

**KM-5**

**ELIZABETH FISHER WHITE**

**BIRTH DATE: MARCH 20<sup>th</sup>, 1904**

**INTERVIEW DATE: DECEMBER 5<sup>th</sup>, 1993**

**RUNNING TIME: 40:59**

**INTERVIEWER: KATE MOORE**

**RECORDING ENGINEER: SAME**

**INTERVIEW LOCATION: COLDWATER, MICHIGAN**

**TRANSCRIPT REVIEWED BY: CATHERINE ROUNTREE, 6/2011**

**REVISIONS BY:**

**NETHERLANDS, 1912**

**AGE: 8**

**SHIP: RYNDAM**

**PORT: ROTTERDAM, HOLLAND**

**RESIDENCES:**

**HOLLAND: ARUM**

**UNITED STATES: MARTINSVILLE, INDIANA**

**ORAL HISTORIAN'S NOTE: There is a man in the room with Ms. White and Ms. Fisher. However he is never identified nor introduced. At one time, he is referred to as Charlie. I believe he is the same unidentified Charlie as in KM-4 Vandyke.**

MOORE: Good afternoon, this is Kate Moore from the National Park Service. Today is the fifth of December, 1993 and I'm in Coldwater, Michigan at the home of Charles Fisher, speaking with Elizabeth Fisher White, who came from the Netherlands in 1912 at the age of eight years old. Why don't you begin by giving us your full name and date of birth please.

WHITE: My full name is Elizabeth Fisher White. And uh, I was born March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1904.

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MOORE: And how did you spell, how is your name spelled in the Netherlands before you came here?

WHITE: You mean Elizabeth?

MOORE: Ah no, Fisher.

WHITE: Well, it's V-I-S-S-E-R.

MOORE: There.

WHITE: There. And when we arrived here, somebody changed our names, and...

MOORE: To "f."

WHITE: To... and then Elizabeth is a Dutch name as well as American name. I didn't have to change like all of the rest of the family who more or less changed names.

MOORE: So your name is now spelled F-I-S-H-E-R.

WHITE: Yes.

MOORE: Ok. And um, talk a little about the town that you were born in. What you remember. Ah, what's the name of it again?

WHITE: A-R-U-M. Arum.

MOORE: Arum. Uh-huh. And how, what size was that?

WHITE: Ahhh... I don't remember anything about it.

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MOORE: Ok. Alright. And do you remember anything about the town at all before you came here?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: Alright. And um, what was your father's name?

WHITE: Robert Fisher.

MOORE: Robert Fisher. And what did he do for a living?

WHITE: Well farming, I believe, in Holland too as well as after we came to this country.

MOORE: And what did he look like? Could you describe what he looked like? Your father?

WHITE: My dad?

MOORE: Yeah.

WHITE: Ah, look at Charlie there. I think Charlie looks like him more or less.

MOORE: And how would you say that to the tape? How would you say he looks?

WHITE: (laughs) Ah, I don't know, just an average person, I guess.

MOORE: (laughs) And about how tall would you say? How tall would you say? Like ah, was he a tall man?

WHITE: No. Medium. My dad, was um, not too tall. Like you said.

MOORE: What was his personality like? Or his temperament? Your dad?

Fisher: Well, I don't know. (laughs) I really don't. I, I, I don't remember my dad. I mean, there were so many of us kids and we always, we girls would stand away, figured our dad kind of ah... favored, favored the boys. They seemed to come first.

MOORE: So, um.... Were, were you particularly close to your father?

WHITE: No, not exactly. No.

MOORE: Do you remember any stories associated with your father that they used to tell about your dad?

WHITE: No. I... I don't think. I'm sorry, I just can't.

MOORE: No, that's alright. That's alright. And what about your mom's name?

WHITE: Bertha.

MOORE: Bertha. And, um....

WHITE: Her Dutch name. Vatje.

MOORE: And how do you spell that?

WHITE: V-A-T-J-E.

MOORE: V-A-T-J-E.

WHITE: Andela was her maiden name.

MOORE: And how do you spell that?

WHITE: A-N-D-E-L-A.

MOORE: Andela. And, um, what did she do for a living?

