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Q: Thursday, April 17, 2008. We're in Argyle at PDI with Goldie Wands.

GW: It's a beautiful day here in Argyle, New York. It brings back a lot of memories of our farming days. And we bought Hiland Farm. And Mrs. Ella Hiland, her husband had died and, uh, she was trying to farm the farm, a widower lady with two sons that were, she said, not steady. And I think some of these people will know what they are—what she meant like that, but if you don't, ask somebody what she meant by, "They weren't steady." But, yeah—But they also—We made some big mistakes in our first attempts at farming. We were delighted to have the farm and Mrs. Hyland would say, "Well, you were my choice." And that made me feel very good that she wanted us there. And so, I hope that as time went by, I think that she did—We, we satisfied her as time went by, because she only lived a year after she had moved to Valley Falls and we went to her funeral. But that stops me to remember the things that happened and why the neighbors thought we would—They gave us a year, because the first thing we did was plant oats. And, well, that was a good crop. And the first thing Cord [phonetic] did was plough up the best field that he thought would be the richest field and he hadn't never farmed before. He didn't know anything about farming, but he had ambition to do it and he planted the oats in this field that he plowed up and fertilized. And the neighbor said that, "Uh oh. He's ploughing [unintelligible 0:02:27] they get plenty of oats in that field. That should have been planted to hay." But it was already too late for that and we had already planted it, so we had to wait. The crops came around. But the oats grew and it grew and grew. And they were so large, the field was so heavy that—The heads of the oats were so heavy that they went down. They'd go like that and bend down. And when the stalk wouldn't hold the grain—It was too heavy, so it all fell down and lodged and it made a lot of work to get that grain—that hay in. Had double the work we would have had, if we planted to something else. And then, I think Cynthia's going to tell you about how we nearly lost the whole place in fire. Lightning struck, lightning struck the house. We'd just gone down to pick up my brother. Was it my brother? My brother David.

Cynthia: No, you were coming back from vacation in Seattle.

GW: We were going down to Albany to the airport there. Oh. When we had the fire? We were going down to meet somebody at the air—

Cynthia: No, Mother. You were just coming back from vacation in Seattle.

GW: That's right.

Cynthia: And Jesse and Lathrop [phonetic] Chase had been taking care of the two dogs in your house. And you—When you came back, you heard sirens and you got to the top of Connor's Hill and you said to yourself, "I hope it's not our house." But indeed it was. There had been a thunder storm and a big lightning ball had come through the side window and

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hit your father—picture of your dad on the first phone in Utah or someplace like that and hit it so hard that it shot the refrigerator and the cupboards across in the adjoining room, the kitchen across the room. And that's how it started. And then how many departments were there? Five fire departments that came to fight the fire?

GW: It was a lot of fires in that area. And it went fires that started from like—from lightning and that included Whiteside Church and the Beadle [phonetic] place and I think you had a fire too, Mary Jane.

Mary Jane: I don't remember one, though. At the farm or at the...?

GW: Did you have a fire at your farm too? There was a lot of fires in that—right in that area, though. And that includes the Whiteside Church—

Mary Jane: From the lightning too?

GW: ...and with lightning. And, uh, Hamiltons, one of their barns. And I—you'd have to research that—

Q: Oh, yeah.

GW: ...because it was lightning went through and struck a lot of those farms and it seemed to be a path right through there.

Q: That lightning would strike right down in that area. I was wondering, Goldie, about the roses. When did Cord start planting the roses?

GW: Hmm?

Q: The roses. The rose bushes.

GW: Oh, his roses.

Q: Yeah.

GW: Oh, one of the things we—My husband always grew his roses. He had a rose garden. As long as he lived, he had his rose garden.

Q: But even when he was farming it or...?

GW: Even when we were farming, he had time for the roses.

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Q: I always wondered about that. [Unintelligible 0:07:21] been there a long time. What else did you plant around the garden? Like what types of things did you have?

GW: Well, you—we grew all of our vegetables.

