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**Transcript of DARE Interview (1968): Portage, Wisconsin; Primary Informant
WI007 (Tape 1764-S1)**

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INTRODUCTION: The following was recorded from Dictionary of American Regional English tape one seven six four, side one.

FIELDWORKER: Mr. Hugh [beep], white, age seventy-four. Portage, Wisconsin. Recorded June nineteenth, nineteen sixty-eight by [beep] in the home of Frederick Jackson Turner.

5 INFORMANT: Yeah, yeah, you can go, you can (do what you want, I'll,) uh, you wanna start this?

FIELDWORKER: Yea, it's ready now. {You can start right in.

INFORMANT: OK.} Well at, uh, up at Pittsville, Wisconsin, which is about seventeen miles northwest of Wisconsin Rapids, uh, this country is all granite, with about eight feet of dirt on top of the granite.

10 FIELDWORKER: This is glaciated land, isn't it?

INFORMANT: Hm?

FIELDWORKER: Isn't that pretty much {glaciated?

INFORMANT: Yeah, it could} be, that's right. Uh, and we had, when I, uh, I can't remember what year this was, but we were then operating on our third well. We had one well that was, we had
15 a abandoned that was in the front of the building, then we had two wells, one well that we had abandoned in the back of the building, and one well back of the building that we were using. Uh, we would run out of water, we'd put a night man on, in order to get enough water, (that's my xx), uh, get enough water, uh, for the next day's operation.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah. What do you mean a night man? Somebody to—

20 INFORMANT: Somebody uh, an, a night man just come on just he'd pump. All he did is just run the pump. And he'd pump for twenty minutes, and wait an hour. And then he'd pump twenty minutes and pump the well dry. So, we decided we had to put in a new well, and somebody asked me why I didn't get it witched, and I didn't know what he was talking about, so he said there's an old fellow out here that witches wells. And he'll get you water every time. So, I said, "OK, uh, how

25 much does he want?" "He wants ten bucks." I said, "Bring him on." So, we brought this fellow out, and he went through his maneuvers with his peach stick, or, I don't remember now it was a peach stick or a willow.

FIELDWORKER: Mm-hmm. You use both though.

INFORMANT: Yeah, either one, one works as good as the other. And, uh, he, he, uh, s-strikes a
30 point where, uh, uh, where he has a, where he hits water. Then he puts a stone down, then he goes down, uh, in that same line, and where he hits water again, put another stone down. Then he goes at right angles with this, and gets a stone over here and a stone over here, and where these two lines cross, that's the point.

FIELDWORKER: It'd kinda be, uh, the, kind of a—

35 INFORMANT: The veins the, the, he said these water veins always run on an angle, never due north and south or east and west, or northwest, southeast.

FIELDWORKER: Mm-hmm.

INFORMANT: Or the other way. But where they cross, you get a, you take a point over here, and one over here in this line, and then over here, and where th-, wherever they cross, that's the
40 point. Well he, he got a point that was eight feet from one, from an abandoned well we had in the back of the building, and twenty-one feet from the well we were pumping dry every night. And I asked this man how far down we have to go, and he said you'll get water inside of seventy-five feet. Now, the first eight feet was dirt, we had to case that, but the rest of it was granite. And I can't remember what he charged us that time, but it was around nine or ten dollars a foot. So,
45 it was a little expensive. But we had to have water. So we drilled the well. And we went down seventy-two feet, and we hit water. And, at whe-, at the spot where we had determined that is the place, he determined it, we had a six-inch casing, we put an elec-, w-, the, we could look in the top of this casing and see the water. And we put an electric pump on there, and we pumped that for twenty-four hours and never got the water out of sight from the top, you could always
50 see the water in there. And we were pumping before that, within twenty-one feet of that, and we were pumping the well dry in twenty minutes, and waiting an hour, before we could pump it again for twenty minutes. So, it only goes to show what it will do, we took some samples of that stuff, all the way down ahead of, every once in a while he'd pull up a sample, from, and, we put those in salt cellars and I had them for a long time, but we closed the office here and I threw
55 them away. But, uh, uh, this thing actually, uh, worked beautifully, and I asked this man, I said, "Well, will this for me?" "Well," he said, "I don't know," but he said, "If it don't work for you," he said, "I can make it work for you by walking, coming up behind you and putting my arms around you and grabbing your wrist. And you can hold the stick, and I'll hold your wrist, and then it'll work for ya." But he said, "Maybe you don't need that." So I took the stick myself, and tried to do
60 just what he did.