WHITE: With-h-h fourteen children, what do you did she did?

(all laugh)

MOORE: She was a housewife?

WHITE: Yes.

MOORE: And what did she look like?

WHITE: Well...

MOORE: Well, how did she look? What, what did she look like? How would you describe her?

WHITE: About her my size. And I think I look like her.

MOORE: Blue eyes?

WHITE: I don't know. I never paid much attention to eyes in those days.

MOORE: (laughs) And what about her personality and temperament? Do you remember her?

WHITE: Yeah, I... my mom was, oh, even tempered or as much as she could be. She could also lose her temper.

MOORE: And, would she, what type of person was she in terms of her values?

WHITE: ... I don't... I just thought...

MOORE: If you were to characterize your mother, how would you do it today if you were telling somebody about your mom.

WHITE: I don't know... I would just say she was just mom I guess. She was... you know. We were home and she took care of us.

MOORE: And um, what did she do for her chores around the house? What was her role with fourteen children? To take of the children and just to do the housework as well?

WHITE: Well yeah. What... I had several older sisters, you know, and ah, and ah, they were always ready to help mom do what we could.

MOORE: Did you have hired help at all?

WHITE: In the house? Me?

MOORE: Yeah.

WHITE: Yeah. No. (laugh)

MOORE: And um

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WHITE: [interposed] 'Bout, ah... no. One thing was ah, as soon as a girls a sixteen year old, get a job.

MOORE: At sixteen you go out to work?

WHITE: Yeah, I had to quit school at sixteen.

MOORE: And go to work?

WHITE: And go to work.

MOORE: I see. So then when you worked, did you also go home and work and help with the chores?

WHITE: Well, yeah. We would, go home in between times. And we were keeping house, and, you know, those kinds of jobs for those people in town.

MOORE: And that was after you came to this country?

WHITE: Yes. Yeah.

MOORE: And do you remember much about before you came to this country at all when you were so small?

WHITE: No, except, well, but ah, we, we arrived at ah, New York. And, my oldest brother came by himself to two, three years before. And, ah, he had a house and a family when we came.

MOORE: Mmm.

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WHITE: My older sister stayed in Holland and she was going to be married and she wouldn't leave. But the ah, twelve of us came with mom and dad.

MOORE: Um, what were, how would you describe your um... First of all, name all your brothers and sisters. I know this is a big chore because you have a lot of them. But do you know the names of all your brothers and sisters?

WHITE: Yeah, ah... I'd like to say Garrett. He was the oldest one and he was sixteen or seventeen when he left Holland, all by himself, and made a trip over here. But I had an Uncle Job here. And ah, he, I don't know, Garrett landed... I don't know just where he was the first couple years, but ah, he was in ah, in Indianapolis when we came. And there was another Dutch family there, Vandykes. And he's working on the farms. And he been, he had been out West as a cowboy. He said for a year or two.

MOORE: And so he was your oldest brother?

WHITE: He was the oldest one.

MOORE: And who was next?

WHITE: I was. Except my sister, Joe, she stayed there.

MOORE: Mmm.

WHITE: And Irene. She's the one in a nursing home here. And she married a Vandyke.

MOORE: Yes, I see her name. Yeah. And who was after?

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WHITE: And then, and then, Jenny. And then brother Otto. I don't know. I can't remember now if Otto come before or after Jenny. (laughs) But um, anyway, then Jenny and then Otto, and the John, and then Alice, then Frances, and then me and Sadie, and Robert, Leo, Charles. And one baby was born in Daphne, Indiana. That's all. And all of us [not understood]. We had moved to Nappanee in the uh. And the baby was born and it died in December, so.

MOORE: What about your house? Do you remember your house that you used to live in Holland before you came? Do you remember anything about where you lived? Before you came here?

WHITE: Uh, what the house looked like? That was a nice house. It was a nice house.

MOORE: In Holland?

WHITE: In?

MOORE: In the Netherlands?

WHITE: Yes.

MOORE: Yeah. And what kind of house was it? Like, how big?

WHITE: Not... Like I said, I don't remember. It was... yeah, a small, but uh...