Q: Well, Cynthia was saying something about how you shelled peas. She was telling a funny story about how you shelled peas. Do you remember that?

GW: Uh, what?

Q: How you'd shell peas.

GW: Shell peas? Yeah, we did that in the washing machine.

Q: [laughs] That's what she said.

GW: Didn't you and Roger do that too?

Q: I don't remember.

GW: We went—run them through the wringer, open the rollers—

Q: Yeah.

GW: ...real loose and feed the peas right in and they'd drop and shell the peas and they'd drop in the washing machine and you'd have to just take them out and can them.

Q: Yeah. That was pretty brilliant, wasn't it?

Cynthia: Yeah, it would save a lot of time.

GW: Well, I'm sure we must have read that somewhere, how to shell the peas, because I wouldn't have known about it.

Cynthia: Yeah, it worked well.

GW: Must've read it somewhere in a farm journal [laughs] or one of those magazines, how to shell the peas. You had to have a wash machine first.

Q: Have you—um, was there a favorite place that you had on the farm, like a favorite field or a favorite place you'd go to look out?

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GW: I don't know. There were so many things happened on the farm. The horses running away and all that going on. I can't remember my what my favorite fields would be, but it was a beautiful spot.

Q: Gorgeous.

GW: Beautiful country.

Q: What other things? Um, like with the—We talked about the horses. We didn't talk about the donkeys. What year you get the donkeys? The little donkeys, the miniature ones.

GW: What? I didn't hear you.

Q: What year did you get the miniature donkeys?

GW: The miniature donkeys, oh they were a retirement project.

Q: Oh, okay.

GW: ...after Cord retired.

Q: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

GW: We saw this ad in the paper for miniature donkeys and went down. There was a woman in Cambridge, South Cambridge, that had a riding horse and she sent away for a miniature donkey for a companion to the riding horse. And the, the horse got swamp fever, but the donkeys didn't get it. And we thought they would never get it, but they did get it when they got old and their immune system broke down. So, they did get it in their, in their old age and they—But they lost their ability to walk even.

Q: They had several babies, though, right? You had several.

GW: Yeah, and they had the, they had the babies. Uh, she had them, uh—I mean first one she had was born out on the farm in the field, which was what they like to do. And, and, uh, it was in that field that—It was where the gravel bed was, because, remember, that the old blind horse—One was blind in both eyes, knew that there's a gravel bed in that field, but he doesn't—wasn't sure where it was and he didn't want to follow it. And we saw him circling and circling and we thought it was something [unintelligible 0:11:22] and we went up and brought him back, led him back into the barn and we never let him out again afraid, afraid like that. But there were experiences that nobody should have to go through. [laughs] Like you, Monte Carlo.

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Q: It's that [unintelligible 0:11:48], Goldie. Isn't he? How many was it? You can feel him when he's sitting on your lap. [Unintelligible 0:11:58] Twenty-two pounds. Coming over for a visit.

GW: I'm sure she'll have a lot of fun with those gifts. [Unintelligible 0:12:08] a great talker.

Q: Yes, yeah. Get some stories from him. Um, [unintelligible 0:12:16] I don't know if he was going to be a farmer. I think that he might have had other plans and he came back to the farm [unintelligible 0:12:29] like a lot of people did it. They went away and then came back to farm it. And you chose farming, right? Is that what you said?

GW: Yes. It was my idea. But I never was—never sorry.

Q: And is that where wanted—Did you [unintelligible 0:12:54] reason why you chose it, because you wanted to raise your kids on a farm? Did you want to—

GW: Yes-

Q: ...raise all the kids on—

GW: ...it was. We didn't have any children until we had the farm.

Q: So, you [unintelligible 0:13:05] get a farm. Have you talked on the tape—Have you talked about how many children you had and named them? You should do that for the tape.

GW: Oh, I always had to say that we raised five children and put them through college on that farm. And that today is pretty, pretty prohibitive to be able to do that on a farm.

