

CONNECTICUT 20TH CENTURY AGRICULTURAL HISTORY PROJECT

ORAL HISTORIES

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Name of Person Interviewed: Sam Waldron

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- A. My uncle in 1933, we came up here to So. Windsor. I've been here ever since.
- Q. So your whole family was all living with your uncle originally at this farm?
- A. Yes. We all lived together at my uncle's farm.
- Q. Your brothers and sisters?
- A. I have four brothers.
- Q. And was your uncle's farm a tobacco farm?
- A. My uncle's farm was a tobacco farm and a fruit farm. Potatoes. All around farm. he grew mostly everything.
- Q. The food, did you sell the produce or did you use it to eat?
- A. Not always. We sold the crops that we raise and of course we kept some that we ate.
- Q. How did he sell it?
- A. Went to Harper's Market over the Connecticut River by the bridge and wholesalers used to come around and buy it from him. They'd come in a horse and buggy and some in an old truck.
- Q. When you moved to So. Windsor, was this a tobacco farm then?

- A. No, it wasn't. We built the tobacco shed, my brother and I, on my father's farm here. We raised tobacco. I've raised tobacco every year since 1940 when we got out of high school.
- Q. How old were you when you built the barn?
- A. I must have been about 21 or so.
- Q. What were your days like when you were growing up?
- A. When we were growing up in the 30's, 33, 34 they were days when everybody worked together and there wouldn't be much money, but plenty of work on the farm. We just kept working, that's all.
- Q. Had your father's family, with his brother, had they been farmers, too?
- A. No. My father was a carpenter by trade, but he worked on the farm, too. Back then in those days, everybody worked on the farm even if you were carpenter, plumber, bulldozer operator. Everybody worked sometime during the year on the farm when there was a slow period of time, that I can remember.
- Q. How many acres were there here?
- A. Around 16.
- Q. And that's the size farm originally from back when your dad bought it?
- A. No. My mother and father bought this farm in 1933.
- Q. And were there 16 acres then, too?
- A. Yes.
- Q. And what did your mother do?
- A. My mother kept house. She took care of us five boys and most of the time five or four from the State. They lived with us. We never sat down at our table unless there was 12 people at least.
- Q. She did all the cooking?
- A. She did all the cooking on an oil stove. Some people wonder how she did it, but she did it all.

- Q. I found a lot of differences between the east and west side of the State as to when they got electricity. Did you have electricity here in the 1930's?
- A. Yes. We had electricity in the 30's here. But I don't remember when they put it in on the other house when I was.....I don't know. I was not too old. Three or four maybe.
- Q. At your uncles?
- A. AT my uncle's house.
- Q. Was he on a main road?
- A. No, he lived on Hillstown Road that's off of Spencer Street in Manchester.
- Q. There are parts of Connecticut on the eastern side that didn't get electricity until after the Second World War. I was amazed when I found that out. Did you have other relatives around?
- A. Oh, yeah. We had my other uncles that were my mother's brothers. They were all in the meat business over on Hillstown Rd. at that time. And they used to peddle meat all the time.
- Q. Had their parents been in farming?
- A. They farmed, yes. They had potatoes and they raised tobacco and they had an orchard. They had apples, pears that they sold to get an income.
- Q. And what about your dad's parents, did they farm?
- A. I don't know much about them. My father's mother got burned and then my father was put in the convalescent home. I don't know much about it. Only his brothers and sisters, they used to come and visit here quite often.
- Q. What was school like?
- A. School? I don't know how to explain it. It's something you had to go through.
- Q. Was it nearby your house?
- A. The school was within a half a mile of our house right here. It was right in the center of town. We walked to school every day. There was no bus then. If you lived a mile away, you could take a bus, but here there was only a half a mile and you walked.
- Q. How many kids were there in your class?

A. In my class in school? I can't remember.

Q. Big classes? Small classes?

A. Fair.

Q. Did you finish high school?

A. I finished high school and when I got out of high school. I took a machinists course at the high school and at that time the War hadn't begun, but we went working at Hamilton Standard. Everybody was there. The Aircraft, the Hamilton, Colts and I raised tobacco on the side with a team of horses after work.