MOORE: You had a lot of people in it?

WHITE: Yeah. Well the beds are made in a wall, you know. A couple of them. So that's where kids sleep in one. In one of them.

MOORE: And, was it a brick house? Or was it, what was it made of?

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WHITE: I believe the new houses as they were called in those day... uh... that was my time, they weren't there for the first part of their life, I guess. But then, they were called the new houses and that's where we were living. So they tell me. I really don't remember.

MOORE: Do you remember the furniture in the house at all? Can you remember any of the furnishing or... Do you remember if the house was in or out of town?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: You were so small.

WHITE: Just a small town and uh, a canal right there. By the house, I guess. [not understood] behind us. (laughs)

MOORE: And did you have animals? Remember if you had animals or not?

WHITE: I don't think so.

MOORE: And who else lived in the building? Was it...

WHITE: I wouldn't know. I was just

MOORE: Just your family? One family house?

WHITE: Oh, I think it was two family. We had the front section and somebody else had the back. And the only way around was, I don't know. Irene could tell you a lot more if she remembers. She's ninety nine. (giggles)

MOORE: [interposed] Who did

WHITE: But she's got a very sharp..

MOORE: Memory.

WHITE: Memory. Even though for her, her...

MOORE: Well, that's good.

WHITE: In fact, she's the only one in the family that does know anything about Holland.

MOORE: Well who did the cooking in the family then?

WHITE: Well, mom did. Except that when Jenny got old enough. Instead of her getting a job or, she stayed home to help mom.

MOORE: Oh.

WHITE: Oh, and I mustn't think [not understood]

MOORE: It's good you're forgetting. We don't mind. We're going to do this here. Just to make sure that [not understood]. Get your voice back. Ok. And, um, what was, what was meal time like? Do you remember what it was like in Holland? Do you remember any meals eating with the kids in Holland?

WHITE: Yeah. We all ate together. Always in a hurry. Ready to eat. Everybody was.

MOORE: And um, when you were in Holland, were there, your family, other family members nearby? Your grandparents or any cousins or?

WHITE: Yeah, so they said that I had two grandmas there. But I don't, I don't remember. But the older kids used to say that they'd go up by grandma's going to school, and so um.

MOORE: This was the house near the canal where you lived right?

WHITE: Hmm.

MOORE: And um, what were your grandparents' names? Do you remember?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: You just called them grandma and...

WHITE: Yeah, I was going to say I don't remember the grandmother's name. And I don't think, uh, I don't think the grandfathers were alive even when I was a child.

MOORE: Mmm. Did you, who were you closest to in the family? Was someone special that you were close to?

WHITE: Nowadays you mean. Or uh, you mean?

MOORE: When you were a child.

WHITE: Well my sister just older than me, Frances, and Sadie, just younger. The three of us were...

MOORE: Real close?

WHITE: Were. Yeah. Yeah, we were generally and we stayed that way. I mean, even growing up.

MOORE: Do you remember any stories before you left Holland? Anything, anything that stays in your mind that you remember when you were children with your sisters?

WHITE: No. I don't know. (laughs)

MOORE: You mostly remember stuff after that?

WHITE: Well yeah. Well, I mean uh. Well, after we were through school, you might say. And we were all working at jobs in town near Coldwater, keeping house for people. And I lived east of town, and Sadie had, was working for the same family in another's direction. And after we had, our jobs done in the house, I... We generally walked, well, through the farm where the folks lived for the afternoon. No, I mean to just to, get out, do something. We'd walk home and then back again. Separate for our family, working families, and.

MOORE: Mmm. Well, if we take you back to... Sorry I keep asking about just before you came because we're going to bring you back into the future now. Into the present. Uh, do you remember, did you have a religious life when you were a child in Holland? Was there church going?

WHITE: No. No.

MOORE: Um...

WHITE: Wait, we did go to church Sunday school after we. We, uh, moved to Nappanee.

MOORE: You started to go to church when you were in Nappanee?

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WHITE: Yeah, and uh.

MOORE: Um, what about holiday celebrations in Holland? Do you remember Christmas ever? Or any or special holidays?

WHITE: No. I don't.

