

Dorothy Gross Leverett

Transcript of the oral interview with Dorothy Gross Leverett conducted by Emily Salvette on March 11, 2001 at the Pittsfield Township Historical Society Meeting held at the Pittsfield Recreation Center, 701 W. Ellsworth Rd, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Mrs. Leverett read a prepared statement then took questions from the audience. Mrs. Leverett has received a copy of this transcript, but did not submit corrections.

Interview Summary

Dorothy Leverett was born in Dexter, Michigan on December 18, 1920. She grew up in Dexter on the Gross family farm, on the same property where she lives today. She graduated from Dexter High School in 1938 and took one year of nurses training at Henry Ford Nursing School. When World War II broke out, she went to work at the Ypsilanti Bomber plant doing office work. She married her husband Charles, whom she met at a Pittsfield Grange dance in 1937, in December of 1942. He served in the Medical Corps in Europe during the war. They had four children: Judith, Charles W. (who was killed in a farm accident in 1962), Kristine, and Michael. Her husband Charles died of a heart attack in 1976.

In 1948, Charles went back to general farming at his family farm located at Carpenter's Corner (Carpenter and Packard roads). In 1957 they opened a produce stand, which evolved into Leverett's Country Market, which became a 45-year institution in the Township. This interview deals mostly with Mrs. Leverett's memories of running the market.

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Dorothy Leverett Interview

DL:

Dorothy Leverett

I:

Emily Salvette

BM:

EC: Betty McMullen
F: Emily Conrad
M: Unidentified audience member
Q: Unidentified audience member
R: Ruth ??? from the audience
X: Unidentified audience member
X2: Unidentified audience member
X3: Unidentified audience member

I: ... Pittsfield Township business woman, Dorothy Leverett. Dorothy and her late husband Charles ran Leverett Country Market at the corner of Packard and Carpenter Road on Carpenter's corners. And that market started in 1956, and the story that Dorothy told me was that it began when her brother-in-law had some extra corn and asked if the kids wanted to go down to the road and sell it. And they did, and they sold it all in two hours. And so the market was born. And so that was the beginning of an institution that I grew up with, because I went to Carpenter School, and we used to ... I went to school with Mike Leverett, and we knew that very well. Dorothy met her husband at a dance at the Pittsfield Township Grange, and so she has a lot of connection with a lot of good stories about Pittsfield Township, although she does live in Dexter now.
But with that, I'm going to go ahead and just say that we are interviewing Dorothy, at the Pittsfield Township Recreation Center and the date is March 11th, 2001, and that this will be transcribed for the All History Archives. So Dorothy, I'm going to let you just go ahead and talk, because I know you've presented some ... prepared some material so why don't you just go ahead and start.

DL: Okay. Well, my father-in-law and mother-in-law, Harold and Edith Leverett, moved to Carpenter Road, 3090 Carpenter Road and I think it was in 1914, right after their wedding. And they raised three children; my husband was the oldest, and Harold was the next and DeLynn. The family is all deceased except DeLynn. They did general farming there at the farm there. And they had mules. My father-in-law never had horses. And ... but both the boys left for service in 1943, and they were both overseas, and my father-in-law had a heart attack at the time ♦ not serious, but enough that he didn't do farming. He kind of let it go. And that's the way that was. Then I ... I wrote a few things down. I don't know if you want to hear them all.
I met Chuck at the Pittsfield Grange at Saturday night dances in 1937. We both graduated from high school in 1938. I was from Dexter High and he was from Ypsilanti High. I attended Henry Ford Nursing School on a scholarship and Chuck went to Michigan State. When war broke out in 1941, I went to work at the bomber plant. We were ... I worked there for about six months, I guess, and then I went to visit my husband who was in the service. We were married in December of ♦42, while he was in his senior year, having been allowed to finish as he was in

ROTC. He graduated in 19 ... April '43. Three weeks after graduation he reported for military duty, went to Fort Custer at Battle Creek, and then to Camp Barclay in Abilene, Texas. He entered into the Officer's Medical Training School. In July, I went to Texas and we had a one-room apartment with a lovely family. Chuck had to be at camp but usually had week-end passes. In December '43, after nine months of training, he graduated as a Second Lieutenant in the Medical Corps. Overseas duty followed in March of '44. He left on April 1st. I arrived in Corsica and then on to Italy. He was lost in the Alps while helping one of his fellow officers who had been injured. And then he went on to France. He served in French hospitals, then Germany for the next 21 months. I lived with my parents near Dexter and our daughter Judith was born July 1944. We were with them for 23 months.

