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INTERVIEW OF

GEORGE, HOWARD, JOHN AND MARY PAPEN

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

GEORGE K. VAPAA, NARRATOR

Vapaa: It is a rainy Sunday, June 23, 1974, and we're at the farm of the Papen Brothers southwest of Dover. Let's have the people introduce themselves giving their place of birth, the date of birth, and ah, starting I guess with the--I was going to start with the youngest. Let's start with the oldest. How old are the two of you here. Come on, George.

G. Papen: Well, I'm George. I was born on August 1908 in Union City, New Jersey.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: Ah--

Vapaa: Who was your father?

G. Papen: My father eh--my father's name was John E. Papen. And he was born in New York City. My mother was also born in New York City. They were born 19--1880 and 1882 respectively.

Vapaa: Were they farmers?

G. Papen: No. No. They were born right--were born and raised right in the City of New York.

Vapaa: What did he--your dad do?

G. Papen: He was a--they call a wheelwright, a blacksmith, a wagon builder--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G. Papen: ...until about 1905. And then he--his father gave up the business and he--he went to work as a receiving--well, he worked as a clerk and worked up to a receiving manager in the Liggett Drug Company in New York City. That was his whole life. All--every day's work in his life was put in New York City.

Vapaa: Is that right?

G.Papen: Um-hum.

Vapaa: Now, let's take your wife. Mary?

M.Papen: Well, I was born in New Jersey--1914. I might as well put it down.

Vapaa: (laughter) All right.

M.Papen: And ah, my parents were--were not farmers either.

Vapaa: No.

M.Papen: No. And my father came to this country when he was 15. And he was a jockey. Of course, you could see he's pretty small (?)

Vapaa: Where did he come from?

M.Papen: Liverpool, England.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

M. Papen: And my mother was born and raised in New Jersey also.

Vapaa: I see. Whereabouts in New Jersey?

M.Papen: Ah, Pea Patch, New Jersey--Far--Far Hills, New Jersey, I guess.

Vapaa: Far Hills, New Jersey.

G.Papen: That's Somerset County.

M.Papen: Yeah, Somerset County.

Vapaa: Um-hum. OK, Howard?

H.Papen: I was born in West Patterson, New Jersey in 1914. And ah, spent all my younger life in New Jersey. I attended high school however at Somerville, New Jersey in Somerset County.

Vapaa: Um-hum. How'd you get to ah, Somerset County.

H.Papen: Expansion. Ah, it would start in reverse I suppose. Ah, George and John started in this produce business in Passaic County, New Jersey on a small operation with mostly rented land. And in 1926

they purchased a farm in--in Somerset County at Somerville, New Jersey.

Vapaa: How big a farm was that?

H.Papen: 380 acres.

Vapaa: Well, I better introduce myself ah, at this point. I'm George Vapaa and I was the Kent County Ag--Agricultural Agent up until the end of 1970 when a stroke put me out of business so to speak. So now I'm trying to do what the doctors tell me to do, to keep busy doing something and staying out of these rough fields. But ah, what we're trying to do here is get a history of your experiences in farming in ah, New Jersey as well as in Delaware, and when you came to Delaware and so forth like this. Let's start first of all though with your experiences farming there in New Jersey, Howard or George--either one of you.

G.Papen: Well, I started--my dad and mother bought a small place in Wayne, New Jersey in the year 1920. I was 12 years old and that was the year I started high school. And I took a vocational course in agriculture. Patterson, New Jersey had a course in vocational agriculture that had started just a year or two prior to that. And it was what they called a 6-6 course. Went to school 6 months and got practical experience the other 6 months.

Vapaa: You wouldn't happen to remember who your ag teacher was?

G.Papen: Oh, well, Mr. Fred Wolfley was ah, in charge of the agriculture department. In fact, the only teacher when I started. But within the 4 years that I was there they hired 2 other agriculture teachers. And one man's name was ah, Robert Potter. He lost his life not too long after I got out of high school in a drowning accident. And

then th--then they had another young man by the name of Metzger. What was his first name? But they had 3--3 agricultural teachers in Patterson High School before 1924.

Vapaa: I see.

G.Papen: And I graduated in 1924.

Vapaa: I see. And did you specialize in anything particular in your ag classes?

G.Papen: No. It was a general course. Now they did--the course I took was a 6-6 course and it was vocational agriculture. It was possible to take a scientific course for college entrance and daily try to cram in some practical work in 3 months. And the other boys had a little more ah,--

H.Papen: Academic.

G.Papen: ...academic studies. But ah, the course covered just about everything. And the agriculture teacher or teachers gave us most of the studies. I mean they even had such a thing as agriculture mathmatics which was different than ah, than ah, ah, academic ag--mathmatics.

Vapaa: Believe it or not, George, I taught a course in ag math--mathmatics when I was teaching vocational agriculture at Harrington. This was--I started there in 1938 and except for a period of fi--about 5 years during World War II I--I went back to Harrington before I became County Agent here ah, in Kent County. And I know what you mean when you're talking about some of this vocational agriculture work.

G.Papen: They had a ah, a wonderful set up in that in that school for that time as far as vocational studies. They had forge shop, tin shop,

they had carpenter shop, they had machine shop.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And ah, Patterson was a manufacturing town and had a lot of machine shop industry in it. And th--they had a course--they called it ah--. What did they call that course? But it was a vocational course where the student went to school 1 week and worked in the machine shop the other week. And they al--alternated. Th--the class would close up. They had wonderful shops there. But yet I can remember our agriculture teacher giving us instructions on the blackboard on the internal combustion machine. You know I got--I got a better basic knowledge of the inside of an automobile engine than the boys get out of our modern--ah, er,--. And we didn't have any practical work. It was just diagrams on the board and an explanation to what you were looking for.

Vapaa: You had no shop work in other words?

G.Papen: Oh yes, I did get machine shop and even tin shop right in with the other classes. And ah, carpenter shop.

Vapaa: Howard, did you have any similar experiences?

H.Papen: I started--started that same course in 1926. But ah, then we moved to Somerville and it was not available in Somerville High School. There also I took a straight scientific course in--in Somerville High School.

Vapaa: Now, you are the salesman so to speak for this ah, family corporation here in Delaware. Did you take an--any business training in high school?

H.Papen: No indeed. No.

Vapaa: So where did you get your business training?

H.Papen: Where do wha--most people get their training--in the school of hard knocks, I guess. (laughter)

Vapaa: Well ah, you certainly do a fine job here, ah, in Delaware. And as Sud Emerson your--one of your brokers that helps you sell a little bit here locally has said, "We don't know of any better vegetable farmers all--up and down the east coast and probably over the country ah, of your size."
Now this farm now is how many acres?

H.Papen: Well--

Vapaa: Tillable acres?

G.Papen: We--we are working about 1100 acres on and off. I mean from 1 year to the next ah, with some rented land in addition to our own.

Vapaa: Is that included in the 1100 acres?

G.Papen: Yes. Ye--I mean the--

Vapaa: You own what, about 900?

G.Papen: We own about 900 acres.

Vapaa: Now ah, let's see, when you came to Delaware how big was this farm and when did you come?

H.Papen: Our original purchase was this farm where we are here of 334 acres.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: And during the next 10 years I guess we purchased the 4 adjoining farms which has brought it to the present acreage.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Who owned these farms before you came here? Do you remember?

G.Papen: Chester Townsend owned this original farm.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: The next farm we purchased was from a party by the name of Joe Messina.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Is he the same one who lived up between here and Smyrna?

G.Papen: Same man. Right. And ah, the next--the next place we purchased was ah, John Zimmerman's small farm of 78 acres.

Vapaa: That hasn't been too long ago.

G.Papen: 1959 or 60.

Vapaa: Well, it goes back a little ways.

G.Papen: And in ah, 1966 however that I think we bought the--

H.Papen: Miller Farm.

G.Papen: ...Miller Farm and the Jergens farm.

H. Papen: Jergens place.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G. Papen: The Jergens farm originally was a Townsend farm too. Originally belonged to Mr. Ebe Townsend.

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Papen: Two owners before us.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: There was Warren and Jergens and then us.

Vapaa: I forget Jergens first name. Now, I remember the Snooky, but do you remember his first name? (CHAUNCEY) GKV.

G.Papen: Well, Snooky was only a working man.

H.Papen: Working man.

M.Papen: His name was Chauncy De Voe.

Vapaa: Chauncey De Voe. That's right.

M.Papen: Yes.

H.Papen: It was Fred and ah, ah, Arthur Jergens from Long Island owned the property.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: And it was Fred--

Vapaa: But Chauncey came from Long Island too, didn't he?

H.Papen: Yes. They sent him down here to manage the place when he first took it over.

Vapaa: And he grew potatoes on that farm, didn't he?

H.Papen: Yes. Um-hum.

Vapaa: Did he grow anything else?

H.Papen: Occasionally a little cabbage, but it was primarily potatoes.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Ah, well, let's talk about--

H.Papen: It might--it might be noted, George, ah, for the record, the Jergens' property is actually purchased by the junior members of the present firm. I mean by that George, John and I, we did not purchase that.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: It's ah,--

G.Papen: Richard, Jack and Edward Cox (?) that own that farm.

Vapaa: Um-hum. (clock striking)

G.Papen: They bought it basically the way we own these other farms.

Vapaa: I see. But you operate it?

G.Papen: Yes, it's all Papen Farms, Incorporated. It's made up of the 7

--7 of us now is actually what is involved.

Vapaa: Don't worry about that clock. I'm sure this tape is picking that noise up, but it won't make any difference.

G.Papen: We ah--

H.Papen: Only background.

M.Papen: We could turn it off.

Vapaa: No.

G.Papen: But Papen Farms operation here rent this property and pay a rent to the younger boys for their farm and to the older generation here for their farm.

Vapaa: Let's go back as far as we can ah, to your grandparents. Ah, now they--did they also live in New York City? Or did any of them come from Europe or anything like this?

G.Papen: My dad's parents both come from part of Germany. Ah--

Vapaa: Do you remember what part?

G.Papen: Well, Hanover. Actually, I think my grandfather came over at the time that Hanover was a separate country.

Vapaa: Yes.

H.Papen: 1860 when Bismarck took over the united Germany.

G.Papen: And ah, and Grandma, I believe, came from that same area of Germany. I never heard a history. I did know about grandpa because he'd been involved in those wars over there. When they lost he come over here.

Vapaa: What kind of work did he do?

G.Papen: He was a blacksmith. He own--he set up--he had a shop on 14th

Street--14th & West Street, I believe, in--or 14th Street anyway--New York City.

Vapaa: New York City. Yeah.

G.Papen: And dad--that's where dad as he owned--where he grew up in the blacksmith business.

Vapaa: And got his training.

G.Papen: And I remember them saying--dad said when the city got grown up they--they moved up--they moved the shop to 23rd Street.

Vapaa: UM-hum.

G.Papen: That was up town--

H.Papen: Out of town. (laughter)

G.Papen: ...that was out of town. And he wouldn't commute from 14th Street to 23rd Street. They had to sell their house and buy a house across the street up there. Because those days he--he couldn't waste a half hour or 20 minutes traveling a day each way. He had a live near his work. It's a far cry from what people do today.

Vapaa: Yes. I don't know whether I ought to tell you this, George, or not, or Howard; but I too, was born in New York City. But mine was kind of an accident. My dad was an estate gardener. He had been trained in Finland and had immigrated to this country in 1908. And ah, he worked in Pennsylvania on some big estate there. And then he got his first job in Delaware on what is now the Alfred I. duPont estate Institute. I don't know whether you know where the duPont Country Club is or not, but this estate

is--has a stone wall around it. It was put up there incidentally during World War I, in the middle of the war. Mr. Alfred I. duPont lived there at the time. And Mrs. duPont knew that my mother was carrying me. And ah, so she insisted that I should be born in the hospital. So she had my father take my mother up to ~~Fin~~ FINN Town in New York City which at the time was up around--right in the center of Harlem.

G.Papen: Yeah.