Q: Hm-hmm [affirmative]. Well, say more about that.

GW: But you can do it, if you've got the will-

Q: [Unintelligible 0:13:42]—

GW: ...and you've got—and you love the farm and you have the energy to hold of it—hold onto it. Especially if you've got a cat to sit on your lap.

Q: [laughs] Yeah.

GW: Old Monte Carlo.

Cynthia: I think you need to talk about the neighbors and how you shared work.

GW: Yes, that was one of the big things that endeared us to the farm is that—how we worked as a—You could almost call us a team. The neighbors helped each other and, and heavy—I mean you had threshers threshing that threshed the grain, oats, or wheat or whatever you had. And the neighbors always brought their horses and came and helped, not just themselves, but their horses too and were right there to—

Q: And you'd do that same.

GW: ...teamwork.

Q: And you'd do the same when they were doing theirs.

GW: We'd do the same with them. Exchange work we called it.

Q: And how did that go? Like, what—How would you—How would that happen?

GW: Just by necessity. You couldn't do—bring in the—If you had one tractor and you had to field of oats that was ready to be cut, you could cut it and then let it dry, dry out. And then you'd have to bring it in. And what they would do—I think that, you know, the threshing machine was bought by the—your dad and maybe Alan Brownell and, and, um, Cord. I don't know. I can't remember whether it was a joint thing, but everybody used the same threshing machine and you couldn't, you couldn't afford to buy all the threshing machines, so they farmed it together. And they—You went from one farm to the other until it was done and shared the, the work.

Q: So, how many would—Was it the Brownells and the Connors [phonetic] and the Wands? And was there anybody else?

GW: I don't think anybody else that I remember.

Q: The Brownells, the Wands, the Connors.

GW: Yes, the Brownells. I think Alan went in on it.

Q: And I had a cookie.

GW: But I don't think that everybody did, because—But they—

Q: [Unintelligible 0:16:38]

GW: ...used it. I don't think-

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Q: [Unintelligible 0:16:40] Would you do the same, like, with harvesting potatoes? Would everybody, um—

GW: No, you'd do that that I know of, potatoes, because we didn't do potatoes. And we tried it that first year, but we decided that was just too hard. We weren't going to—and you go into grain instead.

Q: So, would you buy your potatoes?

GW: We bought our potatoes, usually from the farmers.

Q: And—

GW: And a lot of people grow—would cook potato as well. And a lot of people did raise potatoes and sold them and took them to market in Albany, the Menands Market.

Q: Yeah.

GW: And there—I know the Brownells did. And some, sometimes they took them to New York.

Q: Now, did you have an orchard too?

GW: No.

Q: You didn't have your own apples.

GW: We didn't have an orchard, just our own—

Q: Enough for yourselves.

GW: ...for ourselves. But no, we didn't have an orchard per se. Monte wasn't there to help.

Q: You always had cats on the farm, though I remember that.

GW: Oh, yes. We had cats.

Cynthia: We had lots of cats.

GW: But the cats came in the house and slept in my bed.

Q: Were you always a cat person?

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GW: I remember Cynthia had, had one and the cat had—You remember that, Cynthia? You would—You got scared one night and you said the cat got jumped up on your bed. The cat had died.

Cynthia: Yeah.

GW: You must remember that.

Q: The cat died on your bed?

GW: The cat died and, and you—

Cynthia: [Unintelligible 0:18:34] died.

GW: And then she had felt it—She came in and got me. She said, "The cat got in my bed." And I said, "The cat died." "Well, it got in my bed last night." And I had to sleep with her the rest of the night. Those things do happen.

Cynthia: I know.

Q: Yeah, yeah. They do. And I don't remember, did you have dogs? Did you have dogs?

GW: We had a German shepherd and we had a cocker spaniel. Janet gave me the cocker spaniel. She had a litter. She gave me my cocker spaniel, Taffy, because she was the color of Taffy. You know what taffy is, don't you?