During this time, the property on the farm for the trailer park was sold. I don't have the exact dates of it, but I mean, that's when it was handled. Chuck returned from overseas in 1946 to his first child of 19 months. Still was in the Army Reserve, attended meetings once a week. He obtained the rank of First Lieutenant while overseas and actually shy of two weeks of being a Captain. We had a short to get reacquainted with his wife and child and now look for a job. Jim Warner, owner of Warner Dairy on Washtenaw Ave, asked him to come to work. His major in college was Dairy Manufacturing. He offered him \$200 a month, six day a week. He accepted. He became the plant superintendent immediately. But after two years there would be no chance for advancement as Jim's son-in-law had started working there.

So in 1948, Chuck and his father talked it over and decided to go back to general farming and the farm house was made over for both families. The folks moved upstairs and our family was downstairs. We had two children at that time. Becoming a resident of Pittsfield Township, I registered to vote with Dan Ellsworth, who was the clerk. Dan Ellsworth farm was the corner of Carpenter and Ellsworth.

We farmed the subdivision over where Carpenter School is located. There were only five houses in that area. That was before the school was even built. And then when the Korean War came up, Chuck was called back. By that time we had four children. And he didn't pass his physical due to his eyesight. My daughter Judy had her kindergarten year at the original Carpenter School at the far end of our farm, the big brick building. And Chuck's mom ...

I:

Can you elaborate on where that was? That was on Carpenter Road?

DL:

Yeah. It's right ... well, it's where the high rise building is. To the right of that a little bit.

I:

Was it Ozzie?


DL:

Yeah. Yeah. That's where it was. It was Ozzie's. Uh-hm.

I:

It was. Okay.

DL:

All right. His ... Charlie's mother taught at Carpenter School, but I don't remember the dates on that either. I ... In the summer of '56, my brother called and said he had a lot of sweet corn and wondered if we might be able to sell it by the side of the road. We said we'd try and the kids set up a card table and in two hours the corn was all sold. So that kind of got us thinking maybe we should raise vegetables. In spring of 1957, we decided to put up a building. Actually it was a two-car garage west of the house. It was facing Packard Road. We started on a small scale  green beans, peas, sweet corn, cukes and tomatoes we purchased from a grower. Our Judy, eleven at

that time, and CB is eight and Chris was five and Mike was too young, he was two -- didn't do much help. But the kids, the rest of the kids were ...

A couple years later, Mr. Zawicki from Willis who raised our tomato plants and melon seedlings suggested that we put up a greenhouse and sell annuals -- flowers and vegetable plants. So a small greenhouse was put up covered with trees, with plastic. And in July we would go up north and tag our Christmas trees at different growers, and then we'd go up and pick them up in the fall.

The spring of each year found all of our family busy helping get the things planted before the market opened. We always opened the first of May. Evenings were spent working. We planted 6,000 tomato plants, 45 acres of sweet corn, squash and all other vegetables. And pumpkins. We were open through November 1st. No off time. Many long, rewarding hours I say. Some grumbling from the kids. (laughter)

Second parcel of land for golf course was sold some time during these past years. We started picking ... having people come in and pick their own pumpkins with a ride to the pumpkin patch. The children came from everywhere. Pumpkins became a fun time. Chuck really enjoyed the time with the children. We booked rides 30 minutes apart, depending on the size of the group. One year we had our ... over 1200 children that had come to pick pumpkins. The pumpkin patch was the field across ... on Ellsworth Road across from the new fire station over there, originally Doc Cady's farm. We rented all of that acreage.

Well, August 22nd, 1962 was the day our son was killed under the tractor. He and Bill Brooks were going to go get sweet corn and that's been 39 years ago. All property south of Packard and Ellsworth, actually to I94 we farmed. And the farm on Ellsworth Road known as Doc Cady Farm, which is now all private homes we used for farmland. We rented a farm on Morgan Road and a farm on Liberty Road and that's all now in a big subdivision. </dd>

The Christmas of 1962, we had purchased our Christmas trees and the Boy Scouts sold them. We had everybody in the subdivision and all our friends had been so generous, we set up a memorial fund. And the Scouts came and sold the trees, and all the profit went into the fund. And I think we did that for four years. And many boys and girls in the Carpenter District were allowed to apply for help to start their college. I think it was \$300 they would give them. It was handled by the Ann Arbor Trust. It has been closed out. Some went to the Saline Church Home and they decided the remainder should go to our son Mike's college upon the death of his father.

