

OH-3039, John Dilts, 6-13-2014, WY In Flight

MARK JUNGE: All right, I'll help you -- I'm going to help you fill out this --

JOHN DILTS: That would be good.

MARK JUNGE: -- this form. Let me say something at the front of this tape. Today is Friday, the 13th. Are you -- are you superstitious?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: Good.

JOHN DILTS: Not -- not that superstitious.

MARK JUNGE: Today is Friday, the 13th, 2014. My name is Mark Junge, and I'm in the home of Betty and John Dilts, D-I-L-T-S, here at 622 Poplar Street, in Douglas, Wyoming.

JOHN DILTS: Eight-two-six-three-three.

MARK JUNGE: Eight-two-six-three-three, OK. I --

JOHN DILTS: Eight-two -- 82633.

MARK JUNGE: What's -- 82633?

JOHN DILTS: Uh-huh.

MARK JUNGE: OK, what I -- what I'm going to do is I'm going to fill this out, and you tell me if I'm wrong, OK?

JOHN DILTS: All right.

MARK JUNGE: All right. So you don't have an email. Not

applicable. Names -- your names of your parents?

[00:01:00]

JOHN DILTS: Fred Dilts, and Elnora Dilts.

MARK JUNGE: How do you spell Elnora?

JOHN DILTS: E-L-N-O-R-A.

MARK JUNGE: E-L --

JOHN DILTS: N-O-R-A.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, it's Elnora.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, Elnora. In fact, that's what they used to call her, Nora.

MARK JUNGE: Nora?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Do you have brothers and sisters?

JOHN DILTS: I have one brother. I had one brother.

MARK JUNGE: What's his -- what was his name?

JOHN DILTS: Fred Dilts III.

MARK JUNGE: Fred Dilts III. OK. So your dad apparently was your -- Fred Dilts II.

JOHN DILTS: First. My dad was Fred Dilts I.

MARK JUNGE: And then who was the second?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, I don't know. I always [thought?] --

MARK JUNGE: Your broth-- your brother.

JOHN DILTS: Fred Dilts, Jr., my brother was Fred Dilts, Jr.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, he was the second?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. [00:02:00]

MARK JUNGE: And Betty is the name of your spouse. Betty,
what's your maiden name?

JOHN DILTS: Payne.

MARK JUNGE: How do you spell that?

JOHN DILTS: P-A-Y-N-E.

MARK JUNGE: OK. Do you have children?

JOHN DILTS: Yes.

MARK JUNGE: What are their names?

JOHN DILTS: Jack is the oldest one, John C.

MARK JUNGE: John C.?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: You call him Zack?

JOHN DILTS: Jack, yeah. And Jerry.

MARK JUNGE: OK. Zack, would that be Z-A-C-K?

JOHN DILTS: J-A-C-K.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, Jack.

JOHN DILTS: Jack.

MARK JUNGE: I'm sorry, Jack. OK. And then the other
brother is Jerry?

JOHN DILTS: That's the son.

MARK JUNGE: Or, excuse me. Boy, am I out of it today.
Jerry --

JOHN DILTS: I only have two sons. Jack and --

BETTY DILTS: You have three [00:03:00] sons.

JOHN DILTS: Who?

BETTY DILTS: What's he saying?

MARK JUNGE: His -- your sons. You have two or three?

BETTY DILTS: Three.

JOHN DILTS: Jack, Jerry, and Steve.

BETTY DILTS: Steve, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: And Steve. OK. And you're retired, I assume.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: And your -- your occupation? What was your
former occupation?

JOHN DILTS: I was a rancher.

MARK JUNGE: OK. Here in Douglas? Or --

JOHN DILTS: Yes.

MARK JUNGE: You had two ranches?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, I have a bunch of them.

MARK JUNGE: You still --

JOHN DILTS: I had maybe a thousand acres that I got rid of.

BETTY DILTS: Well, you don't have to tell everything, John.

(laughs)

JOHN DILTS: Pardon?

MARK JUNGE: You know, well, usually people don't talk about

--

BETTY DILTS: Are you writing our biography, or are you just -

-
MARK JUNGE: Well, you know, I wanted to --

BETTY DILTS: It sounds like it.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, I kind of [00:04:00] -- well, see, this is information that is just real basic, you know, like where and when were you -- where were you raised, and so forth.

BETTY DILTS: Oh, really? Oh.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah.

BETTY DILTS: You think people are interested in that?

MARK JUNGE: Well, you never know. I always get it just in case. OK, so let's see. Date of birth, place of birth. Where -- you were born in Wyoming.

JOHN DILTS: Yes. Douglas.

MARK JUNGE: Yes. And where were you raised, mainly? Douglas?

JOHN DILTS: Yes, sir.

MARK JUNGE: Where did you -- where did you go to school, elementary school?

JOHN DILTS: Out in the country. And then I went to high school in Douglas.

MARK JUNGE: OK. And what about junior high?

JOHN DILTS: There wasn't any.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, there wasn't any?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: OK. So you went to elementary and junior high at the country school?

JOHN DILTS: Well, no, I went to high school in Douglas.
[00:05:00] The -- I went to country school -- well, my brother was two years older, and -- and really I went to school in the country until he graduated from country school.

MARK JUNGE: Do you remember the name of the school?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: OK. That's OK. Did you go to college?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: OK. You were in the military?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: And what -- we're just getting down towards the end here. What about your religion? What religious affiliation?

JOHN DILTS: Methodist.

MARK JUNGE: Methodist. And politically? Some people put -- allow me to put this in. Some don't. Politically are you a Republican, Democrat?

JOHN DILTS: A Republican.

MARK JUNGE: All right.

BETTY DILTS: (answers phone)

MARK JUNGE: Did you ever hold political office?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: Are you a member of any organizations?

JOHN DILTS: No. You know, my dad died [00:06:00] when I was 18, and I started ranching then.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

JOHN DILTS: But he was 70 when he died. So I was 18 when he was 70. So how old would he have been when I was born? 52? Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: You were 18 --

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: -- when he died. Well, yeah, he would have -- he would have been 52. And, let's see, according to your birth date here, he -- let's see, 35 -- he would have died in '43. 1943. Who is the most influential person in your life?

JOHN DILTS: My father.

MARK JUNGE: OK. And then I have down here last: what's the best thing you can say that you've done, your proudest achievement?

JOHN DILTS: [00:07:00] I got the place, and got rid of it to my kids without being taxed to death.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) OK. So you transferred -- I'm going to put down transferred ranch to kids...

JOHN DILTS: To avoid taxes.

MARK JUNGE: -- to kids to avoid taxes. OK. That's it.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: Now can you -- all you have to do is sign.

You're a donor. You're donating the archive -- the state to the state archives. So there's -- there's a place to sign your name, and then I'll put in the date.

JOHN DILTS: OK.

MARK JUNGE: You can put your signature in there, if you want. [00:08:00].

JOHN DILTS: What is today?

MARK JUNGE: Today is 6/13 -- 6/13/14. Great. That's all we need. OK, thank you.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: I'll put these two aside. OK. I usually start out by asking people, John, when and where they were born, but I already know that. You were born April 1st, 1925.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: So you just turned 89.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: And you were born in the local hospital? Or at home?

JOHN DILTS: Down here in the hospital. Down (inaudible) or right down not very far from --

MARK JUNGE: I know where it's at here in Douglas.

JOHN DILTS: In the old hospital.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, the old one.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Near the American Legion Hall, I think, right?

JOHN DILTS: Well, yeah, maybe.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, right across from it. [00:09:00]

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm. I don't know.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, OK. So you said you were raised on a ranch.

JOHN DILTS: Yes, sir.

MARK JUNGE: Where was that ranch?

JOHN DILTS: Well, I'll tell you my father never got married until he was...