Vapaa: 126th Street and 7th Avenue. I don't know whether that's where the hospital or not is--was; but anyway, that's where I was born in Harlem Hospital. I never lived there at all. But of course, until I had my stroke we went up to New York quite often.

G.Papen: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And ah, I've always found New York City quite interesting. I'm always been glad that I never had to (tape messed up unintelligible) Well, that was before-- (voice overlaps - unintelligible) Well, believe it or not, Howard, yes my background does include ah--. We were not rich by any sense--in any sense of the word. My mother came from a farm in Finland. And my dad came from a--well, he--I don't know whether he was a farmer or not, but he was trained as an estate gardener in school in ~~Salemlina (?)~~ SAVONLINNA, Finland which is on the eastern side of Finland. And mother was from western Finland. And they met over here.

M.Papen: Um-hum.

Vapaa: And my mother when she came over in 1909 lived in Connecticut for awhile. And then came back. Well, that's enough on me. This is supposed to be about Papen Brothers.

G.Papen: Well, Mary's dad that we spoke of before he--he was a--that was his business. He was a gardener. Well, he worked for wealthy people. We'll put it that way. At one time he--he trained horses. Then he took care of fox hounds and besides that he was a gardener. Whichever the ah--well,she grew up on some of these big estates. She knows what wealthy people used to be. She wasn't the wealthy one, but--

M.Papen: No.

G.Papen: ...they used ah--they lived in--in beautiful environments.

M.Papen: Houses right on the estate there.

G.Papen: They always had a house--a modest house on a big estate. And ah, she's played with these multi-millionaire children and--

Vapaa: Move over, kid.

G.Papen: Didn't wipe off on her. They didn't (unintelligible)

M.Papen: (unintelligible)

G.Papen: But ah, she knew how those kind of people lived. I mean, she--she has seen that.

Vapaa: All right. Well, let's talk a little bit about your farming up in Jersey. What you did, what you grew, and this kind of thing? And then, Howard, you can tell us how you sold--I presume you sold it even then.

G.Papen: Well, we--while I was in school, I was young--very young and

rather small to be in high school. And instead of going out and working on the farm for 6 months--we had about 7 acres then that I started farming myself and had to keep a complete project. That was in 1920-21-22-23. In 1924 I graduated. By that time my brother John, he had been working in New York City in ah, insurance business on Wall Street, didn't seem to be getting along too good. And my mother would say,"Well, I'm sure he would desire to quit." But besides that at that time I think he was about 18 - 19. And he quit work and then he went into the poultry business believe it or not. But it wasn't poultry like here today.

Vapaa: No. Layers, layers.

G.Papen: And at that time I was in those 4 years that I was in school commercial poultry farms--com--commercial egg farms was just coming into being. And New Jersey was a pioneer in--in commercial egg farms. There was one farm--I can remember it very well--it was called the White Egg Farm. It was one of the biggest farms for eggs certainly that I knew of, and was known all over. It had 3,000 layers and that was a big farm.

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Papen: And for 3,000 layers I think it had 5--yeah, it had 15 40 x 20 coops spaced oh, hundreds of feet apart. Because that was to keep disease--

Vapaa: Disease out. Right.

G.Papen: ...out. And ah, the open front, fresh air idea of keeping chickens originated around that time. And--and that's where we started.

And we kept several hundred chickens for a few years, but then got into vegetables.

Vapaa: Has that been your only experience with livestock?

G.Papen: Really, yes. Keep a couple of cows to feed the family or eat some steaks once in awhile. We kept horses back in them days. We didn't have tractors(?) That's as much as we knew about it.

Vapaa: Do you remember when you shifted to tractors?

G.Papen: Well, the first tractor I think we owned was about 1926.

Vapaa: '26.

G.Papen: When we went to Somerville we bought I guess 2 Fords and tractors that would go--

Vapaa: Those were the kind you used to break your thumb, wasn't it?

H.Papen: You could break a leg.

G.Papen: Oh, Yes, break your neck. (laughter) They were something. You know you always had to back 'em in a shed. And if you got 'em going, you had a jumpt 'em in gear and go and then look for a big hill to go up and hope it would stop. So--the clutch wouldn't let go. What they would call an oil clutch and the oil was not even. In the old days they would take--but they were--. You got a lot of work done with 'em. We thought they were a great invention.

Vapaa: Now, how long did you farm in New Jersey.

G.Papen: Well as I say, we started there at--you might call it farming--1924. And it was--well, ah, ah, 1926 we moved to Somerville. And then in 1962 we came down here. So we were--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: ...we were about 25 or 26 years in Somerset County, but only a

few years--my high school years and 2 or 3 years beyond that--we was up in Passaic County.

Vapaa: Now, somewhere along the way both of you got married I guess.

G.Papen: Yes.

H.Papen: I think there was something about that happening.

G.Papen: Yeah, I remember it--getting married. I don't remember anything since, but ah-- (laughter)

M.Papen: Doesn't sound so well, does it?

G.Papen: Well, I was married in 1936.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: It's in Somerset County.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: But my brother John, who's my older brother,--. I was a little fellow. See he was always--he was always 6 years younger than I was. Still is. So when I was--when I was 12 Howard was only 6. So I did the big job and Howard had to pull the weeds by hand. He--he was always my slave it seemed to me. I think he is yet.

H.Papen: No I--well George was in that high school course--that is, both summers we grew oh, perhaps 3 acres or so of vegetables crops.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: And maybe even less than that. To us it was quite an operation. And we--

Vapaa: Lot of weeds.

H.Papen: ...we peddled them in the local community there. Ah, 3 days a week we had a peddle wagon and went through town and sold our vegetables. And then as George explained that when he graduated

from school he and John went into farming. And they rented some land and then started what you'd call commercial wholesale growing. First market the first 2 years was in Patterson, New Jersey.

Vapaa: Did either of you ever grow potatoes?

H.Papen: No. Never.

G.Papen: (voice overlap unintelligible) I hoed potatoes once back in--during--in about 1918, I guess, during the World--First World War. Pop planted (laugh) 'em, because it was patriotic. And we had to hoe the weeds. That was the only thing I know about--. And that wasn't the only thing we did. We used to go along and pick the potato bugs off and put 'em in a pan--put ker--eh, can of kerosene and then burn 'em.

Vapaa: That kind of ah, testifies, I guess, your--

G.Papen: We used to knock 'em off of the stick.

Vapaa: Stick, yeah.

H.Papen: It was not injurious anyhow (laughter).

G.Papen: There was no--no environmental problem.

Vapaa: Umm. Well, did we ever say when you got married?

G.Papen: In 1936 I got married.

Vapaa: 1936--and where?

G.Papen: At ah--

Vapaa: Somerville?

G.Papen: Yeah. Somerville would be the better name, but it was really Cluckemin. Now if you want to get something on the record, there's a town in New Jersey by the name of Cluckemin. And it's the only--

Vapaa: Do you know how to spell it?

G.Papen: Sure. There's one in Scotland, too.

Vapaa: Oh.

G.Papen: Yeah. Yeah.

Vapaa: OK. Well ah, whoever wants to look it up can look it up.

G.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: As long as you say there's one in Scotland.

M.Papen: Yeah.

G.Papen: C-l-u-c-k-e-m-i-n.

Vapaa: Oh.

G.Papen: And there's a lot of reasons--ideas where the name originated.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Now Howard, when did you get married?

H.Papen: I was married in '41 also at Somerville, New Jersey.

Vapaa: Um-hum. I say when did the children come along?

M.Papen: Richard was born in 1937.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

M.Papen: Mary in '38, Margie in '41--let's see now--Evvy in '44--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

M.Papen: ...Jimmy in '5- ah--

G.Papen: No, '47.

M.Papen: '4_--Jimmy in '47 and Janet in--

G.Papen: '51.

M.Papen: '51.

G.Papen: They were all born in New Jersey. And Janet was only--less than a year old.

M.Papen: One year old--yeah.

Vapaa: How about your children, HOWARD [redacted]?

H.Papen: My children were both adopted.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: We adopted Lucy in 1948 and Chris in 1952.

Vapaa: I see. Now, along about 1952 I think you told me yesterday you came to Delaware. Is that right?

H.Papen: That's right.

Vapaa: Was that for the crop year in--of 1952?

H.Papen: Yes.

M.Papen: Well, we moved in March.

G.Papen: Yes, we moved here in March, I think the 17th of 1952. And we grew crops the first year.

G.Papen: And we continued the operation of the Somerville farm for 6 more years. Yeah, until '5_--'58

H.Papen: '58 they continued operating the farm in Somerville.While George and I was here, John and his son and son-in-law were operating the farm at Somerville.

Vapaa: And how many acres was at Somerville did you say? 300?

H.Papen: 380 acre farm, but we only had about 125 of that tillable. And we rented land from neighbors there to--

Vapaa: Was it difficult to rent land there?

H.Papen: Not at that time. At that time that particular section was not adaptable to vegetable growing at any rate. And dairying was the main crop in the area. I mean the main business in the area. And ah, there was considerable land available in the '30's. And that's when we started renting land up there.

G.Papen: I'd like to put this in. You say, was it hard? It's almost for nothing. And to this day if you want to go up in New Jersey, you can get land for practically nothing. Either nothing or $4 or $5 an acre. I mean, really-

H.Papen: You--you'll find land that you feel you could still work, you can get it--or eh--

G.Papen: The people that own the land that's not being used are glad to leave you use it to keep the brush down. And they do have ah, a farm ah, farm valuation tax set up similar to Delaware. And if they can get somebody to work that land for nothing, they save considerable in taxes. The owner saves it in taxes.

Vapaa: They simply defer the taxes, don't they--until they use--

G.Papen: No, it's not a completely deferred--. What I think happens when you do sell it or change it's land use, you have to pay back the last 2 years. Or is it 5 years?

H.Papen: Five years, I believe, is what they say.

G.Papen: It was one time only a year or two and then they may have increased it. But then in other words it's retroactive. Your--the ah, new assessment that you will get when it's used for another purpose (voice overlaps unintelligible) you'll have to pay 5--. Howard said 5 times, I thought it was only 2 times that amount. Of course, deducting what small tax you paid before.

Vapaa: Well, in ah, the Somerville area today is there enough land to farm it profitably?

G.Papen: If you say the Somerville area, there is--there are farms operating. As a matter of fact, only a few weeks ago I saw a documentary on

television depicting a couple of farms right in that area showing how difficult it is for them to operate in ah--in area that is, I guess you might say, highly developed residentually and so forth. But it is being done. And ah, it's questionable whether or not.

H.Papen: Now most of those farms are dairy farms that are being operated.

G.Papen: Yes. It is.

H.Papen: Now, there are probably some small vegetable gardens still ah, associated with road stands and such.

Vapaa: Would that be on the scale that you are --

G.Papen: Not in that area. No. No, no.

H.Papen: Purely commercial.

Vapaa: You have to go to southern Jersey for that.

G.Papen: Southern Jersey. And there is up in ah, Warren County there are a few big growers. Up around I think Mohackistown(?)

H.Papen: Great Meadows area and so forth.

G.Papen: Yes, but ah, Somerset County, Passaic County, Morris County, Oregon, Middlesex and those--. No, Middlesex has some farms in it. Yes, but ah--

Vapaa: Now you go up and down that turnpike--you go the turnpike you see it on either side.

G.Papen: Well, when you're right around Cranberry, New Jersey that was beautiful land in there. And there's still some wide open land and some of it's being used. But years--when we moved down here in '52 they was a tremendous amount of potatoes growing in that--in that area.

Vapaa: Yes.

H.Papen: Jersey grew a lot of potatoes.

Vapaa: Yes, I remember a court suit that Ed Brown, you know, of Cheswold was involved in. And it was with a broker up at Cranberry.

H.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: And he won the suit in court. He had asked me to ah, appear with him in court. And ah, I was supposed to be supened for it. But ah, oddly enough I ah, I wasn't aware of it until it was all over.

G.Papen: Un-hun.