MOORE: Alright. Do you remember ever going to school in Holland?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: Ok. Um...

WHITE: Yet I must have gone because I was uh, in the third grade. So, yeah, I know they said we started when you were four years old there.

MOORE: What's your earliest memory of... ? Do you remember coming, getting ready to come to United States?

WHITE: I don't.

MOORE: You don't?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: No. Anything in that time you don't remember? Well you said you came to the States because your older brother had been here.

WHITE: Yes.

MOORE: And uh, did he send money for you all to come?

WHITE: He sent folks some money.

MOORE: To help?

WHITE: Yeah. But, they had borrowed the money from some doctor there that... in...

MOORE: Doctor where? In Holland?

WHITE: In Holland?

MOORE: Mmm.

WHITE: And the fact, I think, uh. We, all the children, had to pay back. It cost us to come. And us younger ones, I think, twenty five dollars for the boat trip.

MOORE: That's what you remember. Twenty five dollars?

WHITE: Yeah. Oh yeah. They had remembered. We had a, soon as we get out of child, we had pay him that twenty five dollars before we, he left us to spend it on, any other way.

MOORE: So you stayed in debt to this doctor until you all...?

WHITE: Well no. Dad, paid some money back. Uh, that maybe, he figured that uh, he had paid for us and that we... He wanted us to pay him for us, our part of it.

MOORE: Right. And um, do you remember wanting to come to America when you were little? Do you remember packing or coming or any of the preparations?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: No. Um, do you remember what your dad or mom said about coming to the United States? Anything? You don't remember, the... Coming, the voyage? Do you remember the voyage?

WHITE: No. I wish I did. But I don't.

MOORE: Um, you don't remember the boat trip? You came by boat right?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: And uh, do you remember the Statue of Liberty? Seeing that at all?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: None of that. And uh, what do you know? What did your family tell you about the boat trip? Did anybody tell you any stories about it?

WHITE: Well, uh, most of the family was seasick, off and on I guess. Uh, my sister Alice was quite ill when, just before we got to this country. And the doctor told her that if she got, stayed sick like that, when, she'd have to go back to Holland. They wouldn't allow her to land. And Alice said just like that, the next day she wasn't sick anymore.

MOORE: (laughs) Do you um, do you remember anything else? Did they tell you anything else about you on the boat? About all of you on the boat?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: You came all together though right.

WHITE: Well yeah.

MOORE: And, do you remember anything about Ellis Island at all? Coming into the port?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: No. Um, do you, what, what's the first thing you remember in... What's your first memory in the States then?

WHITE: Uh, being in Indiana then. Running up the hill and laying down and rolling down. That's uh, 'bout the only thing I remember of Martinsville, Indiana.

MOORE: And that was the first year you were here?

WHITE: Mmm. That was our first summer, yeah.

MOORE: That you...

WHITE: Not here, Michigan.

MOORE: No, no, but the first summer you were in the United States was there. Do you remember running up the hill and rolling down?

WHITE: Mmm.

MOORE: Remember anything else after that?

WHITE: No.

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MOORE: And uh, what did they tell you about that time? What did your family talk about that time very much?

WHITE: Well, they might have, being kids we didn't pay attention.

MOORE: (laughs)

WHITE: You know.

MOORE: Um...

WHITE: And like I said, we met the Vandykes there and they had children my age.

MOORE: And how long did you stay in Indiana with your family?

WHITE: Uh, and just until August. We arrived there in April. And, and, all of us, they were, my dad and Mr. Vandyke had been promised some farms in Nappanee, Indiana. And when we got there, a man backed out. And, so, they told me anyway in later years. And dad got a job in a uh, creamery right where he, or something like that for a while anyway.

MOORE: In Indiana?

WHITE: In Nappanee.

MOORE: In Nappanee, yeah. Nappanee's spelled how, do you know?

WHITE: N-A-P-P-E-N. Nappanee. (laughs) N-A-P-P-E-N-E-E.

MOORE: Yeah. I'll look it up. So you can know it.

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WHITE: (laughs) Yeah.

MOORE: Alright, now when you, when you lived there, you lived there for how long in Indiana?

