

Hartford Agricultural Oral History Project
 Interview Transcription
 June 21, 2012

Interviewer: Kaitlin O'Shea
 Interviewees: Marty Lyman

Location: Jericho, VT
 Time: 7:00pm

KO: Kaitlin O'Shea
 ML: Marty Lyman

The Hartford Agricultural Oral History Project, the 2012 segment, is funded by the US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, for the Certified Local Government Program of Vermont's annual program under the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act. Previously, Hartford's agricultural oral history has been documented primarily through volunteers, often with interview recordings and transcriptions occurring at separate phases with different people. In 2009, additional historical research was provided through the 2009 Vermont Barn Census. The purpose of this agricultural oral history project is to document the history of local residents who grew up or worked on a farm in the Town of Hartford. The Town is comprised of five villages: White River Junction, Hartford, Wilder, Quechee and West Hartford, in addition to several smaller hamlets.

TIME & TOPICS	TRANSCRIPTION
00:00:01	00:00:01
Introductions	KO: Today is Thursday June 21, 2012. I am Kaitlin O'Shea and I am interviewing Marty Lyman for the Hartford Agricultural Oral History Project. We are outside his home in Jericho. Good evening and it's lovely to be out here with you. I guess if we could start, tell me a little bit about where you were born and when and a little bit about your family.
Born 1951; family history; cattle herds; maple sugaring; selling syrup	ML: I was actually born in Hitchcock Hospital in Hanover in 1951. Raised right up the road. You can see the farm I was raised on. It was my grandfather's farm. The farmhouse was a two-story farmhouse. My grandparents lived downstairs and my family lived upstairs. One brother, one sister, there were five of us. We were there until 1961. Through that period of time, we had an operating dairy farm. Milked at the most, 72 head of Jersey cows. Had a rather large, for that time, maple sugar operation. It was different than today. It was all buckets. Used to hang 3,300. I guess the best year they had was 1,200 gallons of syrup. Syrup

	<p>was sold locally, canned and re-canned. It was brought out of the woods in 30-gallon drums. My grandfather would re-can it. Had a list of customers locally that would take the syrup. That was one of his projects that I was aware of him doing.</p>
Chores as a kid; 70 cows	<p>As I say, I was born in '51 and probably from the time I was 5 or 6 or 7, I had chores such as feeding calves and whatever in the barn. Was expected to be there. Chase the cows. Go get the cows. That was a mile and a half walk down through the woods and over across the pasture. Had 70 cows over there and bring them. Try to count 70 before they get by you, you think you got them all and you get back here and you've been gone for over an hour. You're father is standing on the back stoop of the barn asking you what you're going to do about the other two that are up in the corner of the pasture over there. Turned around and you go back and get them.</p>
00:03:13	00:03:13
Father	KO: What was your father's name?
Phillip Dewey Lyman	ML: My father's name was Phillip Dewey Lyman, Jr. My grandfather was Phillip Dewey Lyman. My grandfather went by "Dewey." P. Dewey Lyman was his signature. My father always went by Bud. My father was Bud. And you said you talked to Harris. Harris was my father's youngest sibling. My father passed away in 1999. And he was the first one to leave the farm. It go to the point where changes needed to be made in equipment and such on the farm. My grandfather didn't see that there was money enough to do it. There was tension. My father decided that he was going to leave. He was the first one to leave the farm crew. It was my uncle, father, grandfather – the three of them basically operated the farm in my time. Prior to that, it was all of my father's siblings. There was a hired man always, in Harris' time.
Grandfather; family operating the farm	
Haying; family home; front porch memories	<p>Help with chores and whatever. But it always work, but there was always a good side to things as a kid growing up. A day like today, we might put 700-800 bales of hay in the barn. I would have been involved at 9, 10 years. Not would you go; you were expected to go. At least I felt that. And I was a pretty big kid for my age. I could handle a bale of hay. And we'd do that day after day. We just thought nothing of it. We'd get done at night. The cows were out in the pasture for the night. Everything was calmed down and put up. We lived in the house with my grandparents. The house had a porch, the whole front of it. As we're sitting here tonight, that was the place to be, almost any night. Sit there and rock in the chair until dark come. Then you went in, took a bath and went to bed. But before that all took place, my grandfather would sit there, and say, "Why don't you ask Gram if there isn't an ice cream cone in the freezer." So we</p>

	<p>all had ice cream cones, whoever was around.</p> <p>KO: Certainly a good way.</p> <p>ML: It was good way to end the day. You worked hard but there was a lot of simplicity to it and a lot – there were tough times that got ugly. I can remember as a kid getting mad at everybody. But it was more good than it was bad.</p>
Farm sold at 13	<p>I worked on the farm until the day it was sold. I was 13. Hated to see it go. I've always said to my uncles, every one of them, if I was 18, I would have fought my grandfather to keep it and keep it going. They've all told me, "I don't think your grandfather would have let you done it." But I did say fought; I would have argued my point.</p>
00:07:49	00:07:49
Why sold: health & help; decrease in farming	<p>KO: Why was it sold?</p> <p>ML: It was a health and help situation. My Uncle Norman was the other partner in the farm, or the worker. There were no partners. My grandfather owned it, I believe. My grandfather and my father and my Uncle Norman were the main labor. They were paid a salary or a wage every week. It was probably a salary because you never could in God's world, keep track of your hours. But my father got sick of it and quit. Norman tried to do it on his own. Cut the herd down from 70 to 50 milkers. And he had a bad back. Had a couple of accidents with his back on the farm. And the first summer that he really tried to do it, his back failed him. I was like 10 years old maybe. My grandfather and I, for at least three or four days, milked the cows night and morning because we couldn't find anybody to help. They wouldn't help. Help would come put hay in the barn. Help would come do all the chores. But nobody wanted to milk.</p>
00:09:28	00:09:28
Finding help to milk	<p>KO: Why is that?</p> <p>ML: Just because they didn't choose to milk and had no milking experience. We found a fellow that got word of a fellow from Pomfret who had milking experience and we were able to hire him. I believe he probably worked towards two months. Norman got healed back up where he could go back to work. He tried to make a go of it. Next spring – maple sugaring was a big part of the farm. As it today, diversification is what you've got to have in order to make it go. Spring wasn't spring unless you sugared. Norman tried that as well in a smaller way, with a</p>
Diversify; sold cows 1962;	

	<p>couple of hired men. He just plain had problems that he was not going to be able to do that kind of heavy work. As it turned out, in the fall of '62, we sold the cows. Grandpa sold the cows. I didn't have anything to do with it, other than stand back and watch. And then the spring, the equipment went, about the first of June. Norman sugared that spring, made a little syrup. Basically after sugaring was done and cleaned up, they took all of the equipment out of the sugarhouse and brought it up here to the sale. I remember the first year, the neighbors were asked if they wanted more land to work, to use on their farms.</p>
<p>First ones out of farming</p>	<p>At one time, there was 8 or 9 farms in this neighborhood that shipped milk. And we were the first ones that went out. The price of milk wasn't very good. It was a whole combination of everything that drove it. I don't know really, why other than I guess my grandmother didn't want to live on the farm if the farm wasn't going to be in operation. My grandfather probably had some misgivings of the same thing and decided to sell. I found out a couple years ago, that I had uncles at that time, that had the wherewithal to piece the money together to buy the place. And my grandmother wouldn't allow it, to keep it in the family.</p> <p>KO: That's sad.</p>
<p>00:13:05</p>	<p>00:13:05</p>
<p>Working on farms in high school</p>	<p>ML: It was, when I heard that. I hadn't known that. If I would have been 18, I would have fought my hardest. I had been out of high school, I would have fought my hardest. If not cows, I would have taken care of the land, done sugaring. Probably milk cows besides and have some hired labor, weather it out young and foolish and go. There was 21 or 23 grandchildren. I'm the oldest boy, and I'm the only one out of the whole bunch that ever had any interest in farming at all and stayed with it. I got out of high school in 1969. All through high school, well after the sale of the farm and the equipment that spring, my grandfather offered the land to some of the neighbors. We had grown corn at various pieces of land the year before, probably 12-15 acres. That land was still there ready to plant corn. All you had to do was plow it, harrow it, put corn in. A couple of them decided that they would like to use that land if it was available. Made an agreement. It would be nice if you could plow it. You have big plows and tractors, would be nice if you could plow it. Norman says, well I don't know if I'll be able to do it. Maybe Marty could do it. He's plowed before. If we got him started, I bet he could plow it. Turns out that spring I ended up plowing about 14 acres and harrowing, getting it ready for them to plant corn. And I left like a king because I was doing that. I was 12-13 years old.</p>
<p>00:15:28</p>	<p>00:15:28</p>