The Leverett farm was sold to Sam Frankl for a shopping center. That was in 1963, and that was when they put our house up on beams and got it ready and we cleared the orchard out. And I remember that was a time that President Kennedy was shot and I ran all the way down to the orchard to tell Chuck and the other guys that were working. And we also put up a barn to hold all our machinery, reopened our market with Robert Lilly doing the carpenter work. Later flowers she had attached to the market which served its use for the sale of flowers and Christmas trees. The market was opened May 1st to November 1st and then we opened December 1st usually till about the 18th.

In 1975, Judy and Christine, now out on their own, no longer helped at the market. Christine was married and she had an adopted son, our grandson from Korea. Mike was in college at Western Michigan. Chuck was doing more soy beans, grain farming, possibly thinking of ending the market business. With all the kids gone it was kind of hard. Some worked after school too. Some of those Lilly kids worked over there too.

And then November 1976, my husband had a heart attack in the morning, and was rushed to the hospital. By 6:30 that night he was ... had a massive heart attack on the operating table and passed away.

Mike was still in college. He came home weekends and we worked till late at night, combining and ... One night the combine on Morgan Road got mired in wet area, and thanks to Richard Sakstrup, who came to our rescue and pulled it out.

We decided the farm work had to come to a close. The market we could handle. Did do the sweet corn for another year, as Mike was home in the summer. Then a great friend said he would raise our sweet corn and we could pick it up each morning freshly picked. We had really built our business on our sweet corn because it was always fresh, being picked all day long. Weekends we had sold 300 dozen per day. We never went back to that amount though. All our corn was picked by hand, carried on a bushel basket.

Mike did transfer to Eastern which made it easier, except it added one year of college to him. We have continued going to Detroit market three to five days a week for produce and plants and flowers. This means leaving for Detroit by two a.m. and then come home and work from nine to seven, seven days a week. Long hours, but still rewarding.

We had an auction and sold all our farm equipment after we decided not to do any more farming. In 1979, I sold the farmhouse there. And Mike and I bought a condo on Earhart Road and I lived there 19 years. And then in 1986, we heard the house was going to be sold for a car wash, and we knew it adjoined the rest of us, so we bought ... I bought it back.

So we rented the market out for one year. He didn't succeed and he left without paying, so that was ... the building stands empty as far as I'm concerned. Then my daughter Chris did it for a year, and she didn't make out too well, so she said it was too many hours for no little ... for nickels and dimes. It's been empty for several years. In two ... last ... in 2000, this couple opened it through July and October but they're not planning on doing it.

We're doing wholesale only now. My son Mike is the manager. He still buys in Detroit. He does all the buying. He has the long hours, and this will be our 40th year purchasing trees from Duddle's Tree Farms. They sent me a note with our Christmas card this year. And this is our 45th year in business. We're going to continue on the wholesale business and Christmas trees in December. Seems to be slowing down myself. Turned 80 last December but still work three mornings a week to help pack the produce and I hope I can continue. Thank you.

I:

Now we come to a part where, if you don't mind ... I'm ... I had just a couple of questions that I want to ask you, and then we'll open it up to the audience and ... and maybe share memories that you have, or that you have some questions for Mrs. Leverett. I just need to make sure that we get your maiden name on the tape. You're ... you were born Dorothy Gross.

DL:

Uh-hm.

I:

And you now live in Gross Road in Dexter.

DL:

Uh-hm.

I:

I assume that that's a family.

DL:

That's right.

I:

You live on your mother's farm, you were telling ...?

DL:

Uh-huh. Uh-huh. Family farm.

I:

DL: And when did your mother pass away?

I: She passed away in '86.

DL: And I just wanted to ... did you ev ... I wanted to elaborate a little bit on your work in the bomber plant. Can you tell me ... us a little bit about that experience was like? Going to ... was it like you would go with other women from the neighborhood, or ...?