BETTY DILTS: You were raised in LoBante, weren't you?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, I was raised south of Douglas.

MARK JUNGE: In -- on LoBante?

JOHN DILTS: On LoBante, correct, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK.

JOHN DILTS: And -- and, well, let's see. Then my brother -- my dad died, and my brother and I divided up the place. I picked the north one, land, or what -- [00:10:00] would head out north at that time. And he picked south of Douglas, which was -- it was farmland, and put up hay,

and -- and so forth.

MARK JUNGE: Mm-hmm. What was -- what was life like for you back there in the twenties and thirties? You lived right through the Depression.

JOHN DILTS: That's right. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: You didn't starve.

JOHN DILTS: No. I bought land. I -- I don't know how many acres it was at the time my dad died, but, anyway, I had 90 -- 90 thousand acres paid for when [00:11:00]-- when I gave -- when I gave the -- the place to the kids.

MARK JUNGE: Was that recently you gave the place to the kids?

JOHN DILTS: Well, I don't know. How long ago has it been, Betty? She don't under--

BETTY DILTS: I can't hear. What is it?

MARK JUNGE: Oh. I just wonder: how long have you lived here, and given your ranch to your kids?

BETTY DILTS: What do you have to have that?

MARK JUNGE: Well, I don't --

BETTY DILTS: I don't know.

JOHN DILTS: When did we --

BETTY DILTS: I don't know.

JOHN DILTS: When did we build this house?

BETTY DILTS: What?

JOHN DILTS: When did we build this house?

BETTY DILTS: I don't know.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. So, OK --

BETTY DILTS: Maybe they ought to go to the office to find all
this stuff out, because I don't know.

JOHN DILTS: This here, we built this house before the --

BETTY DILTS: When Jack started to -- '57 he started just --
he was born in '58.

JOHN DILTS: We built this house before the church was built
over here. [00:12:00]

BETTY DILTS: Sixty-four, or something like that. In the
sixties.

MARK JUNGE: Now as I understand it, you were in the Flying
Farmers.

JOHN DILTS: Yes, sir.

MARK JUNGE: What is the Flying Farmers?

JOHN DILTS: A flying organization of agriculture people.

MARK JUNGE: When did your aviation career begin?

BETTY DILTS: (inaudible) asking questions. (laughs)

JOHN DILTS: I got my license in --

BETTY DILTS: (laughs) You've got a life history.

JOHN DILTS: -- in 1925, or when I was 25.

MARK JUNGE: When you were 25. So it would have been 1950.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, what -- why -- why were you interested in flying?

JOHN DILTS: Because I like to go places quick. And another thing is I could kill coyotes.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, really?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. [00:13:00] We killed coyotes out of airplanes, and helicopters, and --

MARK JUNGE: You've got somebody at the door here, Betty.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

BETTY DILTS: I know.

JOHN DILTS: My niece.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK.

BETTY DILTS: She came in.

DEENA WANGLER: Hello.

JOHN DILTS: Hello.

MARK JUNGE: Hi.

DEENA WANGLER: Here's some crabapple butter.

BETTY DILTS: Well, thank you.

BETTY DILTS: Yeah.

JOHN DILTS: This is my niece.

DEENA WANGLER: Hi!

MARK JUNGE: Hi, I'm Mark.

DEENA WANGLER: What are you doing?

MARK JUNGE: Oh, we're just talking about flying.

DEENA WANGLER: Are you (inaudible) to a lie detector test?

MARK JUNGE: (laughs)

DEENA WANGLER: Is that what you're doing?

MARK JUNGE: (laughs)

BETTY DILTS: (laughs) Are you lying, Uncle?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. Well, I told him not to believe anything
I told him.

DEENA WANGLER: OK, well, that's probably a good thing.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) Yeah, we're having fun.

DEENA WANGLER: Are you? Good.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. So you wanted to get places fast. That's
why you got into aviation?

JOHN DILTS: Well, I don't know.

BETTY DILTS: I think those are pretty gruesome questions.
Have you got a --

JOHN DILTS: Is she into this --

BETTY DILTS: -- a license to do this? Or. [00:14:00]

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, I work -- I'm working on behalf of the
state of Wyoming.

BETTY DILTS: Oh, you are?

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. Yeah. So this -- this tape would go into
the state archives.

BETTY DILTS: Oh.

DEENA WANGLER: Oh, cool.

MARK JUNGE: So we're hoping that -- that we can get as much information as we can about people who flew in Wyoming, and what they know about flying, where they learned, what they accomplished, and some of the people that they knew in flying. And that's what we'll put in the state archives.

DEENA WANGLER: My uncle flew better than anybody.

MARK JUNGE: Really?

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah, he was great.

MARK JUNGE: Did you fly with him?

DEENA WANGLER: No, but I heard it. (laughs) No, I knew.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

JOHN DILTS: She --

DEENA WANGLER: I lived in Denver for a long time.

JOHN DILTS: Did your -- didn't -- weren't you kind of raised on LoBante?

DEENA WANGLER: No, I flew with him. He -- you took me up to check on our property, remember?

JOHN DILTS: No.

DEENA WANGLER: And we landed on this little [00:15:00] hill, and I saw a snake, and ran back in the helicopter. I did, I flew with him.

JOHN DILTS: (laughs).

MARK JUNGE: OK. I wish you had time to sit here and talk

with us a little bit.

DEENA WANGLER: Well, I could, yeah, sure.

MARK JUNGE: Do you mind?

DEENA WANGLER: No.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK. Just help -- help John out a little bit, and then maybe we can --

JOHN DILTS: Ah.

MARK JUNGE: -- you can trigger his memory on some of these things.

DEENA WANGLER: Oh, I don't know. Like I said, I wasn't here a whole lot. I was raised in the city.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, she --

DEENA WANGLER: You know who would be really good to talk to is maybe Jack, or one of his kids too.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

DEENA WANGLER: If they could give you their number.

MARK JUNGE: Is that Jerry? The one they call Jerry?

DEENA WANGLER: I don't know. Jack, Jerry, or Steve.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: OK. Are they here in town?

DEENA WANGLER: I don't know where they are. Where -- where's the boys?

JOHN DILTS: Jack is in Albuquerque.

DEENA WANGLER: Is he?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

DEENA WANGLER: Or is he up there at the ranch?

JOHN DILTS: Jerry has a ranch [00:16:00] at --

DEENA WANGLER: Well, Jack has a cell phone. I'll get it
for you.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

DEENA WANGLER: I think I have it.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah, I think it's in my purse. Let me run
out and get it.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

DEENA WANGLER: They would be able to help you a ton.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK. So what are your best memories of
flying, John?

JOHN DILTS: I just did it. (laughs) And I wasn't -- I -- I
bought a helicopter, and I flew a helicopter for quite a
while, and an airplane.

MARK JUNGE: Why did you fly a helicopter?

JOHN DILTS: To round up sheep, and -- and -- and hunt
coyotes.

MARK JUNGE: Oh. Wasn't that expensive?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know. [Provided?] (inaudible)
[00:17:00]. (inaudible) was all right.

MARK JUNGE: So you had a license for helicopters, and fixed

wing?

JOHN DILTS: Yes, sir. And I had a helicopter, a Jet Ranger.

MARK JUNGE: A Jet Ranger?

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: OK. Well, here -- there was a pen over here
somewhere. I had a pen.

JOHN DILTS: (inaudible) a pen?

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. Thank you. OK. So this -- you're going
to give -- what is your name again?

DEENA WANGLER: I'm Deena.

MARK JUNGE: Deena. How do you spell it?

DEENA WANGLER: D-E-E-N-A.

MARK JUNGE: And your last name?

DEENA WANGLER: W-A-N-G-L-E-R.

MARK JUNGE: Wangler.