Q. On this property?

A. Yes.

Q. How long did you farm this with your dad?

A. My father never got involved raising the tobacco.

Q. How did you learn about it?

A. Through my uncles and everybody else. Every farmer here had tobacco on this street. I used to go to work for them and somehow after I got out of high school I made up my mind I was going to raise tobacco and that's what I did.

Q. This whole area, from here into Hartford, was tobacco? Or from here north?

A. From here to Hartford was tobacco and on this street I could name a dozen farmers I think that were people that had tobacco.

Q. Tell me about tobacco raising. You planted and I've seen movies of how they drop the plants in the troughs in the land and then.... So this is broad leaf tobacco?

A. Broad leaf tobacco.

Q. So you had to cover it.

A. When you drop it, there's a hole there and the shoe that's on the machine covers it. And you go along that way. Every sprocket that you put on, the sprocket on the chain and that lets the water out and it also makes a noise so you can put your plant in so it's spaced even. Try to be spaced even. But the new machine, they got a wheel and you can't you put it into the sprocket, I guess you call it, and that drops it right where you want it.

- Q. Kind of like a Ferris wheel that drops it and it goes around. So then when you started, did you have machinery or did you rely on horses more?
- A. We first started with a horse. With a tobacco setter and a tobacco setter hasn't changed since the time the farmers used to do it all by hand. They had a big wheel and it had a knob on it and you pushed that down the row and that would make the hole. And the farmer would do during the day and after school was out, the kids would come and help him plant his tobacco; drop a plant in the hole. One boy would be doing that and the other boy would be covering the plant up.
- Q. Did they walk and do this behind the horses?
- A. No. Behind the horses, you sat on the setter, just like almost the old fashioned setters and you're riding and you drop your plants right where the shoe makes the hole.
- Q. And what time of the year do you start planting?
- A. Around Decoration Day. That's what everybody used to try to do. Now, today, they plant it around the 15th of May up until the 4th of July.
- Q. We're having warmer seasons? Or later seasons?
- A. I don't know. Either that or everybody's in a hurry.
- Q. You planted some vegetables for your own family's use, but then you had primarily tobacco.
- A. Right. Myself, yes. All, tobacco. I tried vegetables. I had carrots. We had corn, potatoes, tomatoes. I planted squash, but my primary crop was always tobacco.
- Q. And you took this to market? Tell me the sequence. After you planted tobacco, and then you picked it?
- A. Then you take it and cure it in the shed for sixty days or so and then on a good, damp, foggy or rainy day, you take it down and you strip the leaves off the lath and put them in a bundle. After that is all done and taken down a tobacco buyer most of the time would come around and offer.
- Q. They came to you.
- A. They came to you and offer you a price. I haven't changed buyers since 1950 when I sold it to SB Graves and Son and I've sold it to them ever since. We never had a contract. We'd always just shake hands, have a cup of coffee and that's it.

- Q. Where are they from?
- A. They're from New Haven.
- Q. And they take the tobacco and ship it someplace else. Who makes the cigars?
- A. They used to have their own shop in New Haven, but it got so hard with the labor and everything that they had their cigars made down in Pennsylvania. We'd process the tobacco here for them and sweat it.
- Q. What do you mean by "sweat it?"
- A. By sweating, you put the tobacco after it's in the case, in the room for six weeks with the temperature at 110 degrees.
- Q. Now, where we were when I came in today, you were putting leaves in
- A. In that wooden box.
- Q. What was that? What do you call doing that?
- A. Tackling. (Tacking????)
- Q. You're getting ready to ship it? You're getting ready to sweat it.
- A. Sweat it. After it's sweated, we take it out after the six weeks out into a room where no heat. Cold storage. And it sits there until maybe another 3-4 weeks before they come and pick it up. Then they put it in cold storage in Pennsylvania and it sits there for another year or two before they begin to use it.
- Q. All that time it's aging to improve its texture or its smoking ability or its flavor?
- A. To improve it. It does it all. It improves the texture, it improve the taste of the tobacco.
- Q. Did you change the kind of tobacco you grow at any time or is it the same kind of tobacco you grew when you started?
- A. We tried different seeds. They got a new seed now that is 3-3 which is resistant to the "pserium" wilt that was a problem here.
- Q. A couple years ago it was a big problem, wasn't it.
- A. Yes. That was the brown spot. Now, along with that, they have the blue mold, which is a bigger problem. That seems no matter what you do, some places it will spread, it will