I: No, no, no. I drove myself. I was ... and worked in an office. It was in the *slitting* department, and actually they gave me one of the men's job because they ... I could figure, and they didn't have any men that could figure they said.

I: Oh!

DL: So I took over the job of ... which they would ... the thickness of the plane and the width of all these little strips had to be done and the length I had to have all that done on paper. And I worked out of a little office ... men's ... The boss was Mr. Miller ♦ just a real nice guy. He passed away very young and I didn't get notice of it till quite a long time after he came from Brighton. But that's what I did, and one night I evidently made a mistake, and this old gentlemen who was the slitting machine, he was a real keen guy, old gray-haired guy, but just a sweet thing. He knew I'd made a mistake, and he call me. He said, 'You made a mistake. I shut all the slitting orders down. We're not going to slit ... do any of that tonight.' And I thought, 'Oh, what did I do?' Well, the next morning, Mr. Miller ... We just had a cage in the big bomber plant. And he met me, and he says, 'You made a mistake,' and I said ... I couldn't believe it. It was several of them. But I didn't get anything out of it. Then I left there. I mean, then I asked to leave because I wanted to go live with my husband ...

I: Uh-hm.

DL: ... in the service, and he said, 'You can't. You're in the Army.' And I said, 'Well, I'm going.' (laughter) And ... they took up a collection. I remember they gave me 150 dollars, that whole group, and so that was ...

I: And that was a lot of money.

DL: Yeah. Back then it was. But there were a lot of workers there, too, in that department. I was in Department 930.

I: Oh my. Oh. And ... and were you ... how did you get then to Texas? Did you have to take a train?

DL: No.

I: Did you take a military train?

DL: Ah, yes. I came home from the bomber plant one day and I said to my mom ♦ I'd stopped at Ann Arbor to get my ticket ♦ and I said, 'I'm leaving tomorrow morning.' She says, 'Where are you going?' And I said, 'I'm leaving for Abilene,' and she said, 'You can't go alone.' She got in the

car, she went down to the depot in Ann Arbor, got herself a ticket. She found out what I had. I mean, here I am ...

I:

A married woman.

DL:

... married woman, you know. She ... she got her ticket and we went to Texas. We rode ... and when we got in St. Louis, we had to change trains and we were on an old ... well, it had lanterns for lights. I mean, it was ... well, all the good trains they'd given to the army, you see, and ... for moving them. And I didn't have a seat, because my mother bought that seat. And I sat on my suitcase in ... in ... 1600 miles, in the (laughter) aisle-way. And the next morning, I've got ... we got to the hotel, and Chuck had come ... had come in, and she knew that he was there, and he said, 'I got an apartment for us,' and the next morning ... Well, it wasn't an apartment. It was a room in a lady's house. And, ah ... because he couldn't live off camp. And we ... my mother saw that we had that room, and she got the next train out and went back home. (laughter) She was happy. She saw that we were ... I was going to be taken care of.

So we had that place and then I ... I flew home, because my brother was killed in March, and I came home. And my mother was teaching at Stone ... mother-in-law was teaching at Stone School, and both of the boys were in Texas. One was in Fort Hood ... Fort Hood, and Chuck was in Camp Barclay which was probably a couple hundred miles apart. So she said, 'Well, I'll ride back with you. I packed my car for my apartment stuff -- bedding and everything -- and we drove back. I drove all 1600 miles.

I:

Wow.

DL:

So that was quite an event. Well ...

I:

Well, you did what you had to. Nowadays ...

DL:

Yeah. Yeah. I wouldn't do it today (laughs).

Q:

How many flat tires did you do then?

DL:

Pardon me?

Q:

How many flat tires?

DL:

None. None.

Q:

No flat tires.

DL:

No.

I:

Let me ...

M:

You were on gas rationing also, weren't you? Was the gas ration ...?

DL:

No, that was ... that was ... Well, when we had our honeymoon, we had gas ration. All the farmer ... all our farmer relatives gave us one coupon so we had enough gas because we went to

Chicago. But, no, we ... yes, they did. I had rationing. I think my mother-in-law took their ration ... no, I've got those books too. I forgot about that.

I:

I ... can I ask the audience, when you ask questions, you're going to really need to speak up because the microphone is on her lapel. And so ...

DL:

You mean, you're ... you're quoting this?