DEENA WANGLER: Uh-huh.

MARK JUNGE: And you're where -- are you here in Douglas?

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: And you're the niece.

DEENA WANGLER: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: OK. And --

BETTY DILTS: I think Uncle John could fly with his eyes
closed, huh?

MARK JUNGE: Really?

DEENA WANGLER: Let's see. Jack's cell is 505 --

MARK JUNGE: Jack. And he's where?

DEENA WANGLER: In Albuquerque, or up there. [00:18:00]

MARK JUNGE: Five-zero-five.

DEENA WANGLER: At his ranch. 328-3963.

MARK JUNGE: Three-nine-six-three. Got it.

DEENA WANGLER: And I do have Steve's too. His cell is 351

--

MARK JUNGE: Three-five-one.

DEENA WANGLER: Two-four-nine-nine. I don't have Jerry's,

so.

MARK JUNGE: Steve, OK. Now that's -- that's Wyoming, 307.

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Three-five-one.

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: And you don't have Jerry's. Is he up in

[Gillette?]?

JOHN DILTS: Jerry is --

DEENA WANGLER: He's in -- close to Cody, or something.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, he's --

DEENA WANGLER: Where's Jerry at, Aunt Betty? Where does

he live now?

BETTY DILTS: Riverton.

DEENA WANGLER: Oh, Riverton.

JOHN DILTS: Riverton. Riverton, Wyoming.

DEENA WANGLER: I'm going to see if he could get a copy of
this stuff. That would be fun, wouldn't it?

MARK JUNGE: Has anything ever been written?

DEENA WANGLER: Huh?

MARK JUNGE: Has -- she said be careful, right?

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah, well. [00:19:00]

MARK JUNGE: She's a little bit nervous about this.

DEENA WANGLER: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Do you have any
identification?

MARK JUNGE: Yeah.

DEENA WANGLER: Here, Betty.

MARK JUNGE: Betty?

DEENA WANGLER: He has some identification.

MARK JUNGE: You know, I haven't been asked for this for a
long time. But -- but, you know, that's why I carry --

JOHN DILTS: (inaudible)

MARK JUNGE: Oh, here, here. Let me get that. Here we go.
Just put it up here.

DEENA WANGLER: Guess what my doggie did? She peed before
she came in.

BETTY DILTS: Pooped?

DEENA WANGLER: No, peed before she came in.

BETTY DILTS: Oh, good for her.

MARK JUNGE: There's my -- my card.

BETTY DILTS: OK.

MARK JUNGE: The state of Wyoming gave me that.

DEENA WANGLER: Oral historian.

BETTY DILTS: All right.

DEENA WANGLER: Now are they going to get a copy of this?

Or.

MARK JUNGE: Well, you can. So far it hasn't been too much because we've been filling out the form, and talking.

But, yeah, you can -- I can make you a copy.

BETTY DILTS: Do you want to leave that? Or --

MARK JUNGE: No, you --

BETTY DILTS: -- is that ours?

MARK JUNGE: You could keep it, sure. [00:20:00] For future reference.

BETTY DILTS: Put that in your pocket.

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah. There, is that better?

BETTY DILTS: Yes.

DEENA WANGLER: OK. You should always ask.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, well, it doesn't hurt. And my mother used to say, "It never hurts to ask."

DEENA WANGLER: It doesn't hurt to ask.

MARK JUNGE: OK. So, Deena, do you want to sit down, and --

DEENA WANGLER: Well, I need to go to my store.

MARK JUNGE: Oh.

DEENA WANGLER: I'm kind of late.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

DEENA WANGLER: Really, really late.

MARK JUNGE: You have a store here in town?

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah.

BETTY DILTS: Do you want me to stay?

JOHN DILTS: No, go.

BETTY DILTS: I can go off later.

JOHN DILTS: No. But I'm going to tell him he shouldn't believe anyway.

BETTY DILTS: He can make it now. He's going to publish it, so try to tell him the truth, because I don't know everything.

JOHN DILTS: Well, I'll try to --

MARK JUNGE: Well, let's put it --

JOHN DILTS: -- do that.

MARK JUNGE: -- this way.

DEENA WANGLER: And he has Jack's number that he could call to confirm too.

BETTY DILTS: Give him your telephone number.

DEENA WANGLER: OK. It's 358-5592.

MARK JUNGE: Five-five-nine-two? [00:21:00]

DEENA WANGLER: Mm-hmm, or 4485 is my work. 307. I live here.

MARK JUNGE: Four-four-eight-five.

DEENA WANGLER: I don't have -- I have a cell, but I don't even know what it is.

MARK JUNGE: OK. Let me -- let me be upfront with you about this. Probably there won't be many people to listen to this. Maybe none for a long time. It's a matter of interest more usually for family members. But if there's something that we can add to the history archives somewhere down the road, somebody's going to want to say, or want to know a little bit about John.

BETTY DILTS: Yeah?

MARK JUNGE: Well, just --

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah, I think that's important.

BETTY DILTS: I do too.

MARK JUNGE: Guess what? We have a -- we have an interview with him done in 2014.

DEENA WANGLER: And that's huge.

BETTY DILTS: That's good.

DEENA WANGLER: So you put on your thinking cap.

JOHN DILTS: OK.

DEENA WANGLER: OK?

JOHN DILTS: I'll try to.

DEENA WANGLER: I love you.

MARK JUNGE: Thanks, Deena.

DEENA WANGLER: Mm-hmm. I'm going to grab my water jug.

Where you going?

BETTY DILTS: I'm going to bridge club.

DEENA WANGLER: Bridge? Well, you have fun.

BETTY DILTS: Yeah, I will.

MARK JUNGE: Were you raised in Denver?

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah, kind of.

MARK JUNGE: I was too. [00:22:00]

DEENA WANGLER: And (inaudible) were -- and what high school did you go to?

MARK JUNGE: Lutheran High School.

DEENA WANGLER: I went to George Washington before it turned bad.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) Yeah.

DEENA WANGLER: I think it turned right bad when I left.

MARK JUNGE: I think I substitute-taught at George Washington one time.

DEENA WANGLER: Did you?

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. I was a teacher for a little while.

DEENA WANGLER: Well, it is -- it was a Jewish high school, and then that was nice. And then they shipped blacks over, and it got a little scary. That's when I

graduated.

MARK JUNGE: OK. What year was that you graduated? I graduated --

DEENA WANGLER: Seventy.

MARK JUNGE: OK. I'm older than you by nine years. I graduated in '61.

DEENA WANGLER: OK.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

DEENA WANGLER: So George Washington was good then.

(laughs)

MARK JUNGE: Well, it was fairly new when I was subbing in it.

DEENA WANGLER: Was it?

MARK JUNGE: It was -- Lincoln, Washington, Jeff-- not Jefferson.

BETTY DILTS: I'll see you later, then.

JOHN DILTS: OK.

MARK JUNGE: So long, Betty.

JOHN DILTS: (inaudible)

MARK JUNGE: Lincoln was a fairly new school when I went to high school, Washington was. North, south, east [00:23:00] and west were the old schools.

DEENA WANGLER: Yeah, I had some friends who went to south. Boy, this is digging way back. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, it is.

DEENA WANGLER: (inaudible) But, yeah, you just remember
it all, because you know what? You're a fantastic man.

JOHN DILTS: (laughs)

DEENA WANGLER: I want you in history. See ya! It was
nice meeting you.

MARK JUNGE: Nice to meet you too, Deena.

JOHN DILTS: My dad came to Wyoming from Kansas in 1902, and
homesteaded out north here. And, well, that's when land
was worth about a dollar and a half an acre.

MARK JUNGE: You should have bought it all -- you should have
bought up the whole county.

