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W. Hartley Fulks

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Date Aug 13, 1973

W H Fulks
(Signature - Interviewee)

Chesapeake Rt. 2, Ohio
Address

Date Aug 13, 1973

Ray Unger
Ruth Fulks
(Signature - Witness)

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MANUSCRIPT

by

Ray Unger

Dialogue by Ray Unger.

Dialogue by Hartley Fulks.

Dialogue by Ruth Fulks.

My name is Ray Unger and I did this interview on Monday, August 13, 1973. I'll be interviewing Hartley Fulks, age 74, he's a retired butcher and grocery man from here in Huntington. He's now residing on Greasy Ridge just outside Proctorville, Ohio. The voice that is heard at the end of the tape is his wife, Ruth Fulks.

SIDE ONE

This tape begins with Hartley talking about corn farming. ...the tools that we have to do it with. We used to lay it off with a gadget that looked like a three runner sled; lay the field off both ways and then go through. That way it was check rowed so you could plow it both ways. Well then of course you, after you plow it, you went through it with a hoe and did a little hoe and thinnin the corn, and then when it got ripe you went in and cut it with a big corn knife and set it in a shock. We usually cut it either 14 or 16 hills square. And then it set their then till it cured out good. Then we went back in and we shucked it.

Now this country used to produce more apples. In fact Lawrence County was the leading apple producing county in the

state at one time. The apples at that time were all shipped in barrels, and these various men in the orchard made their own barrels. This building over back of my barn, that long building over there, now that was the cooper shop here at this farm. They bought these barrels knocked down and then they had to cut the chime around them and set them up. Then they sold their apples in barrels. Well today, we go in to plant corn; they get the ground ready with a tractor, and oh they can get it in so much better shape then we could ever get it with a horse. Well then they put it in with a, with a corn planter that drills it in, and when they get it planted then they go through with another gadget and spray it, spray the ground. Puts a liquid fertilizer and a weed killer on it, and then you don't go back to it then until you're ready to go in and pick it. As I say, some of the, some of them are equiped with shellers so that the only thing that they take out of the field is the shelled corn.

Now to get back to these apples, we sold those in barrels. They hauled them with a horse and wagon over to Huntington to put them in storage and then they'd sellem out. There was more than they could sell, you see, locally here. They would store them over there until they had market for them. Of course now days, they haul them out in baskets, bushel baskets. You couldn't sell a barrel of apples. You couldn't go to a store today and sell a barrel of apples to save your neck. Nobody would buy them. And the majority of them now are sold

in plastic bags. Now this last summer, I was down here trying to sell some of my apples. I had mine put up in 10lb. baskets. They said no. They said we get our apples in 3lb. plastic bags. Well mine don't grow like that. Mine grows on the tree and I put 'em in a basket. I never did grow them in a bag. I got teed off and we were talking about it, getting smart with it. Do they still grow very many here in Lawrence County? What? Still grow many... No, not many now. See this used to be a garden, truck guarding, garden center. Now down here where the, a, South Point plant is; atmospheric nitrogen. Now that was, see that was really, that was really a truck garden center right in there. Grew a lot of cantelopes and a whole, whole lot of vegetables. That was before the days that there was truck in. Now when I went to work in the grocery, there wasn't any strawberries to amount to anything here until our local berries come in. Now my uncle would buy some shipped from Florida in a refrigerated crate. Held 80 quarts. And it it was iced. As far as I know, no one else in Huntington that was buying them even like that. Well then he'd sell what he could there at the store, and then sell some to hotels and restaurants. He'd clean up the 80 quarts with that. Then when home grown berries come in, there was three ferry boats that come into Huntington; one at Guyandotte, one at 26th st., and one at 10th st.. And a lot of times on Saturday morning, one of us would go to each ferry and buy all the

strawberries that come across. So if you bought strawberries you had to go to a, you had to come to the store where I was working. Corner on the market. Huh? Make a corner on the market. Oh yea. It was no- it was nothin to it. Now chickens used to be you couldn't buy a chicken in Huntington dressed. You bought 'em on foot and dressed them yourself. My uncle had a, he started dressing chickens. For a long time we had a lot of customers who wouldn't buy a chicken dressed. They'd come in and pick 'em out and want to take 'em home alive. You couldn't get anybody to dress a chicken at home now at all. No one knows how. Well it isn't that they don't know, it isn't that they don't know how so much as they just don't want to fool with it.