FIELDWORKER: And how, how do you hold the, how do you hold the stick?

INFORMANT: You hold your, your forearms parallel with the ground, and the, the, this is the end of the fork.

FIELDWORKER: Now it goes out—

65 INFORMANT: Comes up {like this.

FIELDWORKER: As you hold} your, your, you're holding your palms face up, and as th-the end of the stick goes out {to the outside through your thumb and (xx), right?

INFORMANT: End of the stick goes out, out here, on, and out here on}, on this side. Well there's nothing particular I mean it ju-, it just, you just grab the end of it see.

70 FIELDWORKER: Uh-huh.

INFORMANT: And you hold it with your, with your forearms, parallel to the ground, and you walk very slowly and your, the stick is balanced up here now, stands about this high. And you are just like this, not any faster. And when you get over water, that stick will go down. You can't stop it. It'll come down so hard, that it'll twist the bark off in your hand.

75 FIELDWORKER: You can hold it as tight as you—

INFORMANT: If you hold it just as tight as you can, and just, move very slowly, and when that comes down, so I thought, well, there's no use in me going out and trying to go through the maneuvers he went. I wanted to go over this spot that he said there's the spot. And I went over that spot from every direction, and I'd get right to that spot and that stick would go down like
80 that, and you couldn't hold up to save your soul. So I said, well, this darn thing works. I went out to the country club, right near my cottage, and we were having trouble, and at that time I was president of the country club. And they ha-, we had to put in a new well. And they had a well that was around fifty feet deep, and I said, well, we're gonna witch this darn thing, this new one. So we witched it. And we weren't within about twelve feet of where the other one was and put it
85 down. We went down thirty-eight feet and they used that well from nineteen, the nineteen thirties until this year. And we always had water. This year they went out and put in a whole new system out there.

FIELDWORKER: Well, do a lot of people, do most people witch the well here be-, rather than have some professional come in or {something?

90 INFORMANT: Oh}, well anybody, you know, now, now for instance, my kids, it worked for my kids. All three of them. But my wife couldn't do it.

FIELDWORKER: Huh.

INFORMANT: I could do it. I don't know why, I don't und-, I don't know what, I don't know what, I don't know what makes it do it.

95 FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

INFORMANT: But it, uh, I know it does it. Now my youngest boy was in Belgium. And, uh, during World War Two, and was entertained at some, uh, countess's or count's place over there, and up on the wall, they had their witching stick.

FIELDWORKER: Do they ever use anything besides willow or peach?

100 INFORMANT: Uh, well, uh, I think that there are other things that work, but I know that that's the common thing. Willow or peach. Most of it's willow around here. I don't know what this old fellow had, but what he had worked. Now I wouldn't have believed that. But I was paying a big bill for this deal, and when I had to take it into the, and present that bill to the office in Pittsburgh, of course they thought I was nuts when I was talked about getting this well witched. But it works.

105 FIELDWORKER: Does it ha-, does it have to be green, or can it be dry?

INFORMANT: No it's, just go out and cut it.

FIELDWORKER: (It had), you'd have to cut it each time, you didn't keep the stick that you {(xx).

INFORMANT: Oh, oh,} it might la-, th-those sticks might last a couple of weeks, you know. I don't think it's that, uh, I, I don't know, I do-, I never, I never tried it. But, y-, the whole stick is only, I'd
110 get one about this long, you know, {(xx) fork and come down.