<p>Moved up Jericho Road in 1963</p>	<p>KO: So where did you all move to?</p> <p>ML: My folks lived, as your coming up Jericho Road, at the bottom of the hill if you're going down through it, right on the right there is a little split-level brown place. That's where my folks lived. Built a house down there, two-acre lot that my grandfather gave my father. He could build a house. We moved down there in 1962, which was the spring before we had the auction in 1963. '63 I guess it was we moved down there, my brother, sister and my folks.</p>
<p>Current farming operations 00:16:37</p>	<p>KO: And now you are still involved with farming, correct? What do you do?</p> <p>00:16:37</p>
<p>Haying</p>	<p>ML: I make my living today, a good part of my living, by haying, making square bale hay and round bale hay. The majority of square bale hay is for horse people. We're fortunate in this area to live in a horse-rich area. One of the things you do, if you've made hay all your life, is one thing you can do without screwing it up terrible bad. I hay over parts of what was all of the 8 or 9 farms here existing. Probably totals between 300-400 acres.</p>
<p>Managing, not owning property; hay bales; bulk shaving business</p>	<p>KO: So that's land that you own or do you lease?</p> <p>ML: I don't own a spoonful of dirt. I don't even own the land we're sitting on. But I have use of all of that. I have probably the most ideal situation. I ain't bragging about it, but it's an ideal situation, other than the fact that when it's over, it's over. I've got nothing to show. I've given to that. That's the way to go. We make about 18,000-20,000 square bales of hay per year. Sell it. Make 300-500 round bales, the marshmallow type bales you see in the fields. Get in the clientele of people who use that. Today my son works with me. He's a laborer. He's not financially involved into it, but he draws a wage. The other business we have is we deliver bulk shavings, truckloads of shavings used for horses and dairy animals. There's a mill up in Ely, Vermont that we get the supply from and we deliver between 400-500 loads per year. Between the two of them it keeps us going. The last couple years, with the downturn of the economy it shows because a lot of the backyard horses that I had are gone because people can't afford to keep them. Their kids are grown up and off to college and no longer have an interest in the horse or the animal. So the customers disappear in that manner. We're doing alright. We make enough money that I can pay him and keep the equipment running and whatever. It isn't as good as it used to be. Maybe it will turn around. I don't know.</p>

Current owners of former Lyman property	<p>But just being here on the farm, as we sit here looking the barn – I have use of the barn. I care take for people who own the farm. They are from Greenwich, CT. They’ve had it for like 25, 27 years. They come up and visit once in a while and are usually here at Christmastime. The rest of the year I’m here, mow the lawn, plow the driveway. Whatever else goes on: about 40 acres of cow pastures I keep opened up so it doesn’t grow up to trees. I try to keep it as my grandfather and father would like to have it. That’s the same way I take care of all this land here. I knew everyone of the owners well. They were the same age of my grandparents.</p> <p>KO: Who were some of the people who lived around here? What were some of the family names?</p>
Neighbors: Lyman, Parker	<p>ML: Well right here at the corner, the brick house, was Eugene Lyman, which was my grandfather’s brother. And he and Eugene and Charles and Alberta Parker. Alberta was Uncle Eugene’s daughter. They farmed that until mid ‘60s, through the years after we sold off. It was kind of tragic the way that went.</p> <p>KO: How so?</p>
Parker family	<p>ML: They had one son, Gordon. He was 33 years old with a wife, three kids, lived down in Hartland. I want to say it was the 1st of February, dropped dead of a heart attack. As anybody would tell you is the last thing they want to read is their child’s obituary in the paper. And come to find out, they did an autopsy to find out the cause. His heart was that of an eight year old boy because it had grown a webbing around it when it was young. The heart never had a chance to grow. It grew within the confines of that webbing. We was always tired, always tired. He’d start right out and in an hour, he’d be whipped. He could keep going but he was whipped. He was tired. That was way earlier in the medical world. It hit them folks pretty hard. I was over there helping them do chores, as was my father and my uncle and everybody else that cared anything. We chipped in and helped them get through the bad the time. If I heard it once, I heard it ten times, in a three day, four day period of time. “I am not dying milking cows,” were Charlie Parker’s words. “I am not going to die milking those god-damn cows.” As soon as spring gets here, these cows are going down the road. One month to the day he passed away, sitting there milking cows, of a heart attack. One month to the day from their son.</p> <p>KO: That’s spooky.</p> <p>ML: I guess it was spooky. Poor Bonnie thought the devil himself was after her. She was always, from that day forward, just a bundle of nerves. She just – life bothered her all together. She lived into her 80s. But in the</p>

00:25:50	everybody in the neighborhood felt. 00:25:50
Wallace family	Next farm over, the white house, there's two – one either side of the intersection up there. The white house belonged to a fellow by the name of Frank Wallace, Frank and Daisy Wallace. Frank was an old man when I was a kid. Old man, probably late 60s, 70s. Milked 20-25 cows. Subsided. They never had any children. He took ill. Daisy died first. Daisy died before we sold the farm here. And then it was a short while, there was a neighbor that lived on Sugartop Road, approached Frank about milking for him. Eventually they moved in with kids and took over the farm. They milked there for 12, 15 years before they gave up here and moved over to the other side of the state. But they helped old Frank out. Frank lived the rest of his life. I bet he was early 80s before he passed away.
Robinson family	There was going in that direction, the next farm up the road was Joe Robinson. When I was a junior in high school he passed away from cancer. It was sad. It was the days that they couldn't treat cancer. Didn't know what it was. Stayed home, put the morphine to him. Sometimes he was there, sometimes he wasn't. Always in pain. I'd stop to see his son George who was a couple years older than I am.
Burt Nott	The farm at the end of the road out there I worked on through high school: Burt Nott. When we sold the farm, the first summer, the summer between 7 th and 8 th grade, three farmers in the area wanted to hire me. KO: You were a good worker, huh? ML: I guess. I took this job here. I worked at Charlie Parker's over here for the first summer. KO: Was that haying?
Haying; summer farm jobs; Vermont Technical College	ML: Mostly haying, summer jobs, whatever you do between school ending and school starting. Usually get haying down. Clapboards needed to be painted on the barn. Painted windows. Fixed windows. Whatever such things. I had zero experience doing, but learned. Had some teachers. Cut wood. Get wood ready for the winter. And the second year between 8 th and 9 th grade, I went up to Burt Nott's at the end of the neighborhood and I stayed there until I started – I graduated in 1969 from Hartford High School. I was going to the New Hampshire Vocational Technical College in Claremont. I was going to study the electrical program, a two year program. I worked for him through. I started school on a Thursday. And Tuesday he had an auction. His health was an age that he couldn't take

