don't think so. I don't think – I guess they always *[inaudible]* **[0:23:42]**. The woman was helping the man *[inaudible]* **[0:23:47]**.

Interviewer: You remember we went Marie Gustus' brothers?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Well, I don't know – no, that wasn't Goem.

Mrs. Vapaa: They didn't have a farm. They have a...

Interviewer: Peat bogs.

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: They had peat bogs.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes.

Interviewer: But we went to a farm, someone that you knew – I don't remember who it was.

Mrs. Vapaa: That person...

Interviewer: Anna Corbin *[phonetic]* [0:24:10].

Mrs. Vapaa: If we're *[inaudible]* [0:24:11] this place.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Vapaa: But then she wasn't living, I don't think.

Interviewer: No.

Mrs. Vapaa: She was her daughter.

Interviewer: Her daughter and her son-in-law.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Yeah, son-in-law.

Mrs. Vapaa: I forget what they were.

Interviewer: But they had built – they had a farm too, you remember?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. They had a farm.

Interviewer: And you remember what happened to coffee time?

Mrs. Vapaa: I don't remember that.

Interviewer: He was trying to milk the cows. Who milked the cows?

Mrs. Vapaa: She did – the women milked the cows. The men don't milk the cows.

Interviewer: No. Now and on that particular farm, too, this was right there on *[inaudible]* [0:24:54] as I remember.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

[0:25:00]

Interviewer: They also built their own house and they were building on to the house when we were there. And they had also built their barn and a silo. Do you remember that was a short – very small silo. I think it was only about 15 feet tall maybe. Do you remember that?

Mrs. Vapaa: I don't remember much.

Interviewer: Well, it sticks in my mind that that was the size of it and they had made their own bricks for the barn, for the side of the barn. And of course, most of the farms in Finland, beside being low and by the way, low land – that's what Finland means, low land. And it's very much in some respects like Delaware except that the dirt was – soil was darker, I think, than this here. Don't you?

Mrs. Vapaa: It's quite clay.

Interviewer: More clay like.

Mrs. Vapaa: Mostly clay.

Interviewer: But how about stones?

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: How about stones? Did you have very many stones on your farm?

Mrs. Vapaa: No. No, no. We didn't have many stones in our farm. We don't have any stones.

Interviewer: And we don't have them here in Delaware.

Mrs. Vapaa: No, no.

Interviewer: Well, let's see. What else can we talk about on the farm? I mean, I can't think of anything.

Mrs. Vapaa: In the summer times they have wild strawberries in some places on the field where the *[inaudible] [0:26:39]* was. Most kitchens we see on the side were the strawberries. Well I don't kitchen or fields where the strawberries grow. I was going up and down there and when I come back, I come *[inaudible] [0:26:56]*. I didn't eat it myself but I brought them the strawberries that I found.

Interviewer: Now, you say stepmother. You meant that your father remarried too?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And is that the woman that lives in the house when we were there?

Mrs. Vapaa: No. She died many years ago.

Interviewer: Well, who was the woman living in the house when we were there?

Mrs. Vapaa: They were people – that was my stepson's wife.

Interviewer: Oh.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. Because when weren't there, she ran right away to the shelf to get the pictures down and show – she'd sit there *[inaudible]* **[0:27:44]** Johann, he was. But they call him *[inaudible]* **[0:27:48]**. My father was Johann too. So they call him Yanni. And she went there to get the pictures down. She said, "Yanni, he was always taking my pictures down. And he misses me the most when I left the home." He was mad at this mother when I left. But I didn't get to say nothing. It's just hard *[inaudible]* **[0:28:19]**. I asked my sister to send me a ticket.

Interviewer: So that's why you left Finland?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Hmm-mm. Are you sorry you left Finland?

Mrs. Vapaa: No. I'm not sorry. I was thankful I left. I won't be leaving if I had been there.

Interviewer: And how old are you now?

Mrs. Vapaa: I'm old. I'm born 1888.

Interviewer: 1888, yes. September the 8th.

Mrs. Vapaa: Four eights.

Interviewer: And you were born in Alestero right there on the farm.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Right down that farm, where we were.

Interviewer: Yes. Did I get your maiden name?

Mrs. Vapaa: My maiden name?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Amanda Palajoki [*phonetic*] [0:29:03].