FIELDWORKER: (two and a half feet.}}

INFORMANT: And just get it so that you can, you can hold it up here. You can't get it so, so limber that, uh, you can't hold it.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

115 INFORMANT: But it shouldn't be, uh, oh, not anywhere, uh, about the size of a lead pencil on your hand. No bigger than that, you don't want a big heavy one.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

INFORMANT: But just something that w-when it's up there, y-, all you do is just, just balance it. And just keep your eye, (see if this thing) balances, you know, and just, don't try to control it at
120 all, but just move with it so that you don't, you don't, you, you could tip it over. But you don't move it (along). (Thing'll) go right down, you can't stop it.

FIELDWORKER: That's just amazing to me, you know, it just—

INFORMANT: It's a fact, that's, but, and that's up in granite. And this fellow said we'd get water. Now I, he did something, I don't know anything about this. But he takes that willow stick to d-, to
125 figure out how deep it's gonna go, [sound of a clock] and he holds it this way, over that spot, and it'll start to move, and he counts it.

FIELDWORKER: That's how long for it to go down?

INFORMANT: Yeah, and he counts the number flips it makes this way.

FIELDWORKER: Oh, the number.

130 INFORMANT: And, a-, goes like this, he says you get water in seventy-five feet, if you hit it within three feet.

FIELDWORKER: That's an, isn't that something, (I just). Are there a lot of people around here who do it?

135 INFORMANT: Oh sure! Sh-, lot of people have their wells, oh, you bet. And now this fellow, uh, like I say, he's a (head of) Stotzer Granite Company, or stop me on post office, (xx) and ask me to come down with this well for them. {(xx)}

FIELDWORKER: Do you lay out,} do you lay out the diamond-shape thing too, when you do it, when you—

140 INFORMANT: Oh, sure, you bet. I try, I, I, I, in the first place, I, I, I'm taking this man's word for it, I don't know how I, I, that, that these veins of water run northeast and southwest. And uh, northwe-, and, uh, the other way.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

INFORMANT: [laugh]

FIELDWORKER: Northwest, southeast.

145 INFORMANT: Yeah.

FIELDWORKER: That's, that's, {(that's just amazing)}

150 INFORMANT: And, and}, but they don't, so, y-you, first you find a spot where the stick'll could go down, put a stone down there, just give you a mark. Go over here a ways, put down another one. I mean, and, and walk along the same, and when that stick goes down, well you've got this stone, this stone, well you figure you got a line, this way. Then you, go at right angles sort of. One over here, one over here, where they cross, that's the spot. Just as simple as that.

FIELDWORKER: The, uh, are there any other, uh, folky things like that around, like, do they have any, any kind of hex doctors—

INFORMANT: {No.

155 FIELDWORKER: —around or} anything like that?

INFORMANT: A lot of people laugh at this thing, (I say) a lot of them, but people don't know what they're talking about.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

160 INFORMANT: As I say, we're, h-here, here's this, uh, uh, here are these people in Belgium, and this was, uh, some kind of royal family over there. And Howie was there as a guest, and they had their witching stick hung on the wall. And 'course as soon as he s-, Howie saw it, he said, "Where'd you get that?" [laugh] you know, over in Belgium doing the same thing, so it's nothing new.

FIELDWORKER: I was talking to a guy in Pennsylvania who, who did it too. But I, you know, just talked to him briefly. I didn't know about laying out the stones and things like that.

165 INFORMANT: Well, that's, you just put the stone down for a marker, that's all, I mean you could put the stick in the ground, or anything, just so you know well here's where I hit, here's where I hit water, right here. Now, I've gotta go over here somewhere and see what, does this thing go this way? Or does it go this way? Or does it go over here? Wherever, wherever he hits this water here, just, then you got a line.

170 FIELDWORKER: You don't have any slightest idea what might cause it to work?

INFORMANT: Haven't the faintest idea in the world. I don't know. But I know it works.