Q: Yeah. Yeah. And what about the winters? Like, how did you make it through the winters? Were you—

GW: Hmm?

Q: How did you guys make it through those winters, when there'd be so many snow drifts and—

GW: I don't know. We just did. You had something you had to do and you just did it. And it was most things. If there's a job to do, you have to do it. We didn't have everything at our touch to—mechanized, you know. It was there to do, you have to do it. Somebody's got to get it done.

Q: Would the, um, would there be times when the milk truck couldn't get at you? How many cows did you milk? Did you say you had 23 when you started?

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GW: Oh, about 25.

Q: Twenty-five.

GW: We didn't have any more than that. We raised our own calves. But we all did that.

Q: Who would come get your milk or did you have to take it?

GW: The milk truck.

Q: The milk truck?

GW: Milk truck. That was, that was a separate business.

Q: Was it Anderson [phonetic], the Anderson Dairy? Was that where you sent your milk?

GW: I don't know who was it came and picked up our milk. I don't remember that.

Q: Monte wants to say something in the mic. Isn't that what—We had that on the video. [laughs] He just stood up and looked right at the mic, like he was going to—

GW: Yeah.

Q: ...he was going to say something.

GW: Trying to get on Cynthia's jacket is where he likes to sleep. That's his favorite spot.

Q: We should talk about when Cynthia and George took the, um, was it the pig pen? What did you—What building did you take to [unintelligible 0:21:20].

GW: George and Cynthia brought—helped—took the wagon house. Yeah.

Q: It was a wagon house? Okay.

GW: Hm-hmm [affirmative]. It was the dog—It was the doghouse. Yeah.

Q: It was the doghouse?

Cynthia: We had so many nice out buildings.

GW: Yeah, we did.

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Q: How many are there? There's several, right?

BS: [Unintelligible 0:21:40]

F1: Oh. Yeah.

BS: [Unintelligible 0:21:44]

Q: We've got Bill coming in.

F1: Have you started recording?

Q: Yeah. But we can stop. We can pause it right now.

BS: Hi Goldie.

Q: Why don't I just say that, um, that Bill Skiff [phonetic] has joined us and we're going to continue our conversation. Okay?

BS: Okay.

Q: Yeah.

BS: All right. Is that how it works? [laughs]

Q: [Unintelligible 0:22:07]

BS: Well, I found, I found out your name is really Goldie. That's an unusual name. That's all right. And, of course, your sister Alicen that's in the same area. She lives in the room next to me. We're all at the retirement home in Argyle.

Q: Well, Bill—

BS: [Unintelligible 0:22:40] mention that it's nice to see you. Okay.

Q: Now, say what you said before about, um, your connection to Goldie's neighbors. Remember when you came in, you said you grew up—you lived next to the Beadle farm?

BS: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

Q: So, say what—

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BS: Yeah.

Q: ...your connection to the Beadle farm.

BS: Well, Goldie and Cord Wand lived next to the Beadle farm, which was my mother's, uh, home farm.

Q: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

BS: And that's still in the family. My, uh, my nephew is working that farm right now.

Q: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

BS: His name is Skiff, of course.

Q: Yeah. Hm-hmm [affirmative].

BS: But the Beadles, uh, my mother, uh, was a Beadle and they had—She had her brother Harman lived in the farm next to where Goldie lives.

Q: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

BS: Okay.

GW: Where's Harman now? Here, I think.

BS: Hmm?

GW: Harman, Louisa's son.

BS: Oh, no. No. Harman, no. He died a long time ago. My mother had two brothers, Harman and, and Joe Beadle.

GW: She had a son Harman.

BS: My mother, Carrie Beadle. And Joe Beadle lived in Hartford, in the Hartford area, New York. And Harman lived on the farm next to where you lived, but that's now being run by my mother's son, no grandson. My mama's son was my nephew.

Q: Yeah. Now, how lived there when you moved there?