JOHN DILTS: Well, I'll tell you what, I did. I bought and
paid for, as I say, 90 thousand acres when [00:24:00] --
which I turned over to the kids. (phone rings)

MARK JUNGE: Well, that's -- I think --

JOHN DILTS: That's the phone.

MARK JUNGE: Hang on a minute. I think -- can that go into
voice messaging? Can that just go into voice messaging?

JOHN DILTS: I just -- go ahead. Maybe I could answer it.

MARK JUNGE: I think -- I think they're already --

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. OK.

JOHN DILTS: Hey -- (caller leaves message).

MARK JUNGE: OK, that was the doctor's office, just reminding
-- reminding your wife of an appointment on Monday.

JOHN DILTS: OK. [00:25:00]

MARK JUNGE: I get those all the time for my wife and me.

OK. So, anyway, your dad came in here from Kansas?

JOHN DILTS: Yes.

MARK JUNGE: Why did he come to Wyoming?

JOHN DILTS: Well, he had a -- well, he -- there was a whole
bunch of Diltses in Kansas, and that's one reason I think
he came to Wyoming.

MARK JUNGE: Too many Diltses?

JOHN DILTS: Well, yeah. And, anyway, well, he homesteaded
out north here about 60 miles. It took him all day to
ride a horse to town, at that time. And he came in and
went back out. You know, come in one day, go out the
next day, and so forth.

MARK JUNGE: Was he a pretty hard worker?

JOHN DILTS: Well, [00:26:00] I don't know what you'd call
hard work, but he developed a homestead, and bought land.
He bought more land around, and whatever.

MARK JUNGE: Mm-hmm. So he died when you were 18.

JOHN DILTS: Yes, sir.

MARK JUNGE: So then you had to take over the ranch?

JOHN DILTS: Yes, sir. He was 70 when he died -- when he

died.

MARK JUNGE: So you had to take over the ranch, or your brother?

JOHN DILTS: Well, my brother -- my brother was, well, he could have taken it. That was he had a place south of Douglas where, well, my dad -- my dad [00:27:00] started ranching down. Anyway, well, we divided up the place when my dad died. My brother -- that south ranch was fenced and developed, and north it wasn't. There wasn't a lot of -- there wasn't a lot of fences, and --

MARK JUNGE: Were you -- were you sheep or cattle ranchers?

JOHN DILTS: Sheep. Sheep, basically. And, well, when my dad -- we had about a thousand cattle, and ten thousand sheep.

MARK JUNGE: Ten thousand sheep?

JOHN DILTS: Ten thousand sheep.

MARK JUNGE: Who did the herding?

JOHN DILTS: We hired shepherders.

MARK JUNGE: Where were they from? Were they from the Basques?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, from --

MARK JUNGE: From --

JOHN DILTS: New Mexico, and Arizona, and Texas, and Mexico.

[00:28:00]

MARK JUNGE: Did -- go ahead.

JOHN DILTS: And, well, I started kind of running the place.

And, hell, I could -- I'd even buy booze when I was about 19. (laughs) I was -- I was the owner, you know.

And...

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. Did you -- did you drink illegal booze in the Prohibition days?

JOHN DILTS: I suppose.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) Almost -- a lot of people did. I shouldn't say everyone, but a lot of people did. OK.

JOHN DILTS: When was the Prohibition days?

MARK JUNGE: Thirties.

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah, I drank booze. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: Oh, excuse me. The '20s and '30s.

JOHN DILTS: OK. Because I was born in -- in '25, and Dad died [00:29:00] 25 and --

MARK JUNGE: Forty-three.

JOHN DILTS: Forty-three, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, I should have said when the Volstead Act was passed, Prohibition went into effect.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: And then President Franklin Roosevelt came into office in '32, and Prohibition ended. In fact, that's --

JOHN DILTS: Oh, I remember him.

MARK JUNGE: You do?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah, Franklin D. Roosevelt.

MARK JUNGE: Did you like him?

JOHN DILTS: No, he was a Democrat.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) So you've always been a Republican.

JOHN DILTS: Yes.

MARK JUNGE: OK. All right. Now you worked on the ranch because -- I mean, you weren't in the service because you worked on the ranch.

JOHN DILTS: That's right. And, well, (inaudible) when -- as I say, when my dad died, we had ten thousand sheep, and [00:30:00] -- and about a thousand head of cattle.

MARK JUNGE: Do you have any stories to tell about those early days, raising -- being raised up on the ranch? Do you have any memories?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know. What are you supposed to have memories --

MARK JUNGE: Well, what happened to you when you lived on the ranch?

JOHN DILTS: I used to come -- well, I used to have shepherders. And I used to have one for, well, in the wintertime we had three thousand sheep with one herder. And in the summer about eight or nine hundred head, or a thousand sheep, ewes and lambs. And, let's see.

[00:31:00] And, oh, hell. I used to go on -- I used to hire fellows, and (laughs) I wasn't old enough to drink, but I'd go drinking with them.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs)

JOHN DILTS: And, well, I was just like a fellow who was old enough to drink. I --

MARK JUNGE: What -- do you have any memories of the cattle end of the business?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. Rounding them up, and branding -- branding cattle.

MARK JUNGE: Was that hard work?

JOHN DILTS: Well, I used to -- well, did you ever wrassle a calf?

MARK JUNGE: No.

JOHN DILTS: Well, we never used to wrassle -- brand until June, and the calves were pretty good-sized in June. And [00:32:00] we used to have these guys [heel?] them, and stretch them out, and brand them. Because of the -- because, well, you heeled them, and then you'd grab them by the tail, and plop them down, and brand them.

MARK JUNGE: Who -- did you do some branding too?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yes. Branded them, and castrated, and -- that's cutting the nuts out of them.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah.

JOHN DILTS: And, well, we branded -- we sheared sheep, and we didn't shear the sheep until the tenth of June. And -- and then, later on, we started [00:33:00] (inaudible). Well, I ran into a fellow by the name of Leroy Moore, who is the father of Eddie Moore, and his family. And he had been down to South America, visiting down there. And they -- down there they built fences, and turned sheep loose. They didn't have any herders. And, well, hell, I went through that, you know, not having herders, and turning them loose. And the sheep went from -- the pounds went from maybe 60 pounds to 80 pounds.

MARK JUNGE: Why?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. And the wool, I used to sell [00:34:00] a lot of wool.

MARK JUNGE: Why did they gain, in terms of the wool weight, why did -- why did you have more wool?

JOHN DILTS: They just did better, the sheep did better.

MARK JUNGE: Did you -- did you know all the Moores, the Moore family?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Were they neighbors?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, they're up north, north of -- well, we probably joined our place (inaudible), you know, when you own 90 thousand acres, you've got more neighbors.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. Yeah. Did you socialize much with your neighbors?

JOHN DILTS: No. No.

MARK JUNGE: You know, John, it sounds like your life was a life of mainly work, but that -- that's not true, is it?

JOHN DILTS: Well, [00:35:00] I started at a direction, and I kept going that direction.

MARK JUNGE: Mm-hmm. Why -- when did you first get interested in flying? Do you remember how old you were? Were you just a kid?

JOHN DILTS: No. Well, I was -- I don't know. Hmm. I don't know.

MARK JUNGE: Well, what does it take to be a good pilot, either a helicopter pilot, or a fixed wing pilot?

JOHN DILTS: A desire. So I did that, and -- and I don't know the year I bought the helicopter. I don't remember that.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, that's OK.

JOHN DILTS: And started flying, and, well, we'd round up sheep with the helicopters. Great. [00:36:00] You know, well, to get back to the place where -- with no shepherders, and turned them loose, and [fixed the?] fencing. I hired one fellow that built 300 miles of fence for me.