stop it, and other places it don't stop it. There's no end. No one knows. No one answer yet to it.

Q. How did you keep up to date on what was new in the tobacco farming?

A. We'd go to the Experiment Station. That's over in Windsor. They do a good job over there.

Q. So, if you have a problem, you can take it there or they do classes and things.

A. You have a problem, you go over there, you show them your problem, or they'll come out and try to help you. Very good. Very good people.

Q. I've been up there and talked to some of them. What were your neighbors like here?

A. They're all friendly.

Q. Were they all from the area or had they come in?

A. Now most of the neighbors are all new ones. We don't have any old neighbors left.

Q. When you first, let's say after you were in your twenties, were the neighbors people who had come around the time your dad did, or had they been here longer?

A. They're about my father's age. But back in those days, you always helped your neighbor, you know. We would have stuff here, my father would have vegetables and we would have a little stand down at that corner here. When you went cutting tobacco at a neighbor's where you helped him and then you go to the next neighbor and help him. That's the way the whole street worked.

Q. Did you share equipment?

A. Oh, yes, sure. Borrow from this neighbor and that neighbor. Sure

Q. Have these neighbors over these years, it's getting much more populated, the town and cities are moving out. Have these neighbors continued? I noticed there was the Watson farm up near Buckland Mall. Watson farm is brand new section of condominiums. I'm assuming it used to be a farm. How many tobacco farmers are there still out near you?

A. In South Windsor now? I could count them on my hands. I would say maybe five. There used to be fifty-five. I don't know how many there would be.

Q. Was this the same kind of tobacco that was grown up in the north of Hartford? The other side of the Enfield area?

A. The same tobacco. Outside the shade tobacco. Shade tobacco in Enfield. The shade tobacco used to be down in Buckland where the Buckland Mall is. That was all shade farms. There was a broadleaf farm and then they gave it up and rented the land out for shade. Then they built it with Amosite (?). The company buildings, they rented them and then they put in the Amosite parking. (??)

Q. Now, you show me the big tobacco leaf that was framed. That's broad leaf tobacco?

A. That's broad leaf.

Q. But it's not shade tobacco.

A. No.

Q. What's the difference?

A. The shade tobacco you grow it under a tent.

Q. But what's the difference in the tobacco? Why would you do one or the other?

A. Why I wouldn't do the other? I wouldn't do the other because it's so expensive. I couldn't afford it. One would cost you maybe \$25,000 and acre and the other one would cost you maybe \$4,000-5,000. I don't know. I never stopped to figure it out.

Q. What's the difference in the kind of uses for the different tobacco?

A. It's all for cigars, but the shade is much thinner and they don't have the veins in and it's supposed to be a better wrapper for a cigar. I don't know. Some people like the shade wrappers and some like the broad leaf.

Q. Is the broad leaf stronger, like more strong coffee? (Laughter) You said people would help. The neighbors helped each other, helped you too when you needed help, or your family. Did many women take part in the running of the farm?

A. Oh, sure. They used to work out on the farms with their husbands. My wife never did. She was always doing hair or used to help me strip the tobacco. When we're cutting tobacco, with hanging it, before we had children.