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GW: Mrs. Hiland. Ella Hiland. H-I-L-A-N-D. Her husband was Tom Hiland. She had a son Tom and she had another son, Frank, and another son, John.

BS: What name?

GW: Hiland.

Q: Hiland.

BS: Hiland?

Q: Lived out on the farm.

GW: H-I-L-A-N.

Q: Hiland lived on your mom's farm.

BS: Yeah, that's right. I remember. I didn't know those people. Hiland.

GW: Well, your-

Q: Uh—

BS: Yeah, that's right.

GW: ...dad used to. I know your father worked too, ran the farm for, for a while.

Q: My grandfather. Yeah. After her husband died.

GW: Yeah.

BS: Okay.

Q: My, uh—Here's a story. My grandfather, Bill Connor, William Connor, he was working a field in back of Goldie's farm and lost his watch. Did you ever hear this—

GW: No.

Q: ...story? And he lost his watch. And, um, I think it was probably at least four years later, where they were plowing up there and he found it. And I have it. It's the little pocket watch and the marks from the plough, you know—

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BS: No kidding.

Q: ...the dents from the plough were in there, but it was a story that I was told, because it was years later that they ploughed up the watch again.

F2: Yeah.

BS: Isn't that something? That was going to happen. [Unintelligible 0:25:38] found the watch.

Q: We were talking about farming, Bill, about farming with horses and—

BS: Oh, yeah.

Q: ...Goldie, she used one.

BS: Well, that's why I interview [unintelligible 0:25:48] that I was telling about—

Q: Hm-hmm [affirmative]. Yeah.

BS: ...starting with horses and tractors and [unintelligible 0:25:54] other plough horse equipment [unintelligible 0:25:47] we did, well, fine, but [unintelligible 0:26:00] tractor was taking over the farm. We'd use horses [unintelligible 0:26:04] the oats and planting the corn and hauling the wagon, hauling the hay. I don't know what else.

Q: Yeah. I was saying to Goldie, how did you get through the winters when you were farming like that? And how did you do it? How'd you get through all those cold, windy, drifty winters?

GW: We didn't. You had to it. We did it.

BS: I don't know. In my time, the 1920s on through the '30s, well, they had the Depression, of course. There was no money, but, uh, we just, uh, had to make a living and we did. [Unintelligible 0:26:47] we had to keep our expenses down by having horses.

GW: No, we had to—We had a furnace.

BS: [Unintelligible 0:26:54].

GW: We had a wood furnace. We burned wood.

BS: Oh, yeah. We burned—

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GW: I had a Hypus [phonetic] furnace.

BS: Yeah.

GW: It was one, one register, a central register. Everybody liked to cuddle, cuddle over that.

Q: I imagine.

GW: You'd stand on the register and—

BS: [Unintelligible 0:27:13] . Well, it hasn't been abandoned, but it [unintelligible 0:27:19] people around it, older people. And the husband died and she had a—and, of course, it was just on the market. But when we left there, they had electric lights around most here, but that's about it. They didn't—

GW: We had a Delco system.

BS: ...have any inside—

GW: But you, you made your own electricity.

BS: They didn't have—

GW: We did ours. Mrs. Hiland had a, a Delco system with, uh, batteries.

BS: Yeah.

GW: And every year, every year or every morning, Cord would have to start the engine up and charge the batteries.

BS: Yeah. Well, they had that on my father's old farm. They had—Where I was born. That was down in Beadle's old area. They had Delco down there and they had put lights in. But in Greenwich when I moved to the house there in 1940, they had just lights in, but there was, there was no plumbing, no inside plumbing. And, uh, nothing was running by electricity.

GW: Oh, we put in—

BS: But uh—

GW: ...plumbing.

BS: ...as long as you had a plumber come in and—

GW: Who could do it.

BS: ...[unintelligible 0:28:20] the bathroom and there was the water came from a well off an area, then. So I had to—

GW: We had wonderful water, wonderufl spring water.

BS: ...draw the well. Then, we had plenty of water after that.