FIELDWORKER: And this guy was, I mean he'd used this, he was a well d-driller, too? I mean he just used this as part of his business?

INFORMANT: Well sure, these well drivers pret-, all these well drivers witch.

175 FIELDWORKER: Really?

INFORMANT: Oh, well, there are some places, there are some, some places where you say "Well, uh," says, "I can get you water any place. I'm going down deep enough." We went on this last time, they went a hundred and seventy-five feet down.

FIELDWORKER: That's a {(xx)

180 INFORMANT: (xx)}. They didn't have to do this, but they did, they went down a hundred and seventy-five feet and pulled back to a hundred and forty-two. Now don't ask me why, but, uh, it cost the club something.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah, {(I guess it did).

INFORMANT: It was a good deal for} the, for the driller.

185 FIELDWORKER: All this land here is granite (underneath, {is it)?

INFORMANT: Yeah}. This is all sand here. You don't have any granite here at all. You'd see boulder or something like that, but you wouldn't, uh, you, you don't have any san-, any, any granite like's up at around Pittsville.

FIELDWORKER: I was talking to, to Gertrude, uh [beep]. Do you know her?

190 INFORMANT: Yeah, I know her.

FIELDWORKER: And she said that, uh, they have a lot of trouble growing things around here, because of the soil, because it's so sandy.

195 INFORMANT: Uh, (really)? (xx), well (now), part of, parts of Portage are very light and, uh, parts of it are very good. But it's all much lighter soil here, in this whole area, than it is for instance in the Fox River Valley.

FIELDWORKER: Or in Madison.

INFORMANT: Or in Madison, or Poynette, or down at Stoughton or Edgerton, I mean, we don't raise tobacco right here.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

200 INFORMANT: But down as, twelve miles south of here they start, at Poynette.

FIELDWORKER: The farming's not good here at all (then either) in this area, right close to town?

INFORMANT: Well, uh, there is an awful lot of sweet corn.

FIELDWORKER: There is.

205 INFORMANT: Oh, Poynette does twenty-two thousand acres of sweet corn. The first year, uh, uh first or second year they had the factories running down there, they put in twenty-two thousand acres of sweet corn. That's a lot of stuff.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah. Someone told me that they go spearmint in this area too.

INFORMANT: Yes. Mint.

FIELDWORKER: Mint.

210 INFORMANT: Quite a bit of it. (xx) grow mint right up north of Portage here.

FIELDWORKER: Is that wet land? Do they grow it in wet land?

INFORMANT: No, well, uh, I don't think so. But uh, it's uh, I know where this farm is up here, it's called the Good Earth Farms, run by an attorney here in town. But uh, lots of mint grow in Indiana.

FIELDWORKER: When did the Heinz people move here? Any {(xx)?

215 INFORMANT: We started here} in, uh, nine-, in, i-in Sparta was our first station, eighteen ninety-eight. At Sparta. And, uh, this station was built in nineteen two. And has run every year.

FIELDWORKER: Any special reason why they chose this place?

220 INFORMANT: Well, it's good pickle country. A-, see, we, we covered, uh, in the old days, when the roads weren't good and people had their, they brought their produce in on a horse and buggy for example, or on an hay rack, depending on what kind of a farmer he was, uh, we had a station pretty near every town. And we tried, it was nothing to have a station just ten miles apart. One

here and the other about ten miles up, we were all around this country. We had, I ran forty-two stations out of this state. I was a district officer. We had a district officer that wasn't in the factory. Our factory's on the First Ward. Still there running. But it, we had a district office downtown.
225 And—

FIELDWORKER: First Ward's, what, west of town.

INFORMANT: South.

FIELDWORKER: South of town.

INFORMANT: South of town, on the way to Madison.

230 FIELDWORKER: Isn't this the way they talk, they talk about in this area of wards, they call the parts of town by wards, {don't they?