	<p>care of the farm on his own, and I pretty much all summer long had been doing the work. And he had a job offer to him and Quechee Lakes was getting started. He was a liaison person between Quechee Lakes Corporation and all the landowners for the land they were trying to buy, because most of them were farms and he was a farmer. He could talk to farmers. Steal them blind. I worked for him until '69, and then a fellow approached me at the auction. Wanted to know if I had interest in part time farming. Would I have time to work weekends or after school days or whatever my schedule was going to be. He needed some help and lived in Norwich. I said let me see what my schedule would be. Turned out, I had two-three afternoons off. Classes in the morning, so I went up to see him after school started and went to work. I baled. I worked for him for two summers while I was in school and after school doing all sorts of farm related jobs. In the wintertime, he and I swapped milking every other Sunday morning. So one or the other had Sunday morning off. Other than that, I used to milk two nights a week and Saturday night. The two of us would milk Saturday night and then we'd swap Sunday mornings. We look back at it. Big deal. People today sputter about having to work five days a week. They don't know what they're going. I say, how about seven days? You can't work seven days. Of course, you work seven days. You're a farmer. You've got to do the job. Your cow is there; you've got to milk them. If you're fortunate enough to afford to hire somebody and have somebody you can trust to milk your cows.</p>
00:34:28	00:34:28
Post college work	<p>ML: I've done it all my life. I worked after I got out of the vocational college down there. Said "I'm not going to have to keep you going full-time. You might want to see if you could find yourself a job. If you want to come here after hours and work, we sure could use the help, put the hay in and chopping corn or milk one night a week. That's up to you. I can't hire you full time. There's not money enough." I understood. I got a job at Twin State Electrical Supply in White River Junction as a wholesale electrical distributor. I worked for them for 13 years. Within that 13 years</p>
Lisette Lee	<p>I established a mini farm of my own, and had beef cow. I'd swap the beef cows for dairy herd replacements raising them. Selling those off. 1977, I had an opportunity to come back and live on the farm up here. Various people had been in and out of it. The woman still owned it that bought it from my grandfather, Lisette Lee. She was quite interested if I would come back and live on the farm, and stay in the house.</p>
House caretaker	<p>KO: In the house?</p> <p>ML: Live in the house. Take care of the house. And there's two apartments in there, upstairs and downstairs, same as it was when we lived there as kids. The first thing I did was go to my brother who just got</p>

	<p>married. “You interested in living down on the farm?” “What’s up?” Told him what the story was. All she wanted us to do was pay the taxes, \$1478 I think was the first tax bill we had. For a whole year’s rent, and we got to use the barn.</p> <p>KO: Not bad.</p> <p>ML: Can’t beat that with a stick.</p> <p>KO: How long did you live in the house?</p> <p>ML: My brother out of the house in 1981 I think. I stayed there until ’83. She sold it. She could no longer afford to keep it or whatever. The situation that Lisette Lee and I had, as far as I was taking care of the place, she was not in the least bit against anything I was doing. Everything was great. Over the last three summers, she would come spend a couple weeks with us there at the house. She kept saying, “don’t let me get in the way. I want to help, but don’t let me get in the way.” She could see that it was going to be a burden to her. She had two sons without interest in owning her. Her husband, I believe, was a victim of the Vietnam War. Never heard, but I always assumed that. She had two sons. One of them was two years older than I. One was a year younger than I. The oldest one was going into college or was in college. And they were losing interest in it and being up here summers. It just got to where it was going to be a family burden. She called us right off quick. “My sons and I decided to put on the market to sell.” It sold within a year. Two hundred</p>
Lisette Lee	<p>acres, house, barn – there’s 200 acres left of it, I should say. When my grandfather sold it to her initially there were 400 acres. The land on the other side of the road went with it. It doesn’t anymore. The middle 60s when she bought it, interest money started climbing. Started went from 2% to 5%, and she couldn’t afford that. So she sold off everything on that side of the road and the barn down the road. And kept 200 acres with the home barn.</p>
Acreage of farm	
Barns	KO: So there were originally two barns?
00:40:12	00:40:12
	ML: Originally was three barns. This one here.
	KO: Was that for the hay?
Barns; cows; silo; George Miller; father; heifer	ML: This was where the cows were milked. In this big barn was hay storage. And there were three silos that were there with it. That window that faces us on the roof, that’s a fill hole to the silo that’s inside the barn. The next barn down the road was the heifer barn that went with the farm.

barn	<p>And there was a barn on the other at Miller Road, at the top of the road on the way to George Miller's. It's the first house that you come to now. Turner's, who is right there where the house is. The barn came down, the house went up in that same location. My father was actually born – there was a house that went with that barn over there, and my grandfather and grandmother lived in that house for a couple years. My father was born in that house. And soon after they moved to this one. They kept the barn and all that over there. I think the house burned, if I remember right. They kept the barn and used that for heifers. Had an opportunity to buy the next farm down the road, which would include the next barn – the one for heifers. They bought that in the early 50s. My uncle moved into that house and raised their family there.</p> <p>KO: Did your grandparents build that house and barn, or did they buy it?</p>
Family home & farm; house renovations	<p>ML: It was in the family, back as far as three-great grandfathers owned it. Been in the Lyman family since the early 1800s. The Lyman family was originally up on Sugartop Road, where the Wiggin house is. That was the late 1700s. I can't think if it was Arthur or Dexter who moved into this one. The main barn was built, I'm not sure. There was no ell on the barn. There's a big ell that goes that way to the house, 90 degrees to that big barn. The house was a one-story house. I have pictures of that with my great-great grandfather. And my great-grandfather. And my grandfather. And one of his sisters. That was taken in front of the house. And eventually in time, the roof was raised. The whole roof was jacked up. A second floor was put in for kids' rooms. My father had two brothers and three sisters. There were six of them.</p> <p>KO: So they needed some more room?</p>
00:44:57	00:44:57
Jericho Schoolhouse	<p>KO: Now did you go to school in this little house here or was this before your time?</p>
Current Community Club	<p>ML: No, it was before my time. Harris went there. Harris was one of the last ones that went there. All of the siblings went there. I believe that was '48, '49, somewhere in there when they closed that up. The Town of Hartford sold it to the Jericho Community Association, as it's called now. It was called the Jericho Community Club. It was sold to the Jericho Community Club for \$1. There is no running water in it. There is no septic system other than a two-holer. It is essentially today, it's the only one in the Town of Hartford. It is essentially today was it was when they had school there. All the rest of the schoolhouses in the Town of Hartford are all homes. The one in Dothan is a home. The one down here in Centerville is a home. Center Town is a hope. Quechee has two, and they</p>