MARK JUNGE: Three hundred miles?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, [Marcy Bricket?]. And he did that himself. And -- and, anyway, well, I turned the sheep loose while, as Leroy Moore was telling about down in -- in South America they turned them loose, and they did well. The sheep gained weight, and grew better wool, and -- and had more -- a bigger percentage of lambs.

MARK JUNGE: Do you [00:37:00] remember how tough it was in the springtime, with spring blizzards?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. Nineteen forty-nine blizzard is -- I lost, oh, hell, maybe three or four thousand head of sheep.

MARK JUNGE: You couldn't save them?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, no, hell, no. It was a storm that would blow you over in the corner, and they'd pile up and kill each other, you know, piled up, and --

MARK JUNGE: Suffocate?

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm, whatever. They died. And there wasn't -- it wasn't a planned deal. It was you did it, whatever the (inaudible). You did the best you could.

MARK JUNGE: Did you have the National Guard fly [00:38:00] hay down to you?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: Because they did that, you know, the National

Guard.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. Yep.

MARK JUNGE: What did you -- did you work with horses, or did you work with tractors?

JOHN DILTS: Well, the sheepherders had horses, when we had sheepherders, and then they turned them loose, you know. And then -- and then things started going well. And, well, I had -- as I say, I had 90,000 acres paid for. Land that I'd bought and paid for with whatever I was doing. I didn't owe any money on it.

MARK JUNGE: How often did you get to Douglas, to town?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, I kept going through it all the time.

[00:39:00] See, I had a ranch south of Douglas, a Miller -- Miller -- Millers owned it for 40 years, or 50 years, the ranch. And, well, it's [Jenny?] -- Jenny had -- I bought it. That was the first one I bought, I think.

MARK JUNGE: A Jenny?

JOHN DILTS: Jenny, yes.

MARK JUNGE: Were those biplanes? Two wings?

JOHN DILTS: No. Well, they were -- no. My first airplane was a Aeronca 7AC, whatever that is. Do you remember that?

MARK JUNGE: No. (laughs) I don't know planes very well. I shouldn't be doing interviews, because I don't know

planes.

JOHN DILTS: Then I got a 185. Are you familiar with them?

MARK JUNGE: Mm-hmm.

JOHN DILTS: They [00:40:00] -- 250 horsepower, or 280, or something like that.

MARK JUNGE: What was your favorite plane?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, I think that 185.

MARK JUNGE: It was the easiest to fly?

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm. And I'd -- I landed out in the country, and, well, I landed out places you wouldn't land, ordinarily.

MARK JUNGE: Really? Like what?

JOHN DILTS: Out in the sand, and, you know, and along the cliffs. I landed wherever I wanted to.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, but there was sagebrush in this country too, wasn't there?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. Yeah, there was sagebrush, and grass, you know. And now one time I landed out -- out north there, and -- and [00:41:00] (voice on a walkie-talkie) it wasn't the 185, but it was -- might have been the Aeronca 7AC. But I'd landed where you -- I walked over to -- from the plane to do what I wanted to, to talk to whoever or, you know, the people.

MARK JUNGE: Did you ever have any accidents?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: That's why you're still alive.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. (laughs) Yeah, let's see. I don't believe I did.

MARK JUNGE: Ever have any close calls?

JOHN DILTS: Probably.

MARK JUNGE: You don't recall those, though.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: It's probably good that you don't. (laughs)

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: So did a lot of ranchers in this part of the country fly? Or was it just --

JOHN DILTS: Well, I don't know. You know, every -- this land is kind of expensive. [00:42:00] And -- and, well, I [had a?] plane. I could afford it. So.

MARK JUNGE: Gas was a little cheaper in those days, wasn't it?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, God. (laughs) 12 -- what I first -- I think it was 12 or 15 cents a gallon.

MARK JUNGE: Did you use aviation fuel? Or just --

JOHN DILTS: Yes, aviation. Aviation fuel.

MARK JUNGE: So where did you -- did you have your fuel shipped out to the ranch? Or.

JOHN DILTS: Yes, I had some out the ranch.

MARK JUNGE: How did you -- go ahead. I'm sorry.

JOHN DILTS: I was just taking a breath.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK. Did you fly every day?

JOHN DILTS: Or just when I wanted to, and needed to. I didn't -- I didn't have any -- no set day to go out and fly, or anything.

MARK JUNGE: No. [00:43:00] Just when you needed to.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: Or wanted to.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: You know, now, John, I'm getting the impression from you that you flew because it was part of the ranch work, it was part of the job.

JOHN DILTS: Yes, that's -- that's it.

MARK JUNGE: But didn't you -- didn't you -- you must have enjoyed it, or you wouldn't have done it.

JOHN DILTS: (laughs) Well, I was capable.

MARK JUNGE: What does it take to be a pilot, I mean, to be a capable pilot?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know. Just went out and did it.

MARK JUNGE: Well, let's see. What else do we need to talk about here? When did you -- did you quit flying recently, or have you -- have you --

JOHN DILTS: Well, my right eye, well, I either -- I can't

see your face, you know, with my right eye.

MARK JUNGE: Right. [00:44:00]

JOHN DILTS: And I -- it went haywire on me, and, anyway, that's one of the things I started to stop flying.

MARK JUNGE: But did you fly even after you got done ranching, just for fun?

JOHN DILTS: Well, I was never done ranching. I was always ranching, (laughs) and fly.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK. OK.

JOHN DILTS: There wasn't any particular time.

MARK JUNGE: Where were some of the places you went to in your plane?

JOHN DILTS: Hmm. I flew to -- to Kansas. To I had my relatives in Kansas. And I flew to -- flew all over. I flew to... [00:45:00]

MARK JUNGE: How about Wyoming? Did you fly to some of the airports in Wyoming?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, anywhere I wanted to go in Wyoming.

MARK JUNGE: Do you remember the Medicine Bow airport?

JOHN DILTS: No, I never was there.

MARK JUNGE: OK. And Douglas's old airport was out here where the international speedway is.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. Yeah. Well, the old Douglas airport was right in town when I first started flying. In fact, it's

a racetrack -- where the racetrack is now. Let's see.

And then the Douglas airport -- oh, whatever (inaudible).

MARK JUNGE: Casper? Did you fly to Casper?

JOHN DILTS: [00:46:00] Oh, yes, I flew to Casper.

MARK JUNGE: Do you remember anything about the old Army air base that was there in the forties?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. I didn't land there. You weren't supposed to land at -- in fact, during the war here, in Douglas, you couldn't land at the airport. They stopped you from landing at the airport during the war. And so, well, I don't know.

MARK JUNGE: Do you remember the old prisoner of war camp?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yes.

MARK JUNGE: What do you remember about that?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, they had prisoners. (laughs) For a while, let's see. Are you familiar with Douglas?

MARK JUNGE: A little bit.

JOHN DILTS: [00:47:00] Down at the south end of town -- which is now south end of town. It was in town. I landed at -- I landed there for -- because I couldn't land at the airport. They wouldn't let you, because of the war. And I landed -- just landed.

MARK JUNGE: In a grass field?

JOHN DILTS: Huh?

MARK JUNGE: In a grass field?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, it was -- aw, hell. Do you know where my office is?

MARK JUNGE: No.

JOHN DILTS: Well, I've got an office down there, and it was down south end of town. And it was I landed on that for quite a while, because you couldn't land at the airport. No military airport, no airport that the military planes would land at, I couldn't land at. [00:48:00]

MARK JUNGE: Did you ever see any of the prisoners, the Italians and the Germans that were there?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. They worked around the area out here.

MARK JUNGE: I guess they helped out the ranchers a little bit.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Did they help you out?

JOHN DILTS: Hmm. Probably. Probably they did. Yeah, they -- hell, they were just regular people. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: Except they were prisoners. (laughs)

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. Yeah. So you had an office on the south edge of town?