Vapaa: They told me I should have been suppenaed to make this court appearance. But anyway, Ed won his case against this ah--

G.Papen: It's awful big--

Vapaa: I call him a Philadelphia lawyer.

G.Papen: Several big brokerages in (unintelligible) Cranberry. And the one was ah, but I don't think necessarily this is the one Ed Brown was involved in, but a big fertilizer company that he had handled-- Chamber & Barkley was one and there was another one--

Vapaa: That's the one, George.

G.Papen: Chamber & Barkley.

Vapaa: Yeah.

G.Papen: Well, when we first came to Delaware for a year or two we used to get our fertilizer from Chamber & Barkley trucked down here. Things have changed a lot.

Vapaa: Oh, yes.

G.Papen: You know we could buy our fertilizer cheaper than the fellow next door there. They would assume the complete trucking rate from their plant to here.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And ah, well, it wasn't no cheaper. We paid the same price--

Vapaa: Sure.

G.Papen: ...and the fellow next door to their Hurry (?) plant--in other words, had to be subsidized in our trucking rate. I don't know. That's the way they were doing things them days.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: Yeah. Ah, but we--we were going on what we did in New Jersey (unintelligible). We stayed there in Passaic County and had poultry for a couple of years and worked in to a (unintelligible) farm. I think it had 70 acres. Maybe it was less than that.

H.Papen: Over in Lincoln --

G.Papen: Lincoln Park.

H.Papen: ...Park which was in Morris County only a few miles from our home-- That was in 1926. That was actually where our--I guess we became dedicated to the produce business. That's about the time.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And that was a beautiful piece of land. Wasn't too large. I think it was about 50 acres we used. But it was as flat as this table and it had a sandy loam.

Vapaa: If you could have your druthers, would you rather be on another piece of land or do you prefer this farm and your father's(?) farm in this county or state?

G.Papen: Oh, I think there's other farms in this state and in this state just as good as ours. I don't--I think we've got a very good location in Kent County and not--in the Delmarva Peninsula. If you go over near Preston, Maryland, they've got beautiful land. Oh, and you go in Kent County, Maryland there's beautiful land in this Peninsula.

And I think we have--even though it's raining every day now--we've got a more uniform climate than most places in the world. There may be some that's better. But by far, we're up in the top 10. Yeah, I'm sure of that.

Vapaa: Of course, I guess we could describe this as a wet year, can't we?

G.Papen: Yes, we've had a--

M.Papen: So far.

G.Papen: ..wet--a wet season I think for 3 years now.

H.Papen: And yet in church this morning they prayed for rain for the farmers. And it is true up until yesterday, I guess, there were sections right in--right around the nearby area that were suffering for the want of water.

Vapaa: Herb Richardson was one of 'em complaining.

G.Papen: He was?

Vapaa: Yeah.

G.Papen: Now, you see they didn't get--. We got 2½ inches of rain last Sunday that Herbe didn't get. (laughter)

Vapaa: And he was estimating last night--he was happy last night because it was raining in Dover and he knew he was getting his share. (laugh)

G.Papen: Well actually though, George, It's not the dry--

Vapaa: No.

G.Papen: ...and the ah--. I presume the general farm crops do better in the wet year than they do in a dry--certain spots. I've found out that the others make up for them. When it's dry the whole place is dry and you don't get anything. But it--it's not beendry. And Herb wasn't in bad shape except that he didn't want a irrigating.

Vapaa: No. No.

G.Papen: But that's what we have irrigation systems for.

Vapaa: He's all set up for it. And he says all he has to do is turn it on.

G.Papen: Yeah.

Vapaa: And he's glad he's set up that way.

M. Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: And he has had it on, I guess.

G.Papen: Yeah.

Vapaa: But ah, ah, I don't know whether you know it or not, but the water records over a period of years show that out of 10 years we'll have an average of 6 dry years for every 4 years of wet weather.

G.Papen: Well, this is about the 4th year. I think that--. You know Gene Gagen?

Vapaa: Sure.

G.Papen: I remember when the wet spell started. It was about 3 days after--3 days before his daughter was married. And then--that was his second daughter.

Vapaa: Second daughter.

G.Papen: We were--the day we went to the--to his daughter's wedding, we were trying to set late cabbage. And that was the early part of August. And the ground was too wet. We couldn't even find a dry spot to get going. And that had been the first time in at least 6 years that we ever had that problem. Because at least 6 years before that we--we'd go through a whole summer without a--even one thunderstorm.

(tape ended)

Vapaa: And yet ~~Dean's~~ GENE'S soil is very much like yours, isn't it? 'Cause it's just north of here.

G.Papen: Yeah. I--I wasn't talking about ~~Dean's~~ GENE'S soil, but I can remember that morning trying to get them started setting cabbage and then going to ~~Dean's~~ GENE'S daughter's wedding that afternoon. And that had been the first we'd had a rain of 3 or 4 inches a few days previous. And we--I'd got to get the (unintelligible) working.

Vapaa: I think we should explain at this point that ~~Dean~~ GENE Gagen used to grow potatoes on--I don't know how many acres he got on that piece of ground? 1200?

G.Papen: No.

H.Papen: He had only 180 acres that he tilled. He had--he also had that farm at Leipsic too, you know.

Vapaa: Yes, and then he also tilled Joe Wilds' ground.

H.Papen: That's ah--

G.Papen: At different times. But ah, on an average I think he grew between 3 and 400 acres of potatoes a year.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: See the one--before we bought the Jergen farm he worked his farm and Jergens which is 200 acres. And they were very close together. And it was very convenient. And then after we bought the Jergen farm he bought the farm up at Leipsic. Which was a good farm and I guess it had around 200 acres, but it was very inconvenient. He had a move his machinery and everything.

Vapaa: Who's tilling that land now?

G.Papen: Ah, one time--I think last year ah, not Mike, but I think Phil Cartanza, I believe, had it.

H.Papen: That's right.

G.Papen: I'll tell you who owns the land now is Whe--Reds Wheatly owns--owns the farm.

Vapaa: I didn't know that.

G.Papen: He bought it from ~~Dean.~~ GENE

Vapaa: Of course, he sold his processing plant and all of his land up at Clay~~mont~~ LON--

G.Papen: Some of it.

Vapaa: Not all of it, but--

G.Papen: He had sold everything he had. And he said he had a own something in Delaware so he bought that (laughter and voice overlap, unintelligible). Because actually ah, this is no--no secret at all. ~~Dean~~ GENE spoke to us about buying that farm before--

Vapaa: joining (?)

G.Papen: ...Wheatly bought it. And we considered it. It's a good farm. But I can't see going across the county. You know, it's--it's too much expense involved.

Vapaa: Well of course, ~~Dean~~ GENE was unusual in one respect. I think he had never had any sons I don't believe.

G.Papen: No.

Vapaa: And ah, he was trying to operate 2 farms at least 10 miles apart--one at Leipsic and one at ah, here west of Dover.

G.Papen: He did--he did a wonderful job.

Vapaa: Yes, he--

G.Papen: But he was under a strain. He had a man worked for him for years--Robert. And just around Labor Day he'd have to move all that machinery over to Leipsic. And Robert was trying to get across

13 highway on that weekend (laughter). But ah, see Emerson (unintelligible) a harvester. And he stopped there quite a while. And I guess it give him time to think. And he got across. (laughter) And ~~Dean~~ GENE got to talking to him. He says, "I can see them cars a going." (laughter) But he says, "Where do they go when they stop." (laughter) He--he thought being there was so many cars going by he wanted to know where they was when they stopped.

H.Papen: Couldn't figure where they parked 'em all.

G.Papen: And ah, ah, that was a--afunhy (unintelligible) But that makes things very un--inconvenient. You see, George, we own that farm where Jack Walton is--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: Ah, we bought it in 1960.

Vapaa: Let's explain who Jack is now.

G.Papen: Well, Jack Walton is my son-in-law--married my oldest daughter.

Vapaa: And your oldest daughter's name?

G.Papen: Mary.

Vapaa: Mary.

G.Papen: Mary, yeah.

Vapaa: And how old is she? You might as well tell me.

G.Papen: Mary's 37, ain't she?

M.Papen: (voice overlap, unintelligible) She was born in '38.

G.Papen: OK. So she's ah--

Vapaa: Let 'em figure it out. (laugh)

G.Papen: How old would that make her?

Vapaa: It's 1974 so that's --

G.Papen: 36 years.

H.Papen: 36 years.

M.Papen: 36, yeah.

Vapaa: 36 years.

G.Papen: Jack is ab--about the same age.

M.Papen: Yes. Jack be 36 in December.

G.Papen: And ah, but we worked that farm for about 4 or 5 years til Jack took it over. And that isn't near as hard to get to as Leipsic. But it was just too inconvenient. Believe it or not, we made money on that farm. (voice overlap) The point is, George, you have so much involved in your expense of operation that it can be 10% more efficient, you save enough money to pay for a lot higher priced land or whatever inconvenience you'd have to go through to compensate for your--your--your inefficiency in--at a different place. We made money on that farm every year that we gr--worked it. But ah, we were losing a certain percentage of it in our efficiency of operation.

Vapaa: Yes. You were trying to grade and pack over here, weren't you?

G.Papen: Yes. We (H & G Papen speaking together) We brought just about everything back here--cucumbers, corn.

Vapaa: And now Jack does it all down there?

G.Papen: Oh, Jack runs his own business entirely

H.Papen: He (H & G Papen speaking together, unintelligible)

Vapaa: Somebody told me he just put up a storage shed. Is that right?

Cold Storage?

G.Papen: Oh yeah, he's got a big cold storage room and he's got the foundation and the material for a big new packing house that he meant to get up this past winter. But he didn't get it up. And of course, partly because he's been su--been hurting with that eye.

M.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: I'm sure if he'd been in good health--

M.Papen: It'd been up, I'm sure.

G.Papen: ...he'd a had it up. But he's got very good boys that work there 2 brothers and Paul ~~Shetland(?)~~ SCHAEFFER works for him. And he's got the best for help.

Vapaa: Now ah, yeah, Paul's a good man.

G.Papen: Oh yes, he's got very good help. If he didn't, he'd a been out of luck. He hasn't been able to do a day's work--

M.Papen: No.

G.Papen: ...since last August. Well, that's exaggerated, what I say.

M.Papen: (voice overlapped by G.Papen, unintelligible)

G.Papen: He hasn't done a go--a full day's work I--I would say since last August, because with something like that on you you just don't--

H.Papen: He's made over a hundred trips to Philadelphia in that length of time for the treatment on that. Besides staying there for a few weeks.

M.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: Did he drive himself up or someone take him?

G.Papen: Oh, no.

M.Papen: Mary--

G.Papen: He hasn't driven since August.

M.Papen: ...Mary does all the driving because he's not able to drive.

G.Papen: His perception is such that he can't even pretend to drive.

Vapaa: And how many children do they have?

M.Papen: They have 5.

Vapaa: 5. Now Jack didn't have any farm experience when he came here, did he?

G.Papen: No.

Vapaa: What's his background?

H.Papen: He's in--

M.Papen: Three years in the Merchant Marine Academy.

H.Papen: ...Merchant Marine Academy.

G.Papen: I think he was in--I don't know if he was born in Wyoming, but he spent the best part of his life in Wyoming.

M.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: Went to--graduated from Caesar Rodney.

Vapaa: Caesar Rodney.

G.Papen: Same time as Mary did.

M.Papen: Yes, he graduated there.

H.Papen: That's an interesting th--fact though. None of the Waltons were ever engaged in farming ah, that I know of. And here Jack and his 3 brothers are all deeply engaged in farming.

M.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: That's right. And the brothers are married into the Fifer family.

H.Papen: One brother.

M.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: One of 'em is.

M.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: And the other still working for Jack. Purely military background--that's all he ever had done. He was a major in the Army retire--resigned from the Army not retired--resigned from the Army and went into this.

H.Papen: Who?

G.Papen: Bruce.

H.Papen: Bruce, yes. Well, Jack did too. He--

M.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: ...he came back as a first Lieutenant.