Q: [Unintelligible 0:28:33].

GW: And I—Mrs. Hiland in their advertisement spoke about it. And the ad was well water was with springs.

BS: Yeah.

GW: Wonderful water. And that was a selling point for most people.

BS: Yeah.

Q: Did you put in the indoor plumbing, Goldie?

GW: Hmm?

Q: Did you put in the indoor plumbing when you moved in?

GW: Yes. It was one of the first things Cord did. And he could do all his own work. He knew the—how to do everything. I think he a good friend that taught him all that.

BS: Well, Goldie, we all lived—The two of us went through all the stages, didn't we? [laughs]

GW: Yes. We did too. That's for sure.

BS: Okay. [laughs]

Q: Lots of changes. What about—Did you both—Was the cooking done on a wood stove or kitchen?

GW: Wood stove.

Q: A kitchen wood stove?

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GW: Yeah, we had a kitchen wood stove with a reservoir on the side. It held water.

BS: Yeah.

GW: So, hot water. We had a little—

BS: Goldie, the Brownells that lived back, lived back in the lane. I can't think of their first name.

GW: I think the one that's there now is Jack.

BS: Hm-hmm [affirmative].

GW: I think Jack lives on the, on the Brownell.

BS: I think that they're my age and I'm trying to think of his name.

GW: Well, there was—

BS: Brownell.

GW: Yeah, Brownell. Jack is his brother. What was—What his name?

Cythnia: Charles was Bill's age, right? Or no? No?

GW: Oh-

BS: Anyway, the Brownells lived in that house back of the lane.

GW: Yeah.

BS: But that was when you lived there. They, of course, lived there at the same time.

GW: Yeah.

BS: I can't remember his name.

GW: Jack and I suppose his brother.

Q: Alan and [unintelligible 0:30:25].

GW: What was Jack's brother's name? The elder boy.

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Q: Jack's brother?

GW: Yeah, Jack Brownell's brother.

Q: Uh—

GW: They were—I think he went out West after a while.

Q: [Unintelligible 0:30:35]

GW: But I don't remember his name.

Q: I'm trying to remember.

GW: Anyway.

Q: [Unintelligible 0:30:52] The, uh, the house that I lived in was built for George Brownell. And he [unintelligible 0:31:05]. They lived in that house. And then I think the Pearson family house was built for a Brownell as well. [Unintelligible 0:31:14] Brownell [unintelligible 0:31:18].

F2: Who was that Whipple [phonetic] related to Joe Whipple in Greenwich?

Q: Yeah, it was—She was from Greenwich, yeah.

F2: Oh?

Q: I think two of the Brownells married into the Whipples of Greenwich. What about—What was the date that your house was built?

GW: 1800.

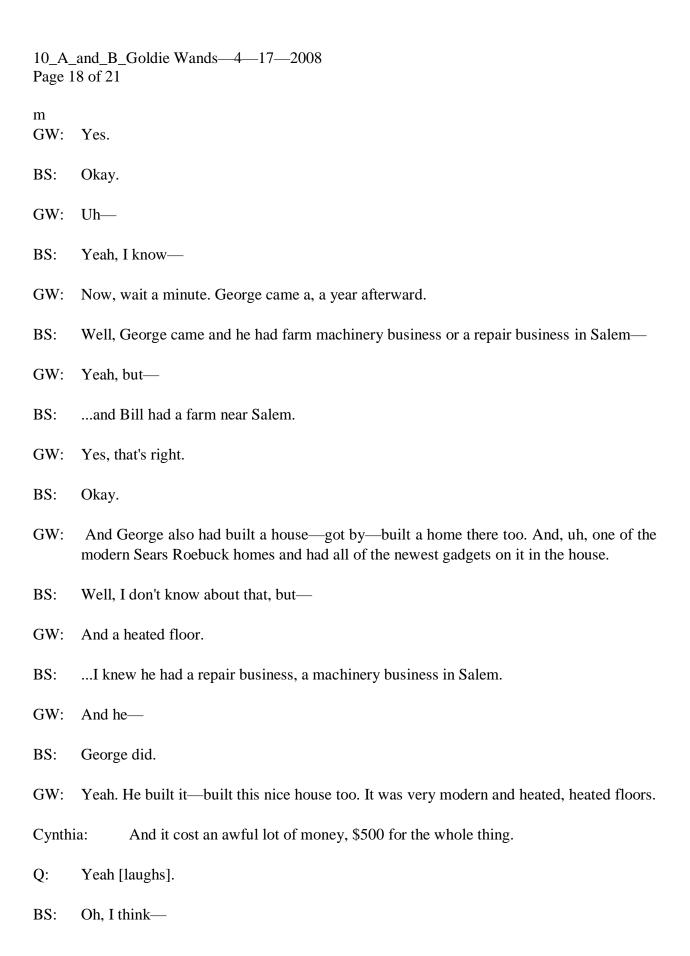
Q: 1800.