WHITE: I don't know. If it was a year or two. If we, we, uh... Like I said, we moved from Nappanee to Milford. And we moved out to the farm there. (dog barks in background) And uh, Garrett was at home then and [not understood] dad and I don't know if mother was or not, but um.

MOORE: Your older brother then took care of the family then. Was that true?

WHITE: Well, he helped yes.

MOORE: And he worked with your father?

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: And your father.

WHITE: For.

MOORE: And worked at creamery, did you say?

WHITE: Well, that was in Nappanee, but then when we went to Milford. That was a little town. I don't know how far away. Not too far maybe. But. And, we lived out on a farm there. And we kids went to school in Milford.

MOORE: And when did you, do you remember learning English? At all?

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WHITE: Oh, we eventually, I don't know... It probably... (laughs) It took quite a while maybe to learn to talk.

MOORE: Did you remember having any problems in school at all about learning English?

WHITE: No, that's what I said. I don't know just how long it took us to talk enough to get by.

MOORE: But do you remember that there was a difference in language when you came?

WHITE: Well, oh yeah... We, we couldn't talk any English at all, of course, maybe. And I doubt if we learned very much in the first three, four months. And in Martinsville, since the Vandykes were Dutch to begin with and we could talk Dutch to them.

MOORE: Do you remember any Dutch now?

WHITE: Well, no. Yeah, I suppose, if I heard I could, if I had... I never was too good at talking that. (laughs)

MOORE: Now in that place in Indiana, when you first went to school, do you remember about the house there? Do you remember the farm? When you moved to the farm and lived there and went to school?

WHITE: Well, ah, we weren't on a farm in Nappanee. We lived in town.

MOORE: In Nappanee, you lived in town?

WHITE: Mmm.

MOORE: Then you moved to um...

WHITE: Milford.

MOORE: Milford. And were you... on a farm there?

WHITE: Yeah, we had a big farm. With a long lane to walk to the main road.

MOORE: And um, what was the farm house like that? How big was that?

WHITE: Ah, you know, I don't remember. But it was a big house for... to... er, I mean, anyway.

MOORE: Did your family rent that? Or did they buy it? Or what did they do? How did they get that house?

WHITE: No, we just rented it.

MOORE: Yeah. And then you farmed, is that it?

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: And did you work out?

WHITE: Well, they said we did onion fields, but I don't remember it.

MOORE: And um, what did... So your mom took care of the kids and your dad was a farmer.

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: And your brothers helped?

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: And evidently, you did too.

WHITE: Well ah... we did... we all helped out as far as that goes. I... ah...

MOORE: How do you remember being treated by other children when you first went to school? Do you remember anything about when you first went to school in Milford?

WHITE: Not too much. We were out... Nappanee was where, the first schooling... And ah... No. I... ah... I don't, I don't [not understood] the teacher's name... she put her arm around me... [not understood]

MOORE: You thought she pinched you? (laughs)

WHITE: Yeah, I don't know where I got that idea in my head.

MOORE: And do you remember if it was difficult the first time?

WHITE: No, I don't remember. I suppose it was. But... being kids, maybe it didn't bother us so much.

MOORE: And were you in the same class as any of your brothers and sisters?

WHITE: Yeah. Well, no. Ehh... you know it. Oh... I... Frances was a year ahead of me, I think. And Sadie was a year behind us. But when we were in Milford. We lived in the country, but we went to the city, town school.

MOORE: How did you get there?

WHITE: Well it was... Sadie said dad used to take us on bad days with the horse and wagon. But anyway, and uh... they had programs Fridays in schools. And they got Frances and me a Dutch song. Every Friday, we'd have to sing, get up the front and sing a Dutch song for them. And then the last time we sang, we started to laugh and we never did stop laughing. We didn't sing again.

(both laugh)

MOORE: How old were you then?

WHITE: Ahh... ten I guess.

MOORE: Ten. And were there other Dutch families in the area?

WHITE: Well yes. About uh... just a [not understood] a couple of them. They had two Dutch girls.

MOORE: And did they speak Dutch with you? Did they speak Dutch with you, those other kids?