Q. How did you meet your wife?

A. She was my next-door neighbor. We went to grammar school together.

Q. How many children did you have?

A. Two.

- Q. Both boys?
- A. No. Two girls. One girl was retarded and my other daughter was down a half a mile from here on another piece of land that we owned. We built a house there.
- Q. And now her sons are helping you?
- A. Her sons are the ones that are helping me on the tobacco now and for the last twelve or fourteen years
- Q. So, they grew up the same way as children. Is your other daughter who was retarded, is she still alive?
- A. No. She died in 1968 on her eighteenth birthday. Hard to deal with...yep.
- Q. How has this business changed over the years since you first started? Has it changed?
- A. Oh, sure it's changed a lot. When I first started, there maybe were two dozen tobacco buyers. Today there's maybe two or three tobacco buyers.
- Q. And this is Graves that comes.....
- A. Graves buys my tobacco. But we never made a contract. We never did nothing.
- Q. Are the other buyers from Connecticut also, or are they from father away?
- A. No. General Cigar is one of them and they're owned by another outfit now. They have buyers that come from other states. They do most of their processing. Most all of the bigger tobacco companies do the processing of tobacco down in the Islands. They don't do it here no more because of the labor costs.
- Q. When you speak of processing, you mean the processing that you're doing now when you sweat it and then you chill it, or is it after?
- A. When we get through with it..... They do it down there in the Island the same thing that I'm doing here.
- Q. So some people must sell raw tobacco leaves to them and ship it to them?
- A. They take the raw tobacco right down to the Islands and have it processed.
- Q. They'd have to fly it down? Take it by boat?

- A. They take it by boat. They put it on a container and the container On a boat, you know. They take it down.
- Q. Is there any problem with the time that goes by while it's being shipped? Does it make it a better or worse product?
- A. It don't seem so.
- Q. You mentioned labor. Is labor a problem? Getting labor to help?
- A. Yes. It's a problem because you never know. It's a problem because you never know how many you want to have to help and the next thing is to try to get them to come and help you.
- Q. Do you have the same.....
- A. A lot of off-shore people.
- Q. How do you find them?
- A. They come to you.
- Q. Word of mouth? From the same towns, the same village?
- A. Sure.
- Q. Where do most of them come from?
- A. All over. Springfield, New Haven, Willimantic. All over.
- Q. Do you have the same people coming back each season?
- A. No. Most of the time maybe a few will come back, but there's always a new bunch. Then they go on to a better job. They work on the farm and then they get a job in a restaurant or as a mechanic's helper.
- Q. If they're new, they might come and do tobacco and then the longer they're here, the more they work other kinds of jobs.
- A. Yes. I would say so.
- Q. I interviewed a Christmas tree farmer and his workers come from the Islands and Mexico. But they come back every year. Because of the winter season and then they can go back and they do..... Now, do these workers once the tobacco season is over, then they don't go home?

- A. They find another job.
- Q. Did you have anything that you did not continue doing with our farming? When you said things have changed with the tobacco farming, things that got better and some things got worse? Which things got better and which got worse?
- A. Oh, I don't know if anything got better or it got worse. It evens out about the same I would say.
- Q. What do you think your greatest satisfaction has been doing tobacco farming? Why farm?
- A. Everybody asked me that. Since I started to raise tobacco. My mother and father tried to discourage me at it because they were "through the mill," maybe because my uncle lost one farm to tobacco. I just like it, that's all.
- Q. You liked growing things?
- A. I just liked growing things. And it's hard work, but I don't mind hard work either. Some people will go and play golf all day and walk around and I can go in the tobacco lot and hoe tobacco all day and I'd be just as happy as he is.
- Q. How many sheds do you have.
- A. We only have two sheds now. But I rent five or six sheds. Six of them.
- Q. How far away are they?
- A. Only about half mile.
- Q. These are from tobacco farmers who are no longer farming?
- A. They're from tobacco farmers that all retired and they sold their land. In fact the ones up on the Buckland Hill Mall, some of the sheds I rent. They're going to build a mall there someday.
- Q. Next to the other Mall?
- A. Yes, right next to it.
- Q. When you call steaming them, what kind of building do you steam them in? Once you pack them and you have to put them up to 110 degrees, where do you do that?