Now turkeys. I used to grow turkeys. I made my back lot, when I lived on Jefferson Ave., my back lot made the payments on my home. We grew turkeys, then in the summer time I grew alot of vegatables and so forth. But the turkey was the big item. At that time you could get oh anywhere from 65 to 90 cents a pound you see for a dressed turkey. And I figured when I put one dollar into the turkeys I could take out two. And I did two, did take out two or better. I grew turkeys for a couple of years after I moved over here but the folks, more folks had got into it and the price had come down and so I quit. I couldn't make any money. There wasn't any use to fool with it if you couldn't make money on it. And a one a- the last year that I had turkeys Ruth was, brought 'em over to town. You see when I grew 'em then, town folks come to my garage and pick 'em up. But after I come over here, then we had to deliver them. Well

of course I could get 'em dressed but I couldn't get 'em delivered, I couldn't deliver 'em. One evening she come in there; boy she was truly all in. She'd been out pedden turkeys. I knew right then that that was the last year we'd have turkeys and it was. We've had alot of fun. But a...

Now the place where I worked was the first store in town that dressed turkeys. Where was that store? Huh? Where was that store? It was on 3rd Ave., 1009, 3rd Ave.. Norris Fulks. It was the... Now the... And it used to be that we didn't get prime chickens until after Easter. You know there was no a, none of these big chicken farms in business then. All the chickens that we got, we bought from farmers. A farmer wouldn't have hens to go a setten real early you know. And a...

Dr. Guthrie lived up a, back of um, up on Pea Ridge someplace. He got into the chicken business, that is to growin friers. I think possibly he was, had layn hens but he'd buy these white legerns and then he'd sell the roosters off as friers. And I remember we got some of those in, in time for Easter. Well I believe it was a dollar a pound we got for those. It was an awful price, but nobody else had them. We didn't make no long profit on 'em. We paid him a big price for them too. And then we'd dress 'em out. I've dressed many and many a chicken, had it ready to go befor its heart quit beating. How long is that? Oh, a couple of minutes. That's a fast job. Well, you know when I first went to work in the grocery, and you went back to dress

chickens. I thought I was good at it boy. I'd dress, help my mother dress chickens alot of times. I was a picken ya know with my thumb and finger like that and I was, I was wasn't foolin away no time. My uncle was doin two and three to my one. Wait a minute fellows, somethins wrong. So, I watched him. After he scald his chicken, he'd take it by the leg and run this finger(index) and his hand up the leg and that got all them feathers the other way. Take the wing and come down and get all the feathers off of it, and then take your hand and rub the feathers off. He a, he beat me for a little while but after while he got to where he couldn't. We had alot of fun though; worked alot of hours. But now you couldn't sell chickens dressed the way we dressed them then now though, because we didn't, didn't take too much time to get the pin feathers out. We didn't, we just didn't do a good job cleanin them out inside alot of times. You couldn't sell chickens now like that at all. People would take care of that themselves usually, wouldn't they? Yea people then took care of it themselves.. They felt, they felt like they were fortunate to get'em with just part of the dead and part of the feathers off. Some of them as I say there was some of them that, the older ones that wouldn't buy'em dressed. They wanted to go back to the chicken room and see, pick theirs out on the, on foot. Take it home that way. When I first started to work in the grocery, oh my goodness, I guess I was the bashfulist, country boy that you had ever seen. Some girl came in and wanted some Palmer

paper. Well I didn't know what Palmer paper was. I tried to, I tried to sell her toilet paper. Now the writing, practice writing paper that we had used over here in Ohio in school, was the Foolsgap paper in a long sheet. It wasn't Palmer paper at all. And I know that that girl if she's still living, she still thinks that I was a tryin to be bright with her. I's just naturally dumb. I didn't know what it was. That's writing paper. Un hu. It has a little red line between the first two lines on the top of the sheet. Why I didn't know what, I wasn't tryin to, to be smart. I was just dumb and nothing I could do about it.