WHITE: Well no, we were talking English fairly well by then. I mean, us kids. Mom and dad never learned to talk. They could understand, but they never learned to talk.

MOORE: So you spoke Dutch at home basically?

WHITE: Yes. Well. Mixed.

MOORE: You mixed it?

WHITE: Yeah. It was probably hard for mom to understand us at all, late years.

MOORE: (giggles) Um, so, the children all learned... Did the children all learn English?  
Even your older brother?

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: And, but your parents didn't learn it?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: And they didn't need to?

WHITE: No. That's right.

MOORE: What about your mom's friends? Did they have any friends?

WHITE: Never. She didn't have any. Except there in Milford, there was a Dutch family. And they'd talk, visit with her, a few times. But we didn't live there so long then. Ah... Mr. Buyerson in Coldwater had an ad in the paper. He wanted the large family with boys on his farm. My dad were he heard, heard about it, I don't know. But he heard about that big farm and he... applied for it, and Mr. Buyers rented it to us.

MOORE: The farm in Coldwater then?

WHITE: So then we keep move to the Coldwater valley.

MOORE: What year was that about?

WHITE: 1917.

MOORE: 1917.

WHITE: [not understood] Charlie? Oh he's out. Well, I think 1917.

MOORE: Ok. Oh. That's alright. We'll get back to that. But um, okay so you came to Coldwater in '17, you think?

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: And you had a big farm.

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: And were there...

WHITE: [interposed] And all the boys are home to work on this farm.

MOORE: Mmm. And you went to school here?

WHITE: And we all went to school here.

MOORE: And you were how old then? Was that... um, 11 years old?

WHITE: Yeah. I was... 12, eh... Well, whatever. I was in the sixth grade when we came to Coldwater.

MOORE: Sixth grade. And do you remember the school there? Here in Coldwater?

WHITE: Yeah, [not understood] school house.

MOORE: Any teachers, or... remember any people there at all?

WHITE: No... well, no. Uh...

MOORE: And what about

WHITE: [interposed] I was, see, we came in, the first of March or the last of March or April. And ah, passed through the seventh grade that spring. And then I had to go to a different school.

MOORE: And what do you remember ahh... about that time in Coldwater? What was it, was it, how was it moving to Coldwater? Were you happy about it? Or were you...

WHITE: Oh, yeah, I mean. I guess we always happier then in a way. Everybody had a job that was... good jobs doing housework. And I mean, [not understood] Irene was the only one. Jenny stayed home to help mom. And Alice ahh... she did, she worked out also. But she went to Ann Arbor for a couple years after. What do you call, college or... um...

MOORE: University of Michigan?

WHITE: To pass her... eighth grade so that she could go to a better nursing school?

MOORE: Oh, I see. I see. Um, now when you came, did you have any type of... did people make fun of you for ever being Dutch? Did anybody ever, have any bigotry ...

WHITE: Not that I know of. I mean, I was just too good to know maybe, but.

(both laugh)

MOORE: What was religious life like? Did you attend church, your family?

WHITE: [not understood]

MOORE: And which church did you attend?

WHITE: We went to the Baptist church for... if... we were married by a Baptist minister.

MOORE: In Coldwater?

WHITE: Yes.

MOORE: The Baptist church that you went to, was it very close to where you lived?

WHITE: Well, by that time... by the time, of course, I was married. In 1926. We lived out, my husband and I, on a farm, (name of place, Octavia?). Lived there for four years. It was out.

MOORE: So, your brothers and sisters, what occupations did they become eventually? What were the types of things...

WHITE: Well, 'cause they were... when they were on a big farm. They were, the milk business living. They had three milk wagons that they had to deliver. And ah, well, they moved. Left that place and dad and all the... small farm, 90 acres, 100 acres, whatever. And Charlie was still in school. And, Otto had a job, working for Millan's Company. I don't know, they all had jobs.

MOORE: That's funny because before you said your father worked for a creamery.

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WHITE: Well, yeah, but that was a long time ago.

MOORE: But he was always in the dairy business, was he always in the dairy business when he was on farms? Or was he also growing things, growing crops?

WHITE: Oh well. Yeah. Just a regular farming, they do everything except when we were on a big farm here in Coldwater. It was a dairy farm.

