

CONNECTICUT 20TH CENTURY AGRICULTURAL HISTORY PROJECT

ORAL HISTORIES

Interviewer: Luane J. Lange

Name of Person Interviewed: David Barney

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Transcriber: NIM Transcription

Interviewee Address:

Q: This is Luane Lange interviewing David Barney at **Mole's Hill Farm** in Millerton, Connecticut on October 19.

A: This is Sharon, Connecticut. Millerton is...

Q: Millerton is right across the state line in New York?

A: Right. Yeah, we got that clarified right away.

Q: Yes indeed 'cause I thought of Sharon Road when I got here. Would you start by talking about when and where you were born.

A: Well, I was born in November of 1942 in Stamford, Connecticut. I came to this area in 1949. As a summer resident. We have this property over on Indian Lake.

Q: All right. Have you always been interested in rural things or agriculture?

A: Oh, of course, yes I have.

Q: Did you go to school in agriculture or anything...?

A: No, I didn't. As a matter of fact, I went to school to be a sheetmetal mechanic. After I graduated from that school I went into the Navy and practiced a little bit; and then got out and worked in Pratt & Whitney for about a year. Then I went into agriculture right after that. It's always...that's always what I wanted to do. I just never went to school for it.

Q: So what was your first job in agriculture?

A: In agriculture? I worked on a dairy farm in Pawling, New York. Then...for a while. Then I went to work driving truck for a feed company and mixing feed, going around the different farms in the area all over the State of Connecticut and New York, picking up their corn and stuff and taking it back to the plant and grinding it and mixing it with supplements; then take it back and deliver it to 'em for feed.

Q: And where was that company?

A: That company was in Millerton, New York. It was Wayne Feed. We did a lot of work for Watertown Co-op, which was in Watertown, and delivered to all the farms out of there. So we were the main source of feed for, I would say, a good part of the northwest corner of Connecticut and even farther down and beyond, even to Naugatuck.

Q: And then how did you get to become...you're the Manager?

A: Right.

Q: What was your transition from that to this?

A: To this. Well, I...I had other...I worked at a private school but I also worked as a teenager. I should go back a step, before I went into the service. As I teenager I worked for Mrs. Ryan...Mr. Ryan and Mrs. Ryan. I used to deliver books to the Ridgefield Library and stuff and run errands. You know, use my own car and being a neighbor to the farm where our summer place was, I was always here hanging around and looking at the cows, the Black Angus cows, stuff and trying things. Then they sold the place.

Q: This...this actual farm?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay, go ahead.

A: They sold the place...oh God I can't think...in 1981 or 82 to...to someone in New York City, the name was **Hagermans** I believe. They just kept it for a year or so to roll it over. Then a family called the **Faulkners** bought it and that's when I came to work here. I was working at a private school and she talked me into coming here to be a manager of the place. And so I did. That was in 198...full time in 1988 or 89 I think, working here full time. But, I worked part-time for this woman for a long time. You know, mowing fields and stuff like that. But then we had llamas here which were...The owners of this farm had llamas and that's what we raised and...

Q: Which family raised llamas?

A: The Faulkners.

Q: Okay.

A: The **Perrins**, I think the name was Perrins. She was a Faulkner and then she married a fella named Perrins. Then they moved to Colorado and this fellow, Mr. Goldfrank bought this place. All the while, we always had our main barn complexes up the hill where the stable is. We always had our neighboring farm, dairy farmer, he leases some of...some of the barns and all our tillable land and pastures. He has Holstein cows. But prior to that we've had other people with beef cattle and such as that. But the mainstay of this farm was Black Angus cattle that Mr. Ryan had had here. He had some of the best in the country. Had his bull Maximillian...you know, had semen all over the world. And also Mr. Blum, you've talked to him.

Q: I'm going to interview him in about two weeks.

A: He...he has some cows that are...are essential...He has some cattle that are direct descents from Maximillian. From back...well, you know, related to Maximillian. So he was, you know, an excellent...this was one of the best herds. People from all over came to see them and they showed all over the place.

Q: Now was Maximillian part of artificial breeding, artificial insemination?

A: Yeah, they did...they did. They even...yesterday they...I'm sure his semen is gone now, it has to be but yes, they did. They drew a lot of semen from him. He's buried on the farm up here. Has a headstone.

Q: Yeah, we had horses at UConn like that.