GW: Yes, and I tell—One of the stories they tell about the steps. Mrs. Hiland—

[Audio ends abruptly]

[Beginning Audio 2]

BS: Yeah. The four of you came all the same time.



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Cynthia: Ordered it from the catalogue.

BS: I think all four of you came to Greenwich—this area at the same time.

GW: No, Ethel—Ethel and Ray came first, Ethel Stout. She lived to be 106. And she wrote back home, urged our family come, so they decided they would pull stakes too and to go back, because they came to South Dakota. And so, they went back to South Dakota. Or didn't go back there, they came to Argyle. Lufkins [phonetic] had come in the meantime. Before that, the Lufkins had come.

BS: Oh, is that right?

GW: And there were the ones that urged Ray and Ethel to come—

BS: [Unintelligible 0:01:45].

GW: ...and they—So then, they—

BS: Lufkins came from there, because Ralph and I are the same age. We went through school together.

GW: Yeah, the Lufkins came first. And then, they coaxed Ethel and Ray to come into the good farm land.

BS: Okay.

GW: And so, they decided to pull stakes. And Ethel didn't want her children going to the Canadian schools.

BS: Yeah, okay. Well, this is great to recall old times. How about that?

Cynthia: [Unintelligible 0:02:14] anything.

BS: All right. Okay.

Cynthia: I just wanted to make sure he was okay. Do you need anything else? Or did she [unintelligible 0:02:28].

GW: He would take care of me and he does seem to. She at least stays on my bed most of the time. She said, "I behave." She's the quietest cat.

F1: Excellent. That was a lovely little finish there.

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Q: Did you want to have us record how to make an apple cake? Could you tell us how to make an apple cake?

GW: I don't have the recipe here.

Q: Oh, I thought you might have it in your head. [laughs]

GW: No. I, I think Cynthia's got it somewhere in my recipe books.

Q: And was that a cake that you made a tradition for yourself—

GW: No.

Q: ...or did that come from your mother?

GW: My mother.

Q: It did.

GW: I think she—I think we took the Albany Times, um—What was the Albany papers name?

Q: The Times Union?

GW: No.

Q: Um—

GW: Well, there was a Times Union, but—

F1: There used to be a Knickerbocker Something or Other, wasn't there?

GW: What was the Albany paper? She used to write a recipe in there. And she—That was a never fail cake, though. That was a chocolate cake. And she had that recipe for years and it was called Never Fail and that was the name of the cake and it didn't. I never—

F1: It would never disappoint.

GW: It never disappointed anybody.

F1: That's great, Goldie. I'm going to just show you what you look like on the, on the video, if you'd like to see it? I'll show you just a little bit. That's great now. Mary Jane, did your

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recording come out well, my dear?

Q: We haven't listened to it. So, we'll have to listen to a little bit of that too. Well, Goldie, thank you for letting us record you and put you on tape. I appreciate it.

GW: Well, thank you. Good luck with your project.

Q: Thank you.