INFORMANT: Wards}, that's right.

FIELDWORKER: W-A-R-D.

INFORMANT: Yes. And, and that is, that is the low section of town. Not this, that has nothing to do with the farming. We didn't, {we—

235

FIELDWORKER: It's} Fifty-one, it's fif-, (I'm sorry), down fifty one, is {that it?

INFORMANT: Yes}. It runs right along the levee, that's in the First Ward. Soon as you cross the canal you're in the First Ward. Out of town here, you know where the canal is?

FIELDWORKER: Yeah, I {know where—

240 INFORMANT: Well as soon as} you cross the canal, that's in the First Ward, the hosiery is in the First Ward. The fair grounds and the, and the, uh, high school park, and the, the veterans' memorial park is all in the First Ward. But that's the low part of the town.

FIELDWORKER: Do you know when they built the, the, uh, the dikes, the levees along, along the river?

245 INFORMANT: No, I don't know when they built them originally, but they were done over here, oh, this dike that y-, this levee that you see here now, right along fifty-one, where there's a four-lane highway, right in town here.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

INFORMANT: That was moved thirty-some feet out into the river. And a whole new levee built so they could put that four-lane highway. There was only room for two lanes. So they shoved it out, I think thirty-one or thirty-two feet. And that's all new, and it's all stone-faced on the other side.
250

FIELDWORKER: Does Portage e-, this doesn't ever flood, in your memory it's never flooded?

255 INFORMANT: Oh yes, we had one, well, oh, I don't know what year it was, but the old, before the present locks were built, and the old lock gates were gonna give way, and if it hadn't been for the telephone company and the power and light company, they would have gone, but they got there in time and they braced the gates from the inside with telephone poles.

FIELDWORKER: Hm.

260 INFORMANT: And held them. If that (xx) had let go, there would have been eight feet of water in the First Ward. And we were worried down there to be hit that time, because our tanks were eight feet deep. We might have had water at the top of those pickle tanks. And that would have been no good.

FIELDWORKER: Can you describe the pickle, uh, process to me a little bit? What it, how does it, you know, from the begi-, kind of the beginning to the pickle, what do they?

265 INFORMANT: Well, see, of course in the first place we contract with the farmer.

FIELDWORKER: And they call them, they call them in this area pickles, even {when they're growing.

INFORMANT: (Technically) they're cucumbers. It's cucumbers, but the, as far as the trade is concerned, it's pickles.

270 FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

INFORMANT: See n-now this is, it's a green cucumber. What we handle in the factory down here is a green cucumber.

FIELDWORKER: But would you talk to somebody about, some farmer, "How's your," would you say, "How're your, how's your cucumber {crop this year," or "how's your pickle crop?"

275 INFORMANT: No, no, "How, how are the} pickles?"

FIELDWORKER: Yea.

INFORMANT: They, they all, they call them pickles, when they put them in they call them pickles. But they are cucumbers, but that's the trade, pickles. And, and the contract is written for pickles.

FIELDWORKER: Uh-huh.

280 INFORMANT: (Most), well, sometimes I don't know, y-, some of them are, some of them mention cucumbers.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

INFORMANT: But anyway, and they pay for them by grade, uh, the smallest, the smaller sizes pay the most money. I don't know what they're paying this year, I think last year they paid
285 fourteen dollars a hundred pounds for the small grade. But, uh, we have to go out and contract

the farmer. And today, uh, I mean this business of having a, a station in every town, that's all gone, long gone. We used to run forty-two stations. Now we run two. We run Sparta and Portage, and that's all.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

290 INFORMANT: And where we used to have, uh, we used to figure a minimum of sixty bushels to the acre, that was a, a, I mean a maximum, a maximum of sixty bushels to the acre. Any grower that raised sixty bushels in the old days was doing very well, because it was a f-, small family operation, uh, lots of people with a half an acre, uh, done strictly by the family, uh, very little commercial f-fertilizer used, the s-, the seed, you just had to trust to the Lord that the, you
295 weren't gonna get disease, this sort of thing. And the University of Wisconsin, very expensive research, did a wonderful job on eliminating, uh, the two worst diseases, mosaic and spot rot. Uh, by producing seed that was immune.