	<p>are homes. All the rest are homes. This is the only one that was kept as it was for the most part.</p> <p>Twenty-five years ago, some of them decided that they ought to have a kitchen. What's more convenient to have a kitchen? Well someone tore out part of the woodshed and one bathroom. Made a counter top, cookstove in one corner. That thought went as far as "there is no running water." There is no septic system. We can't have a sink. This wasn't thought out. So that's where that sits today.</p>
00:47:45	00:47:45
Community get togethers	<p>ML: The neighborhood gets together a couple times a year. When I was a kid that was a big occasion.</p> <p>KO: How often?</p>
Potluck supper; card games; good food	<p>ML: Four times a year. The wintertime was military whist card party at someone's house, because it was too damn cold to play cards in there. Three times a year we'd have a potluck supper here. And then the tail end of that era, they thought it was a good idea to have a cookout in August sometime. We'd go to someone's home. Everybody always brought 10 times more than you could even begin to eat. You'd never walk away hungry. You were always too ill from eating too much. There was more good stuff. I always looked forward – there was always a gathering in the spring in May, about the time we'd be getting the fields ready to plant corn. It'd be mid May so we'd have a good, warm evening. And everybody would come, bring all the kids. And everybody brought a covered dish, casserole or baked beans or breads or rolls. I'm telling you – for dessert there was a half a dozen different kind of brownies and cookies and pies. They had coffee. And everybody brought something for the punch. They'd mix the punch in a 10 gallon milk can. And they tried in the spring and the fall. The fall was a carbon copy of the spring one. Both, they would try to invite someone to speak, to give a talk on a trip they'd taken or some such thing. Most of the time, once you get past 12 or 13 to pay attention, it was interesting. But as a kid – outdoors, not sitting in there and listening.</p>
Community	<p>KO: About how many people were in the community?</p> <p>ML: Then? Oh I bet they all came – kids – 40, 45.</p> <p>KO: So everybody could fit in there?</p>
Potluck suppers	<p>ML: Well, close quarters. It was buffet style and the food set on one big table. You took your plate and went around, took what you wanted. How</p>

<p>00:53:15</p> <p>Current use & community</p> <p>00:58:00</p> <p>Haying –</p>	<p>big your family was, you had a table or card table. It was mostly folding chairs in there to accommodate most everybody. If there wasn't, sit on the porch or the lawn.</p> <p>KO: And the kids would just play?</p> <p>ML: Kids would eat and then go out and puke because they'd get horsing around. That's just happens. The kid would go out and get playing and get green. But it was a good time. I always looked forward to the spring get together, because it was the first time that everyone had been together in that fashion since the fall before. There was card playing in the middle of winter. It was pretty limited. You'd get a dozen people and they were all adults. And doing that, you a box social, where you take some sandwiches in a box and auction them off. You never ate what you brought. It made it more fun, more interesting. You never knew who brought want.</p> <p>00:53:15</p> <p>KO: Do those events still occur?</p> <p>ML: Those events still occur.</p> <p>KO: Do you go?</p> <p>ML: No. It's probably my own ignorance that I don't go because it's a whole different crowd of people than what I was brought up with. I have no problem with any of the people as neighbors, but I wouldn't how it'd be to socialize. There's nothing wrong with it. Just different. They had one three weeks ago. I used to get an announcement – they have one in the spring and the fall, not the card game in the winter or in the spring. They have an association and pass the hat once a year, usually in the spring. They have insurance they pay and do maintenance and painting or whatever.</p> <p>KO: It looks well kept.</p> <p>ML: Oh, it is. Different organizations use it. I'm a member of the local snowmobile club and we have our biggest function in there.</p> <p>{Talks about use of snowmobile association's use of building and other organizations that use it & events. Current maintenance of schoolhouse building.}</p> <p>00:58:00</p> <p>KO: I want to get back to haying a bit. I'm curious because you've been</p>
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then v. now	doing this your whole life. What's the difference of haying when you were a kid v. how it's done now? Are there differences?
Differences	ML: Oh big differences. KO: Can you explain them?
Hay baler, 1950s	ML: when I was a kid and first participating, probably 8 or 9 years old, we had a hay baler, a square baler. Probably one of the first in the neighborhood. We had a baler since '54 or '55. The first one we had was a used baler. Anyone will tell you today that they were a piece of junk right from the start, but everybody had them. It wasn't long before everybody got rid of them for something better.
Hay bales; haying	The bales all hit the ground, one after the other. Where there was a windrow, there was a line of bales. They'd be 20' feet apart. Usually a kid would drive truck. Another kid job was roll one row up the hill or down the hill so the truck could go through. And they'd pick three or four rows on either side of the truck. Put on 110 bales, 115, 120 bales or sale – whatever the truck could hold. Go to the barn and do the same thing all over again. Usually a couple hired men and my father and my uncle. Usually two or three kids. A couple of us kids could stand to do that. That was the start of it. Before sold the farm, discontinued farming, we got up to the modern age, I guess it was called them.
Haying	We had our baler fixed up – we pulled a four-wheel wagon right behind it. A long chute come up out of the baler. A man would ride the wagon and pile hay up, take hay off the bale cute and pile them on the wagon. Pile the load. That was at the time when I started baling. I was probably 10, 11 years old. I wasn't very old. My Uncle Norman rode the wagon, piled them on and I drove the tractor. Basically all I did was steer it, up the hill, down the hill, up, up, get out of the windrow. I learned to bale hay at that young age. At that young age, I learned to rake hay. I was a third or fourth man. And I learned to mow hay. And mowing was with a bar mower. And then we got what they called a conditioner. It crimped the hay, squished it after you mowed it, which sped up the drying process. There were a lot of versions of those crimpers that started out to be the best thing in the world but turned into the horror show because they would plug all the time. It was nasty and everyone was mad until you learned how to run them. They were around for quite a while. My job after fashion was, I had to rake hay. Rake hay meant that I had to drive the first tractor that my grandfather ever bought. It was a 1941/2 Farm-all, which was essentially about an 18 or 20 horsepower tractor. It was a pretty decent tractor for the time. It started by cranking and by the time that I got to it to use it, the mag-needle was so weak that you couldn't start it by cranking. You had to jumpstart it or tow it. It was a morning
Conditioner; hay rake; tractor	

	<p>ritual. Usually when I got done raking I tried to leave it on a hill somewhere where I could coast it and jumpstart it. My father and uncle would head off to mow. The last words out of the both of their mouths, individually from both of them, was “Don’t stall the tractors.” “Don’t clown around and stall the tractor.” Boy, a couple times I can remember I stalled the thing. And I just thought, oh I hate that. I don’t want to go see them. I’d rather die than go tell them I stalled it. It meant they had to stop the mowing over here. Somebody had to hook on to me, tow me and get it going again. And then they could go back and finish their mowing, but they were about a half hour behind.</p>
01:04:17	01:04:17
Time required	<p>KO: How long did it take to do everything?</p> <p>ML: To rake. Well, a section like what I did here today, that would be a section like we would do. With that rake it would take me probably an hour and a half, and hour and 45 minutes, maybe 2 hours because the tractor went slow. You couldn’t get in trouble for going too fast because the tractor went so slow. And then you were always raking in high gear, wide open. It was probably 2, 2.5 miles per hour. Today I raked that piece with my tractor in about 45 minutes.</p> <p>The biggest tractor we had on the farm was the tractor that did the most work, obviously. Did all the baling and chopping of the corn because it had the most horsepower, and that was only 40 horsepower. That was the biggest tractor we had on the farm.</p> <p>KO: What are they today?</p> <p>ML: My biggest tractor today is 100 horsepower. My smallest is 65.</p> <p>KO: So it’s bigger than the biggest.</p>
Haying again; 1977; mower conditioner	<p>ML: My father and uncle were around to see the changes, as I started in business making hay for myself. We started essentially in 1977, when my brother was here and we moved back on the farm. We did it with a tractor with a cutter bar mower. Let it dry. Raked it and baled it. Methods were pretty much the same as when we were here farming. It got to be the point where I wanted to get more involved in it, be bigger, do a little more. The next step up was a mower conditioner. We mowed it, crimped it, put in the windrow. There was very little plugging. There was some. Most of the time it would go right through it and never bother a bit. A regular cutter bar would plug up. You had to back up, shake it off. It was a lot more time consuming.</p>