Interviewer: Palajoki. Let me spell it in English.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: P-A-L-O-J-O-K-I.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: But you pronounce it Palojoki.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Well, now, we're about at the end of this time, so I'm going to let the thing run out and then we'll turn it over and play the other side.

Let's talk a little bit more about Finland. I don't really know what to say. Do you know anything at all about my father's family in Finland?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes, but they're all dead a long time ago.

Interviewer: And where did he come from?

Mrs. Vapaa: He wasn't very far from my home where he was born.

Interviewer: Is that right?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: How did he get to Southern Lima? He moved there didn't he?

Mrs. Vapaa: It's simply – you know, we were in Alestero.

Interviewer: I know you were in Alestero but didn't he get – when we went to Southern Lima, you told me that that's where daddy went to school.

[0:30:07]

Mrs. Vapaa: No, no, no. Not him.

Interviewer: Not him.

Mrs. Vapaa: No. No. He's never been to Southern Lima. He never was in *[inaudible]* **[0:30:15]**.

Interviewer: He wasn't.

Mrs. Vapaa: No.

Interviewer: But you didn't know him when he lived in – fairly near you, did you?

Mrs. Vapaa: My father?

Interviewer: No. My father.

Mrs. Vapaa: Oh yes. I was thinking about my father. No. Where was he now? I didn't – he was all the way out from – I mean *[inaudible]* **[0:30:47]** where I was in Finland where he was from. And his father died when he was very young.

Interviewer: He did?

Mrs. Vapaa: He has a brother...

Interviewer: Now where was this?

Mrs. Vapaa: He has a brother and he had a sister.

Interviewer: And where did they live.

Mrs. Vapaa: I forget the name. I don't think – he never wrote to them except for his mother. He wrote to his mother and I forgot to know what he *[inaudible]* **[0:31:20]**. They're far from where I came from, anyhow. And his father died when he was very, very young. And he went to work as – you know, when they had like this big yard where they sit there. You know, when people travel, they have the horses and then they drive to one place to another to *[inaudible]* **[0:31:58]** a taxi or something like that. They call and then they will get the horse. So your father, he was very young when

he went there. And he went to high school but they – he was a boy that you could trust and let him charge the people around. And he went to school too.

Interviewer: Now, you showed me the school grades and it looked to me like they were pretty good grades.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. He has good grades in school. Of course, his mother was – he didn't have much and had *[inaudible] [0:32:40]*. But he used to go in for people *[inaudible] [0:32:49]* or something. They used to give food – prepare foods and ask people coming to eat and they have to prepare a lot and she used to go in there and work.

Interviewer: Did my father's mother ever remarried?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes.

Interviewer: She did.

Mrs. Vapaa: She did but then...

Interviewer: Do you remember what her name was then?

Mrs. Vapaa: I didn't remember then. And she wrote to him. She was all right then. Then after she cut them out, she got a very good husband. And I think he has a flour mill and he made very good *[inaudible] [0:33:33]*. He would go to the farmers and they – stuff there in the flour mill and how were the flour made from oats and barley and *[inaudible] [0:33:44]* everything from the farmers.

Interviewer: Did this mill work the whole year?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: They did.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: So in the winter time they hold the stuff in a sleigh, is that right?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: To the mill.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: In the summer time, they'd take it by wagon.

Mrs. Vapaa: No, no – yes. Same with the wheels on them. Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, Finland you know is called the land of 10,000 lakes. Did my daddy ever go on the lakes at all?

Mrs. Vapaa: I don't know. That part of the country, I don't know much. He was telling about it and he used to say that he's going to send me down there with you sometime or somebody. And she is a *[inaudible]* **[0:34:36]** but then she died.

Interviewer: So she died and he died when I was five.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And John was three.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, do you know why my dad left Finland? Why did he come to the United States?

Mrs. Vapaa: Just like everybody else that's looking for the better living.

[0:35:00]

Interviewer: And he got his training as a gardener in school.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And he worked in Finland as a gardener too.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah, yeah. Helper. Helper and then – I mean, just learning to garden in school.

Interviewer: Did he ever tell you anything about coming over to this country about the boat that he came over on or the boat that you came over on?

Mrs. Vapaa: No. I don't remember anything about that anymore. I guess the same thing like me. I mean, we came in first in England and then get to the boats and then across the ocean.

Interviewer: But you didn't come out on the same boat. So you didn't'...

Mrs. Vapaa: No.

Interviewer: You didn't meet until you were in this country.