FIELDWORKER: What would, did it, what's mosaic, for example? What kind of disease is that?

300 INFORMANT: Well, the, the, the pickle gets v-, uh, uh, very hard and white and knurly, and they're bitter.

FIELDWORKER: What do you mean by knurly?

INFORMANT: Well, uh, not, well you know what an ordinary, uh, cucumber looks like, got the little, little wart? Well these, these look, uh, like a knot on the side of a tree, I mean they're just, uh, they're knurly. Th-th-th-there's not a well, the, they're—

305 FIELDWORKER: You'd cut that out when you {(xx)?

INFORMANT: They're not edible}. Period. And mosaic will r-, always raises heck with you.

FIELDWORKER: How about spot?

INFORMANT: Hm?

FIELDWORKER: You call it spot rot.

310 INFORMANT: Yeah. Well the spot rot, uh, usually is a wet weather deal. And—

FIELDWORKER: Where they're lying on the ground?

315 INFORMANT: Well yeah, and, and the r-, or raindrop even on the vine, and, and, or the dew, or the heavy dew in the morning, and if they get wet and don't dry off, that will begin to form a, an, an, you get a spot on that pickle and you can never get it off, and the, and the, it, it spreads rapidly. Today we don't have either one of them. Well now, instead of having a, a maximum, we figure, the, uh, uh, sixty bushels, that is really something. Now today, when we have to figure tank capacity, we figure a minimum of two hundred and twenty-five. A minimum! Now, much more commercial, commercial fertilizer used today than they used to use. Now we take these

pickles, and we grade them. And most of these pickles now are Mexican-picked. Now in the old
320 days, we used to figure if we had two thousand acres, we had two thousand growers. That would
be an average. An acre per grower. Some would have a quarter acre, some would have half an
acre, some would have two acres. Today we don't have that kind of business at all. You go out
and write the fellow for twenty acres, thirty acres. I wrote one man here a few years back for a
hundred and forty acres. One man. Mexican-picked. Now these are Mexicans from Texas, not,
325 uh, not from Mexico.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

INFORMANT: You can get them from Mexico, they're nationals, those are, those are the
Mexicans from Mexico are nationals. We call these other boys Texicans.

FIELDWORKER: Texicans.

330 INFORMANT: They're the ones with the families. When you get the Mexicans from Mexico,
they're all men. I had some of those. Awful headache, because I only had one fellow out of a
hundred who could speak English. And, uh, they're a problem.

FIELDWORKER: Well, the men here by themselves, I imagine they would be more of a problem
than if their families were here.

335 INFORMANT: But when their families are here it's not so bad.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

INFORMANT: But now, uh, th-the, they, the w-, all the, we do all soil testing now. We didn't use
to do that. We'd take a fellow, fellow'd say, "Sure, gimme a half acre," take that half acre, he puts
it (up). Today we don't sell, uh, give a man a contract until we, he, we say, "What field are you
340 gonna use?" This field, we soil test it, we find out what it's gotta have, in the way of fertilizer,
that's one reason you're getting a m-, a minimum. And we get lots of them that run better than
four hundred, anywhere from four to six hundred bushels to the acre, see?

FIELDWORKER: It used to be sixties.

INFORMANT: Sure.

345 FIELDWORKER: (That's good.)

INFORMANT: So then we ta-, we put them in tanks, here, we ship some, we—

FIELDWORKER: Are those underground tanks, are they?

INFORMANT: Hm?

FIELDWORKER: Are they basically underground tanks? Do you put them in underground tanks?