Cutter bar mower; raking; baling	<p>I could mow with that machine. I could mow three, four acres an hour. With a regular cutter bar mower, if the mowing was good, you could probably do it in the same amount of time. Then you had to go back and condition it. There was another whole step involved that this machine took out. Then you were raking and baling. The baling situation went, from when I started, they had a bale-buncher. It was a sled type mechanism that dragged behind the baler. The bales would fall off the baler to this sled. You could 8-10 bales in there, and a rope that went all the way across the baler clear up to the tractor. You'd get bales in it, and when it was full you dump it. Pull the handle, the bales would slide out onto the ground. It was a random pile. Then the thing you'd try to do is, your next pass around you'd try to dump in the same place. So when you got all done baling, in this piece here, you'd have five or six lines of hay and you'd go back through with a truck or a trailer. You could just go right along. It made things faster. When I started doing it, I was making hay here and worked out everyday. So this was an after work, every night, weekend hay making situation. We probably made 3,000 – 4,000 bales a year at that time. Mostly to feed the animals we had here. We usually had 600-800 bales to sell. Somebody would come along and want to buy it. Most of it was to feed our own stock. My brother and I were there. We had beef cows. We went to dairy with Holstein heifers.</p>
Horses	<p>My first wife had horses, hence the small barn up there. It was a horse barn we built. She had for a long time, a dozen head of horses. This whole field was horse pasture and cow pasture. Horses were on the top, cows on the bottom.</p>
01:09:58	<p>01:09:58</p> <p>KO: Do you ride horses?</p>
Draft horses; tractor v. horses mowing	<p>ML: I've been on a horse's back for about 20 minutes my entire life. I always said if I had anything to do with horses, I wanted to be behind them, not on them. That was a big downfall that surprised, to me. I guess it was after my brother moved to Hartland. Neighbor down the road bought a pair of Belgian drafts to play with. He had a dairy farm – George Miller's father, Raymond. He bought a pair of Belgian drafts to play with. Thought he wanted to. Well, I thought I had to have a pair of drafts. I started looking around. I went and looked at a couple pair. My father says, "What in God's name are you doing to do with a pair of horses?" And there was one thing I had in mind. I had had it in mind for a long time before I thought about getting horses. I wanted my father to teach me how to mow with a pair of horses. I told him so. He said, "boy have I got disappointing news for you." I said why's that? He said, "I've never mowed with a pair of horses in my entire life." I said, "You're kidding me. All the years that you've had horses and farmed here with horses, you</p>

<p>Rotary mower; disc mower; cutter bar mower</p>	<p>never mowed.” “Nope. Your grandfather did all of the mowing. I never did know. Just the minute we got that Farm-all tractor. It came with a set of plows and a mower. We mowed with Farm-all tractor. I think your grandfather mowed with that once. He never got on it again. Either Norman or I did all of the mowing with that Farm-all. Grandpa would trim around. He would mow with horses.”</p> <p>KO: He preferred the horses?</p> <p>ML: He preferred the horses to the tractor. He knew how to handle that. He didn't know how to handle a tractor. I said, “Man, you're depressing me. I wanted you to teach me how to mow with a pair of horses.” He said, “You're going to have to teach yourself.”</p> <p>KO: And did you?</p> <p>ML: Never bought a pair. That cured me.</p> <p>KO: Well at least your dad saved you the trouble.</p> <p>ML: Today our haying has even come further along. I bought, a number of years ago now, they were coming into the market: a rotary mower. It was a disc. They call them disc mowers. It's a bar with rotating discs on it, with two knives on either end of these discs. I bought one of those mowers. You could mow through anything, heaviest hay you've ever had. And you mow it fast. Five miles per hour was nothing. When I started mowing with that, my father and my uncle were both alive. They just couldn't believe how fast you could go through that hay and do as fine a job or a finer job with cutter bar mower. Eventually I went from that machine to a big pull behind machine. Essentially that's what we're doing today. I mowed nine feet in a swath. There's no plugging. There's no backing. You just start out and you go. It's fool-proof.</p>
<p>Avoiding stones in the fields</p>	<p>My son said to me this spring, “I want to learn how to mow.” He's 34 years old. He's never mowed in his life. I never pushed him. I wanted him to mow. I wanted him to bale. He square baled for me last year. Thought that wasn't a bad deal. We baled off and on. When I get sick of it, he said I want to mow. I said there is nothing to it. It's just like mowing a lawn. You don't have to worry about things getting plugged up or broke. The only thing you've got to do and the only way to learn is repetition: learn where the ledges and stones are in each field and remember them.</p> <p>KO: You don't want to hit them.</p> <p>ML: So you don't hit them.</p>

01:15:15	01:15:15
Baling hay	<p>ML: We've got that machine. I've got 7 wagons. I call them kicker wagons with the racks on them. My bales are all thrown into the wagon from the baler. The bales don't hit the ground. The other day we did 780 bales.</p> <p>KO: In one day?</p> <p>ML: In 3.5 hours.</p> <p>KO: Oh my goodness.</p> <p>ML: Time I started baling, they picked up the first load. They headed to the barn. It was my son and two other guys helping him, unloading the wagons. I was a mile and a half up the road working. They would bale them. There was that road travel between time. When I got done baling they grabbed the last load. I said you guys must have been pushing. Nope, we weren't pushing hard.</p>
Storage of hay bales	<p>KO: So they go in the barn right away, the bales?</p> <p>ML: Yup.</p> <p>KO: Has that always been the case?</p> <p>ML: Yup. The business I had –I've sold hay for years. I have the best luck, I should say, or I get along the best. I don't try to deliver while I'm making it. I've had poor luck with people saying they'll come pick it up. "Leave me a couple wagons. I'll come pick it up." Well along about now, I head up the barns and put them up. And then 8:30, 9:00 I'd heard that they forgot about the hay and got hung up. I said no. If you want come get it, I'll leave it in the afternoon. If you don't show up, the boys can load it.</p> <p>KO: Makes sense. Efficiency.</p> <p>ML: I can put, a week ago, Saturday, my son wasn't going to be available or the other guys. We'll work Sunday. "Do you think you can get it on 7 wagons?" I said, I think so. I started in and I baled 827 bales, and had it on 7 wagons. The neighbor farm down the road, I call it my lower landing base. Part of their farm, the lady has an indoor riding arena that isn't used in the summer for riding. She does her riding outside. And I have full access to that. I roll the door open and I can load several loads in there and drop them. Next day, they were there 11:00 Sunday morning with five guys. They unloaded those 7 loads and 5 more. They put away 1400 bales in 6 hours.</p>