JOHN DILTS: I do now.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, you do now.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Do you go to the office very much?

JOHN DILTS: Once or twice a week.

MARK JUNGE: What kind of an office is it? Is it part of
your ranch operation?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. My son's -- my son's -- we have
[00:49:00] a sec-- secretary.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK.

JOHN DILTS: But the secretary writes checks, and I sign
them, and --

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK.

JOHN DILTS: And they sign them (inaudible).

MARK JUNGE: Now does anybody else fly in your family? Your
sons?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: They fly?

JOHN DILTS: Uh-huh. And my grandchildren fly.

MARK JUNGE: Really?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. (laughs) Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Wow. Did you teach them how to fly?

JOHN DILTS: No. They took lessons from our person that's
the teacher.

MARK JUNGE: You weren't -- you didn't want to teach them?
Or you wanted to make sure they had a good edu--

JOHN DILTS: Well, they wanted -- well, they had to get a --
taught proper (inaudible).

MARK JUNGE: Certification.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. You wish you could still fly?

JOHN DILTS: No. Hell, I haven't [flied?], but I don't want
to. I don't [00:50:00] I hardly leave this here house.
And I go on Thursdays, and -- Tuesdays, and Thursdays to
go play gin rummy, and that's the only time I leave the
house. I built this house.

MARK JUNGE: You did.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm. And -- and it's not a bad house.

MARK JUNGE: No, it's a nice -- in a nice location too.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm. Well, that was -- hell, there wasn't
any -- anybody here. Well, Eddie Moore built the house
right next door to us. Eddie was my neighbor. The
Moore's (inaudible), and he built the one next door, and I
built this one.

MARK JUNGE: Is he still living there?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, no. He's dead.

MARK JUNGE: Eddie's dead?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. And [00:51:00] let's see.

MARK JUNGE: Well, there's Bill Moore, and Lee --

JOHN DILTS: That's Eddie's brother, Bill, and Lee --

MARK JUNGE: And Jim?

JOHN DILTS: -- Lee Moore.

MARK JUNGE: Lee Moore, Jim Moore.

JOHN DILTS: Well, Jim is a kid. One of the Moores' kids,
one of the Moore boys sons.

MARK JUNGE: That Moore ranch is very historic.

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. Yeah, they were my neighbors out
north.

MARK JUNGE: Did the Bozeman Trail go through your property?

JOHN DILTS: Oregon Trail. I don't know about Bozeman.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

JOHN DILTS: Because the Oregon -- through the property south
of Douglas, the Oregon Trail came through that, and went
right on up, west a little bit.

MARK JUNGE: Could you still see the ruts from the wagons?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: [00:52:00] John, did you ever take time, and
going -- this is going back to the ranch, and I know
we're jumping around here a little bit, but I'm -- I'm
just thinking of various things. When you mentioned your
ranch south of town, that's on LoBante Creek.

JOHN DILTS: Yes, sir.

MARK JUNGE: Did you ever take time to fish?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Was there good fishing out there?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yep.

MARK JUNGE: What did you catch?

JOHN DILTS: Trout, (inaudible), well, and salmon. Somewhere
I've got a fish.

MARK JUNGE: Mounted? Oh, that's OK --

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: -- I can look at it later.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, it's about that long. Yeah. I used to
fish, and -- and, hell, I had hunting meat. I had deer,
and antelope. In fact, we used to eat antelope. That's
what we used to eat. We had [00:53:00] -- see, we didn't
have any -- before we had any airports much, the antelope
and stuff were running loose everywhere. And it's good,
you know, antelope. Fried antelope.

MARK JUNGE: Well, they were probably living on -- on grass.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. Yeah, they were.

MARK JUNGE: They will eat sage, and I suppose there was a
little sage taste to them once in a while.

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. All that. They'd eat anything they
wanted.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) Did you ever have any problems with
deer and antelope in the alfalfa, and eating haystacks?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: No?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: Did you ever have any elk?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: And I suppose you ate a few elk.

JOHN DILTS: Oh, not very many. I didn't buy licenses.

[00:54:00] (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: Well, a lot of people didn't, you know?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: If you were a rancher, I suppose that you felt it was your land, and you could do what you wanted to.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, I remember eating -- so I'd eat them. They ate, and I ate them. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) Well, the Flying Farmers organization was the main thing I wanted to talk to you about.

JOHN DILTS: Oh.

MARK JUNGE: Do you recall any of your -- do you have any memories of the organization, or the people?

JOHN DILTS: I think it cost \$20 a year to [join?] the Flying Farmers.

MARK JUNGE: Did you fly to their meetings?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, maybe one or two. Not very many. I didn't go to the meetings. I wasn't a -- I wasn't a person that went to meetings. That went to meetings. When we used

to have [00:55:00] Flying Farmers here in Douglas, they'd come -- I'd go to meetings here, occasionally.

MARK JUNGE: What did they do at these meetings?

JOHN DILTS: Talk. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: So it was a social gathering.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: But the common interest was what? Flying, I suppose.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: OK. So was there a lot of talk about flying?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know. I don't remember.

MARK JUNGE: Were the Moores flying too?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. Yeah, Eddie was a pilot. And I suppose, well, I don't know. I think my children and grandchildren are -- I know they are doing it. They want to. My grandchildren are pilots. And I guess -- I don't know [00:56:00] whether Eddie's kids are doing it or not.

MARK JUNGE: Are you a practical person? I mean, are you, you know, I don't think many pilots live as long as you've lived without being practical.

JOHN DILTS: Hmm.

MARK JUNGE: You know? They say there's -- there's old people, and there's pilots, but there's not many old pilots.

JOHN DILTS: Oh, is that right?

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. (laughs)

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. Well, hell, I flew for a good number of years.

MARK JUNGE: Do you think it takes more skill to fly a helicopter than a fixed wing?

JOHN DILTS: No, I think fixed wing was more -- a helicopter, hell, anybody can fly them.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) Really?

JOHN DILTS: (laughs) Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: You could teach me how to fly a helicopter?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: You don't know me. (laughs) No, I couldn't fly a helicopter.

JOHN DILTS: (laughs) Yeah, I'll tell you what, [00:57:00] you move the [cyclic?] about that far, and you're -- you're -- you're going that way, or you're going that way, or that way, you know. And to go this way, and back up, do everything. And it's -- it's --

MARK JUNGE: How did you -- tell me how you herded sheep with a helicopter. How did that work?

JOHN DILTS: I didn't herd sheep with a helicopter.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, you didn't?

JOHN DILTS: I turned sheep loose. I'd go -- if I wanted to

round, rounded them up with a helicopter, but you don't herd sheep, you know, out on a -- you can just go like if sheep are over there, you come over here and land it a little bit. And they'll start moving where you want to.

MARK JUNGE: I guess I used the wrong word, "herding sheep." That -- to you that means something entirely different. I -- I guess what I was talking about was pushing them in --

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: And [00:58:00] that's what you're talking about.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Did you shear sheep yourself?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: You had shearers.

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah, we had -- well, hell, I could shear, but I -- that's work. (laughs) Those shearers would come and shear 200 a day, 200 sheep, which is quite a bunch.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. Yeah, I'd say.

JOHN DILTS: And, well, it started out, you know, the -- you've seen sheep shears?

MARK JUNGE: Hand shears?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. They're about this long, and --

MARK JUNGE: About six inches long?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. And they used to (inaudible). And then -
- and then they got the machines, you know, the, well,
[00:59:00] it started out machines you'd get them pretty
close. But if you sheared them early, you had to leave a
little wool on in case of a storm. And so you left a
little wool on. And our (inaudible) we used to [shear
on?] the 10th of May. And that's pretty damn late. And
so we started soon in April, and turned them loose. You
know, (inaudible) turned them loose, which was really
good. And this Leroy Moore, which was Daddy [Hak?].
That was what they called him.