350 INFORMANT: No, no, no, no, no, no, these tanks, these tanks hold about a thousand bushels. And, uh, the big ones. And we tank, uh, we, we put those in brine, lots of them, and we ship lots of them direct green. Toni-, tonight we load, the truck is, the semis are in here tonight, we load them in the semi, there in Muscatine, Iowa, in tanks there the next morning. That's where the big factory is. The, here, we have the two. We ship some stuff to Holland, Michigan, which is the
355 largest pickle factory in the world, and direct to our factory at Muscatine, Iowa. We ship most of our stuff to Muscatine, Iowa, because the Holland factory takes care of Indiana and Michigan.

FIELDWORKER: Would you use a different kind of pickle for slicing then from the one you'd use for {(xx) pickling.

INFORMANT: No}, just the size.

360 FIELDWORKER: Just the size.

INFORMANT: Just the size. They grow very fast. And, uh, you know, a pickle that's, uh, maybe that long tonight, tomorrow it's that big. {Next day it's like—

FIELDWORKER: Oh really?} Grow and inch in a, in a night maybe.

INFORMANT: Grow like the Dickens! So the slicers are the big ones.

365 FIELDWORKER: So what do you do—what'd you call them, the sizers?

INFORMANT: Sl-, the slicers.

FIELDWORKER: Oh slicers.

INFORMANT: The slicers, where y-, you know when it's l—

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

370 INFORMANT: You know, you've seen those, uh the—

FIELDWORKER: Yeah, mm-hmm.

INFORMANT: (Well), ah, ah, they're usually, uh, not over five inches in length.

FIELDWORKER: The, uh, difference between a sweet pickle and a, and a dill pickle, would be just the way it's processed, right?

375 INFORMANT: That's exactly the way it's processed [sound of a clock] at the factory a-, w-w-when their factory gets them, they're first just salt pickled, and brinded, what they call salt-stock. That's the way we take care of 'em. Then, from this salt-stock, they can make them into sweets or sour, or what they want. And, and, uh, this fresh cucumber pickle, they don't go in the brine at all.

FIELDWORKER: They don't.

380 INFORMANT: They're in, no, they're, that is a fresh cucumber pickle, it's a different kind of processing done at the factory. We don't do that out here at all.

FIELDWORKER: You, those are the ones you ship off.

INFORMANT: That's right. Oh, we ship all kinds of them. We ship lots of them, I mean, depends on our tank room. If we don't have tank room down here, boy, we're shipping them like mad,
385 every night.

FIELDWORKER: Uh, the workers in the factory, is this basically seasonal work?

INFORMANT: Seasonal, definitely, definitely seasonal.

FIELDWORKER: Do you have any trouble with, uh, people, you know, being out of work, uh, uh, and complaining because they don't have work all year around?

390 INFORMANT: Hm-mm, Hm-mm. Not with us.

FIELDWORKER: But it pays pretty well, does it? {Enough that they can live on it all year.

INFORMANT: Oh yeah, oh yeah, oh yeah}, oh yeah.

FIELDWORKER: You get people from the farms and li-, like {that working?

INFORMANT: That's right}, oh yes. We don't use the Mexicans. We don't use the Mexicans,
395 because then, they're brought in for a, a, for, a lot of them, uh, least the M-, th-the Mexicans from Mexico, they have a agricultural contract with the United States government. You can't use them in the factory. And the labor union object to it. We don't {(want any of them).

FIELDWORKER: It's all unionized now, (is what you're saying).}

INFORMANT: But the Texicans you can use because they're a citizen, I mean, we, every once in
400 a while we get some of these young fellows from the, um, and we're short of help. They'll come in from the camp, they'll be picking pickles all day and come down to the factory and work at night.