MOORE: It was a dairy farm.

WHITE: Yeah. They had hay and stuff like that, but um... how many cows were they milking Charlie?

MOORE: How many cows were there on the farm here in Coldwater?

Man: 83. 83 cows.

MOORE: 83 cows.

WHITE: I guess.

MOORE: You milked then by hand?

WHITE: Pardon?

Man: Had a machine.

MOORE: Had a machine?

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: Now, you went and then you moved down... did you ever live on that small farm that your parents bought, and after, Coldwater?

WHITE: Oh yeah. I... um... we walked practically every day, Sadie and I, er.

MOORE: So when you had that big dairy farm, you all lived together?

WHITE: Yeah, but then we kids were all kids in school then.

MOORE: But yeah, but when your dad went and bought the small farm, were you still all living there?

WHITE: Well, yeah, but that was five years later. We lived five years on the big farm.

MOORE: Ah. And then you get a small farm. And then the children, were children still home then?

WHITE: Ah... John and um, Charlie, Leo [not understood]. But the boys got jobs and different things in town.

MOORE: And um, what did you do for fun when you were living on a farm? What was your idea of fun that time? What did you do when you wanted to go have a good time? Hold on. (sound recording noises) When you lived on... when you lived on the farm now, what did you do for entertainment?

WHITE: Nothing.

(both laugh)

WHITE: Well no, I mean, no. We were just kids on a big farm then. We didn't really have any friends. We didn't need anything, I guess.

MOORE: Yeah, you had all... you had each other.

WHITE: Well, I mean, we went to school, come home, and have to do some chores, stuff like that. We had chickens and...

MOORE: So you had animals too on this farm.

WHITE: Oh yeah. And... uh.

MOORE: Did you have horses?

WHITE: Yeah. On a farm. But the boys, see there were four men there... Well, they didn't need a bunch of us kids messing around.

MOORE: Did you have your own pets? Did you have dogs? Cats?

WHITE: I don't... I don't think we had a dog. Had cats. Sadie and I got our... lamb one time. Had a pet lamb. It was blind, I believe. But I suppose it was butchered later on. (laughs)

MOORE: Oh. Did you think your family was satisfied with coming to the States? Or dissatisfied? How you...

WHITE: Very much.

MOORE: Very much satisfied?

WHITE: Yes.

MOORE: And did they talk about that ever?

WHITE: Well nobody wants to go back.

MOORE: And you had one sister in Holland still?

WHITE: Yes.

MOORE: And did she ever want to come here?

WHITE: I believe, she came over in, ah... '49, I believe she came over. That's the first I... you know, I, I didn't know her. I mean... ah... she had left home, working Amsterdam, before I was even born. She was that much older. So if she ever did

MOORE: [interposed] Why originally did your family come? What was the motivation for your family to come?

WHITE: [not understood] Dad has always said that at the... he wanted to come to America.

MOORE: You know why?

WHITE: Yeah. That's because it was the land of the honey.

MOORE: And do you think he felt pretty good about the decision?

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: And ah...

WHITE: Oh yeah... and ah, everybody's well satisfied with it and part of

MOORE: And did you ever go back to Holland very much?

WHITE: Ah... yeah, I went about 23 years old ago with ah... family with my youngest daughter and her family. Her husband and family. I was a widow by that time.

MOORE: Now after you, when you first got married you said, where did you live? Who did you marry? Did you someone from this town?

WHITE: Which we rented a farm in Octavia, that's six miles out.

MOORE: And how did you meet your husband?

WHITE: He was a milk man. After, after we left, the Buyers found a big farm. As uh, Garvin finally found Springfield, Missouri, rented the farm. And my husband was a brother to one of the Garvin women. And he was, delivering milk with them, in a milk wagon and horse, you know. And where I was working at, he was our milkman, so I got acquainted with him that way.

MOORE: And yeah, how old were you when you got married? How old were you when you were married?

WHITE: 22, 21. Well, I lacked two weeks of being 22.

MOORE: And um...

WHITE: We lived out there in Octavia for four years. And then we moved to Coldwater rather than farm over there.