MARK JUNGE: Daddy Hak?

JOHN DILTS: Daddy -- Daddy [Ock?], yeah. And --

MARK JUNGE: Daddy [Hock?]?

JOHN DILTS: [01:00:00] Hak, H-K, Hak. Anyway, when he went
down south, and, you know, he brought a lot of different
ideas home to this country from South America, because
they turned them loose down there with no herders. And
we used to have to have herders, we thought.

MARK JUNGE: Who did your shearing? Did you have people from
Australia? Or --

JOHN DILTS: Well --

MARK JUNGE: -- New Zealand?

JOHN DILTS: -- the last, the last they were from --

MARK JUNGE: New Zealand?

JOHN DILTS: New Zealand, or Australia? I don't know. But they came from Mexico up here to shear them by hand. And, I mean, they -- they sheared, they sheared -- I had several different groups of people shearing.

MARK JUNGE: So you could hand-shear, some of these people could hand-shear [01:01:00] 200 sheep in a day?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. Yeah. That's -- then they got those, oh, (inaudible) shears.

MARK JUNGE: Electric?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. They were some -- I don't know whether electric, or what they were.

MARK JUNGE: Did you guys have a sheep-shearing shed where you worked --

JOHN DILTS: Yes.

MARK JUNGE: Where they worked?

JOHN DILTS: Yes. Yep.

MARK JUNGE: Hmm.

JOHN DILTS: And they started out they used to clump wool. Have you seen them how they do it now?

MARK JUNGE: Tell me how they do it.

JOHN DILTS: Well, they just throw it in -- have some girls throw it in, some people, and they have a hydraulic compactor. [01:02:00] Then they make it 500 pound bags,

or something of wool, you know?

MARK JUNGE: What did you do with your wool? Did you ship it?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: How did you ship it?

JOHN DILTS: Well, it used to be we used to stomp it into bags, you know, around about six foot long bags, and -- and have a guy stomping. And then I took it to a wool warehouse here in Douglas, and they'd sell it to somebody, and they'd come and get it there.

MARK JUNGE: During the -- during the spring, when they were lambing --

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Did you use your helicopter, or your fixed wing plane to check on the animals?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, I did. [01:03:00] And if I'd seen a coyote, or something, well, I shot him out of an airplane too, you know.

MARK JUNGE: You shot him?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: You had to have some --

JOHN DILTS: I'd do the flying.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah.

JOHN DILTS: And somebody would do the shooting.

MARK JUNGE: You shot a lot of coyotes, I suppose.

JOHN DILTS: Well, it helped. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) It helped.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Were they really bad up here, the coyotes?

JOHN DILTS: You know, well, for example, we were lambing -- and this is in daytime. We left the sheep. We went home to eat lunch. And this is -- I'm (inaudible). And we came back, and there was maybe 15 or 20 of them, with their guts taken, [01:04:00] you know, lambs with their guts taken out, and -- and ewes with guts taken out too, you know? I mean, they'd kill them all, you know, whenever they decided to do it. And you certainly wouldn't want to be a conservator of coyotes.

MARK JUNGE: If you were a sheep rancher.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. Well, hell, we went back -- we came back after about an hour, and there was maybe 30 lambs killed, and, you know, in one place.

MARK JUNGE: Was ranching hard work for you?

JOHN DILTS: I kind of enjoyed it.

MARK JUNGE: What was the best thing about it?

JOHN DILTS: Well, we made [01:05:00] a living.

MARK JUNGE: Were able to raise a family.

JOHN DILTS: Yes. And give them, well, in fact, well, if I

put 90 thousand acres in -- in, and had it available for -- to go, and it paid -- was paid for.

MARK JUNGE: Did you spend much time on horseback?

JOHN DILTS: Well, not particularly.

MARK JUNGE: So you spent more time in an airplane than you did on horseback?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, probably. Oh, yeah, hell, yes. But on a horse you didn't do much, you know. [You'd run it?] out to, well, if I wanted to (inaudible) get a -- round up a bunch of sheep, or something, and you went out and did it, which wasn't very much. But --

MARK JUNGE: [01:06:00] When did you fly? You, obviously, had to pay close attention to the weather, right, before you got in your plane.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. But, hell, I flew in damn near every kind of weather there is. And wind.

MARK JUNGE: Do you remember some of those days?

JOHN DILTS: Sort of. Not particular, it's just part of life.

MARK JUNGE: Hmm. Did you ever have any problems with icing on your wings? Or.

JOHN DILTS: Yes.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, you did?

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: Carburetor problems?

JOHN DILTS: No. The carburetor worked all the time.

MARK JUNGE: Where did you take your plane to have it serviced?

JOHN DILTS: There was a guy here in Douglas that -- that did that.

MARK JUNGE: [01:07:00] You didn't do it yourself.

JOHN DILTS: Oh, no.

MARK JUNGE: Were you mechanically minded?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know.

MARK JUNGE: Did you have mechanical ability, I mean?

JOHN DILTS: I didn't fix anything.

MARK JUNGE: How could you live on a ranch, and not be fixing anything?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know. (laughs) I don't know.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) Somebody else did it for you.

JOHN DILTS: You know, south of Douglas, when I was 12 my dad bought a tractor. My dad died when I was 17, did I say?

MARK JUNGE: Eighteen.

JOHN DILTS: Eighteen, yeah. And out there, on LoBante, there was a lot of irrigated land that grew alfalfa, and stuff. And I, at the age of 12, I started cutting hay for -- to [01:08:00] put up hay, you know. So I got a pretty early start in things.

MARK JUNGE: Well, your dad had to have the help.

JOHN DILTS: Well, yeah. I'll tell you what, before they got the tractor, we used to have a team, and a mowing machine. Have you ever seen one of those?

MARK JUNGE: I have seen them, yes.

JOHN DILTS: Maybe had about a four or five foot blade out on them. And you used to have a lot of guys driving horses, and cutting hay. But when they got the tractor I did it all myself. And we had, oh, hell, maybe [01:09:00] 12.

MARK JUNGE: Horses?

JOHN DILTS: No, 12 hundred acres of -- of hay.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK.

JOHN DILTS: Or something like that.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. What were your other jobs, besides cutting hay? Did you have to stack it too?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Did you stack it loose, or bale it?

JOHN DILTS: Stacked it loose, then we also baled it, and, I mean, it went from one -- one method of doing it to the next.

MARK JUNGE: Now, John, if you -- this is for your grandchildren too. They're going to listen to this someday.

JOHN DILTS: (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: If -- if you had something to tell them about those old days, how would you describe them? Would you say, "You're lucky to live today in the times you do?"

JOHN DILTS: Not particularly. They know that they're -- they inherited this place, and they know how to use it. [01:10:00] They know how to run it. In fact, I've got a granddaughter that lives north of Douglas on the ranch, and one granddaughter who lives south on a ranch. And it's just part of life. They're doing part of life.

MARK JUNGE: Are they hard workers too?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know. They get whatever's necessary done, and that's all that's necessary.

MARK JUNGE: Were you a hard worker?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know. I don't know whether I worked hard.

MARK JUNGE: Well, you -- you -- you ranched.

JOHN DILTS: Yes.

MARK JUNGE: You put together a pretty good-sized ranch --

JOHN DILTS: Yes.

MARK JUNGE: So you --

JOHN DILTS: Yes. There's a lot of people didn't do that.

MARK JUNGE: What -- how did you meet your wife, Betty?

[01:11:00]

JOHN DILTS: Hmm.

MARK JUNGE: Was she from Douglas?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. She worked at a -- she worked for the high school, at a school district, and, I don't know. I'd just run into her. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: Did -- did you date? Did you go out on dates?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. And were you married here in Douglas?