Well like cutting meat. Now when I started cutting meat we did it all by hand with a, you know with a knife and a hand saw. Right. Oh we ground our sausage; we had an old hand mill that we set between two chairs. One fellow turned and the other fellow fed the mill. I've done that. After we got that home, we usually had pretty near, right near on to a wash tub full of sauage when we got it all ground up. And then my daddy would put salt and pepper and sage in it and we'd get down there and mix it up. After we got it mixed then we'd fry a cake to see, you know, if we had it seasoned right if it needed a little more salt or a little more pepper, a little more sage or what. Well now, of course we have a ban saw that we do the sawing with. We have a big electric grinder that we grind it with. We ran 180lbs. of pork through that grinder in 9 minutes. Now that was actual weight, actual time. Don and I did it. That's when

Don was out of work here 5 or 6, 5 or 6 years ago now. We bought a big hog. Oh he dressed out alright. I'd expect he weighed 400lbs. on foot. Dressed out a little over two because we had 180lbs., it had to dress way over two because we had 180lbs. of sausage. But a, as I say now we way the meat befor we grind it, we weigh the seasoning, and then we put the seasoning on it befor we grind it. Then when you, when its ground its already pretty well mixed up. The only thing you have to do then to mix it, is to get the lean and the fat mixed up even. Now when I first came over here to Ohio, we cut meat on the kitchen table with a hand saw. That's the way we did ours at home. Then I traded a turkey for a, a slicen table. Well then I got a chance to buy a grinder. It was an old one. I paid out I guess about \$10. Then I got hold of a cube machine. Well tnen I bought this a, I had never been around a ban saw, never seen anyone cut meat with a ban saw. Oh you know I'd, I'd see it, I'd see 'em do it too, but I mean never paid any attention to how they did it. I seen 'em cut a steak or something with a ban saw, but I never used one. And I found this one over town and they told what they wanted for it. Well, they ask \$200.00. I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll give you \$150.00 for it right now and take it home. He said now, he said the blade won't stay on. Well I think we can fix that. Well after I'd bought and payed for it, now he said it will cost you \$100.00 to get it fixed up. Then he said its worth three. Well I, I brought it on home. Bill Gill worked on it and he

got it so the blade don't come off no more, unless I knock it off. Then I got ahold of a big grinder now with a horse and a half loaded on it. That's the one that did the 180lbs. in 9 minutes. I bought that grinder. The head was pretty well worn on it. You know those kind of threads like back inside of the head of the mill, you know so the meat can push the meat out. Well this one we had was pretty well worn, so I bought a new worm for it. I had to buy 60, about \$60 worth of parts befor I could get it to work. They told me then that I oughta have, that I needed a new head that would cost me, it was \$58.00. Noooo, I ain't gona spend no money like that. Well this year, the head had gotten worn till the meat backed up awful bad in it, so I went over to get a new one; \$97.70. But they had a, they had changed its um, befor the guard was bolted onto the pan that sets on top of the mill. Well, it had alot of folks who was taken that guard off and gotten their hand in the mill and they'd sue the company; sue Hoebart. So now they have pressed the guard onto the head. Only way you can get it off now would be to cut it off with a hacksaw. Oh, burn it off with a touch of course. Then they changed the threads on it so I had to buy a new ring. That's how come it cost me so much money.