- A. We do that at J. B. Shepherd Tobacco Warehouse. They have a new all insulated. It's nothing that you could get the temperature up in the house or anyplace where you can get the heat, you can sweat tobacco. And you have moisture there, too.
- Q. So the Shepherd Co. is a facility that different tobacco farmers use at different times?
- A. The buildings? Yes. Used during the fall time. They're used mostly year around because they store tobacco there, too.
- Q. Is there ever a problem finding a place to do this sweating? What if everybody had a big crop? You said you had the best crop in 1990. One of the best. Because they were big leaves?
- A. No, if chilled down right and it grew right. I would say the "Man Above" made it a good year for tobacco that's all.
- Q. What is your usual crop? Do you go by pounds?
- A. By poundage. Sell it by the pound.
- Q. How many pounds per acre does a person usually get?
- A. That year we got over a pound per the acre, which is very good weight. A real good crop of tobacco.
- Q. Off set the years when it's not so good.
- A. When you have bad years, my other half, my wife, she would be working in the beauty parlor, so we kept going. We didn't have to.....
- Q. Did you have it here at your house, or did she go out?
- A. We had it right at the entranceway there where you come in the door. That helped out. It helped out a lot. A lot of years, it wasn't a rosy one. You learn to live that way.
- Q. What do you think made you more successful at staying in business then some of your neighbors?
- A. I guess I loved to work, regardless of hours. I don't know.
- Q. Do you have to invest in a lot of new equipment?
- A. No, I haven't done that. I did a couple years, but I haven't.....

- Q. I heard of one man who has field trucks. He did vegetable garden farming. Some of his trucks were from the 1940's. He said they were good for the fields and he just kept them running. You said you had a mechanical background from high school. Has that helped you in your farming?
- A. No, because we used to learn how to run the machinery.
- Q. Not cars or trucks?
- A. No. Without a little that you know.....up from making mistakes and you learn.
- Q. Did you belong to any organizations?
- A. Oh, yes. I belonged to most all the farm organizations. Farm Bureau Organization. Farm Service Agency, I'm a county chairman there. Different organizations.
- Q. The Grange? Did you ever join the Grange?
- A. The Grange, we belonged to that.
- Q. How old were you when you got married?
- A. 1945. How old is that? Subtract. We celebrated our 56th wedding anniversary.
- Q. That's wonderful. I see you have a State of Connecticut....
- A. They sent me that.
- Q. In honor of what?
- A. Being married. So long together, I guess.
- Q. It was for your wedding anniversary. That's wonderful. Where did you buy your supplies for your farming?
- A. Most of it comes from Crop Productions. That's where I get my fertilizer and supplies from. That's in Broadbrook, Connecticut. About four miles from here.
- Q. Do you go and pick it up? Have you always dealt with them?
- A. Always dealt with them.
- Q. And they do general supplies or primarily tobacco supplies?

- A. They do general supplies of anything pertaining to our farms. Corn, tomatoes, peppers. Anything you can think of you can find there. They would have it and most of the time they would have the chemicals that you could use.
- Q. With the other farms leaving, do you think their business is, it must be hard for them. With fewer farms to deal with.
- A. When you work all day and all night, and you don't make no money, you might as well give up and quit. My wife is the one that kept things going pretty good because she was working as a hairdresser. And with her income and with what little I would make, some years why we'd "put the pie" together. And I never sat home or sat around waiting, I always found work someplace.
- Q. What other kinds of work did you sometimes do?
- A. Anything anybody wanted me to do.
- Q. I've interviewed some who drove a school bus.
- A. No, I never drove school bus. I've been working helping different farmers, grading potatoes, everything that pertained to the farm.
- Q. Did you ever take part in any government, community activities? Like on the boards of zoning or planning or education?
- A. I was in the town board of finance. I was on that for four years. That's when it was much smaller. I've been on the Farm Services as director for I don't know how many years I've been on that. Been on the, president of Wat... Cemetery Association. President, served the community. You get going on them and you're out every night.
- Q. What changes do you remember about the prices? Things you bought or when you sold? The prices of things. Like you talked about that you had to buy your supplies back in the 1940's or 50's compared to buying them now and then compared to the prices that you get for your tobacco. How have those changed?
- A. They change. The price of the supplies are higher all the time and you're income gets smaller. The price of any commodity is supply and demand. I don't know if they got government insurance now, we have, and they're suppose to be for prices, too, but there's no body can govern the price of anything with a pencil and a paper. It's supply and demand. If you don't have a big supply, why the price will be pretty good. But if you have a big supply, the price is apt to be a little bit short.
- Q. Have you ever had a problem getting insurance or anything from a bank because you were in farming? You got some insurance from Farm Bureau.