A: Right, I'm sure they did. Right. But that's what...that's what really made this farm what is was. Everybody since Mr. Ryan has just been, you know, not...his parents lived here and we had hobby animals. Now Mr. **Goldfrank**...we're just starting a herd of Scotch Highland cattle. So, that's what we're gonna raise, here. We just started that so we have five. We're having two delivered on Friday; red ones. So we're going to have seven and try to keep a herd of around twenty or twenty-five if we can find a market for them.

Q: Why did you...why was the decision made to...?

A: To make Highland cattle? Well, he's very much interested in English.

Q: Are these longhair?

A: Yes, they are. I have some photographs I will...
(Tape interruption.)

Q: Where is your butchering and processing?

A: Well, it's in Pine Plains, Connecticut...or Pine Plains, New York. That's the closest one.

We raise hogs and take them over and have them butchered, there. Then we have 'em smoked over in Fishkill, New York. There's a smoke house in Torrington, Connecticut

They're very good but they don't slice bacon and stuff to...to meet our...they don't do

that stuff so...But they...they smoke your meat for you. There was a fella that, he was the head of the Ag Department in one of those schools over there, that had...I think

he did it through the Ag Department. We used to take animals there and had them done.

I guess he's...since then he's died so there isn't any....

Q: Who is the market though? Once it's packaged, where does it go?

A: Oh, we do it, personally. We raise four or five hogs for the help.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: We give it to the help. Anything like a lamb or something. We'll do that. We'll raise our own. At least you know how it's fed and...and it's sort of organic the way we feed it.

Q: Now the Black Angus that were here, were they organic?

A: No. I don't think they were. They fed 'em grain and stuff. The Black Angus, you have to have really fit and looking nice when they show. So, you have to give them a lot of grain and silage and stuff. Where...where these Highland cattle are actually kind of a really low maintenance animal. They live on hay and browse, pasture and browse mostly. You can feed 'em hay all winter and they'll do very well on it. They don't have to feed 'em any grain whatsoever.

Q: So where are they native to?

A: Scotland.

Q: All right, that's right.

- A: And the Queen of England has a big herd up in Scotland. Oh, like eight hundred or so. Eventually we'll probably get...we'd like to get bull semen from...from the Queen's herd. I don't know if they've...lifted that ban on...on...on being able to import animals from England because of that mad cow disease. I don't know if they've lifted that.
- Q Oh, that's interesting, sure. That's an interesting thought.
- A: So I'm not so sure. But that...that's the direction we're going in right now as far as this farm is going.
- Q: How much...you said you had about three hundred acres plus the new one?
- A: Plus the new one. Yeah, we have three hundred and fifty-some odd acres on this farm. I think there's two hundred of that or a hundred and fifty of that is in New York State. Well, the...and the other farm, there's two hundred and some odd acres on that one also.
- Q: And that's the **Paley** farm.
- A: The Paley farm...yes, the Paley farm.
- Q: And that's the one we were...I didn't have the tape on...that the development rights were sold.
- A: Right.
- Q: Before he bought...Mr. **Goldfrank** bought it?
- A: Right. Yeah, they were ..they were sold ...oh God, I would think the '60's or '70's. '70's or '80's, early '80's I think they were sold. I can't say for sure when they were, but they were sold a long time prior to...to....Mr. Goldfrank's only owned it for a couple of years.
- Q: You have horses.
- A: Yeah, we have a boarding facility.
- Q: Tell me about that.
- A: Well, it started in around 1990. The Perrins started it and thought it was a good idea to have the barns used. You know, they were just sitting idle. To use them we had it all transformed from box stalls, for birthing pens and all that for the cattle, into horse stalls. Now we have twenty-three or twenty-four stalls up there. They're all full of horses; they're boarders. It's a boarding and training facility. People can have their

horses trained there and they board them and it's all cared for. They pay a fee and that's it.

Q: Do you furnish the trainer?

A: No. Well, we do. Actually the farm does have a trainer and that's how they furnish it. Or else, people can bring their own and at a fee. See, they have to sign a release if you're going to go on somebody else's property and train somebody or give lessons. You have to be sort of bonded or be insured and stuff like that 'cause you're coming from the outside. If you're paying board here then you're covered by the liability insurance that's on the property. But someone from the outside to come in, an outside instructor to come in has to pay so much and have proof of their insurance. So if they get hurt...it's...it's...horses are a big liability. So we have that. And, we have a big indoor arena which is two hundred by seventy or a hundred and fifty by seventy.