But oh my goodness, in the winter time ya know, when I can't do anything, don't have anything to do here on the farm, oh there's always something I could do. I could always be down there pruning trees, but I don't climb that good any more. I fell out of an apple tree when I first bought this farm. I

haven't climbed one since. Now many, about how many trees or acres do you have in trees? Oh I'd imagine its 4 or 5. The trees are kind of scartered out. There practically all early apples; yellow transparent. I have 11 new trees that we have put out; golden delicious, red delicious, and winesap and northern spy. Then I have two grimes golden. Now one of the grimes golden trees has an apple, one apple on it this year. That's the first its had. Those are trees that I have set since I've been here. We've had several little winesap apples and golden delicious apples. The apple tree that we depended most on for ourselves was this one right here. That's an old-fashion stark's delicious. Really a good apple. And we've put as high as 15 bushels in storage from it. I see quite a few on it right now. There's not a bushell on it this year. The freeze come just right to get those apples. Now my trans- parents last year, well two years ago, a fellow up at Rome was taking my apples to market for me. I'd just haul them up there and leave them in his barn, fellow by the name of Gorby and he would take them on and then I'd would take him another load the next evening, and collect for the ones I had taken the day befor, you know depending on how much he got out of them. He charged 15¢ on the dollar, for sellen'em. Well, he quit. They changed the city market there and he decided he'd just retire and he did. Well that didn't leave me anyplace to sell my apples so I went out here and peddled them out along the... Wanted me to pay two dollars to back in over to the city market, over there at the new market. Well I'm too contrary to do that

and I wouldn't do it yet. So I peddled them at the fruit stands down along the road. Well this, this year I told Ruth ain't no use for me to spray all these apple trees, fertilize all of them, and then just pick a few of them. This year we'll just spray the easy ones to get to, the first row here and spray these trees down below the house here that we can get to real easy. And that's all we fertilized and that's all we sprayed. I sold some, a few apples to up at Milton. One of Meadows boy. He would buy what I could haul in the bed of my truck; 36 pecks at a time. I could have put the rack on it and hauled alot more now but that's still the bottom of the bed; 36 pecks. I took him up 3 or 4 loads. In the mean time I told a fellow that had a little stand up on Ohio River here above a, above Proctorville. He said he'd take all I had. I'd promised some to boy Meadows. I'll have to take them up. You can have the rest of them. Well don't any to anybody else. I want them all. And he took all the apples that I picked. The weatner was so hot and so dry that my apples ran out about two or three weeks earlier than they usually do. They got too ripe and fell off. He bought more apples then I'd ever sold befor, and he told me he wanted my apples next year'again so I hope to take'em to him. The Lord was awful good to me when he let me buy this little farm. This is pretty. Well I, you know I come out here and everything is so peaceful. There's not much traffic; most of the traffic, noise we have is airplanes goin over. Then in summer time I sell a few apples. Now I have a few plumes now that

I'll be taking to market pretty soon, damson plumes. You ever grow any plumes? We had a few, we had two trees. I don't know what kind now. We had two trees of them. A blue plume? Yes, it was. About so big around? No they were bigger than that. They got oh, about that big around anyway. That's more a prune plume. I have one tree now that's supposed to be like that that I just put out this year, but my tree's old-fashion blue damsoned. I didn't think I was gonna have any this year. I went ahead and sprayed the trees anyhow. I got a pretty good crop of 'em.

You ever see any white walnuts or butternuts? Yes. I have three trees. I know the, the name by butternuts. I didn't know they were called white walnut. Their wood is soft, not hard like a black walnut. Well you can see why they call it a white walnut by those trees there. A few trees down there, you can see the leaf is just the same as on a black walnut, or practically the same. There's not very many of them around any more. Black walnuts are beginning to get scarce. The timber's worth so much that the farmers are cutting them. When did you move over here? Into this house? To Ohio. 1953. Twenty years ago. We lived 13 years in the big house, and we've lived in this one now 7. Well, how did you all make out? Pretty good. Pretty good. I reckon we're through, we're through aren't we? No, we're still goin. Still goin? I didn't know that. No now I've been out here on this farm for seven years. What you want, a head of cabbage? Yea. Huh? Yea. Want my knife?

Can you come and get it for me? What did she say? Wanted
you to come and get it for her. I talk too much. You know
that happens once in a while. Now come down here. I got
something I doubt if you know what it is.

END OF TAPE