Mrs. Vapaa: He got a job down in Connecticut. And I was there working in there. And he got the job there to work in the garden. And he wrote to me and he said that when he left that he's going to correspond with me and if any letters come *[inaudible] [0:36:13]* present to the family, to that place and then he go *[inaudible] [0:36:19]*. Then he wrote again then *[inaudible] [0:36:22]*.

Interviewer: Now, at that time though you weren't speaking any English were you?

Mrs. Vapaa: Not much.

Interviewer: So you talk in Finnish all the time.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Let's see. Where do we go from here? Well, let's talk a little bit now. He had work for Mr. Alfred I. Dupont and Mrs. Alfred I. Dupont.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And the he left there. Why did he leave there?

Mrs. Vapaa: Because it was so far from the town and we didn't have an automobile or anything. The chauffer would think that – nor that we ask if he had the chauffer with the help.

Interviewer: You remember, too, you told me that the wall that's around the Alfred I Dupont *[inaudible] [0:37:11]* was built when?

Mrs. Vapaa: It was, you know, started – we moved then *[inaudible] [0:37:15]* and he was afraid – he was afraid that – and the neighbor would come...

[Cross-Talk]

Interviewer: To the United States.

Mrs. Vapaa: She was crazy already. And she went *[inaudible]* [0:37:28]. And she told him too she didn't have to care anybody – if anybody says anything, you don't have to go. Then you do your work if you want to go downtown or you want to go anyplace, you just go. And if anybody says anything, don't pay no attention. She says, "I'm the one to go into *[inaudible]* [0:37:50]. But don't say anything or they'd be jealous and they'd be – say something to you but don't pay no attention. If I have something to say, I'll you."

Then she got sick and then nobody knows if she was home or where she was. We didn't see her. Then we heard about *[inaudible]* [0:38:17]. And he applied for the job and then he left. But she had asked him and then *[inaudible]* [0:38:27] how he was in there. I think she got mad when somebody said that she had *[inaudible]* [0:38:34] and asked and he wasn't there.

Interviewer: Now, when my father went to work for Rodney Sharp, was he the head gardener?

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: Was he in charge of all the gardeners?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. All the garden – yeah.

Interviewer: And how many were there? Do you not remember roughly?

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: How many gardeners did they have at Sharp?

Mrs. Vapaa: He still have the men, Kalinsky and – I don't think – what's *[inaudible]* [0:39:00] he got the extra help then but Joe Galinsky.

Interviewer: Joe Galinsky.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Frank was the oldest son.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Of *[inaudible]* [0:39:11].

Mrs. Vapaa: No. That was Joe and *[inaudible]* [0:39:12] then.

Interviewer: Yes.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: But I'm saying Frank Galinsky was his oldest boy.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: And he was killed during World War II wasn't he?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And Mrs. Galinsky is still living?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. I used to see her.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. And they were so glad *[inaudible]* **[0:39:33]**. Somebody asked – we're watching their *[inaudible]* **[0:39:38]**. Yes. We're fine. And we might *[inaudible]* **[0:39:48]** came to the door. He's so fat and he's just, "Oh, this is," and oh, she was so glad and then she called mother who was *[inaudible]* **[0:40:01]** coming down and she's got tools.

[0:40:04]

Interviewer: As I remember she lives on Maple Street in Wilmington. If I remember right the number is 1511 or something like that. And it's on – this is Pauley's town isn't it.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. It's Lena Pauley's church. We met her at that time when we were there. We come to their house at that time when they were looking for and then we went there. And *[inaudible]* **[0:40:31]** that her mother isn't of help but she went up and down the steps and begin to – it sounds like something from upstairs.

Interviewer: That's right.

Mrs. Vapaa: And she was in her handle and my *[inaudible]* **[0:40:48]** went down and through down the backyard. And her husband was there. Marcella's husband was there and it was nice backyard with the flowers and the vegetables down there, string beans and – it was nice.

Interviewer: Well, she's a lot like her daddy then was she?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah, I guess so.

Interviewer: Pretty good gardener.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. And he probably saw he grows vegetables. I mean...

Interviewer: Is Marcella's husband Polish?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Yes.

Interviewer: You don't remember, do you think?

Mrs. Vapaa: I think so. I forgot to know what his name is.