Q: Was that rehabbed from another kind of building?

A: No. That was built...no that's the only new building. Well, we have these little sheds that were new but the rest is all old. Actually, one of the barns up there, Mr. Ryan bought in Vermont. It was disassembled...disassembled and brought and reassembled here. It's funny because you look up on the...in the floor you can see where they had that...they put the floor joists on upside down from where they were before. All the nail holes are there from when they nailed the floor and it was...it was kind of like a post and beam...a little bit post and beam construction. You can see where they plated that and where they didn't line up and some of the other things. But it's a really nice structure. So that used to be just a little barn up there, a little dairy barn where the two ends of it are...with one that they built and one that was brought down from...from New Hampshire or Vermont.

Q: Where do the horses that are boarded...who owns them?

A: Well, different people. Oh, yeah. It isn't anybody in particular.

Q: How far...how far...?

A: Well, a lot of them are from New York City and they're weekenders. They come up and visit on the weekends. Uh, let's see...

Q: Is this where the Taconic Highway comes up. Where is that?

A: Route 22 in New York City and the Parkway is a little farther west and I guess Route 7 is the closest in Connecticut. But, most of them come up 22 or will even ride the train up to Dover Plains. The train goes that far.

Q: And do they stay over?

A: Well, most of them have homes here.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: There's like Mr. Goldfrank. He's a weekend person. And they have real homes and they come up here. They're here on holidays and...and stuff like that. There's a few people that are full time residents that board their horses here. I don't know exactly how many because I oversee the whole place. I don't know everybody that's up there. We have a barn manager and then a business manager for the stable and there are three other people that work there. Now, there's four of us down here.

Q: So there are three up at the stable area and the four that are here, do what, then?

A: Well, they maintain...we maintain the grounds. We have gardener and we have a housekeeper and the cook...housekeeper and cook combined. The fellow helping me...we...he's sort of the herd man for the cattle and helps me with the whole estate. The gardener takes care of all the gardens.

Q: If someone...if you were going to have to replace yourself, where would you find you?

A: Find me, yeah. That's what I'm looking for now. (Laughter) It's hard you know. I...the...the younger generation, it's very hard to find someone to do this kind of work. They...they don't have to work the hours and they don't have to work so hard to make the same money, if not more. And, it's very hard to find someone that's really interested in this type of work. Like, I mentioned that to Mr. Goldfrank. That's why...I have another eight years before I can retire, I'm looking now, hopefully at Steve, the boy works with me very well, will stay on and the pay...

Q: How old is he now?

A: He's twenty-seven.

Q: And what kind of background did he have?

A: Well, he's a local boy whose grandparents have been dairy farmers all their lives and they work...He was born and raised on a farm and he went to Cornell University, four years, graduated with a degree in Animal Science. So that's about the background he's had. He's worked on dairy farm and then he was working at a nursery. Now he's came here. Fortunate to find him. You know...

Q: Did you advertise for him or word-of-mouth?

A: No, it was just word-of-mouth. I asked him...I...I knew that he worked for the neighbor. I very seldom advertise for anybody here. I never had, as a matter of fact. I

always go by word-of-mouth, "Do you know somebody?" Or I call somebody being local, you know native to the area, you know a lot of people and know who's going on. So that's how it works. When they had got a gardener they advertised in Horticulture Magazine. We've had people come from as far as Ohio, to come and apply for a job, here. It's a gardener...and from New Hampshire and Vermont. But, we ended up hiring a local person. It's hard to relocate to a dif...a new area. Yeah, that's a replacement. My job will probably be easier to do than...than someone with a real working dairy farm or something like that. I think it would be easier to find someone to take my job to oversee an estate then it would be to...to get up every day and milk cows.

Q: We had a call. Someone who is clearing out the barn from their relative's estate. We were given copies of, not Country Gentleman...Country Home. They were from the 1920's. There were ads for herdsman, managers and so on and there was a lot about what you spoke about. If you had come up by train but it was all...it was back in the 1920's.

A: Right, right.

Q: It seemed that some people had persons come over from Europe, with either certain kinds of cattle or sheep, to...to work with them.

A: Right. Um hmm.