<p>01:20:57</p> <p>Favorite part of farming: tractor driving; animal watching</p>	<p>KO: Wow. I don't know that much about it. But it sounds like a lot.</p> <p>ML: I saluted them. I was whipped just watching them. There had been a day when I sailed right in and been right with them. But the last three, four years my body has been telling me to back off. More things hurt than don't hurt. I hate it, but I guess that's part of getting older.</p> <p>KO: I suppose.</p> <p>ML: I have always – I think there was three years that I did not hay. Or was even involved in haying at all, helping neighbors or whatever. Just did other things. I always missed it. I'd go back into helping a neighbor down the road. Putting hay in the barn for him, a couple thousand bales. That was my haying for the year, more to help him than for the money.</p> <p>KO: What's your favorite part about it?</p> <p>01:20:57</p> <p>ML: Favorite part of the whole thing is I guess, I enjoy tractor driving. I really enjoy it. If I didn't, I wouldn't be doing it. And the other thing with that, my favorite part of that is the opportunities you have to see wildlife and their stupid demeanor. Oh, I'm telling you – I have seen some ungodly sights from the tractor seat that just make me laugh to no end.</p> <p>KO: Like what?</p> <p>ML: One day for instance, we're outside on the other side of that knoll in that field mowing. Early October, leaves were starting to change. They were still on the trees. It was a brisk fall afternoon. Bright sunshine, probably temperatures in the mid 50s, low 60s. I had been up there mowing for 20 minutes or so. All of a sudden I looked up. There was a pair of red-tailed hawks sitting on a limb, overlooking the field for mice that I'd be chasing with a mower. In the same instance, there were 3 or 4 crows. One of the red tails would fly off to hunt for mice. The crows would pester the hell out of them. Dive on them. They were just young crows. They were pestering the hell out of that goddamn red tail. I was watching them. He'd fly up and sit on the limb. He'd go out and search again. They were right on them. All of a sudden that red tail went way up in the air. One of the crows followed him. All of a sudden that red tail folded up like a bullet and took that crow out of the sky. Head and shoulder, that was crow was floundering. You could see he was going. The red tail let him go. And those four crows disappeared. The red tail goes back to the limb and the other goes back searching. The pair of them were there until I left.</p>
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	<p>See that out your office window.</p> <p>And I had another instance. I was seeding a field down on Route 14 where what was Kelvin Motors for George and Ray Miller. They had it ready to seed. I guess they starting chopping hay earlier and wanted it seeded and wanted to know if I'd do it. I said sure. Took their machines down there and I went around and around. Same deal. There was this young that came in. Never appeared to land. I kept watching it. Never appeared to land. It would come right down close to the ground and want to. Never landed. Finally after 10-15 minutes of watching him, he touched down and tumble-saulted. Finally got himself up. He only had one leg. That's why he didn't want to land. Couldn't land in soft soil with one leg.</p> <p>See fox with three little ones followed out there mousing following behind you. You don't see that.</p> <p>KO: Even just sitting here I saw a bunch of chipmunks.</p> <p>ML: Oh yea. It's really depressing when you find a baby fawn in the wrong manner. But it's otherwise a good thing to see and know that they are healthy and going. I have not seen a fawn this year, yet. Even a sign of a bed where a fawn was born this year.</p> <p>KO: I saw one when I was interviewing David Brown. It just walked in front of his window, following his mother. It was cute.</p>
01:26:30	01:26:30
Deer in the fields	<p>ML: Last year, unfortunately I got two, all in the same field. I know they weren't twins because it was two different mothers that came looking. That was very depressing. The first time I ever did that I was working for Dale Summerville in Norwich after high school, mowing with a tractor and carbar mower. And been on this one particular farm working for a week to 10 days. Doing a small plot at a time. Got down to the last plot. Everyday before that, for three or four days, you'd chase out this fawn. The mother would take him and go off with him. You saw everyday. You looked for him everyday. Got to this last chunk, probably 2-3 acres. I opened it up. Went around 2-3 times. I stopped. Another fellow was working with me, running the conditioner, the crimper. I said, "You seen the fawn come out yet?" "Nope." "You think he's in here? She must have have taken him by now." I went around another 4-5 times and got to where I had three passes this way, three way, six left to go. I stopped again. He said, "what's the matter?" I said that cuss is in here. I know he is. Two times in that week I had carried him out of the field. This is how I got to know.</p>

	<p>KO: And he kept coming back?</p> <p>ML: The mother would bring him down at night. And he'd stay there. That's where they all died. Of the age, the mother brings them out. Until they are 2-3 weeks old, where they can get up and go, mother feeds them and you stay here. They don't have a scent at that time.</p>
01:29:12	01:29:12 {Cell phone rings.}
01:29:26	01:29:26
Vegetable garden	<p>KO: I wanted to ask if you had a vegetable garden, or if your mother or grandmother kept one.</p> <p>ML: At the farm we always had a big one. My grandfather had a big garden.</p>
Canning	<p>KO: Did your grandmother do canning?</p> <p>ML: My grandmother, my mother, my wives have canned. My wife cans today, but my vegetable garden is right there and the crows ate half of it. I don't have a spear of corn growing and there are five rows of corn planted, and two rows of peas. I think there's no corn and there are six or eight pea plants that came out before they decided they were eating peas and not corn. That's the extent of my garden. I used to have a pretty good sized garden out here in the field. Used to raise potatoes and a couple rows of potatoes to give us enough to go through the year. We could have them till late spring. And corn, always had corn on the cob. We had some to can or freeze. Always can string beans, peas, beets, carrots. Granted, it's not the same, but you can buy the stuff in the store cheaper. It's just my wife and I here for the most part. How much do you can? How much do you raise?</p> <p>This is my fourth attempt with corn. I gave it up to the crows. Next year, I'll sow that out I'll seed it back to grass and figure it out again. But up at the farm, my brother and I had a big garden. We never had a want for canned vegetables and potatoes. We always had 15-20 bushels of potatoes into the cellar. That would get us through till they were sprouting bad by April, May. And then you buy potatoes through the summer because it's tough to keep them. We had another batch coming in the fall. My grandfather has a big garden. He participated in wartime in the victory gardens.</p> <p>KO: Harris talked about that.</p>

Victory Garden	<p>ML: He had a Victory Garden and won a trip to Chicago.</p> <p>KO: For the best garden?</p>
Harris Lyman	<p>ML: I think he won first place in the State of Vermont. As a winner, he went on a trip to Chicago by train. Maybe Norman went to. It was just out of high school. It was a big deal. I would have been scared to death.</p> <p>KO: How'd he do in the whole competition?</p> <p>ML: I don't think it was a competition thing. I think it was a notoriety thing. Victory gardens were government sponsored during World War II. It was the winners of each state. You were on exhibit and got to speak about what you had in your garden. Dad's garden was probably towards an acre. It was a lot of ground.</p> <p>KO: That is.</p>
Eating well	<p>ML: Everybody ate well. Home on the farm, we lived on the farm, I bet we bought less than half the groceries we buy today. We had milk, obviously, beef. The only thing we'd buy was pork. For whatever reason, I don't know – by the time we kids come along – they used to when my father, brother, sisters, were on the farm, they had two-three pigs. They had pork. In my time, we never had pork. We never raised pork. We bought it. It was cheap at the store. Chickens were cheap at the store. We never had chickens. Chickens were gone. It was just a dairy farm. The vegetable garden was there, all the vegetables that you could want: onions and all your keeper stuff.</p> <p>KO: And milk. And corn.</p> <p>ML: Sweet corn. We had five different varieties of sweet corn. And it was canned as well. Beans and string beans were canned. They had shell beans that were canned. Soldier beans. Soldier beans you put up as a dry bean and make baked beans with. Had all of that stuff. We probably had 100 lbs, 150 lbs of soldier beans for baking. It'd take 20 rows of planted rows that were 150 feet long. Take up quite a lot of gardens. It was a lot of work. My grandfather, by the time spring come when you could work again, plowed and harrowed. Pretty much until the first of August when the season was tipping over where everything growing was on its own. Done taking care of nursing it and it was due to ripen. He'd give up working it, as far as hoeing and keeping it clean. And then spend an afternoon cleaning it up in the fall before the snow come. Cut the corn off, run it through the chopper. Put it in the silo. Cleaned it all up. He'd spend two-three hours per day in that garden hoeing. He never had a roto-tiller – a power cultivator. He was doing something in the garden</p>