FIELDWORKER: And you do your pickling, you do your pickling, you say, the factory work, at the end of the, August or somewhere in there, is this when—

405 INFORMANT: Well, it usually starts, uh, the last week in July, and, uh, now it's over, practically Labor Day, due to the Mexican pickers, because today, in the old days we used to pick pickles here sometimes until October. Uh, or until the first killing frost, because every farmer was picking his own. But today, with the Mexican labor, when Labor Day comes, they all want to st-, pack up and start home for Texas and put the kids in school. The, and, and, and, well, the pickles are
410 there. Th-the, they just aren't picked, those last ones. But while they're here, they really pick them. You know, and the farmer don't do any picking at all. Farmer puts in ten, twenty acres of pickles, or thirty acres of pickles, he don't pick a pickle. He brings them up to the point of harvest,

415 he plants and he, he prepares the soil, he plants them, he cultivates them, he brings them up to the point of harvest. Then he don't touch them anymore. And the Mexican picks them. And the Mexican gets fifty percent of the value of the pickles he picks, and the farmer gets the other fifty percent.

FIELDWORKER: Well, I think that's pretty good for the {Mexicans.

420 INFORMANT: Work}, they make darn good money, and then you see this crazy guy up here in Wautoma, uh, with his Mexican union. Just trouble, that's all. Ju-, not, he didn't, he never did a thing to us. We're out of there. We were in there for years.

FIELDWORKER: I would think that that would be a pretty doggone good in-, uh, {you know.

INFORMANT: Oh-ho}, these fellows make good money.

FIELDWORKER: I-I think the farmer's kind of getting it a little bit, isn't he?

425 INFORMANT: We've seen, uh, I've seen it myself, where there would be thirty people come up in one truck from Texas. That's the way they travel, (you know, there'd be two or three families, maybe. In one truck. They'll go home with three trucks. They'll go home with three trucks. They'll buy two trucks after, from what they've done, the money they've made up here, they'll buy two trucks (and they all) ride home.

FIELDWORKER: Well, they get fifty percent of the net product.

430 INFORMANT: Fifty percent of what, uh, the, of the value of the pickles.

FIELDWORKER: And that would be the- the gross price.

INFORMANT: The gross value. Fifty percent-

FIELDWORKER: {Wow, they get more than the farmer does.

435 INFORMANT: If he brings in, If} they bring it and- for instance, he brings in a hundred dollars' worth of pickles on this load, the grower gets fifty dollars, the Mexican leader for this group, whoever picks those, say it's a family, if the family picks, the family head, we right him one check. We don't write a check to the mother and- and maybe three daughters. We write one check to the family. He gets fifty percent of the value of the pickles that he deliveries to the factory.

440 FIELDWORKER: So I guess after his expenses the farmer probably only gets about twenty percent. He gets a twenty percent-

INFORMANT: Well, yap, they make darn good money, and you know, we, the proof of this thing is, we get the same farmers year, after year, after year.

FIELDWORKER: Yeah.

445 INFORMANT: If these fellows, uh, figured this is no business. Well, we wouldn't have them. I mean you're out- but we have the same farmers here, well sure you have a turn over here, some fellow drops dead, some guy's sick, uh, some fellow don't like you, but paying large, uh, I'd say we get about ninety percent of them back, year after year.

FIELDWORKER: Would there someone be just an exclusive pickle farmer x?

450 INFORMANT: No. No no, no no, no no. {That's a general farming job, it's a cash crop, it's strictly a cash crop deal.

FIELDWORKER: X} Well, the people down South might raise a little tobacco, these people raise pickles.

455 INFORMANT: That's right. And sweet corn. Uh, a lot of farmers went into sweet corn, around x, we couldn't, uh, they don't have the labor problem. Uh, they're, they're sure There's a- there's labor problem with sweet corn, there's a labor problem with any kind of a crop. But there's more of a labor problem with pickles than there is with sweet corn. Ehm, when they went so strong, and down here, we just closed our factory up down there, and tore it down. Moved them out. We don't need them anyhow. And i- i it's nothing around Sparta, e- even here. We get people bringing pickles in, twenty miles. In the old days, what are you gonna do with a team of horses?
460 They aren't coming in twenty miles. You have to be in every town.

FIELDWORKER: Thank you.