Q: And so when you mention this young man, I think, well what does it take to be a herdsman? I mean, is it still word-of-mouth?

A: Well, I guess...being that we're starting a new herd and he has a background in keeping records...keeping records and keeping an eye on the animals constantly is...is the big thing about being a herdsman. You know, you weigh 'em, you keep a record of the weight, their daily weight gain and then when their heat cycles come in. Then you keep an eye on when they're...you know, who's related to who so you can separate everything. So, the job gets to be bigger and bigger. So, yeah, as far as on the job training type thing, but he also has the background study for it.

Q: Sure, that's interesting.

A: But, there's other people that are very good herdsman that haven't even got past the eighth grade in school; which is what's they've done all their life. And they...they know that's how they...they've been past down from the generations, how you keep records and how you do this. But, I think it's just getting harder and harder to find the kind of people that do that. That's the biggest trouble with most of these dairy farms that are going out of business. It isn't so much the money as it is to try to keep help. Try to get help. That is....that our neighbor, here. He's you know, he just lost his

father. It was him and his father. They had one person work the farm. Now his father dies so he has has a...some migrant workers from Mexico working for him.

Q: How many head does he have?

A: I think he's milking a hundred or a hundred and twenty-five, something like that. That's a lot of cows. Again, he has a milking parlor but he does... You know, years ago I remember when I was...well, I think I was fourteen...fourteen years old you go to work on a dairy farm then. You could walk this whole neighborhood and go to farmsoperating dairy farms. You know, like twenty, thirty cow, herds, and ask for work. And, you would get it. As a young person making hay or things like that. But you could never do that, now. I think in...in...I don't even know if there's any dairy farms left in Sharon, to speak of, right now. I know there's a few people up in Ellsworth that have these **Belted Galloways**. There's one dairy farm, the **Ogodlow** farm, I know is in operation but I don't know...there are very few more. I can't really think of...

Q: The farms that are out here...there are some other horse boarding places. Is this something where the young people could get jobs in the summer?

A: Yeah, I think so. We put on summer help, here. One person usually for mowing grass, seasonal help. We try to get a young person out of college or somebody that will come and do that. Last two or three years summers we've had college help, a boy. And at the farm, they try to get a working student to come. We've had working students from Holland here for the last four or five years.

Q: Oh..

A: This one or that will be sponsored by somebody. The girl that used to run the barn was from Holland. She's since moved to North Carolina so took a working student with her because she's the one who...

Q: Sponsored.

A: Sponsored her to come over, herself.

Q: What regulations do you have to go by? Is this through the Department of Labor or is this the USDA?

A: I don't know but I think it's through...I think it has to go through that and it's also done through a university in Holland. There were students from there. I don't know how it's worked with them. It's like a work study thing. They come over here, someone sponsors them. They give them a place to live and a little money and they stay here for six months or so. Some stay longer, some just stay. They...they leave that sponsor and just stay if they can't get a green card. Now, they have some

younger children that have horses up there and they kind of putter around and learn the work of the stables. But, mostly it's not.....not like a high school kid to come and get work for the summer. It's not.

Q: What kind of skills...You were in sheetmetal work and then you did other things. What kind of carryover was there for you from either what you did in the Navy or your other jobs when you came in to do this?

A: All that...it's mostly you're...it's kind of like being a jack-of-all-trades. Because most farms, you can't afford to have someone come out to fix things. So you...you fix everything yourself, being a welder and sheetmetal, and you fix equipment. And working in...in a feed store, you know what the nutrition part of the things are as far as feeding the animals. And...and building. I built my own house and all that. So you learn. You actually have to be a real handyman to be a...have this type of job. Otherwise, you just hire services to come and do it. See, there's a difference. You don't get that personal touch that way but... So, I guess that's what the carryover is, being a mechanical...working in a mechanical field as far as the sheetmetal, and going to school like that. All of a sudden it...that's how it...it kind of went...came over onto this, what I do here. Most people that are in agriculture, the family farms are that way. You know, you learn to do everything from rebuilding the engine on your tractor to...to building a barn. It's the idea that you just can't afford to pay a hundred thousand dollars for someone to come in and build you a building when you can build it for forty. So, I guess that's the way it's always been as far as this farm is... And now, they with...this farm is different 'cause it's a --- working farm.

Q: What does Mr. Goldfrank do with the other part of his life?