M.Papen: Oh, yeah.

H.Papen: But that was the Reserves. But Bruce was working full time in--in Army work all his life.

Vapaa: So you see-

M.Papen: Well, and George too.

G.Papen: George (everyone speaking, unintelligible) ...came from the soil--came from the soil. They came from over near Massey.

H.Papen: Oh, yes.

M.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: Massey, Maryland.

All Papens: Yes.

G.Papen: Up in that area anyhow. But ah, his uncle and his father--George Walton lives near Newark now--but ah--

M.Papen: Rhesa?

G.Papen: Rhesa Walton, yes.

Vapaa: Rhesa.

G.Papen: Yeah, he--

Vapaa: I didn't know he's over there.

G.Papen: Yeah. He--Rhesa--

(everyone speaking - unintelligible)

G.Papen: But their father and mother live up near Massey. They had a--

M.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: ...some kind of a farm up there, I believe.

M.Papen: Yeah.

Vapaa: 'Course Rhesa's still in the military. Although he--

M.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: ...was for awhile for Southern States Cooperative--

M.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: ...if you remember. And he also worked for Marker's Hatchery. I don't know if you remember that either?

G.Papen: Yes. Yes.

M.Papen: Yes. After A~~lbert Colbert (?)~~-- ELBERT GOLDER

Vapaa: After ~~Albert~~ ~~Colbert~~ ELBERT GOLDER left I think he worked there for awhile.

M & G Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: Well, his brother George, Jack's father, has been in the military longer.

M.Papen: He's just retired as--what?

G.Papen: General.

M.Papen: General, yeah. He just retired 2 years ago, was it?

H.Papen: Yeah, I think so or less than 2 years ago.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

M.Papen: Two years ago, yeah.

G.Papen: Well, then we went to--we rented this farm up in New Jersey. Up in Passaic County for a whole year. In 1926 we moved to Somerset County. And I'll tell ya, Dr.--Dr. ~~Nisely (?)~~ Nissley--

M.Papen: ~~Nisely(?)~~ Nissley

G.Papen: ...from Rutgers University--

Vapaa: I remember the name. He wrote a textbook I believe.

G.Papen: He was apretty quiet man. He was a quiet man. And he had a--had a position I think that would compare with ah, Bob Stevens. (U. of D. Horticulture)

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And the first--

Vapaa: (voice overlap - unintelligible)

G.Papen: Yeah, yeah. And the--worked with the Extension Service. And the first year we were--we finished up in the fall we got in contact with him and he come out. We had planted corn in some of these fields. Now this farm we had bought in Somerset County hadn't been tilled--some of it for 30 years. We plowed cedar trees--cut the cedar trees out and plowed some of them under. Well, the corn had terrible bad growth in some spots--good spots in others. And he came up and looked at it. Well he says ah, "You know what to do. Plow it and plant a cover crop. Plow the cover crop under, plant it in a summer cover crop and keep on fertilizing. Two or 3

years it might grow something," he said.

Vapaa: Umm-hum.

G.Papen: I said, "Yeah, but Doctor, you can't eat cover crops." But here a few years ago you stop down--it was quite a few years ago--he stopped down here. He was on his way down to see--you tell it--worked for Cannon. Ah, Doc, oh--

Vapaa: Dr. Hammond?

G.Papen: No.

H.Papen: No.

Vapaa: Couldn't be Dr. Hammond.

G.Papen: Unn, well, this was--

Vapaa: H.P. Cannon you're talking about at Bridgeville?

G.Papen: Yeah. We'll get to it. That--they had--they were school mates up there. And he stopped in here. And of course, this has been 30 years after we first got him up there to--to Somerville. He said, "You know, when I come on that farm I didn't know what to tell you boys." (laughter) He said--he said, "All I could think of was you'll starve to death there." (laughter) But we stayed there for 26 years. And we--we--I practically raised my family there.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And as far as the cropswe grew--we grew at least 6 or 8 different things. And the reason we grew so many things was I was afraid to give up anyone of them for fear my kids would go hungry. You know. I had to grow--we grew carrots, we grew beets, we grew kale--

H.Papen: Squash.

M.Papen: Squash.

G.Papen: ...squash, spinach--

M.Papen: Tomatoes.

G.Papen: ...tomatoes, sweet corn, cabbage,--

H.Papen: General farm.

G.Papen: ...snap beans.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: We come down here we grew about 6 different things. We grew spinach. We grew beets.

H.Papen: Kale.

M.Papen: Kale.

G.Papen: And kale. And besides that the 4 crops we're growing. And we've dropped those others and now we just grow the 4 crops.

Vapaa: Right. Well, this tape is about to run out. And ah, when it does of course, we'll turn it over and ah, record on the other side.

H.Papen: Sure gotten into a lot of people's family history. (laughter)

Vapaa: Well, I think historians like that you know, Howard. I'm doing a book on Goodstay. Ah, this is an estate in Wilmington--a duPont estate. It's where my mother worked for 20 years. See, my dad died when I was 5. And ah, so my mother worked there for 20 years. And she put my brother and me through school.

M.Papen: Un-hun.

Vapaa: And then she got remarried in 1941. Within a year my brother and she and I were all married within that year.

M.Papen: Oh, my.

Vapaa: 1941 and '42. Well, I think I'll just go ahead and turn this tape over.

G.Papen: Well, we got married about the time you got married.

Vapaa: Um-hum. March 14th, 1942.

G.Papen: Mine was June the 8th in '41.

M.Papen: June '41.

Vapaa: Uh.

G.Papen: I was no longer on--I wasn't on the farm at the time. I was working for the Department of Justice at that time.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well, we'll pick up from there.

(pause in tape)

G.Papen: We never--never had any legal papers at all. It always was that way. What's his is mine and what's mine is his. I was going to say it the other way around. I mean that's the way it was between John, Harry and I. And peculiarly enough our wives have been very, very much that way too. We never had any trouble. As far as finance or anything goes, as I say, back when we were young before we were married and we were trying to get along one of--two of us would have a date the same night. And I can remember time and again the arguement would be, you go. "No," he'd say, "you go." "No," I'd say, "You go." You don't see--you don't see--you don't see that too much anymore.

H.Papen: The re--the reason both of us couldn't go was--was no such thing as individually owned cars. The--the only thing was the family car. And Ma and Dad let us use the family car and there was only one available to use.

G.Papen: Ah, quite often we had something to take care of at home too. I mean--

H.Papen: Right. Be--believe it or not I think the first privately owned car among the 3 of us was when I went to work for the government. I got a car for myself at that time. Up until that time none of us had owned an individual car at all. We had a family car. Ah--

H.Papen: Well, I think we used to have 2 family cars--one to beat around in.

G.Papen: Well, that--that could well be. But I mean they weren't owned by Papen Brothers or anything else. I mean Mother and Dad certainly deserved all the credit in the world for starting us in the business because of the ah, st--start that Dad gave us in--in purchasing a farm in the first place. Ah, it required his name. We were all--were all under age at the time. And he had no interest in it at all except for our benefit. Eh, he commuted every day to New York and--and ah, where he worked. And my mother boarded our help. In those days we used to have--

H.Papen: Pop paid the feed bill.

G.Papen: And Dad paid for the feeding of them. That's true. (laugh)

H.Papen: Ah, we had 4 or 5 men all the time lived at the house. And Mother fed them, did their laundry and everything else for them. That's the--that was the system at the time. You had hired men you hired by the month. And certainly without that kind of a start I--I doubt if we could ever have gotten going near as well as we did. And that's a sure thing.

Vapaa: Do you want to make any prediction on the future for a p--person starting out on a farm?

H.Papen: Well, without the support of somebody, the family or otherwise, and the backing of them it would be rather difficult for any young fellow to start out. I--particularly with the attitude people have nowadays. They have to have everything that everybody else has in order to live. And in that kind of an operation there is darn few farms which could be started that way. In addition to the fact the

initial capital would be awfully demanding. It just takes an awful lot to establish a farm these days.

Vapaa: Now on the management of this farm--this particular farm here--how many people do you--would you say you have in a managerial capacity? Who help to make some of the decisions in running the operation?

H.Papen: Well, we like to think we have 7. Sometimes we question that.

G.Papen: We very definitely do have. We have at least 6. We have--

Vapaa: They're all related aren't they?

H.Papen: Yes. I--they are either George's sons or John's sons and myself. I mean that's what we like to think.

G.Papen: Richard and Jack Papen actually do ah, running things pretty much except for the selling end of it. Harry is doing that. But I--I'm the--they make up their mind out there and I usually ah, have a word of advice. Sometimes they appreciate it (laughter) and sometimes I'm sure they don't. The trouble is I'm afraid when my advice is usually ah, ah, almost a demand sometimes. Maybe that's not right.

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Papen: I don't mean it that way. Sometimes I wish they'd talk back. 'Cause if I say I think so and so is right, they seem to--they ah, they go with it you know.

Vapaa: Now, let me ask you this question. If one of you got sick, do you feel that you've got enough trained people on hand to take over for you in an emergency? Could Richard sell for example, Howard?

H.Papen: Certainly. I ah--might be hampered somewhat in not knowing the--many of the people he's doing business with.

M.Papen: (voice overlaped, unintelligible)

H.Papen: But I am definitely making an attempt to get him involved with 'em. And his closeness to it in the shipping end of it in that he knows where everything is going i--is helpful in that respect. But ah--

Vapaa: He runs your packing shed now, doesn't he?

H.Papen: Right.

Vapaa: And sells to the hucksters and all those?

H.Papen: Well, I wouldn't mention that. I mean, that's--that's something that is just a problem to us ac--actually. We don't chase them away. But I mean no involvement there than they had to serve 'em when they get in here.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: As far as him taking care of the hucksters, believe it or not anybody and I mean pert near anybody on this place will take care of them. And I've got that much confidence that I don't think anybody's ever took a dime from us. The Puerto Ricans will take money and they'll give it to you.

M.Papen: Yes. Yes.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And I've always--I think it's the right way to handle people. Trust them. I had quite a few--well, this maybe not sound good but colored people that worked here picking beans and what not.

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Papen: If they want to buy 5 gallon--5 gallons of gasoline which we don't sell, but I mean they're always out of it.

Vapaa: Right.

G.Papen: Some go help themselves to 5 gallons of gas. And I think they'll take it. But if you stand there and watch them, the next time they'll take it, they'll take 10. I--(laughter) I mean well, if you put a little trust it makes them more ashamed to steal from you. I honestly believe that. And--and these other people like Puerto Ricans I've got every bit of--you could give any Puerto Rican out there pert near a $100--

H.Papen: And George is speaking in generalities. Naturally there are exceptions to all rules.

G.Papen: But we do give a lot of faith, that's right. I mean, but gen--generally we want to put faith in people.

H.Papen: Because I think you--you'll get more honesty if you just trust 'em before they do anything wrong why--

G.Papen: You got a lot--

H.Papen: You don't keep people from pi--ay--tapping the till by paying 'em more money. That was Mr. Roosevelt's error--philosophy. And I don't believe that's the answer.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: But I--I do believe--

H.Papen: I--I remember as a young boy that was the thing that ah, Franklin Roosevelt propounded that you gotta pay these people more then you won't--you won't have 'em stealing. Well you see what's happened, we're paying people like they were never paid before and ah, we certainly have gotten around it.

G.Papen: No, but getting back to--

M.Papen: Most anybody that's handy out there til somebody comes in and the--then they only want a dozen ears or a basket of corn, Gilbert will come in--he'll come in with a few dollars in his pocket once in awhile and put in my box. (laugh)

Vapaa: Now let me this,(?) I know that John's been ~~borrow (?)~~ involved in partisan politics. How about you 2? Or you could include you too Mrs. Papen.

M.Papen: No, I'm not involved in it.

G.Papen: No, no. I've registered at the--

H.Papen: I've registered.