I:

Oh, yeah. We've got ... this is all part of the *job* process. (laughter) So if you ... if you have a question, if you could stand up and ... and really project this way, and it ... this microphone will pick it up, but it ... it won't be a problem. But I just want to make everyone work.

DL:

Can you delete something?

Q:

Yes. What kind of car did you drive to ...?

DL:

I had a '39 Ford Coupe. Uh-hm.

EC:

I'm Emily Conrad and my mother-in-law is Lucille Leverett.

DL:

Oh!

EC:

My father was Frederick Leverett. I believe you came to our ... I'm taping this, I'm videotaping this _____. I believe you came to a Leverett family reunion at my house in 1990. And I was wondering, because I can never remember, what relation ... you're our relation, but I'm not sure whether you're a first or second cousin or what you are to us.

DL:

I think they were second cousins, but I wasn't at the ... at any ... uh-uh.

EC:

_____ Dorothy Leverett was ... was there.

DL:

Oh.

EC:

Were your _____?

DL:

Well, if there is, because somebody just called me from Chicago.

EC:

Really.

DL:

This is kind of a coincidence. And I said, 'No, it's not me.' So maybe there is another Dorothy.

EC:

Are you familiar with Frederick Leverett who lived over on Jackson?

DL:

Yes. On the ... in the brick house?

EC:

Yes.

DL:

Yes.

EC: Right. Now, he was a relation of ... of your husband, wasn't he?

DL: Uh-hm. He'd probably be a third or fourth cousin though.

EC: I can ... I can never remember. I knew there was some ...

DL: See ...

EC: There was some kind of a sure tell relationship and whatever that means and ...

DL: Yeah.

EC: So _____

DL: But I wasn't at the reunion, because I haven't gone to any of them. Ah, what was that girl's name? Can't think.

EC: From Chicago, or ____?

DL: Well, she just called and asked for Dorothy Leverett, and I said 'speaking,' and she said, 'Oh, I'm so glad to hear from you,' and I said, 'I don't ... I think you're ... I don't know who you are.' I said, 'What was your name?' Well, she told me something, didn't make any sense and I said, 'Gee, I think you have the wrong number.' I said, 'Where are you calling from?' She said, 'Chicago.' And I said, 'No,' I said, 'I'm not the right one. Let me look in the phone book.' So I looked in the phone book and there weren't any other Dorothy's, so I didn't know. So she thanked me and that was it, but ...

I: When you had shown us the abstract that you brought, there were sisters on your ... your husband's father's sisters.

DL: Yeah, yeah.

I: Are they still in the area too?

DL: No, they're all deceased.

I: And is there any other family that you keep in contact with from ...?

DL: Well, I have my sister-in-law who's in Monroe.

I: Uh-hm.

DL: That's the only one left of the Leverett family on ours ...

I: Is that DeLynn?

DL: DeLynn Wurzel.

Q: Wurzel.

DL: Uh-huh. Um, and there's a couple cousins. Two of them have lost their husbands now too. And then there's one in ... Otis, Willard Otis from Ypsi. Do you know that one? The Otises?

Q: Otises ... Otises are really familiar to me.

DL: Uh-huh. Willard and Bea. Willard has, um, I don't know, Alzheimer's and he shuffles, I mean, he's pathetic. But that's the only one that's left on the boys, on the cousins.

Q: Is there ... the house, ah, the Leverett House that was moved ...

DL: Yeah.

Q: ... that's there.

DL: Yeah. That belongs to us.

Q: That belongs to you. Do you have any plans that you're thinking about doing with it?

DL: Oh, it's for rent. Anybody that wants to come and rent it.

Q: Okay (laughter). No, his hou(se) ... was that house built in 1914?

DL: No, no, no. 1845, I think.

Q: That house was built in 1845?

DL: Yeah, but it's torn out. There's not lot of it that's ... when I sold it, then the insides were tore out, a lot of it. It's not original.

BM: This ... just Betty McMullen. Where did that house originally sit?

DL: Right where the gas station sits.

BM: Which one?

DL: In the shopping area type.

Q: Where the CVS ...?

BM: Oh. Where the Speedway ...?

DL: Hm, Speedway. Uh-hm.

BM: Oh.

DL:

Uh-hm. And then our ... the market was just below that. I think Bob built the market down there too, didn't he? Yeah, I forgot about ... You know, I tried to think of things, but it's ... I'm losing my ...