A: I have no idea. I really don't. I don't think...you know. I've never asked him and...and he's never offered so...I have no idea. I...I just don't know.

Q: How did he happen to get interested in this kind of cattle?

A: Well, I think it has to do with the...because of the...the English...

(Tape interruption.)

I think a lot of it has to do with his...he has a great interest in old things. His...his house is decorated from old England and has a lot of things from...from the old...real old and ancient. Greek...Grecian and stuff like that. While the Highland herd is kind of like an older herd that came from England and...and this type of thing. And it's...it's kind of rare. He likes rare things that other people...there isn't a lot of them around so...so, that's one of the reasons. He was either interested in those or the Belted Galloways which are both from Great Britain.

Q: I saw them for the first time this summer, in Maine.

A: That's why this interest was in these animals. And, he kind of liked these better because kind of...well, they kind of look nice out in the field. Things like that...and being that they're low maintenance animals. It doesn't take a lot of people to do anything with them. And they're kind of docile, easy to work with. And, they don't get rattled and they're pretty predator proof with their...their young ones. Nothing seems to...they aren't intimidated by dogs or coyotes or any of the other...

Q: You say you have coyotes? A bear was up in this area last week, too?

A: Right, yeah. We have all this stuff and, they aren't bothered by that. Deer or anything, it just doesn't seem to bother them where others, Holsteins and other animals, are liable to...to you know, get really riled and run off.

Q: What do you think this community was like when you were growing up?

A: Well, I don't think it's changed a great deal. There was maybe some more farms but it was always...always...Sharon was always kind of a... there's a great big huge homes there. Huge houses, mansions and it's always been that way. The Buckley Estate and others. It's always been an affluent community even when I was growing up. Even before then you know. Even before me it was afflou...I don't know, its very pretty country and it's just where they...they are and that and Salisbury and Lakeville...all seemed to be there. The New York side of it was different. You just go over the line and it was going to another country.

Q: Interesting. I've done some reading about people who came up from New York to summer here.

A: Right, yeah in Sharon...

Q: Was it because the land was less expensive here at one point?

A: Oh, I'm sure it was or maybe it could be the geography too. It was very pretty. I'm sure it was. Most people that came up, like I say, even in the '20's the train ride up here was probably...by the time the train ride and the car ride from the railroad station, they had a... They used to have a railroad station in Salisbury. Lakeville I mean, they had one. And they had one in Millerton, New York and Armenia. They had them all throughout the Harlem Valley which the Harlem Valley Line came from New York City. So you could probably be here on train from the city and be into your home in two hours, two- and-a-half hours or maybe even less. I don't how fast the trains went but that was... So,

anything within two hours from a home, from a city isn't a bad commute. You start going four hours and it's not a weekend home, you know, spending eight hours of the weekend traveling. So, it could be it had to do with geography and the distance of it.
(Tape Interruption.)

Q: Was there a difference between the people who lived nearer into town and those who lived out in the country?

A: Well, actually, the one's that lived out in the country were actually the natives and the farmers. And, the one's that lived in town or these big manors were the New York City people or considered from wealthy families, whatever. They had the hospital here which was also another drawing thing for that. They had some health care here, way up here in the country. They had the little hospital in Sharon. You get over...just over the state line in Millerton and then it was dairy farms. Then there's just people that worked in factories and other things. Worked for the state...things...There wasn't any...there's very few big home over there, any kind of. I guess most of the workers came from there. It's funny because Sharon has all these beautiful big, big manors in town and then you go down to the Sharon Valley where there's all these little...little tiny houses. Anyway the people that couldn't afford to live (in Sharon), that's where (Millerton) they lived there longer, it seems. I don't think it has much to do with agriculture but I think it had to do with...

Q: No, but it part of how we developed as a state.

A: Right, right, exactly.

Q: We have a long tradition of part-time farming in Connecticut. People we talk about small farms. But, when you talked about when you worked in a machine shop, I thought about people who...who worked at the defense plants; or, way back in the early part of the century, worked at mills in the industries and so on. They had to for subsistence farming 'cause of wages, had a little plot of land; or, they chose to live out in the country rather than living in where the mill was. And so we have an interesting history in this state.

A: I bet.

Q: Different than other parts of the country.

A: Right.

Q: Well, Massachusetts and Rhode Island would also be different than other parts of the country.