G.Papen: ...Republican for the simple reason I don't think it's--we can keep a 2 party system if everybody registers as a decline. You gotta register as one thing or another. And it--if it comes to a primary at least you got a--got a vote in one party. But that doesn't mean you have to stay with--within that ah, general election. But I--I don't go for these people at all vote ah, registered decline. If you're going to do that, then who's going to keep up our two party system? And I don't say that's the best way. But that's all we got now. It's better than nothing.

M.Papen: No, I said, but I'm interested.

Vapaa: I shouldn't apologize for it, George, and I won't. But I happen to be registered as a decline. (laugh) And the main reason I think I registered as a decline 'cause was when I was working as a County Agent George Worrilow, my boss, used to tell me, "You haven't got any business in that State House. You stay out of there."

M.Papen: Yeah. I--I-- (voice overlaps, unintelligible)

Vapaa: Yet he spent most of his time there. He was registered as a Democrat. I didn't know that until one time I noticed in the State News that somebody wanted to run him for the Congress against Pete duPont.

G.Papen: Yeah.

M.Papen: Um-hun.

Vapaa: And ah, he wouldn't do it--

M.Papen: No.

Vapaa: ...because he was just about retirement age.

G.Papen: No, ah, George, I can see why anybody holding a--a--any kind of an office that are--that's affected by Politics--

Vapaa: Right.

G.Papen: ...should steer a little clear of it. But if an ordinary citizen that isn't asking anything is going to be a decline--. And--and I--I don't owe nothing to any politician. I don't--and they don't owe me anything.

Vapaa: No.

G.Papen: And I always used to say that about ah, Senator Boggs. He used to thank people in his speeches too much. And I said, I don't see why he's thanking. I should be thanking him. If he's doing his job--

H.Papen: George better push a button around here pretty soon--(laughter)

G.Papen: No, I don't think there's anything wrong in that. I don't think a politician (voice overlaps, unintelligible) owes--owes me a--a

a vote of thanks.

Vapaa: Well, it is pertinent, Howard, I think in talking to the tape. I think that ah, people 50 years from now are going to want to know something about what did farmers think about politically and--

G.Papen: Don't get me wrong. I'm not talking anything about Senator Boggs.

Vapaa: Yes.

H.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: He's a fine man. It's was just a--a habit he had. But I don't believe that a--a politician should be too grateful to his constituents for a vote. They should be con--grateful to him for--in performing his duties properly.

H.Papen: Right.

Vapaa: Right.

G.Papen: That's what I think. If he--if he does 'em properly.

Vapaa: Of course, the thing that I enjoyed about Senator Boggs and when he was Governor was that he could make--he could listen to both sides of an argument and when you went away from there you were convinced that both of you were right.

G.Papen: Oh yes, I understand that.

M.Papen: Yes. That was true.

G.Papen: But I--I mean--

Vapaa: I don't know how he did it. (laughter)

G.Papen: Yeah, that's a joke at different political affairs. You'll hear that a lot.

Vapaa: Yes. And of course, he's wonderful with names.

G.Papen: Yes, yes, he is. And--

Vapaa: And that's one of the nice things I think of living in a small state like the State of Delaware. Even when I went over to New Jersey to a pollution meeting one time, Atlantic City, ah, this was when Governor Peterson was in office. Pat Caulk had him over there for this pollution conference. It started 9 o'clock in the morning. And I happened to get up for the start of the meeting and I was in the back of the room talking to some New Jersey County Agents and the Governor happened to see me from the stage. He walked all the way to the back of the room. Remember I--this was since my stroke.

H.Papen: Yeah.

Vapaa: And ah, he walked back and wanted to know I was and all this. And I always kind a appreciated this. I mean ah, I think most people do.

M.Papen: Yes.

H.Papen: Well, I guess Mr. Peterson had that facility, didn't he?

G.Papen: Ah, he--he was really good at remembering people. He--everyone in our family he'd call by their first name.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And I--you know I had a job remembering--not his first name but a lot of people. I--I got a job--I go down--I know--I know every Senator down here. But you know I get mixed up every now and then and can't think of his name. (laughter) But I know 'em by sight.

Vapaa: Yeah.

G.Papen: When there's only 21 you can soon size 'em all up. And I got a--an opinion--you might say an opinion or an idea--of each one. And yet I can't think of their name when I--

M.Papen: Sometime he can't remember.

Vapaa: Well, maybe as Howard says we're getting away from ah,--

G.Papen: The farm.

Vapaa: ...the farm here. Ah, and I think we ought to get back to it a little bit ah, more than we have been. Ah, are you probably going to continue to operate pretty much as it is, do you think?

G.Papen: I think we're going a--I think so. 'Course times will change and we'll have to change with it. There's one thing we started with this year--done away con--completely with a bean picking crew--a hand bean picking crew. We're not--if we can't pick our beans with a machine,we're not going to pick 'em anymore. And that--we're one of the die hards. We kept a hand crew I guess longer than most commercial farms. But we thought it was the right way to handle beans. We thought the people are in this country available and it's a good healthy occupation for 'em. And we thought it should be done that way. But it's come to a point where the cost is high but the performance is so terrible, I mean, we have--we can't control these people.

H.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: I mean if we get 150 people running around in the field that won't listen to anybody, we've got to quit regardless of whether you're paying them or whether they're doing it for nothing. If a person don't follow direction, you can't do anything. And that's the

type of help that got to a point where you just can't tell 'em what to do.

Vapaa: So you fear that you're going to go more and more to mechanization?

G.Papen: Well, everything has gone that way and certainly we have. And I'm reluctant to do it. But I have to do it when there's somebody e-- when enough other people do it I've got a do it. The reason I'm reluctant I think it's the wrong direction for our country.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: I think we should glorify a little bit this manual labor--manual work. Somebody has to do it. But it's got to be a dirty word in this country. Ordinary work is a dirty word. You've got a have computers--computers. They can't even use their head for anything. It's got a be--everything's got a be mechanized.

H.Papen: They're even issueing computers to school children now.

G. Papen: And--and I--I think--I think we--we are--civilization in this country is missing a point. I really do. I--

Vapaa: Howard, you were talking about ah, church. I happened to be in church this morning when ah, noticed on the church bulletin that some of our Sunday School classes are selling these mini computers, you know, that you can teach yourself to use a computer. And they were offering them at a bargain price. I think $34 for a $40 computer. And ah, I guess it's a good price for 'em. I don't know what kind--. I--I didn't see--didn't even look into it. But ah, I think you've made a good point that ah, we do everything by machine and some cases it is a necessity.

G.Papen: My point is that they got them for absolutely nothing, to issue 'em to a school child to do his figuring is to me utterly ridiculous. And certainly when you're in school you ought to get the practice that we hope you're going to be able to use later in life. And the--the principal of--of figures certainly ought to be ingrained in your mind before you start learning how to push buttons. (laugh) That's my idea of it.

H.Papen: Well, in--

Vapaa: Do you have any opinion on the so called new math? It's old now, but they teach in school?

H.Papen: I'm so ill acquainted with the actual working of it that I shouldn't comment on it. The only thing is it just doesn't make sense to me. The whole world is working toward a metric system where the base is 10 and they are doing everything possible to distort people's thinking into this other deal where you can use anything as a base. I--I don't quite follow the reasoning.

Vapaa: Do you like the metric system?

H.Papen: I think it's lo--logical as anything that's ever been devised by man. And of course, there isn't too much of an opinion put on logic anymore. All it did was (unintelligible). But it sure seems to me that it is more logical than the systems that have been used by the English or--

G.Papen: I--I would think that none of us hate to give up something we've lived with all our lives. But certainly it'd be better to give up our odd ball measurements and--and go to the metric system than do away with ah, which is basically at least our counting is metric,

and do--and work in the other direction. That I think is what Howard's trying to point out.

(everyone speaking -- unintelligible)

Vapaa: How would this affect your farming operation? Now, remember ah, there's one thing about this farm. How many tractors did we say you have on your farm?

H.Papen: I think there's 26 or 7 I believe.

Vapaa: I know at one time you had 29.

H.Papen: Well, we've got just as many. I don't think we've got any less. (laughter) That's right.

Vapaa: I know you never traded any in and you never got any less.

H.Papen: No. (laughter)

Vapaa: And they're all based on the English system aren't they? The measure.

G.Papen: This is true. The transition period is going to be difficult for everybody. And the transition period is difficult for an old man like meself to use his mind that way. But I am willing to do that eh, with the idea that the future generations perhaps will have something more sensible than we have now. That's all.

Vapaa: Have either of you looked at any of these Russian tractors?

H.Papen: No. I've seen 'em in the paper.

G.Papen: I have looked at them.

H.Papen: I mean I've seen--

Vapaa: Yes.

H.Papen: ...the write ups.

Vapaa: Well, they're quite--coming in to quite extensive use I understand

in ah, Indiana particularly--in the mid west. Because they can't get large enough tractors of American design. And apparently some of these large Russian tractors are working out very nicely. They say they have trouble with hitches and getting the ah, fittings you know to hook up American equipment to 'em. But ah, they do a good job and apparently--

G.Papen: Oh, there's no question. We certainly don't have a monopoly on that type of engineering. That's for sure. We might know a little more about space travel. But the Russians ain't too far behind us in that really. So this other thing is something that ah, it's just a matter of for years we were the leaders in mass production and in--in our industrial production. Certainly in our manufacture of mechanical devices. But it isn't true any longer. I think that the Japanese from what I hear are--are outstripping us--

H.Papen: There are many countries that are outstripping us and it is only because of the per--productivity of the individual.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: It is quite obvious our Gross National Product is slipping. And it's not because we have any less in the way of raw materials or natural resourses. It's just the inclination of man not to produce as much as he used to produce for--in an hour's work. And I believe that's where we slipped. Every product we buy now is--is made--made someplace other than here. Even though we're supplying the raw materials for 'em. Now, certainly a country like--without the know how we had, the technology we had, should have stayed in

the front since we had the raw materials to supply a good many of these things.

G.Papen: Ah, speaking of mechanical machines--

Vapaa: I'd like to talk more about that, yeah.

G.Papen: And this may be good and it may be bad. We put in a machine that lightens the work. We really don't expect to get--lay off much help or get any more done. But the fel--the person has to work less. And I--I go with that. I mean there's no use to ah--. We all need exercise. But back in the old days some of the work was a little over exercise.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: More than a man probably should do. But sometimes the easier you make it for a person the less they still do. I see it here on the farm. And I'm pretty sure that may be happening in these big factories--in these big production factories. I remember when we used to have a boy stand on the back of a wagon and pack cabbage bent over all day long. All day long. And he packed more cabbage in a crate now than we put everything right in front of him and bring the crate right to him, take the crate away, and put the cabbage in front of him. They just got a stand there. But they won't put in any more cabbage than they did when they were bending over. I'm sure by night they're not quite as tired or anything else. Ah, these--these are the things--

Vapaa: Let's talk a little bit about some of your specialize machine--machines, George. Your hydracool for example. I mean, weren't you the first to have one of those in this area?

G.Papen: I think in this area but it was--the hydracooler itself was a--a patented machine. It just--the one we have are hand--are made--custom made, but they are copied closely after a--a patented machine. But mechanical refrigeration for it was a little bit rare when we put it in. I took Mr. Bob Richardson and I went up to New Jersey--.

(TAPE 1, SIDE 2 ENDED)

G.Papen: And the only 3 places that I knew in New Jersey at that time--there might have been others. We visited in each one of them to--to get their ideas. And it was Mr. Bob Richardson that put this amonia cooling system in. And ah, of course, that's what makes a hydracooler. Before that these hydracoolers were made and you hauled in ice. And there were--they were impractical. This--the mechanical refrigeration (clock striking) of this water that cools the product makes these things oh, I don't know how many times more efficient. If I had a buy ice and haul it in here, it would take 2 men continually all day long dumping the ice into my (voice overlap unintelligible)--

H.Papen: The bags don't (voice overlap unintelligible)

G.Papen: So at the end of the day I presume would run $300 or $400 a day.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And where with mechanical refrigeration I--I haven't got the costs figured right down but I don't think it costs us $25 a day, and that would be tops.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: And in addition to that it's the uniformity of the refrigeration. When you're putting ice in you don't keep that water at the same

temperature all the time--. But this thing is--it absolutely stays at one temperature. Because its the same water going right past the same foods at the same temperature all the time. But with ice it depends on how small a piece of ice you chop and everything else. You can throw a big box of ice in and never bring the temperature of the water down.