MOORE: And kind of farming did you do? What kind of farming did you do?

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WHITE: Everything.

MOORE: Everything?

WHITE: Yeah, a little of everything.

MOORE: And what's everything mean, like for example?

WHITE: Well, well I mean... ah, hay, and corn, and milking some pigs, and having pigs.

MOORE: And did you have children?

WHITE: I have four.

MOORE: Four children. What ah, boys? Girls?

WHITE: Two of each.

MOORE: Two of each?

WHITE: Two of each?

MOORE: And did you speak Dutch to them at all?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: Never? So they never learned?

WHITE: No.

MOORE: And ah, but they were interested in Holland, were, have they ever been?

WHITE: Well, they're in the rest... they'd like... to... my youngest daughter, they've been to Holland or Europe or at least four times in the ten years. They'd like Europe. And we, we have relatives there. We keep in touch with them. They've visited us the last several years.

MOORE: Do you remember the first time you met, met your husband? [not understood] at that time?

WHITE: Yeah... he was a cute little guy, I thought.

MOORE: (laughs) And you met because he was delivering milk? How'd you met, you said?

WHITE: Yeah.

MOORE: And how did you know he was going to be your husband?

WHITE: Well... because... we got to talking and he come to see me. And, but, that was 23 years later.

MOORE: Oh so you know.

WHITE: We didn't, we didn't get married right away.

MOORE: And ah, so now you live in Coldwater right?

WHITE: Yes.

MOORE: And you live in a farm?

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WHITE: No. I, I... live next to a, by my youngest, [not understood] here in town. And they have one here in live. And they have a little house next to their house. And her mother lived there, but when she died ten, twelve years ago. And then they asked me if I... I had my own home then. And I... been talking [not understood]

MOORE: You did a good job. Good job.

WHITE: So anyway, I owned my own home for a while there. My husband died. And ah.

MOORE: When was that? When did your husband die? Was that?

WHITE: 1970.

MOORE: 1970.

WHITE: And so, then, my son-in-law's mother, my son's mother-in-law died. I had been talking about selling my home. So they said, do you want to live in this little house, next door here? So that's where I'm in now.

MOORE: And your children, what do they all do? What, what professions are your children, the four of them?

WHITE: Well, ah... my oldest is Marge, to the oldest one. She worked at the federal loan here in town, and she worked in a hospital, ah, she retired two years old. And my oldest son is next, he's the second one. He's retired from his job in... in Edison, Indiana. But so, working for ah, what do you call it... ah, I can't think now.

MOORE: But then, then you had a son after your daughter. You had a son then daughter?

WHITE: And then... and, two boys in the middle there.

MOORE: Oh two boys in the middle.

WHITE: And then, my oldest son lives in Edison, Indiana. And Jim lives here in Coldwater. And then Joyce is the youngest of the family. She was a school teacher in Detroit, but ah, she's also in real estate now.

MOORE: And do you, are you a pretty close knit family? Do you see each other quite a lot?

WHITE: Yes.

MOORE: How about your brothers and sisters? Are you in contact with them here in town?

WHITE: Well, yeah. When, ah, when they come to town, we generally get together.

MOORE: And you, you... who is surviving in the family now then? Four, five of you, right? How many of the fourteen children are surviving now?

WHITE: Oh. Just six of us.

MOORE: Six.

WHITE: Three girls. The boys.

MOORE: Um, so, in conclusion, do you think that your family, your family is happy that you came to America? Your family is happy that you came to America?

WHITE: My family?

MOORE: Yeah.

WHITEss: Well they better be. (laughs) Yeah. Yeah, I guess so.

MOORE: That's a good place to end. Is there anything else you'd like to say?  
Anything at all?

WHITE: (laughs) No, I didn't know I supposed to do all of this talking. I thought I would just be sitting here and letting Charlie do the... all of the [not understood] except you said Charlie didn't know anything about it.

MOORE: Well that's a good place to end this interview and I'd like to thank you for taking the time for us at the archives about your experience. This is Kate Moore signing off on the fifth of December, 1993, for the Ellis Island Oral History with Elizabeth Fisher.

WHITE: (laughs)