A: Yeah, when they had the iron ore, when they were mining iron ore here. Then they had a...we used to have some charcoal pits up on the mountain, one of our pits beds where they burned it off. It was a big flat area and they called, over in Salisbury they had, I forget what nationality it was, but they called them "raggies." They were the ones that

cut all the lumber, all the ash trees and everything and hauled them in to burn to make the charcoal. I have a book on it at home. And this crew was...it was quite a thing. And the cutters were...I don't know if they were German or if they were...but they called them "raggies." And they had the mountain up there where they dig out the wood....Mount **Riga** 'cause they had a blast furnace...

Q: Mount what, please?

A: **Riga.**

Q: Riga. Is that the phosphorus that was in the news recently? There's some big furnace that they ...

A: Restored?

Q: Restored.

A: It could be that one up there. It could be up on the...

Q: It's now a historical thing that they...

A: Yeah, there's a fella in town that knows all there is to know about everything. His name is...oh, God...names aren't my forte...Ed Kirby. He goes all over and lectures about this place and he lives here in Sharon.

Q: Might be. So, two questions. One is, was your family surprised when you eventually went into agriculture?

A: They probably were. Well, they knew that I liked the country. I have two brothers and one's an engineer and the other one is a **luthier**, as such but they both went off to...

A: A what please?

A: A luthier.

Q: What is that?

A: He makes guitars, musical instruments.

Q: Oh, very interesting.

A: They both went off to college and stuff to do that. I'm sure that's what my mother wanted me to do but I just got...I went through the technical you know, trade school and that's what I wanted to do. I wanted to do that. I didn't want to... So, I guess

they weren't really surprised. I was really like that even when I was a child up here. I was always out riding on the farm tractors with the local farmers and the neighborhood families and stuff. So I think it was...I guess they weren't too surprised.

Q: Have you done anything with town organizations? Have you ever done anything politically or...?

A: No, I haven't. I don't have an interest in politics. I do my duty and...and vote and things like that, but I don't really have an interest in...in town politics. I have an interest in such things as zoning and things like that. I think we need that but I don't...When it comes up for referendum on certain kind of zones and it's for the public to vote then I'm one of the first ones there to vote on that kind of stuff. But as far as local politics, I don't think I really have an interest in getting in on it.

Q: How do you keep up to date on things? Like learning about these cattle, this is brand new.

A: Right.

Q: Or anything else that would be coming up. You have a computer.

A: Right.

Q: How do you...?

A: Well, the cattle...we decided...I read it in a farm magazine that there was someone had a herd of Highland cattle for sale. I mentioned it to Mr. Goldfrank and he thought that would be good. I says, "Well, I don't really know if it would be good if someone wants to sell a whole herd. You don't know if they have good genetics or whatever they have." I said, "Maybe we should do some research on it." So I did. I called the Highland Association, they're out in Denver, Colorado. They sent me books and literature on it and then I...and it also has a directory of all the people that belong to the Association. I picked some names that were close and called them and I went to several farms. The one up in New Hampshire seemed to have the best genetics as far as you know. He has raised them in ways which I agree with. It's hard to do. If a cow doesn't calf every year then they cull that cow because it isn't really good for the heard. If it doesn't catch...if she doesn't breed within the six weeks you have the bull in with it, and you don't use a backup bull, than she isn't going to keep producing. So you want an animal that's going to produce every twelve months. And if she doesn't produce every twelve months then you cull her. You know, sell her for beef or whatever you do. You know, take her out of your breeding program. And that's what this fella did. I mean, he's almost had a hundred per cent return on his animals that he has now. So we bought...well, we bought four heifers from him. I just bought a couple of bred cows from him. Someone else also does the same thing up in Cummingford, Massachusetts. So that's the research I got. And, if you don't...if

you're going into it blind, don't know anything about the herd, you kind of have to rely on people somewhat and then get your own...own feeling. And look at what they have on paper. And this fella had a lot of things on paper so...but he was quite more expensive than other people. But, we went with it anyway. We wanted to start with a good foundation and so we...we got the best that we think we could get from here. But it's just like people, you know. You can have two of the best parents in the world and the offspring is going to grow up to be that great. So, we're trying that way as far as genetics...we'll see.

Q: What other...you mentioned a farm magazine. Do you remember what the name of it is?

A: I think it was...oh dash, what was it?