G.Papen: I think a reasonable job can be done, but it would be tremendously costly. You'd have to have a good--. You see a man trying to do the job continually there and somebody hauling it to him--because this thing would melt 1½ to 2 ton of ice an hour I believe.

H.Papen: More than that.

G.Papen: And--and that's a lot of ice for a man to get in and cut up and the cost of that. Now it's what--it's around 10--. What do we pay for ice?

Vapaa: hummm

H.Papen: I think it's $14.

G.Papen: Fourteen dollars a ton, so you see you would be spending $28 and hour. And this freeze element--most of this cooling machine is used machinery--most of it that Bob assembled and put in. And it works very good. And there's very little upkeep on it. There's a certain amount. But it's--it's very little upkeep. And the fuel is--

Vapaa: It might be well at this point, George, to say that Bob and Herb Richardson are brothers.

G.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: And their father came from Canada. I don't whether you ever knew that or not.

G.Papen: Yes.

Vapaa: But ah, both Bob and Herb were born in this country. And I'm not going to interview them like I'm interviewing you because they're native Delawareans. And their father has been dead for a number of years. He used to have a nursery on that farm you know.

H.Papen: I believe they came from North Carolina.

G.Papen: No, he went from Canada to North Carolina and came back here.

M.Papen: Yeah, yeah.

Vapaa: Well, I didn't know he went to North Carolina.

H.Papen: He started to teach industry in--in North Carolina--certain areas. Oh, I think the boys were born in North Carolina.

M.Papen: Yeah, I think so.

H.Papen: Brought up there.

G.Papen: Some of them b--they were infants when they came up.

Vapaa: Yeah. Yes.

H.Papen: I don't mean infants--little fellows.

G.Papen: And he ran--. I heard Bob talk about they--. Of course, you've heard this many times. If he doesn't, the car is sitting right in Wyoming ah, for--in the peach(?) fields.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And I've heard him tell--and he told me about loading I don't know how many thousands of baskets of peaches a day for pert near a week to find out that the--when they really got their checks back from New York or wherever they shipped them, they were losing money on every basket. I mean ah, had a--not that the communi-

cations were that bad I don't think, but the--the time elapsed--

Vapaa: It was just too much.

G.Papen: You--your transportation was slow, but the dealers up there they were doing things different. We sold a lot of stuff on consignment back in the '30's, but ah--

Vapaa: Did you ever sell to Washington Street Market in New York?

H.Papen: Yes indeed.

G.Papen: That's on consignment?

Vapaa: Yes.

H.Papen: On consignment

Vapaa: How about up in Brooklyn? What do they call that new market up in ah--

H.Papen: Hunts--Hunts Point.

Vapaa: Hunts Point.

H.Papen: We certainly send trucks in there occasionally. But we don't consign as a general rule.

Vapaa: No.

G.Papen: I should put this in here. You wanted to know how we started. Howie is the salesman now. But brother John from what--we'll say 1924 on, '25, until about 19--want me to say--almost 1940 during the second World War--he--he stood on--on what they call the ~~canvas (?)~~ West Side produce market. It was on 14th street and--

H.Papen: We--West 4th and West Street

G.Papen: ...in New York City. It was a farmers market. You sold direct to--to the buyer there. And it was a cash bid firm. Mary here used to

count the money. That was after we were married. Before that I forget who counted it. But he come home with pockets full of money. Ev--everything was cash. And it would be everything from silver up to sometimes hundred dollar bills.

H.Papen: In other words, it was a farmers market where the farmers sold themselves. There was still Washington Street operated down there where the commission houses sold consignment sales. But for many years John sold most of our produce, practically all of it, right there on the--in the farmers market.

G.Papen: He would be in there every night with a truck load and sometimes 2 truck loads or even 3. And you'd park in there and he'd sell 'em. If they were short--these commission houses which were downtown which were consignment--but if they needed something, they would come up and if they--they didn't get it on consignment they would even come up there and buy it. Walk down and then sell it just as commission men are doing now. Like Howard says, we send stuff to commission houses or consignment places now where practically always it's sold. They're not getting enough. And no matter wh--whether you go to Washington or Boston or New York City these commission houses have got a come out and buy your stuff, take it in and resell it.

Vapaa: Do you ship in to Philadelphia at all?

H.Papen: Yes, we ship to a warehouse in Philadelphia. And there again we don't consign in Philadelphia, but we sell to various concerns--

Vapaa: Hal one thing--I mean Howard, one thing I've noticed that when--when you're selling ah, you talk directly with the chain store buyer

or the large commission house--whoever is buying this--you tell 'em what the quality is. And they accept your word for it, and because they're sure that when it gets there it's going to be that quality.

H.Papen: Yeah. This--this--

Vapaa: Now, how do you keep up with the quality yourself?

G.Papen: This is the point that I was thinking of when you asked about business administration. This type of business is so unique that I don't believe there is any course offered to anybody that would in any of our institutions of higher learning that would train a man to handle the job the way it is presently being done in this country. It is definitely a question of man's integrity, his--his word, his word against his pride. That's all--that's all he has to--to work on. And this is the way the produce is handled. It is unique in business in that there are no contracts written, everything is done by word of mouth. There is millions of dollars worth of produce transacted every day over the telephone. And the amount of question or law suits involved is miniscule compared to the volume that is being done. It is a unique type of business. And it is an--ah, a wonderful business to be in. I think it's the one thing that makes--makes this job interesting. Ah, you--you're dealing with people that you just have confidence in most of them, that's all.

Vapaa: How many of 'em do you see in a year?

G.Papen: Do I see?

Vapaa: Actually see.

G.Papen: Well, I see a great number of 'em by attending national conventions of--through organizations that are--I belong to. But ah--

Vapaa: You want to mention what they are? What they are?

H.Papen: United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association and the Produce Marketing Association.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: They're national organizations. But aside from that, during the business season I never see any--hardly any of them and--and just do the business continually over the phone.

Vapaa: Do you remember the lady I brought out here one day? There was a bunch of people on a tour group. And ah, we were standing out there by your packing shed by the telephone pole that has the telephone on it. Er, I don't know whether it's still there or not.

H.Papen: No.

Vapaa: But anyway this lady says, "How do you arrive at the price of your produce on any given day?" Do you remember what you told her?

H.Papen: Told her, "If the phone is ringing, it means the price is going up. When I'm dialing the phone it means the price is going down." (laughter)

Vapaa: And that's the best explanation of all surprisingly enough I've ever heard. (OF THE LAW OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND) SAY.

G.Papen: You see there again, George, she was a banker. Her whole training was in banking, if you recall. That group was a bunch of bankers I believe from up in New England.

Vapaa: I don't even remember who they were.

G.Papen: And ah, her--her idea is that everything has to be down on a piece of paper--

M.Papen: In black and white--plain.

G.Papen: ...with her name signed to it--

M.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: ...and everything else. And when youwant to find out the price of money is you call up the New York ah, Federal Exchange and find out what money is worth that particular day. But you don't do that in this business. And it's based entirely on your product, that's sure.

H.Papen: There's one thing I'd like to point out--

Vapaa: I--I'm sure of one thing. You took that whole group up that day (laughter)

G.Papen: There's one thing about the quality of the product and that's a funny thing. We've got this United States Inspection Service. They've got regular standards.

Vapaa: Right.

G.Papen: And usually--usually our stuff has got a clear that standard or we better not ship it at all. But it's possible to clear that standard and still have your buyer turn it down unless you've got a written agreement that he's got a--or verbal agreement. But usually if a man don't want your stuff you take it away from him.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: I mean that's pert near the--. But half the government inspection

isn't necessary what the buyer wants. On the other hand we sometimes sell stuff that would not pass United States Inspection and the buyer's tickled pink with it. Theres' a--

Vapaa: They can't get it anywhere else.

G.Papen: Yeah, but not that. It's better than--than what this certain--. Now for instance, we'll speak of corn, but there's other things that pass the same thing. You're allowed 10% defective ears and 90% have got a pass. Well, you can have 90% ears that just pass and it's mediocre looking corn. In fact, you can have 95% just pass, but there's--but you can have beautiful corn, but if for some reason you got a defect in--in 11 ears out of 100--a defect--and that would throw that most beautiful corn out. And the defect might not be so bad at all. But it--

Vapaa: No.

G.Papen: ...it'll still throw it out. It may have beautiful husks, may be just the right time to eat it and everything else, but if there's more than a square inch on 1 ear that's blank that ear is disqualified. Well, if you get a worm in another ear and pretty soon you got 11 ears and--. We--we have sold corn and the buyer is tickled to death; but we wouldn't dare have an inspector come in because if we did, it couldn't have passed.

Vapaa: So what you're saying is you don't use Federal or State inspection?

G.Papen: We use that--

H.Papen: He didn't mean to say that. Don't--don't go quoting him that way.

Vapaa: I won't.

H.Papen: He meant to say was that the trade itself has standards of its own which are different than Federal. In order to get corn in the U.S. fancy grade you want it over ripe because ah--from our standards it would be over ripe--because you don't have the immature ear which would throw it out of grade. But the man who is buying this corn and is going to sell to a consumer, he wants the corn in the prime condition where it is slightly young. And consequently, the corn that oftentimes can not pass the U.S. fancy inspection is exactly what the buyer wants, because it's more up to what the consumer wants.

G.Papen: In other words he--he's willing to take 1 or 2 or a few extra unprem--unmature ears to get the right kind of corn than to have corn that'll pass the inspection, but not an unmature ear in the whole bunch because it's really tough.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: See, when they come to inspect--

H.Papen: Inspect--if they can squirt milk out of it, it's U.S. fancy, but if you--that's pretty tough corn.

G.Papen: You see it's oh--it's not out of grade until it comes out in a--

Vapaa: That's right.

G.Papen: ...in a--in a puff (?) see.

Vapaa: And of course, that's almost a Kenner (?) grade too, isn't it? At it?

G.Papen: (voices overlap, unintelligible) ..grade can make U.S. fancy easier than--than the corn we try to put out. (clock striking) Our cabbage--we are cutting all our cabbage immature. But that is the way the

trade wants it. That is why once corn is overmature, it's got that over ripe look. You don't sell it so readily. But ah-- (voices overlap - unintelligible) I--I'm not downgrading--

H.Papen: Don't down grade the U.S. Inspection Service.

G.Papen: ...the U.S. Inspection Service. But I say sometimes we vary it.

H.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: That's what I mean. We don't take it for gospel. That's all I said.

H.Papen: Right.

G.Papen: But there are times we do business with some of these big concerns--big ah, chain stores--and at a warehouse--an inspector at a warehouse will turn down a load of stuff. Howard will demand an inspection. The inspector comes in and says that's U.S. No. 1, the company will take it.

H.Papen: I--

G.Papen: Now, that's with a few of these big chains like the A & P. But some individual buyer if he don't want it, he don't want it. He didn't sign any--

H.Papen: Ah, eh, ah, that's right. And that's the sign of my point. All he did was--

G.Papen: ...he didn't sign any paper.

H.Papen: ...order the kind of stuff that he thinks I know he should want.

Vapaa: Right.

H.Papen: And that's what I'm supposed to give him. And I have no comeback if he wants to reject the stuff or cut the price on it or something, I've got to depend on his integrity whether he's going to do or whether he isn't going to do it. There are many items that'll go

to one pl--one particular customer that I wouldn't want to send to another. I mean this went on right out here this morning. One particular place we could send a little smaller head of cabbage than we can to the other. This is the kind a thing that has to be known and--and all the inspection in the world doesn't enter in to it. I mean very of--very seldom do we have to involve Federal inspection. Except as when George points out I know I've got something good enough I'll call for a Federal inspection. And in many cases we make them take the load, because it's what I think they wanted in the first place. Sometimes a clerk is involved in rejecting something because he doesn't want to bother taking it in and storing it--somebody has over ordered or something like that. But that is part of the business training that--that you have to get by experience. That's the only way that you get it.