A. Yes. All my insurance is Farm friendly. As far as the bank's concerned, I've never had no problem getting money. The first time I went after money, I was in high school, my senior year. I wanted to buy a tractor and I went to the bank and told them who I was and he said, "How do you expect to pay this back? I said, "When I sell my crop next fall. He said, "hat's good enough for me." I signed the paper and in the fall I paid him back the money. Then I went with a Production Credit Association which is a farm organization and they were very good to me.

Q. They understand the seasonal thing, too. Were there any key problems that you remember facing? Were there some years, like the hurricane of 1938, anything like that?

A. If you lived on a farm, you have all kinds of problems. (Laughter) Don't expect to get away without having no troubles. In 1955 the flood, we just got through topping tobacco, 18 acres, and overnight 14 inches of water come down and took that crop of tobacco and drowned it.

Q. Topping tobacco? It means when you're cutting it?

A. When it was already to be cut, to be harvested. That was one year and then another year, 1947, we fired tobacco and we had a most miserable bunch of sweat you ever would see. Then another year we had a hail storm. I just got through fertilizing it all day and on the weekend, too. It was Saturday and Sunday. Eighteen acres. And just got through and on Monday afternoon, down in the lot we werer hoeing tobacco and a hail storm come and broke everything away. A lot of times.

Q. That's why you think it's the Man upstairs.

A. That's right. The Man upstairs, He's the one. 1966 they burned down one of my tobacco sheds.

Q. What burned it down?

A. Somebody set it on fire, but no body could ever find out who. Then in 1968, the same year, they burned down another shed with all my tools and no insurance. May of 1968. the end of 1968 in December, they burned down the shed filled with tobacco. All taken down.

Q. Do you think these were kids out and about? Just vandalizing?

A. Oh, sure. Vandalizing. Sure. They burned down two sheds in 1968.

Q. Never caught them? Must be horrible.

A. Never caught them. You have to live with it.

- Q. Is it possible to insure for..?
- A. Oh, yes. After that I insured. But the insurance don't pay for everything, but it helpts. It's a big help.
- Q. What do you think is the greatest change you adjusted to in farming tobacco? Big changes in the kind of tobacco you grew, or the kind of equipment you used or the timing of the season?
- A. No, I don't think there was any great change in anything. One of the greatest changes was the horses to the tractors. That was a good change. When you had the horses, you always had to somebody to help you. But with the tractor, you could go by yourself. I don't know of any bad change.
- Q. Do I remember this right? Your father and mother moved here and you had the 16 acres, but your dad never really farmed it. You farmed it.
- A. No. My father, first he raised vegetables. Then in '32 he helped to put the pie together to keep the place. My father raised tomatoes, muskmelons, cabbage, strawberries. And he used to sell them at the end of the street and then he would usually go to market with them. Then we always had three or four cows and he would have veal calf. He used to help us with tobacco, but he was a carpenter by trade.
- Q. Building houses?
- A. Building houses, remodeling for somebody.
- Q. So, would you say that he farmed half of his time, part of his time, 25% of his time?
- A. No, I wouldn't say he farmed that much.
- Q. So you and your brothers ran the farm? Did your other brothers go on into...?
- A. One brother is a teacher, was a teacher. He's retired now. Another brother was a..... And another, my other brother that was in with me on tobacco, he went to a tobacco dealer. He worked there as a buyer. My youngest brother, he was with the telephone company for years and he retired from that. I've been on the farm ever since I got out of high school.
- Q. What is your happiest memory of being here?
- A. Having my wife here.
- Q. Good life for the two of you with your family, your daughters.