X:

I know Skip had a lot of fun in the barn.

DL:

Yeah. Oh, Yeah. They used to run ...

X:

All that ____.

DL:

Uh-huh. And the ...

X2:

We used to, when we were kids, we'd always ... used to take lunch ____ and go back into the woods and ...

DL:

Yeah.

X2:

... and most of the time we'd start a big fire.

DL:

Yeah (laughter).

I:

Wait, we have to make sure to get this on tape. The kids started the fire ____ (laughter) ...

X3:

... with ... and I think we blamed Mikey too.

DL:

Sure (laughter). And that Kosky boy, he ... remember he worked for us, and he ... I hate snakes. And he said, 'Mrs. Leverett, I brought you something.' And he had a potato bag, and I could hear a squirming in there. And he said, 'I think it's something you want,' and I said, 'If that's a snake, just take it the farthest end of the fields,' and I said, 'You're done working. No more.' I didn't let him come back to work.

X:

Oh! (laughter)

DL:

I just couldn't stand sneaks (laughs). But we had people who would pick their own, you know. And one time they came up from the field and I heard this 'bunk-funk- funk' and they had picked cucumbers and put them inside the tire and taken the rim out and plugged that all up with cucumbers (laughter), stealing them. They went back to pick beans.

X:

Oh, my

BM:

They must really needed cucumbers.

DL:

I said, 'What was that noise?' and she said, 'I don't know.' And just then Chuck came up and I said, 'Chuck,' I said, 'they've got something in the hubcaps.' And he ... he said, 'What do you mean?' And I said, 'Well, there's a thud, it bumped every time they came through here.' And he said, 'I'll get a screwdriver.' He opened it, and they were all full of cucumbers. (laughter) And ...

M:

Why ... The Tomato Place?

DL: Oh, yes. The Tomato Place. I think all the kids loved that (laughs). At the end of the season especially we allowed them to go out and just throw tomatoes.

F: You said you went to nursing school. What ...? _____ or ...?

DL: No. I just went one year. It was a scholarship. We didn't have money to go to school. I lived on a farm, I ... we were nickel and dimes, you know. We didn't have any extra money. My dad couldn't ... there was no way he was going to pay for me to go but ...

BM: So you didn't get an opportunity to work at all as a

DL: Uh-hm. Uh-hm. Uh-hm. Uh-hm. I learned a lot in that year though (laughs). No.

M: What was traveling back in the 1940s? There wasn't any motels or anything like that, so where did you stay? Or was there some?

DL: Oh, yeah. There were motels. Now, wait a minute (laughs).

F: _____? (laughter) _____

DL: Yeah, they weren't like they are today, I'll tell you that, but there were motels. Yeah.

I: Did you have a question, Ruth?

R: Yeah, I think was thinking of ... thinking about Florence. I'm her sister Edna Hodge.

DL: Yeah.

R: Of course, Gertie, you know ...

DL: Yeah, I know Gertie. She married my cousin.

R: ... were cousins.

DL: Yeah.

R: And wasn't Otis the one that did the ...?

DL: The background?

R: Yeah.

DL: The historical ... uh-hm.

R: Yeah, okay, that was the Erwin.

DL: Erwin.

R: She tried ... she did that for many years.

DL: Yeah. Uh-hm.

R: Tried to get ... for me to get a *drink* (laughs).

DL: Uh-hm. Fact, we used to get updates on that almost every year from them.

R: From that ____?

BM: And James is doing it now. He lives in New Mexico, and he's put it on the computers, ah, and, um, and I met him. I met him at the '90 ... 1990 Leverett family union. They came from all over the country to my house, but I couldn't tell you who most of them were. Bunch of people there. Ah, and Pete started doing it then and just to put an update *here*.

DL: Oh.

BM: So I don't know if he's been in touch with you or not.

DL: Uh-uh. Chuck Otis did that too.

BM: Yes.

DL: But has since passed away. I guess he's got his all on tapes or whatever they call them.

BM: Uh-huh.

DL: But, ah ...

BM: I think he ____ have Warren come up, you know, _____

DL: Back and forth?

BM: _____ together.

DL: Oh.

BM: And then James I think decided he would because nobody seemed to be interested in doing it, and he had a computer and he decided to put it on the computer.