Vapaa: Now, let me ask you this question. Do you ever--could you give me any kind of percentage figure on ah, the number of loads that might be turned down? Percentage wise?

H.Papen: Out of here?

Vapaa: Out of here in a year?

H.Papen: Certainly not more than 2 or 3%.

G.Papen: I thought, Howard, we figured half of 1% the last couple of years.

H.Papen: Of quantity he's--. They're talking about ah, loads. I--

Vapaa: No, quantity. That's all right.

G.Papen: Well, I mean, on the average.

Vapaa: On the average.

H.Papen: On the average--he certainly he had only about a--

G.Papen: It was less than 1% I know for 2 or 3 years. And of course, when it is rejected it--there's a loss involved.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: The most you can do is send it to some other--. You got a tell the other buyer, now I got a load that's rejected. You can use it--. You can't tell 'em, I got a load there--(voices overlap - unintelligible) It's being deceitful. Because he'll find out.

Vapaa: Sure.

G.Papen: If he don't find out when you give it to him--

Vapaa: Yeah (voice overlap - unintelligible)

G.Papen: ...for a week or two later the gossip will get around why heck, that load was down--. So you better--better tell him right up and down, I've had trouble. So and so won't take it. Now if you can use it. If you can't, you send it to a commission house (clock striking). You don't have to tell a commission house it's been rejected. But ah, they probably find out too.

H.Papen: I've never--never consigned a rejected load that I didn't tell 'em that.

G.Papen: A--a commission man is different. He's not buying. He's gonna do the best he can.

H.Papen: The commission man is your agent. He's supposed to be working to your advantage.

G.Papen: And generally if they--they'll do pretty--they'll do as good as they can. Ah, you know, over the years--and I've heard farmers

find the same fault with canners. They used to find fault with Libby's. We've sold them. I think Libby's lives up to their contract baautifully.

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Papen: They always did.

H.Papen: My biggest objection to Libby's was they abided by their contract and many cases where they should have gone overboard and given the fellow an--ah, ah, an extra amount in a tough year rather than go out and buy replacement stuff at a much higher figure. Where - as if they had given their contractor a little bit of a break that year and increased his price, they probably would have had better--better contractors the next year.

G.Papen: And the other thing I was gonna say about commission houses wh--when an awful lot of the business was done that way. Ah, I always--I've often heard farmers say these commission houses are crooks. I don't think they were. Most of the time they were--oh, I don't say they we--they didn't do a little finagling. But when they tu--tur--ah, when you had a heavy loss on a load of stuff. That--that isn't when they were crooked. They were really stuck with it.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: The only time a commission house might have been crooked was when the farmer never suspected. When he made a real good deal I'm sure--

H.Papen: (voice overlap unintelligible)

G.Papen: ...that's when they--they--they cut the cream off the top. And the farmer never said a word. But he sent a load of beans in there that

cost him $1.50 to get picked and delivered and they sold them for 30¢ a bushel. He'd say, "That son of a gun robbed me blind." Well, they--he didn't rob 'em blind that time. That's all that commission man got--(voice overlap, unintelligible)

H,Papen: ...the day they jumped from $3 to $5 (voice overlap, unintelligible) the day he might have taken a buck out of him.

G.Papen: He might have taken--and gave you $4 and you was as happy as a lord. (laughter) But I've seen--. That's the time they did it. But ah, you couldn't tell that to a lot of farmers. And the only time he hollered was the time the commission house was really stuck with it. Because the stuff was cheap. They weren't going to beat you down then.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well, we have about 5 minutes of tape left on here. I don't know if--

G.Papen: Well--

Vapaa: ...what you're thinking about.

H.Papen: Well, I would think that what we've just--to sum up what we're just saying here, that type of business in fresh produce is not completely passé, but--I mean the business of consigning and having it sold for you. Ah, it is a lost--lost portion of the business, however. There are in ma--in most cities commission business is secondary to the man's business. He'll be listed as a jobber and commission house or a receiver and jobber and commission house. And generally the commission comes second or third in--in his rating, because of the fact that he is more involved with buying supplies and selling 'em to--to a retailer or somebody like that.

And the commission deals are for the people who have no place for--no place to go with their product. The surpluses in other words. They'll be inferior products or something like that. Ah, I think I got to be very frank to admit that if I have an inferior product that I don't want to sell to my customers, I consign it with the hope of getting something out of it. I mean, I think you've got to recognize that fact. And I think most commission merchants recognize that fact. A man that's been in the commission business for the last 50 years though, it's hard for him to accept the fact that his business is no longer the same as it was. That he's--he's a commission man. That--but there are very few houses in any city any more that are actually soliciting consignment sales. Very few houses. I have just this very night I have 3 or 4 loads that are in city markets, in Cleveland, in Pittsburg, in Boston, that are sold directly to a man who has a commission business. But he wants a good product for a certain customer that he knows that he's got to have a good product for.

G.Papen: There's one thing I'd like to say ah, looking to the future of this business. And that's one reason Howard I think is very active in the Fresh Fruit--United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association. You only stay in the fresh fruit--ah, fresh vegetable business as long as people will buy fresh vegetables.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: And we're going to have to do something to keep this up. Now,

the people in this country are very affluent. They don't care how they spend their money for the chrome on their car or their fancyness on their furniture or something else. But they're kind a tight on their food and it's too much going to the process food. That's more efficient, more economical. But if you want something real stylish, you want it fresh.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: I mean really. And of course, these big chain stores and this modern refrigeration and--and the long periods of time between the time it's picked and the time the people get it in the store is hurting the fresh fruit and vegetable business. Refrigeration was a great boost to keeping produce. But the whole thing is it boomeranged. They keep it too long. I recall back in the '30's when John used to stand on the market. We pick the stuff today at 3 o'clock in the morning, he'd sell it, and by 2 o'clock that afternoon--

H.Papen: The people were buying it.

M.Papen: Yes.

G.Papen: ...the people were eating it.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: See. Or that evening--or evening. If they didn't, they threw it away and they got more fresh. Now, we pick it today and this is no exaggeration, corn or beans or stuff will probably be 2 weeks before the housewife gets it. Now refrigeration is good, but it's not perfect. It don't keep it that long. And that's kind a hurting

our business. And I think that United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association is trying to spruce up the fresh market today.

H.Papen: And they're doing that by tra--trying to coordinate the ah, the wholesale merchant, the retailer, and so forth with the producer. And in that way you get the better product to the consumer. That's the whole point in it.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well, I ah, wanted to talk a little bit more about John. We can still do it on another reel, if you want to do it. I mean if you're tired, why we'll stop. But ah--

G.Papen: Ah, I want--I think you know--I think you know more about our business than I thought I knew. (laughter) Ah, you want to talk about John? (voice overlaps, unintelligible)

Vapaa: And--and the politics involved--particularly up in Jersey.

H.Papen: Well, I don't think you'd be interested.

G.Papen: Actually, John's involvement was politics--was when they discontinued the operation. I mean his primary--his biggest involvement was after they discontinued the operation of the farm there. And he stayed there because he was involved with his job as a surrogate--the county surrogate. And he served in that I think for 8 or 9 years. And ah, now he is in retirement. The only thing is we don't let him retire. He works--

H.Papen: He works harder than anybody.

G.Papen: ...harder than anybody else on the place.

Vapaa: And as I found out yesterday, he's been here with you 2 years. Is this right?

H.Papen: He's been down here 2 years in November.

G.Papen: I wanted to tell you about John--

Vapaa: And he's always had an interest in this farm, huh?

All Papens: Oh, yes. Very definitely.

G.Papen: John and I started when he was still a little fellow. And we've always been the same. And he's--even though he was in Jersey, he was just as much a part of this as we are now.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: But the one thing I wanted to say, the reason he got in to politics the old tax assessor in the town died. And this is no exaggeration, several men come to see me and wanted me to run for the tax assessor. I said I wouldn't have nothing to do with it

(TAPE 2, SIDE 1 ENDED) (TAPE 2, SIDE 2 BLANK)

Vapaa: It's a typical hot, sunny July the 7th at ah, 2:30 P.M. on the Papen Brothers Farm north of Wyoming, Delaware. And we're continuing the taped session started a couple of weeks ago with George and Howard and Mary Papen. And ah, George happens to be out right now, but ah, Howard is here and so is Mary. And ah, we'll go ah, on from here. Ah, say Howard, your shipping schedule advertises sweet corn for the full month of July. What's happening?

H.Papen: Well, there's nothing wrong with the schedule. Except that ah, we never--never do start sweet corn ah, the first week in July. It's usually the second week in July before we start.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: Primarily because we don't grow an early variety of corn. We ah, we decided it would be better to grow a better quality and ah, avoid the early variety which give you a poorer quality.

Vapaa: What is the variety you're growing?

H.Papen: Ah, Northern Bell and Gold Cup are our main varieties. Northern Bell is the early crop and the Gold Cup is the main crop of the season to--through the entire season.

Vapaa: Do you have any white sweet corn?

H.Papen: No, we do not.

Vapaa: They're all yellow varieties?

H.Papen: All yellow.

Vapaa: And it's all for fresh market?

H.Papen: Yes, they are.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Now ah, Howard, I notice too--you know the Delaware State Fair is coming on toward the end of the month. And I noticed that there is an awful lot of Papen Brothers' cucumbers that seem to get in the Fair, but they never--I never see 'em in your name. How come?

H.Papen: I never took it upon myself to enter. I don't know who enters the cucumbers other than ah, school.

M.Papen: This used to be FFA boys.

H.Papen: FFA boys or ah, (loud noise, unintelligible)

Vapaa: Un-hun. Do some of them work out here for you?

H.Papen: Some of them have. There was in the past.

Vapaa: At least they know where to get them, because they get them to the grading table and they get the nice ah, waxed cucumbers. Would you want to describe a, ah, good market cucumber for us? Slicing cucumber?

H.Papen: Well, the ideal commercial grade cucumber for fresh market is a

rather long, slender, dark green cucumber. The darker the color, the smoother the surface, the better. Some of your hybrids recently developed they're inclined to have other characteristics such as you find in your pickling type cucumbers.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: It might make for a better but they do not make as--as good a quality as some of the older type cucumber.

Vapaa: Well, what's the difference between a pickling cucumber and a slicing cucumber?

H.Papen: Ah, the same difference I guess as there is between ah, apples and pears practically. They're two--two distinct ah, plants and two distinct ah, pieces of fruit. The pickling cucumber is made to be short in length to start with. And ah, has smaller seed cavities I suppose in it's--in it's early stages of development. They're a short--short, stubby cucumber. Just contrary to what you want for slicing.

Vapaa: But you don't grow any pickling cucumbers at all?

H.Papen: No.

Vapaa: Do you feel it's not profitable or what?

H.Papen: Well, it's another business that's all. We--we're involved with fresh products and we do not go in for processing products at all. We're equipped to handle ah, handle and pack fresh--fresh market products. Con--consequently, it ah, it'd be kind a foolish to grow processing stuff when you've got as much invested as we have in equipment for packing.

Vapaa: Well, I noticed as I came in your yard or driveway today that you'd cleaned up on your cabbage.

H. Papen: Cabbage is finished for this spring crop. And ah, we'll start again about the middle--middle of September we'll start harvesting the fall crop.

Vapaa: So that your big movement right now is what?

H.Papen: Well, cucumbers and snap beans as of today, but within 2 days we'll start sweet corn and that--that is our bulk to hold us for the balance of the season.

Vapaa: Does that mean you'll stop snap beans too si--?

H.Papen: No. No. I have snap beans and cucumbers right on through until frost. And we'll have corn probably til the middle of September.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: About the time fall cabbage starts in.