Interviewer: Well, we can look at that. We'll have to go see Marcella and Mrs. Galinsky again. And we'll see and find out what her married name is.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Because her brother Stanley still lives in Wilmington.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. But he told me all that but I forget things. But John, he was in *[inaudible] [0:41:55]*. I guess, we *[inaudible] [0:41:58]* better than I do. He was never up there but he got married there. And is he a priest?

Interviewer: Well, he wouldn't get to be married if he became a priest. He couldn't be because he's Catholic.

Mrs. Vapaa: That's right. He can't be a priest.

Interviewer: He can't be a priest.

Mrs. Vapaa: That's right. I was just watching and I was wondering if he's gotten married.

Interviewer: Did he marry someone in Europe?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: I see. Are they still living in Europe?

Mrs. Vapaa: I forget that even.

Interviewer: All right. We'll try and find that. We'll ask Marcella or Mrs. Galinsky.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Now, we've about covered the Sharps except – no, we haven't really covered it because let's see – when you first move to Sharp's, you moved in which house?

Mrs. Vapaa: We had a house on Greenhill Avenue. There's a big house.

Interviewer: On Pennsylvania Avenue?

Mrs. Vapaa: No. This one was tracing...

Interviewer: Greenhill?

Mrs. Vapaa: Greenhill but we're staying at the corner in *[inaudible] [0:43:22]* Avenue but nothing according to the original house in the corner, a double house. And while we were in this house and they have *[inaudible] [0:43:35]*. And then Mr. Sharp didn't like that we lived in that house because it should be them. So it wasn't so bad but I guess he didn't think that it was good enough for us, anyhow. Then she put us in the corner, Pennsylvania Avenue and...

Interviewer: Greenhill.

Mrs. Vapaa: Greenhill. In front or facing...

Interviewer: Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mrs. Vapaa: Our room was on both sides there.

Interviewer: Right.

Mrs. Vapaa: Both *[inaudible] [0:44:18]* I was there. So she put us in there and then – no before that, there was an English family. He was a butler and *[inaudible] [0:44:31]* with the Sharp. And this man has been there. He was taking care of their yard and horses. And he got mad, and then he didn't like it. He moved away. And then Mr. Sharp told us to move in there because the house except that house isn't good enough for us to move in that corner.

[0:45:05]

But then he started – he moved us to another house to us to move. He started to feel bad.

Interviewer: But while he was still building that house when Johnny was born wasn't he? You still lived on Greenhill Avenue? That house there. I think you told me that John was born...

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. I think he was born in that Greenhill Avenue – yeah.

Interviewer: Greenhill Avenue house.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: And this new house that he was building, was it in 15th and Clinton Street.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Which is right back – it's one block over from Greenhill Avenue.

Mrs. Vapaa: It's down in 14th Street then on to...

Interviewer: 14th?

Mrs. Vapaa: 14th Street.

Interviewer: Okay.

Mrs. Vapaa: 14th and Greenhill.

Interviewer: Just a short street, two blocks long, I think.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: No, it's longer than that but I'm not sure, Mom. But I believe that it was 15th and Clinton because the next street up was 16th, wasn't it?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. The next street is – I guess, it was 15th Street.

Interviewer: 15th and Clinton.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Yeah, because I think – there was 16th Street.

Interviewer: Now, how long did we live in that house, that new house before daddy died?

Mrs. Vapaa: Well, we lived there where *[inaudible]* **[0:46:37]** anyhow because that time your daddy died, they were in the – what corner *[inaudible]* **[0:46:45]**...

Interviewer: The Sharps?

Mrs. Vapaa: Sharp *[inaudible]* **[0:46:48]**.

Interviewer: They were around the world, weren't they?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

[Cross-Talk]

Interviewer: They can go around the world and they took the boys with them, you and the nurse. What was her name? Do you remember? *[inaudible]* **[0:47:03]**?

Mrs. Vapaa: *[inaudible]* **[0:47:06]**.

Interviewer: Well, it's not too important. But it was you, Sharp and what was the other boy's name?

Mrs. Vapaa: I don't know.

Interviewer: Art.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Okay. And they're both still living. And you lived on – in the old house on – they call it 16th and Brinkley Avenue as their mailing address.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Is *[inaudible]* **[0:47:33]** at that time?