DL: Oh.

BM: So I got a ... a year ago, I got enough day ____ corrections to let him know, so I *could* Christmas present _____.

DL: Oh. Uh-hm.

BM:

DL: He's retired and ...

DL: Oh. Well, see I don't remember him. Because we were so busy with the market, we never got to any of the family reunions and stuff like that. I mean, when we had ... couple children, I guess, we went to the park out on Dexter once, I remember, because we had the babies in the buggy, but ...

BM: Long, long time ago.

DL: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

BM: We used to do that. We used to do that.

DL: Yeah. Because my oldest daughter turned 56 ... she'll be 57 in July I guess.

Q: _____

DL: Isn't that something?

Q: Where did the Leverett family ... where were their origins?

DL: Iowa. Iowa.

Q: Well, even before that? Q1: Is that a French name?

DL: Oh, England. England. No, no.

Q: _____ France.

DL: Yeah, it's not French.

BM: We had a ... by the time the Revolutionary War was in Massachusetts, a Leverett ...

I: A Leverett?

BM: I think it was a William Leverett. We had a Leverett, he was a president of Harvard, a relative of ours.

DL: Yeah.

BM: A lot of ... in fact, there's a Leverett, Massachusetts.

DL: Yes.

BM: And I would love to go there some day because I ... I enjoyed _____, and I have a daughter who lives in Bloomfield.

DL: Oh!

BM: I never get there. But I'd love to. But there's ... they've got quite a bit of history on the Leverett family.

DL: Oh, yeah.

BM: And of course we had a Leverett who was a professor who's in Who's Who ... Who's Who in America.

DL: Yeah.

BM: And he's a professor at U of M.

DL: I can't think of the attorney.

BM: He's in physiology. Frank Leverett.

DL: Frank. Yes, oh, yes. Uh-huh. Uh-huh. His wife's name was Dorothy.

BM: That's the other one.

DL: Yeah. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

BM: That's Dorothy ... yeah. _____.

DL: Yeah. And I have the nicest letter from her that she wrote to me when I got married. She was such a sweet lady.

BM: She has ... she has to be passed away by now because ...

DL: Oh, yes! Oh.

BM: But I remember seeing her. She was white hair _____ like that _____.

DL: Uh-hm. (laughter) Uh-hm. In fact, out West ... see, he was a geologist.

BM: Yeah.

DL: And what ... there is a place that's named after him out ... Did you know about that?

BM: No.

DL: Uh-huh.

BM: I did not know. I ...

DL: But due to the geologist that was doing, but I don't know all the particulars. But talking about Leverett, Massachusetts (sic), I went to the ... my granddaughter rides horseback and we were

going to ... we were in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and we were just going to the big showroom, and in comes this truck with this Leverett, Massachusidge (sic.) on it, and I said to Chuck. I mean, you know, the ... that's the name of the town, you know? I couldn't think. I thought, well maybe that was her name, but it wasn't. It was the name of the town, because afterwards we talked and, well, they have been real fludie doots, because they had their little poodles sitting on their shoulders (laughter) and he was kind of fun ... interesting, but she wasn't interested us because we were common ordinary people.

I:

(laughter) She was a fludie dooter?

DL:

Yeah. Oh!

I:

It's right on the tape (laughter).

DL:

Oh. I hope that isn't on there (laughs). I think you better ...

I:

Oh, no. Yeah, well, actually I ...

DL:

Yeah.

I:

Okay. Dorothy I wanted to ask you a little bit about running a business in the 60's and 70's. Did you have trouble finding help or was it ea ... or did you hire a lot of helpers on the ... on the farm there?

DL:

Well, we had all the boys and girls from the subdivision. Ask Pattie (laughs). In fact, there were so many of them, some days we really didn't need them all, you know, the kids did. And I think ... I think everybody had a good time working. I can ... Rob, her brother was one of the main ones that picked sweet corn, and our Mike and ... I can't remember all the kids' names, I ...

X:

The McAllisters.

DL:

Yeah, the McAllister boys helped, yeah. It's ... way long ago.

I:

Kind of like a young person employment agency.

DL:

Uh-hm. Uh-hm. Uh-hm.

I:

I kind of understand ...

DL:

They worked for 75 cents an hour, a dollar an hour back in those days. Or they'd pick the beans by the pound.