<p>01:37:44</p> <p>Harris Lyman</p> <p>Steward of the land</p>	<p>everyday. Did Harris tell you about that – his father being sick?</p> <p>KO: Yea, he did.</p> <p>01:37:44</p> <p>ML: That was quite an episode. Harris never did a lot with the farm.</p> <p>KO: He said he wasn't meant to be a farmer.</p> <p>ML: He won't be bashful about telling you so.</p> <p>KO: He wasn't.</p> <p>ML: I don't know if I ever saw him.</p> <p>KO: He said he didn't much.</p> <p>ML: He went through a time that I didn't go through. I would have given anything if I had gone through it that time. I enjoy it so much and I would pass it on to anybody. I hate to see. If I couldn't do what I'm doing, is probably a lot of the reason I do what I'm doing, is to keep the land opened and used. And I keep telling the neighbors – five more years, I'm done. I'm retiring. "You can't retire." They all appreciate what I do.</p> <p>KO: You're a steward of the land.</p> <p>ML: I carry it on the way my grandfather and my father would. That's just the way it is – plain and simple.</p> <p>KO: It's beautiful out here.</p> <p>ML: I'm fortunate to have people to put money into the barn and keep the barn up. Look at the ridgepole on that barn. It's straight as a tie and it has almost 80 ton of slate on that roof.</p> <p>KO: It's in great shape. It's really beautiful.</p> <p>ML: They had to borrow to put the money into it, and keep the underpinning up. I try to do the best I can now. If it's financial, I point it out to them and get it taken care of.</p> <p>KO: You do have the best arrangement then.</p> <p>ML: I do. There's no two ways about it. I do regret the fact I don't own any land up here. I really would like to own some land up here. Coming a</p>
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Advantages of managing farm; relatives farming	<p>day when I'd like to sit back and watch somebody else do it and help them if I have to, because they want me to. My son and a nephew that both, the two of them, could work together and continue this operation that I've got going and do well. The nephew has a maple sugar operation, Chris Lyman. I tip my hat that to boy. I tip my hat 100 times. He's 21, 22, 23 maybe now. He's tapping about 5,200 – 5,400 taps all on vacuum, all state of the art. Constantly making changes. The sugarhouse uses reverse osmosis, and he's in in it. He loves sugaring. Sugaring is his life. The only regret – the two regrets – is tha this grandfather and his great grandfather are not alive to see him go. There would be tears all around, because the discipline. I just would do anything for that boy.</p>
	<p>KO: That's nice to have in your family.</p>
	<p>ML: Yup. He's one hell of a kid and one hell of a worker. My son is a goo worker, a hell of a worker. I think he's seeing what's going on here with this operation and he's seen that you don't have to be wizard to watch me go – I've slowed down considerably the last 3, 4 years. He sees it. He wants me to continue and wants to be part of it. Eventually I think he will. We tried working together when he was just out of high school. It didn't work. It did not work. Ten, 12 years gone by and he was without jobs and he needed some work. I said if I'm paying your bills, your going to go to work.</p>
	<p>KO: Like any good parent.</p>
Bulk shavings business	<p>ML: That's the way it went. Like I said, we do a bulk shavings business. It's nothing more than buying, selling shavings. Deliver it. That's his main job. I do fill in for him days when he's got something else, doctor's appointment or something like that. He brings me the slips at the end of the month and I fill out the bills. As far as who gets what when, that's up to him. As far as haying, we've been haying now probably towards two weeks straight with this stretch of weather we've had.</p>
	<p>KO: How much more do you have to do?</p>
	<p>ML: I don't believe we're more than half done. But we're way, way ahead of anything we've had in the past five years.</p>
	<p>KO: Wow.</p>
Hay statistics for the year so far	<p>ML: Way ahead. Last year at 4th of July, I baled 33 square bales. I made like 115-120 round bales. It was so wet. Year before was a similar situation. Right now we've baled 3,200 square bales and made 145 round bales so far. Things are working and he's pushing me to get them all and keep going. He said he wants to get this job done and make some decent.</p>

01:46:00	<p>I said so do I. He said you keep 500-600 bales of hay each day in front of us, we'll put it away. I used to be able to do 1,000 bales of hay. I could probably do it if I got my ass moving in the morning. It's easier for me to start at 8:30/9:00 than it is at 7:30/8:00. I still enjoy the tractor driving. You asked me what I like the most about it, it's the tractor driving and what you see from the seat.</p>
Farm in NY	<p>01:46:00</p> <p>ML: I had an opportunity three weeks ago to go out to Midwestern New York. It's where the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario meet in a little town called Cape Vincent, NY.</p> <p>KO: Oh, I've been there.</p> <p>ML: I have a friend whose uncle owned the farm down the road. We got to know one another. He would come down here and help his uncle in the summer through high school. I got to know him pretty well. Once high school was out, he disappeared and I disappeared, and never saw one another until – unfortunately – his uncle died from a stroke. And we got back together. His farm out there – he bought a farm. He was in the Navy. Got out, bought a farm with what he could afford. Bought some more land. Land was not the best. Clay soil. Poor soil. But it was what he could afford. Made do with what he could do. Made a fine job farming. Since he sold his cows four years ago, a fellow approached him last fall: would you be interested in leasing your land to grow corn and soybean? So he agreed to try it. They planted 80 acres on his farm. It was successful. The yield was an average yield. So they decided to expand it with all they could buy. So they started renting land down that road that he lives on. The guy had rented up to 1,000 acres. Robert called me and said, "You want to plow?" I said "I can give you a week or so. Why?" He said things are drying out. I said, "You should have thought of that two weeks ago. I could have given you a couple weeks. I'll give you one week. I'll work till Memorial Day."</p> <p>So I spent 8 days out there. Plowed with 250 horsepower tractors, 8 bottom plows, harrowed with harrows that were 30 feet wide. Never seen or used anything that big in my life. I enjoyed the hell out of it. As it turned, it got so dry out there that they had to give it up. They planted about 400 acres and there was still probably 100 acres that I plowed. The ground was so hard that they couldn't harrow it to seed it. Have to do it again this fall and try work it this summer. And do it again this fall. It's convinced them that you've got to plow in the fall with clay soil. I never could understand why, but now I do.</p> <p>That was a very interesting experience. I worked there for eight days and I</p>

	<p>had a hell of a good time.</p> <p>KO: Any excuse to drive a tractor, huh?</p> <p>ML: That's about the size of it. They were 12-14 hour days. The first day I got there, it was about 6:00 in the evening. They worked till 8/8:30, dark. About 6:00 we were repairing a set of harrows that broke in half. We working on them, fixing them up. I was kind of whipped. The fellow that owned the operation said, "Is this your first full day out?" I said, "Yup. And I ain't lying about it." He said, "You're running out of gas." I said, "Not to be a smart ass, but I enjoyed the hell out of it." The second day I had my shit together. And was used to what we were doing. It was a very good time. It was a very good experience. They've already asked me to come back next spring and help them. They want some help this fall if I can get to where I can go.</p> <p>We get our hay that we make here, we make it and deliver very little of it. You start mid October delivering. It's at the point where you can't make it anymore. We don't make it after we start delivering. We schedule delivery time with people we have on the standard list. And with new customers, we can usually get it delivered. Last year I took the sawdust business. Let Tim handle it. Tim hired another guy that helped him and the two of them got along like peaches. It was unbelievable how well they worked together. They were after one thing: to get the job done.</p>
01:52:38	01:52:38
Generations; family farming	<p>KO: It's nice to have people like you who love the land so much and have been doing it for generations of your family.</p> <p>ML: Out of 23, 24 grandchildren that my grandmother and grandfather had, I'm the only one who had interest in agriculture. Dale Lyman, down the road, he's 10 years than I am. He has a maple sugar operation. He enjoys sugaring. His father helped him get it going and established. His father lived sugaring. He did all the boiling here on the farm for my Uncle Norman. Dale misses him terrible, same as we all do. Dale does a fine job sugaring on a small scale because he works out so he can finance the operation and keep it going. Enjoys doing it. Other than that, I was the only one who had any interest in agriculture.</p> <p>KO: Well you know a lot about it.</p>
Electrical industry; farming on the side	<p>ML: It's all I've done. I worked out in the electrical industry for about 17 years. Basically it was selling electrical parts and components that contractors would use, wholesale supply house. But I always farmed. It was all shavings, all sawdust in between things. The last job I had out, the</p>