Q: I was just thinking, which ones to you read on a regular basis?

A: I don't read many on a regular basis. This was just one that was...

Q: Caught your eye.

A: Yeah, it was just something that I got as a promotion....Farming Ranch, as a matter of fact, was the name of it. It's published in New England so...New York, New England area.

Q: What about a computer? What kind of records do you keep?

A: Well, we just keep the weight records and birth records and stuff like that....and the daily weight gain and when we give them any kind of medication or anything which we haven't. We worm 'em or, whatever we do, we just keep it on there.

Q: Do you have a vet that does it or do you take care...?

A: No, we do all that as far as the inoculation or worming and things like that, we do it all. It doesn't pay to have a vet come and charge you a vet call to come and give a shot where you're capable of doing it. That's another thing that just goes with it. It's not hard to do that. If you start having a vet coming in and inoculate...you know, thirty or forty cows you got to come in and give a shot, he's spending a half a day here giving those things a shot. It's going to cost a lot of money. If it's something that you can,.... there's certain shots that they have to give. You can't give a cow a rabies shot yourself. But as far as worming I...injections like that or...or if it's down with milk fever or something, you can do that kind of stuff. But, there's certain things, certain jobs that you can't inject lawfully.

Q: Okay. What do you think has brought you....well, I'll ask you two questions. The biggest frustration that you've had in the kind of work that you do managing an estate and then, what's been your greatest joy?

A: The biggest frustration...oh, I don't know if this is part of it but the biggest frustration is...is if you're raising...to me personally...is if we were raising some kind of animal. We raise our own chicks and things like that. If you raise them and then you come and a bunch were passed on or died or something, that's really frustrating to me. We had a bunch of turkeys up here and a fox or something must have been circling the pen and they got scared. The turkeys stampede. They...they...they get...they actually kill themselves. They stampeded by running into the wires, just back and forth. After that happened I read some articles and they said, if you put a light...light pole over the yard...that they...it's just so it would keep them from stampeding 'cause they see. At night, when they can't see, they're running back because they're on a roost. I'll tell you I think we lost twelve or fourteen and that's...that is frustrating. Or else Mother Nature can be frustrating sometimes if you're waiting to do something. If you do something and it comes in and we have a wind storm and it breaks up things. but mostly it's the animals. It's the most....anything that happens to them is really...the most frustrating part.

Q: What's your greatest satisfaction?

A: The biggest satisfaction is...is this place. Is looking at it. Being in charge of this and looking at it. When it looks nice, which it does all the time and just thinking you're responsible for that. And that's...it's...a great....very gratifying. To me, it isn't like a working farm you know, you don't have the time to make it look as nice as this. This is what it's for. We're hired to be servicing, and in the service that we do, it's very, very gratifying. You see, it's a beautiful place and it's up to you to keep it that way.

Q: Are you primarily responsible for decisions that get made about running it?

A: Oh, a good part of them, yes. I talk a lot of things over with Mr. Goldfrank. If I see something, I call around by him and he asks me how I feel about it and I tell him. Most of the time he just...we just do it. So, as far as...yeah, I'm here and...I think he doesn't like...I don't bother him with a lot of small things that happen. That's why he hires me to do the job so he doesn't have to...to make these kind of decisions.

Q: Do you have children?

A: Do I? Yes. They're grown up.

Q: Did any of them go into anything related to rural life or agriculture?

A: No. No, I have a daughter who lives here. They live here. A couple of them live here. She teaches in a day care center. Her husband has a furniture store. And, I have

a son that works in a book distributing place. None of them went...worked in agriculture.

Q: Was your wife from a rural area?

A: Yes, she was born in Cornwall. In West Cornwall and she was brought up in agriculture. She actually....they cut timber, had a saw mill and raised horses and ponies She's actually the business manager of this farm. We have our own farm, horse farm, also, just over the line there in New York state. I think we have six horses there, now. Before she took the job, we had twelve and just started... we have a boarding facility too. That's what she does. She's a trainer and things like that so's she been in agriculture all her life. She worked in forestry. She was a Forester, went around and picked out timber and stuff.

Q: I was thinking of this property. How many acres are actually used and how many are in forest?

A: Oh, I would say there's only about maybe sixty acres on this farm that aren't...that's forested that we don't use. The rest is all pasture and tillable land. And on the other farm, I would almost say out of the two hundred acres, there I think there's probably ten that's not usable.