Interviewer: Oh yes. I guess so. That's the address. It's in the telephone book. And I think he has an office. Both he and Bayard have offices in the Dupont building downtown in Wilmington. And I think that Bayard lives out in Centerville. And of course, Mr. Sharp over the years kept buying up a lot of properties and let's see. He didn't have too many I don't believe when we were living there. But over the years, I think he bought several properties.

Well, my daddy dies in June 1921, right?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And do you remember the exact date?

Mrs. Vapaa: No.

Interviewer: Well, I have to look at the tombstone. It is if I could...

Mrs. Vapaa: I can't remember.

Interviewer: But – and then...

Mrs. Vapaa: It seems to me around *[inaudible] [0:48:35]* I think.

Interviewer: And then after daddy died, what happened then?

Mrs. Vapaa: Of course, he left – Mr. Sharp left from the estate in *[inaudible] [0:48:49]* and I – of course, he's left – and Galinsky asked him that if he could move in the house because he was leaving in a bar down in *[inaudible] [0:49:10]*. He would go walk back and forth and he had the responsibility of the place. And so practically, helping everything to do away. So Sharp left along with *[inaudible] [0:49:26]*. And they moved in. Sure enough *[inaudible] [0:49:35]*.

But then I got this job on – it's the *[inaudible] [0:49:44]* came after me when I was in New York where my sister was dying. And I was there. And he got a message before he come in to the door and asked me to come and work for them.

[0:50:04]

And then – I said, "George, Johnny, got sick." *[inaudible] [0:50:09]*. He says Galinsky was dead. So I gave the message that Johnny was sick and my sister told me, she says, "You will place this at home." She never get to *[inaudible] [0:50:25]*. My place to is to come and she would use it – some *[inaudible] [0:50:31]*. I never forgot that night they come home at 1 o'clock in the morning. And I walk from the same Hill Avenue, there's some flowers on the side *[inaudible] [0:50:45]*. Then they touch *[inaudible] [0:50:49]*. I don't want somebody is doing to my legs and I was so nervous. I think it was 1 o'clock in the morning when I got home.

And I was young. I got better but my sister died. She didn't *[inaudible]* **[0:51:11]** in me.

Interviewer: Now, I seem to remember that I started school out there on Union Street.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: I think it was number – I don't even remember.

Mrs. Vapaa: 13.

Interviewer: Number 13th school, yeah. And I went to the first grade. And I guess I went there a year, didn't I or was it quite a year?

Mrs. Vapaa: I don't remember.

Interviewer: But then after that we had to – you had to get – you found another job with Meads *[phonetic]* **[0:51:46]**.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And then, you got married not too long. So you took this job with Meads and do you remember where we went?

Mrs. Vapaa: You see I worked with Mead already when Mr. Sharp didn't ask me to – didn't *[inaudible]* **[0:52:11]**.

Interviewer: This was a good state?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. It was -- we deal *[inaudible]* **[0:52:22]**, then 17th Street and Greenhill.

Interviewer: 17th and Greenhill, right.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Right on the corner.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: What kind of work did Mr. McCue *[phonetic]* **[0:52:30]** do?

Mrs. Vapaa: He worked in Mr. Sharp's office.

Interviewer: And Mr. Sharp worked for whom?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Who did he work for?

Mrs. Vapaa: Mr. Sharp. He got *[inaudible]* **[0:52:44]**.

Interviewer: You mean he worked for himself?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. I think so.

Interviewer: Do you know who he married?

Mrs. Vapaa: He married Barry Dupont's sister. Mrs. Sharp was Barry Dupont's sister. She was a Dupont. Besides he didn't have no money *[inaudible]* **[0:53:11]**. He was a good man.

Interviewer: He certainly was.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. He gave me then \$20 a month.

Interviewer: That was a lot of money in those days.

Mrs. Vapaa: It was a lot of money but then when I told him I was going to get married but then he *[inaudible]* **[0:53:28]**. Plus, he got this *[inaudible]* **[0:53:32]** when he came to meet because he come and then he gets *[inaudible]* **[0:53:36]**.

Interviewer: He did?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: That's nice.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: I never knew that.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Of course Mr. Sharp is dead now.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: But the boys are still living?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And the boys are older than I am. Do you know how old they were when I was little? Now, we have a picture of them and Elsie told me that Mr. – remember when we had that luncheon in January that he was always the shortest but he's the oldest of the two boys, right?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. Yes. He was his oldest.