	<p>company I worked for for about a year and then they were in dire financial straits before I realized what was going on. Unfortunately they said you were the last to come, the first to go. Everybody asked what I was going to do. I said I was going to stick both feet in the water and get them wet. I'll try to go on my own. I had 3,000 - 4,000 bales of hay in the barn to sell. I was delivering a load of sawdust per day. I learned right off that anything anybody asked, if you wanted a job, "yup, I'll do it." Took whatever come down the road. It was funny, I had a lady in Dothan over here. She was a banker. She had three, four horses. I had sold sawdust and shavings and hay and whatever before. She called me one day and said, "I hate to ask this. Do you have an affliction to shoveling horse manure?" I said, "I don't think so. I don't think it bothered before." She said, "We clean our stalls at the barn. We make a pile on the lawn." Her husband Reg would take it to the dump. "He's going to be out of town for two weeks. I wondered if I could hire you to take that away." I said, "No problem. As long as I can do it on my own time." "Oh anytime you'd like to." So I started and did it for three years. Once a month, I'd go over there and put it on the truck and then bring it home and spread it in the field. That was what I did for selection of jobs. Somebody wants wood split. Cut wood. I don't care. I've cut a lot of it in my day. I enjoyed splitting wood. I still cut six or eight, ten cord a year for my mother. Gets a little tougher. Takes a little younger. I get a little more foolish. I split this finger this year.</p> <p>KO: Ouch.</p> <p>ML: That was ouch.</p>
01:57:56	01:57:56
Farming life	<p>ML: Farm life, I wouldn't have it any other way. I would not. I've enjoyed every minute of it here, and hopefully will enjoy it as long as I can. If I get to the point where I can retire and one of the boys can do it, I'll turn the business to them and maybe helped them out. I'd like to have a big dump truck to run for a year or two, just to say that I did. I have a CDL license in my pocket just in case. That may never happen. I don't know. I like trucks too.</p>
Milking cows	<p>I never honestly cared for milking cows. I could milk cows and I have milked cows. Probably if I had to milk them day in and day out, I'd get used to it. Anytime I had to milk cows, I could see the end of the tunnel. I was glad to get out. I would much rather work in the field than in the barn. And I never minded doing chores in the barn. I just never cared much for milking. As an instance to that, a little story that goes with that:</p>
Maple	<p>When we were all on the farm and my father was sugaring one year. My</p>

<p>sugaring; cleaning gutters; story about how father got home late with the cows</p>	<p>job when I got home from school – I had to go to barn and start chores. We were milking 70 cows. The gutters had to be cleaned by hand. The cows bedded. Three cart loads of silage shoveled out of the silo. Hay put down for the night feed. Usually I would get started most days and within most days, they would all come out of the woods and be done for the day. The hired men, the four of them, would stay until all the chores were done. And my father would come to milking. I had to go out and help. I had to be there to help my father milk. I tried to be there. I was never directed, but I was always there. My job was lugging milk from the backside of the barn to the bulk tank. This one night, I had been in the barn and I cleaned the gutters out. Bedded the cows. I kept listening out the back of the barn for the crawler tractor coming out of the woods. That was my sign that they were coming home. I kept listening and didn't hear it. I got one cartload of silage out of the silo and getting late by half an hour.</p> <p>I got one load out of the silo. I went out back and listened. I could hear it coming. So I rushed around and got the other two cartloads of corn out. I'm talking a cart that's 6' long and probably 3' deep. 3' wide. Got that done. Didn't hear the crawler no more. I thought, where are they? All I had left to do was get the milking machines ready to go. So I did that. I had them all in the backside of the barn ready to go. My father would always be milking by quarter to six, six o'clock at the latest. This was like 6:30, 20 minutes to seven. And they weren't back. I stepped out back. I could hear it coming. I said, oh good they're coming.</p> <p>Big boy – I put the machines all on. We milked with six machines. Stepped out back. I could barely hear the crawler coming. I said, where are they now? I had to go back to my machines, swap them, next cows. I'm going along. Pretty soon I turned around and my grandfather was standing there. "What are you doing boy?"</p> <p>I said, "I thought I heard Dad coming out of the woods with the crawler." He said, "It is kind of late isn't it." Grandpa said, "I don't know where they are. I guess they got hung up on something." They got to the barn at 10 minutes past 7.</p> <p>KO: What took so long?</p> <p>ML: They got stuck. They got stuck bad. And they took an hour to get out. You've never seen a more grateful man than my father because I had milked the whole backside of the barn, which was 18 or 20 cows. And there was two strings on the front side and I had done one string and was just starting in on the second string. I was about half done milking.</p> <p>My grandfather said, "what can I do?" I said, you swap machines or lug</p>
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	<p>milk. He said he'd lug milk. So he lugged milk and I swapped machines.</p> <p>KO: And you're dad was happy?</p> <p>ML: Dad was happy. And just one more story and I'll leave you alone.</p> <p>KO: You are not bugging me. It is getting dark though.</p>
02:04:36	02:04:36
Story about grandfather giving \$50 for helping	<p>ML: I was maybe 11. Summers we'd work there. You always helped haying. You never expected money. It was the thing to do. You had to be there. You had to help handle the hay. This particular summer, maybe the first summer. I was 10 or 11. I had a little size to me. We worked hard and we put a lot of hay in the barn. It was mid July, late July. Whatever reason, my parents were gone. My father was out working in the fields somewhere. My mother was at work. My brother and sister were gone. We lived upstairs with my grandparents. I was upstairs watching TV in the middle of the afternoon.</p> <p>I could hear Grandpa coming up the stairs. You knew his steps. He never came upstairs. Rare that he came upstairs. He would never come through the kitchen. There was a hallway and you'd come in through the living room in the hallway. I said, "What I'd do?" I knew I had done something wrong. He said, "Marty, you've been a great help to us this summer. Here. I appreciate." He had a brand new \$50. He said, "I want you to take this in payment for what you helped so far. If you keep going until school starts, we might help you after school starts." And I like to died. I could not not wait for my parents to get home. What am I going to do with \$50 bill, let alone ever seen one in my life? And why you could have bowled me over with a feather. And he did the same thing the day before school started. He gave me another \$50 bill. I was just flabbergasted. Number one, you didn't get money from Grandpa and you were expected to do the job you were asked. If my parents had the idea to do something, you'd get what you wanted for a bottle of soda. Or if you get to go with them to get groceries, there was a soda fountain next to the grocery store in Hartford village. It was ?? store and there was a little Gilmour's drug store. It was good. You could go in there and have an ice cream after groceries. And that was good. And that was worth \$100 bill. You go in and have a hot fudge sundae that you never had at home. It was the same ice cream you eat at home out of the box. But it tasted so much better and so much different there. It's stuff like that.</p>
Good & bad times of	<p>There was tough stuff, but there was good to the other side of it. I enjoyed it. There were times you would get pretty downhearted, but –</p>

farming	<p>KO: Such is life.</p> <p>ML: Such is life exactly. You'd get turned around and it wasn't so bad after all.</p> <p>KO: Well before darkness completely sets, we should probably call it a night.</p> <p>ML: You got any more questions? You didn't get to speak.</p> <p>KO: No. Speaking is not my job. It's your job. It's lovely, thank you. I learned a lot about haying. I do have one form that I have to ask you to sign before I head out.</p>
02:09:44	END OF INTERVIEW.