Q: That's very unusual these days.

A: Well, listen if you go from the top, it's just one long beautiful farmland. You know, this is some of the best farm land, right here on this farm because it's very rich and very...very easy to get the...You're right. We've never cut timber off it. It's never been...there isn't that much. We've been approached a few times but we've never done it.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to add? I've asked you about your own life, I've asked you about this particular farm which is an estate. In either direction, anything that you think would be important? One thing, you mentioned the feed store. Where do the supplies come from, now?

A: Well, they come from different feed stores, different feed companies. There's Blue Seal and stuff. Where their main suppliers are, I don't know. I know that we have an Agway in Millerton that we buy most of ...Most of their feed comes from the Midwest or the mills up in Selkirk. Comes by railroad train and they pick it up by truck and deliver it. Most it's all bags. Very, very little bulk feed any more except for the big dairy farmers. I think most of these mills, like I think Nutrina Feeds is ---less. Agway is...their mixing plants I think are in Selkirk, New York. I don't know where Blue Seal...where their plants are. But most of the grains all come from the Midwest. Very, very little grain is made here I think. It used to be, years ago, the farmers got around and picked up their corn and oats and the feed store had these grist mills and

they would grind it up, add molasses and a soybean supplement or something for protein.

Q: Now, do you remember doing this?

A: Oh, yeah. I did that. Well, this was all power then. It wasn't like a grist mill with the water wheel. Yeah, we used to go and pick it up and dump it and...and grind it up and add molasses and all this. Then it would go right back into the truck and you take it up and it would be blown into their feed bins. So, the farmers actually raised their corn and oats for their own grain, but now...it doesn't..

Q: Do they ever measure the nutrient content of it?

A: Well, you do. They did.

Q: How do you do it? Back then could they...?

A: Well, that's why you add the supplements. You know normally what oats and corn had in it. Corn is pretty high in...there is some protein in corn but not much. And, in oats there isn't a terrible lot but there's a lot of roughage. So they added soy bean which is very high in protein, like forty, forty-four per cent. They also had to put some mineral supplements in it and things like that boost up the protein. I guess it needs a lot of protein in order for cows to make milk. The more protein, the more milk...

Q: Well, when your new cattle come, you said they don't need much in the way of care 'cause they thrive on pretty ordinary food.

A: Well, they can thrive, they can survive on anything. They eat things...browsers.

Q: Out in Colorado, they've got tough winters out there.

A: Yeah. They can. They eat, browse off trees, branches and stuff and wild roses, anything. They live on that stuff. But we'll feed 'em hay. They don't have to do that but they can. They can live on nothing. But they also look really good when they have good pasture. That's what kind of makes 'em organic animals. We don't feed 'em grain. They have naturalization marbelization of their meat because of they don't have a lot of body fat, it's because of the long hair.

Q: That's interesting.

A: They're very low on their carbohydrates but its marbelized enough so it's...it's tender. I've had some Highland beef from New Hampshire when I went up there. He gave me some and it's fairly tasty but it's chewy. His are, especially, because they live on more

browse than they do hay. And of course, it all depends...it's you are what you eat I guess.

Q: I'm thinking of letting my hair grow so I wouldn't have too much body fat
(Laughter)..

A: Yeah, right. That's right. We're not that lucky, I guess. So down here, I think animals raised down here would taste a little bit different than the way he raises them. It's sort of a natural beef, I shouldn't say organic because you can't be organic, even though it's...if you're not certified. But its pretty natural beef if you don't feed 'em any kind of grain or any kind of supplement.

Q: Interesting. So would you think that this part of the state really is, the culture of it, are these estates?

A: I think...not this whole...yes, I think it is. A good part of it is. We have a lot of...of wealthy people that come up and buy these areas.

Q: Do you get together with other people who are managers?

A: No, not really.
(End side one.)
(Tape interruption.)

Q: Okay.

A: Well, I did talk to Mr. **Bloomsman** when I was talking about getting the cows. Yeah, he's in...in some things. As far as that, I don't get very far off of here. I live about a quarter of a mile away in my home and I talk to the fellas that leases the farm...that leases our land there and who's ever at the barn with him. Very seldom I get out and talk to other people there.

Q: Is there anything else that you'd like to add?

A: We covered a lot.

Q: Thanks so much.