Interviewer: Because it's Art, Sharp Jr. That's the way he signs his name.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: He doesn't use Rodney as I remember. And well, we got to good **[inaudible] [0:54:20]**. Now, how long were you at good **[inaudible] [0:54:25]**?

Mrs. Vapaa: I stayed there for many years. I can't leave them **[inaudible] [0:54:30]** anymore.

Interviewer: Well, you must have gone about 1916 or '17, right? Before 1920?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. I think so.

Interviewer: And you stayed there until about 1941 when you remarried.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Morris. That's Morris Gervin.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And Morris has just died this January, four days after my brother died.

[0:55:01]

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: And they both had the same operation. They both had their left legs taken off the same day after thanksgiving in 1973.

Mrs. Vapaa: It was just – it was the funniest thing because they both had the same thing.

Interviewer: Yes. Of course, John's trouble with diabetes. Morris' trouble was more hardening of the arteries, I think.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. But the...

Interviewer: But their legs came off the same day and the same legs.

Mrs. Vapaa: And the same legs.

Interviewer: Right. And John had already retired from the Dupont Company because of the so-called worn out heart. He'd had two heart attacks that we know of. And so – but he died in the – I think it was 5th of January and Morris died on the 9th.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. And the Dupont's gave me a pension now.

Interviewer: They do?

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. I get a 100 *[inaudible] [0:56:03]*.

Interviewer: That's all right.

Mrs. Vapaa: What do you think the Dupont's given me about *[inaudible] [0:56:12]*.

Interviewer: That's the Dupont Company then.

Mrs. Vapaa: What was it that...?

Interviewer: Blue Cross, Blue Shield.

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: Blue Cross, Blue Shield.

Mrs. Vapaa: What was that you shared that I don't need...

Interviewer: *[inaudible] [0:56:25]*.

Mrs. Vapaa: Huh?

Interviewer: *[inaudible] [0:56:26]*.

Mrs. Vapaa: But if you said that it's no use to keeping that *[inaudible]* [0:56:30].

Interviewer: Right because you have Blue Cross and Blue Shield from Dupont now.

Mrs. Vapaa: That's what I say, the Dupont's gave me.

Interviewer: But that's the Dupont Company.

Interviewer: That's the company.

Interviewer: That's the company because John worked for the Dupont Company.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes. But you see Dupont Company is giving me a sick fund for 100 *[inaudible]* [0:56:48].

Interviewer: Yes. And that's also the security...

Mrs. Vapaa: And then they gave in to the city *[inaudible]* [0:57:00] before I get sick. So I dropped my *[inaudible]* [0:57:02] company.

Interviewer: Your White Cross coverage.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah. I start to drop that.

Interviewer: Oh, I think that was probably a wise move because we found out when Morris died, we could not collect on the life part of the insurance because the policy said that it had to be death or it had to be caused by sickness. I mean, by an accident, not sickness and Morris died – didn't die of an accident. He died of a sickness.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: So that's a reason there wasn't any recovery on that. Well...

Mrs. Vapaa: If they're sending me another letter that they sent the one before and I thought they had remember, I asked the *[inaudible]* [0:57:47] I can't remember. And I asked her and she said that most *[inaudible]* [0:57:54]. I said that's where our lives stopped.

Interviewer: I should say at this point that we're talking about Vivian Lloyd, my niece. In other words, my brother's daughter. And she's your granddaughter.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yeah.

Interviewer: Well, mom, we still haven't gotten very far along. I couldn't stay. I think I've got some other tapes here that we can take some of the other stuff off of. But is there anything else you want to say about either Goodstein *[phonetic]* **[0:58:34]** or the farm or anything else?

Mrs. Vapaa: No. I don't know anything.

Interviewer: Except that Ray, my stepfather is taking good care of you.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes.

Interviewer: And Vivian.

Mrs. Vapaa: He's wonderful.

Interviewer: I think he is too.

Mrs. Vapaa: I think he is. I don't know how *[inaudible]* **[0:58:58]**.

Interviewer: The world is all fixed. He gets half of the income from the house when it's sold. So...

Mrs. Vapaa: I think you *[inaudible]* **[0:59:09]**.

Interviewer: Well, we could figure out what we do when you change your will.

Mrs. Vapaa: Yes, of course. That's really – that's really what they want with me. It's – I don't think it's *[inaudible]* **[0:59:26]**.

Interviewer: So I've got to wind this thing up somewhere, mom.

[0:59:30] **End of Audio**