Vapaa: Well, Howard, the last time I was in here I wanted to cover some ah, information about your experiences on the Planning Board--the Kent County Planning Board, and so forth. Do you want ah, give us your views on that?

H.Papen: Well, it was a worthwhile experience I guess from a personal standpoint. I don't know if the County benefited much by my experience. I was a novice at it the same as most of the County ah, representatives or government officials as a matter of fact were. I mean, it was something new to us in the way of it's administration. I had been familiar with it's operation from having lived under it. But it was--it was new to Kent County.

Vapaa: Now you say having lived under it. Where are you talking about?

H.Papen: In north Jersey we had had zoning back in the early '30's or--

Vapaa: Um-hum. Do you think their zoning program is better than the planning

and zoning program is better than what we have in Delaware?

H.Papen: No. No. They started out with the same--same premise that we did that you was going to try and preserve--preserve the way of life I guess in the--in the better land for proper purposes. But it gets distorted due to the economic pressures I guess is what affects it. They--their plan was certainly no better than ours. And ours certainly needed--needs some revising as time goes on. I think the biggest failing in Kent County, Delaware is the lack of conviction on the part of it's officials that they want--want to adhere to a plan. And that is the problem wherever there has been instituted I am sure. Because it has it's effect on--on property owners at the time that they want to do something with their property which is contrary to what the planners feel i--is the highest and best use for the land.

Vapaa: Do you feel a combined planning and zoning board is the thing for Kent County?

H.Papen: Yes, I do believe it's a more sensible outgrowth of--of the program except for one possible ah, failure ah, on it's part is that perhaps there's too much work for a ah, volunteer group of people to assume. I think more--more authority perhaps will have to be delegated to hired officials rather than--than ah, having the decision left to the commission of--of volunteer people.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

(TAPE 3, SIDE 1 ENDED)

Vapaa: Now we have a third partner to introduce to this ah, ah, audience. Ah, you want to introduce yourself, John?

J.Papen: Well, I am the oldest brother of the partnership--John H.--

Vapaa: Yes.

J.Papen: Papen.

Vapaa: Yes. And ah, when did you come down?

H.Papen: Heh, heh, arriving in Delaware in November 1970.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: Having retired from a political career in Somerset County, State of New Jersey.

Vapaa: Now, you also were involved in farming up in New Jersey, right?

J.Papen: Well--

Vapaa: For how long?

J.Papen: Till 1958.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

J.Papen: We continued to operate (cough) the original farm of the original partnership.

Vapaa: And ah, might as well throw in--get a little bit of an explanation. This farm is pretty much of a--a block of land of about 900 acres isn't it Howard?

H.Papen: That's right.

Vapaa: And in addition to that you rented some additional land close by. Is this right?

H.Papen: That's right.

Vapaa: And ah, all of the management pretty much lives on or close to the farm. John, for example, where are you living? We might as well

get this squared.

J.Papen: I'm living on ah, (cough) part of the farm facing on the Hazlettville--or fronting I should say on the Hazlettville Road.

Vapaa: And who used to live in that house?

J.Papen: Well, me and Ba--

(Jean)

H.Papen: Zimmerman.

J.Papen: ...Zimmerman prior to me--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

J.Papen: ...was originally ah, an (unintelligible)

Vapaa: Now ah, what is your mailing address?

J.Papen: R.D. 6.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

J.Papen: Box 160.

Vapaa: Un-hun. And your zip code. I think you might as well tell 'em that--19901.

J.Papen: 19901.

Vapaa: Same thing for Dover any place you go.

J.Papen: That's right.

Vapaa: Un-hun. Well ah, ah, John, one of the things we particularly wanted you in here on was to ah, find a little bit about your political life and particularly your service on planning commissions in New Jersey.

J.Papen: Well, I guess to begin with a--a story that would have a continuity yo--you might say that in 1948 the township having had a ah, what would you call it when they desert you (unintelligible)? They--not an annexation, it's the other--it's the opposite.

H.Papen: The town divorces itself from-- (voice overlaps, unintelligible)

J.Papen: The Town of Raritan seceded is the word..

H.Papen: Incorporated itself.

J.Papen: ...from the Township of Bridgewater.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

J.Papen: Because of that event the tax assessor and the tax collector, both residents of the Town of Raritan, were no longer on the statute governing Township law able to function as the assessor or collector.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

J.Papen: It was necessary therefore for the Township committee to make an interim appointment and to be subsequently put on the ballot in the following November. The Township committee in a--in a bind, I guess you'd call it, to find someone to take the place of the assessor ah, combed the Township. And as had frequently been, and I should say more than frequently most often, in the rural and semi rural areas the Township committees would look for a farmer. Either they figured he was too dumb I suppose to put a just value on the thing or either he was too smart to ah, under value. I do--I don't know which.

Vapaa: A realistic value, is that what you're saying?

J.Papen: A realistic value is--

Vapaa: Would be.

J.Papen: ...is what they were looking for. The price of an assessing a property not being an exact science, it depends a great deal on a man's judgment and a--and ambition to keep things on a equality

basis. Makes very little difference whether you use 36 inches for a yardstick or 48 inches as long as you use the same ruler on all--

Vapaa: Um-hum.

J.Papen: ...instances. Ah, (cough) at any rate, the powers that happened to be, 3 Township committeemen, ah, motivated I think by--by other citizens who were concerned approached me. And I accepted the position (cough) supposedly on a part time basis. We hadn't yet hit the boom. We had a small Township.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

J.Papen: We had 4 or 5,000 residents in the 36 square miles. And ah, the number of line items ah, perverse--

H.Papen: Or since they are very small--

J.Papen: I imagine there are line items that are around 3 or 4,000 which I think it was what it was.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

J.Papen: This position or this sudden upsurge in the movement from the city to the rural areas soon caused a--a building boom. And instead of finding myself on a part time job I found myself working ah, full time plus trying to keep up with the--. And I found myself devoting more--less--

(TAPE 3, SIDE 2 ENDED)

(TAPE 4, SIDE 1 BLANK)

Vapaa: All right, here we go again on the--I hope this is the final tape ah, on this thing. Howard, ah, we were talking as I was changing

the reel here what John's doing here on the farm right now. You want to clear--clarify that?

H.Papen: Well, frankly I think he's enjoying himself. (laughter) Ah, general overseer and ah, maintenance man and all way around. He's--he's sees that everythings going the way it should only it doesn't go that way.

J.Papen: No. I--I don't. That's just the funny part of it.

Vapaa: Does he put in as long a day as you 2 do? You and George?

H.Papen: Yes indeed.

J.Papen: No. No.

H.Papen: When he's there with me he does.

J.Papen: Mostly I won't come over before 9:30. (laughter)

Vapaa: George, I think it's about time we found out how old you are?

H.Papen: George?

M.Papen: John.

Vapaa: John, excuse me.

J.Papen: Well, I'm in my 70th year I guess. I--I'm be 70 in--next February.

Vapaa: Next February 1975. And let's get the exact date. We might as well have the exact date.

J.Papen: February 10.

Vapaa: February the 10th. Un-hun. But ah, you feel that you are basically retired?

J.Papen: Oh, I know that.

Vapaa: (laughter) You know that. From political life anyway, huh? Let's see--

J.Papen: Well, I don't know. Ah, if I could find a good cause down here, I

could get aggitated I suppose. But I can't find anything down here except the--except the toll road.(laughter) to get aggitated about.

Vapaa: We haven't touched on that Howard. What about this West Dover by-pass. Let's talk about it a little bit.

H.Papen: Well, let's not get confused with that and what John just mentioned that a toll road--

J.Papen: No, I--I--

H.Papen: ...is no more than this is a substitute for the West Dover by-pass. Say it--to make--to make a long story short the West Dover by-pass has now had a history of perhaps 10 or 12 years in the--in discussion. And it--the way I understood it was the idea of building the limited access road skirting Dover to eliminate some of the traffic which builds up in the--in the Dover area on Route 13. It is interesting to note that since we moved here in '52 that Route 13 by-passes Dover was constructed and opened. And the--apparently the fallacy in that was that it was not limited in--in it's use at all. And as a result it has become a--a commercial street rather than a true highway.

Vapaa: With a lot of extra traffic lights by the way, Howard.

H.Papen: Yes, indeed. Well, they--they go with it.

M.Papen: (voice overlap unintelligible) ...all the time.

H.Papen: I mean they go with the development there--what we call development the--the commercial development of the road.

Vapaa: You know we have always thought that we have been--been somewhat progressive about road building in Delaware. But do you realize

that downstate it wasn't until very recent years that ah, we had limited access highways downstate? I think we have had them in New Castle County for a number of years, but--

H.Papen: Yes, the legislation to permit it only occurred in 1966, I guess, when it occurred. And that was the first opportunity they had to build the limited access road. And the first conception they had of one was the building of the by-pass around Dover and have that as a limited access road. Taking the traffic off of 13 in one area and putting it back on 13 in another area south of--south of Smyrna.

Vapaa: Well, how about the farmer's position ah, as far as a limited access road was concerned.

H.Papen: Well, the general opinion bet--of the growers--the concensus of off those alike I admit was that it was absolutely ridiculous and there was no point in disrupting more of our--our good countryside for--to build a--another artery of traffic with ah, proper development of the existing one which would help to eliminate all of that waste--wasted land and disruption of the whole agriculture community. And that was what most people have not been able to understand. I mean they have always thought that Papens' involvement in the--the opposition to the by-pass is to protect their farm from the--from the by-pass. And the by-pass since 1966 is supposed to be west of Papens' farm. I think George is--sole interest in it was a practical one. That it is not practical for the State of Delaware to be putting funds into such a--such a road

at such a cost to the agricultural economy and everything else for what it was going to accomplish. We always insisted that the proper development of the existing highway facilities would have served the same purpose. Ah, perhaps even at a greater cost of construction, but ah, would have served a better purpose in--in carrying the traffic past Dover and still giving Dover the benefit of--of the access to it.

Vapaa: Of course, the end result of all of this, Howard, was ah, what? Do you want ah, explain this?

H.Papen: I don't know what the end result is. It apparently--the by-pass--the--one section of the original planned by-pass is apparently going to be established from Frederica to Woodside on Route 13. Ah, with the completion of that they will just be compounding the--the--

Vapaa: From Dover.

H.Papen: ...traffic problem at Dover. But ah, there is a section of the road that they're putting in is certainly not gonna serve a great deal of traffic elimination other than that which would go past the Dover Air Force Base on the present Route 113.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

H.Papen: The peculiar part of it is the 113 was originally planned many, many years ago prior to our reaching Delaware as a dual highway from Frederica right on up. And so far it has only been developed as far as the Air Base and from there on down it's a very meager--meager type of single lane highway.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well ah, where do we go from here? I mean, they do have authority to go ahead with the ah, West Dover by-pass north of Dover. As I understand it, that's going to be developed too. Right soon, is--is it not? Supposedly?

H.Papen: I think we'll let George get in on that because he is more closely aligned with--

Vapaa: But George isn't here.

H.Papen: ..what--what has developed (voices overlapped, unintelligible)

Vapaa: Oh, how did you get in here George? Go ahead, George.

G.Papen: Well, I--as far as I know there's no--unless it's in this recent bond bill--there's no funds allotted for anything past 13.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: But between Frederica and 13 there are authorization for bonds to go on with the work.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

G.Papen: Ah, my drive for the last year of two is that they shouldn't do that until they know where they're going to go further. This--the only point in what they're doing down below Woodside is just put--the camel putting it's foot in the tent so that they get to Woodside and then they have to go somewhere else. And ah, my argument is that's the wrong approach. They should finally decide what they're going to do. But at the moment without the toll road as far as they've planned the Dover by-pass is Route 100. And that would be a funny place to start.

Vapaa: Yes.

G.Papen: Ra--out there in--well, you know where Route 100 is up in--oh, in the--well, it's right near the Kenton - Dover Road.

(TAPE 4, SIDE 2 ENDED)

T H E E N D

Oral History Project of the University of Delaware
George K. Vapaa, Narrator