I:

Yes. By the pound.

DL:

Uh-huh. Uh-hm. Oh, I can remember ...

Q:

DL:

Hm?

Q: We'd be really ____ at school.

DL: Yeah, you're right (laughs).

F: Not anybody could ____?

DL: No, not everybody (laughs). We had to ... there were a lot of good times. We did ... we had a lot of fun. And being in business was great. I mean, you never ... we weren't rich, but at least we had ... we kept our bills paid and ... which is something ... was something back in those days. And ... but we had ... the kids had a lot of fun. Well, we had picnics, and then the boys had their baseball game, so my husband always took off with all the team. I had to stay and close the market, you know (laughs).

Q: Did you sponsor a team? A little league or anything?

DL: We ... no. Um, what's the one on the corner of ... Washtenaw and Packard? That big grocery store. They sponsored our team. Food and Drug.

Q: Where Washtenaw and ...

DL: Yeah. Must as you're going down to go downtown ...

Q: Okay.

DL: ... on Packard. In fact ...

X: _____

DL: ... State ... I'm sorry. Yes. Yes. In fact, when my son died, they came in, they had a panel truck, and they came in with so much food that you can't believe it.

BM: Hm.

DL: Just brought all kinds of thing. Everybody was always so kind.

Q: Do you miss working on the ...

DL: Yes.

Q: ... thing.

DL: I do. I helped three mornings a week, I go in. I'm usually ... get there by seven usually. But all we do is wholesale now, and I just do the odds and ends. I mean, one restaurant wants ten pounds of carrots and eight celery and stuff like that. So I do that packing up. We've had help all winter, because we are driving a semi, but this one guy just quit and so Mike's doing all the trucking, driving too. And we have another fellow that helps deliver. And then we service the prison, and

you've got to have somebody that's ... can deliver there. You have to be very cautious. I rode along one time and all of a sudden a man grabbed my arm. I'd gotten out. And he said, 'You can't go out there.' I said, 'Why? I'm just coming into the office to wait while the boy deliv ... moves back to the loading dock.' He said, 'Well,' he says, 'Those guys will grab you.' He said, 'They jump over the fence when they see a woman.' So I said, 'Well, I'm not going out there, don't worry.' (laughter) But it's ... it's a funny instance. I mean, I don't understand ... they buy, um ... apples, bananas -- odd things: onions. And these guys must have machines and they can buy the stuff out of it. Garlic. Garlic bulbs.

Q:

In Jackson Prison or Milan?

DL:

No, this is Milan.

Q:

Milan? _____

DL:

Yeah. Uh-hm. But they're allowed ... I s(upp)ose) with the money they've made, then they can buy the extra stuff.

Q:

What do you think will become of the space? Will anybody reopen it as a ...

DL:

As a market?

Q:

... market?

DL:

Um, I have one fellow that has talked to us just recently again, but the couple that were in it last year, she ... she's not interested. It's too much work, she said. And it is a lot of work. Nobody has any idea. She did a good job. I was real pleased the way she did things. But I don't know if this other fellow's gonna or not. It doesn't pay us to put anybody in, because we've had two different people and we lo ... they didn't pay and we lost out. And so I said the building can sit empty. But this fellow has talked to Mike just recently and I don't ... nothing else has been said, so I don't know. I got my doubts.

Q:

It's kind of sad when you drive by.

DL:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, I know. In fact, we need to take the Christmas tree sign down, but it takes two of us, and the wind has been so whipping, we can't get it down and fold it up, or roll it up, so I told him this week we had to do that.

Q:

How many grandchildren do you have?

DL:

Ah, let's see ... isn't that awful? Three, four, five, six, seven? Three adopted ones, but we have seven in all, and I have a great grandchild.

Q:

Oh!

DL:

Uh-hm. Uh-hm. She'll be two in July. And the oldest one is about 29, of the grandchildren.

X:

Well, that will keep you busy.

DL:

Uh-hm. Uh-hm. And they're all around.

Q:

Plus you have the acre of yard to take care of *supposedly*.

DL:

Oh, yeah. I mow my own lawn. I've got a big perennial bed.

Q:

Doesn't Chris live on the same _____?

DL:

Yes. Um, when my mom died ... turn it off (laughs).

I:

Okay. Thank you very much.

The End