- A. Yes. I would say that's the happiest.
- Q. If you had to tell you grandsons about tobacco farming, what would you tell them?
- A. It's getting to be a poor business.
- Q. By having developments come in, are there any problems with having people come? Are there any problems having more houses nearby?
- A. No, it don't seem to be. The neighbors have been good to us. Sometimes we've had the airplane come and spray and I had to go see the neighbors and tell them and they all accepted it. But someplaces it's very, very hard because the neighbors don't want you to spray, they don't want you to dust.
- Q. Have they developed any, well they're still working on it, are there any tobacco resistant to some of these diseases?
- A. They're working on it now. In fact, they thought they had the spray. They got one plant, 3-3-87, it's resistant to one disease, but it don't, it isn't resistant to another, so you're stuck. It aint' like saying it's day or it's night. It's got one type that it won't harm you so bad.
- Q. When I came to find you, I walked down to where the trucks are. Are all those trucks part of your tobacco business?
- A. Down in back? No. Some construction. All those buses are storage busses. Back in 1968 when I told you about the fire, it burned up everything, I said it won't burn it up the second time because I'll have everything in a bus. That's why I got all those busses. They store different equipment. One's got cultivators in it, the other, parts for the tractors and another got parts for gas burners and some got gas burners.
- Q. The gas burners you use in the sheds?
- A. It fires the tobacco the leaves. So it won't burn everything up.
- Q. That's an interesting way around the storage.
- A. Don't really look fancy, but it serves the purpose.
- Q. Some farmers do trucking on the side. That's why I wondered if maybe that's what you do on the side, too. Because some farmers do do trucking. I think that's all of my questions. Anything else that pops into your head about your time here on the farm?
- A. No, I can't think of anything.

- Q. What did you do for fun when you were little?
- A. Played basketball.
- Q. With the kids in the neighborhood, your brothers?
- A. My brother played, one of my brothers played for the high school, Elsworth, Hugh Greer. He was a coach at the University of Connecticut he played a few years until he died.
- Q. I have a picture of one of the first UConn basketball teams. Back when we were Storrs Agricultural College or something.
- A. He used to play at UConn.
- Q. Then he coached here, and then he went back and coached there?
- A. He coached in Manchester, then from Manchester he came up here. He coached in Glastonbury, too. Then when he was going to school out there at UConn, he played on the basketball team. That was many years ago.
- Q. Do you watch the basketball games now?
- A. Oh, yes. If I can stay awake I watch them.
- Q. Did you see the UMass/UConn game? I went in after the half, I turned it on.
- A. Oh, you saw the best part.
- Q. I know. I couldn't believe what they said. When they said what the score was at the half, I thought, oh, my goodness. They must have been dying. It was like 34-9 at the half. I wonder what the coach said to them at the half time. (Laughter)
- A. He said plenty.
- Q. Yeah. They sure came back. Amazing. It was fun to watch.
- A. What team have you got the picture of?
- Q. It's not very big. It's maybe 7 or 8 men. I'll have to check to see if there's a name on it and see if Hugh Greer was on that team. It's in the files. I want to thank you very, very much for agreeing to meet with me to do this first of all. Thank you Mr. Waldren.

Continued: He showed the interviewer a framed broadleaf and spoke of having a steam boiler, firing pan, planting machine and pot belly stove (for heat and steam)

Q: I coughed when I came in to find you.

A: Allergies. Lot of people have those allergies

Q: And, my glasses did steam up.

Looking as other artifacts....

A: Shepherd's Farm. There was a big hole, a wash out. We were hanging a third tier and not more tobacco was coming in.

Mr. Wakdren, "Look what I got!" He had spears and hatchets. I said, "Pick it up and put in on the bank." I took a large piece of dirt and broke it up. A 2000 year old Indian pipe. Donate it all to the So. Windsor Memorial Woods Library. My nephew made me pay him \$4. for the spear he found. (Chuckle)