JOHN DILTS: Yes.

MARK JUNGE: At the Methodist church?

JOHN DILTS: I suppose.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. I don't remember.

MARK JUNGE: You guys have been married for over 50 years, I assume.

JOHN DILTS: Forty -- yeah, '47 to 53 years.

MARK JUNGE: Forty -- when were you married? Forty-seven?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Fifty -- 67 years.

JOHN DILTS: (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: Can you believe it? [01:12:00]

JOHN DILTS: No. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: Has it been a short time, or a long time?

JOHN DILTS: Well, it has been reasonably short.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) You know, I'm 71, so when I -- I think

of all the things that I did in my life, and I go, "How did you do all those things?" But I also think, like you, "Where did the time go?"

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: How do you look back on your life?

JOHN DILTS: I look back on it that I got done what I started out to do. That's the way I look back at it.

MARK JUNGE: So you had a successful life.

JOHN DILTS: I think so.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah.

JOHN DILTS: In fact, I've got, well, the Converse County -- I have a [01:13:00] -- what is it -- credit card. My wife -- Eddie Moore's granddaughter is [sailing?] -- selling something. But, anyhow, she couldn't get the credit card to go through. And, hell, I've got maybe 100 thousand dollars in the account, you know, in the bank.

MARK JUNGE: Well, I don't think that your wife, Betty, would appreciate you saying that. (laughs) Personally, I don't care how much money you have, but I'm more interested in your life. You've had a good life.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. And I started out pretty early. Pretty early. Well, my dad died when I -- as I say, he was 70, and I was -- what it was -- 18. [01:14:00]

MARK JUNGE: Mm-hmm. What do you remember about your mother?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, she was -- she was a schoolteacher. She was a schoolteacher, and her name was Elnora [Dunkelburger?].

MARK JUNGE: Dunkelburger?

JOHN DILTS: Dunkelburger, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: So she was Irish.

JOHN DILTS: German.

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) I'm just kidding. Yeah, OK. So she was German --

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Was she a ranch wife, then?

JOHN DILTS: Not particularly.

MARK JUNGE: OK. Did she teach school, and then get into the ranch business?

JOHN DILTS: I don't know.

MARK JUNGE: What kind of a person was she?

JOHN DILTS: Just a (inaudible) good old person. She -- she taught kids, I guess, and [01:15:00] got by pretty good that way, teaching kids.

MARK JUNGE: You know, I asked my dad once, when I interviewed my dad. I said, "Who are you more like, your mom, or your dad?" And I figured he'd say his dad, and he said, no, he was -- he inherited more characteristics, he felt, or was influenced more by his mother. Do you think that's true?

JOHN DILTS: Well, you know, I think it probably has to be, because my dad -- I was 18 when my dad died, and -- and my mother was doing the books, and stuff like that. And I don't know whether I did it any -- I was influenced by her, or anything else, but.

MARK JUNGE: Was she a good cook?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah. Yep.

MARK JUNGE: Did she bake?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: And can? Did she can? [01:16:00]

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yes.

MARK JUNGE: Did you really?

JOHN DILTS: Yes, we did all of that.

MARK JUNGE: What did you can?

JOHN DILTS: Anything. There were -- we had jars of stuff in the basement. Different -- all different kinds of things were canned, she canned it.

MARK JUNGE: Did you have running water out there?

JOHN DILTS: No, but we had -- had a pump in the kitchen.

(laughs) Out there we'd pump water, and (inaudible) it all by hand, you know?

MARK JUNGE: Who did?

JOHN DILTS: The people before -- that had that ranch before.

MARK JUNGE: Oh, OK.

JOHN DILTS: And a guy by the name of Harry [Pollard?] owned the ranch, and we got -- or my dad bought it from him.

MARK JUNGE: Do you remember him, Pollard?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: What happened to him? He got out of the ranching business?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. He was an old fella. [01:17:00]

MARK JUNGE: So you had running water right in your kitchen?

JOHN DILTS: A pump to pump water.

MARK JUNGE: Oh!

JOHN DILTS: It wasn't running.

MARK JUNGE: OK.

JOHN DILTS: You didn't turn the faucet on, you pumped it.

MARK JUNGE: Oh. And where was the well, then? Outside the house?

JOHN DILTS: It had to be in the house, underneath the pump. See, they dug down, and did the -- put the pump in.

MARK JUNGE: Was that good drinking water?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, hell, yes.

MARK JUNGE: It wasn't deep, though. That well wasn't deep.

JOHN DILTS: No, maybe 20, 30 feet deep.

MARK JUNGE: You know, there's a lot of oil in Converse County, and a lot of gas.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Did the -- was the water pure, or was it affected by the oil and the gas?

JOHN DILTS: You know, I think the water was pure. There wasn't any oil -- oil in those days.

MARK JUNGE: I don't see any oil coming out of your skin.

JOHN DILTS: No. (laughs) No. [01:18:00]

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) Then what about electricity?

JOHN DILTS: You know, we were fortunate. My dad had a 32-volt light plant. And [would?] start that up once a day, and, you know, and it -- it generated electricity.

MARK JUNGE: How did the batteries get charged? Wind power?

JOHN DILTS: Had a light plant. The light plant had a little motor. It would charge it up, and...

MARK JUNGE: And so you had electric lights?

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: Did you --

JOHN DILTS: Thirty-two volt.

MARK JUNGE: What else did you use electricity for?

JOHN DILTS: That was all.

MARK JUNGE: Just lights?

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: OK. Well, you didn't have cows to milk, right?

JOHN DILTS: Power?

MARK JUNGE: Yeah. Well, no, you didn't have cows to milk

with power.

JOHN DILTS: Oh, no. No. No, [01:19:00] (inaudible) milked the cows. But we did maybe two or three of them.

MARK JUNGE: Did you have to do that?

JOHN DILTS: Occasionally.

MARK JUNGE: Who -- who mainly did it?

JOHN DILTS: We didn't milk and sell. We didn't have raised calves, and milk them, and sell milk. We didn't do that. And -- I don't know.

MARK JUNGE: Now you raised sheep.

JOHN DILTS: Yes, and cattle.

MARK JUNGE: Did you eat a lot of mutton? Did you eat a lot of lamb?

JOHN DILTS: When they were -- yes, sir, we did when we needed to eat it.

MARK JUNGE: Do you still like it?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Now you've still got your teeth?

JOHN DILTS: Uh-uh.

MARK JUNGE: You've got false teeth.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. And I was in a car wreck, and I broke my jaw here [01:20:00] and here, and it knocked out these teeth. And I was maybe 15, 16.

MARK JUNGE: Fifteen, sixteen years old?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, maybe.

MARK JUNGE: What happened?

JOHN DILTS: I went to sleep driving.

MARK JUNGE: A car?

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: Where at?

JOHN DILTS: Coming north of Douglas I -- I used to live out north of Douglas, and on the highway whatever it was that goes out to the ranch.

MARK JUNGE: Fifty-nine?

JOHN DILTS: Fifty-nine, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: Or 93, maybe.

JOHN DILTS: Fifty-nine, about 15 miles out, and I went to sleep, and went off the edge of the road. And I went up over a place, and I went about 120 feet down the road, and on the end of the car, and rolled lengthwise, and sideways, and broke my jaw here and here. [01:21:00] Right here I think the -- the steering wheel hit my...

MARK JUNGE: In those days they didn't have seatbelts, did they?

JOHN DILTS: Uh-uh.

MARK JUNGE: What kind of car were you driving?

JOHN DILTS: Chevy. Chevy.

MARK JUNGE: An old Chevy? What -- you don't remember what

year, do you?

JOHN DILTS: Forty-one, or '42, or something like that. In that neighborhood.

MARK JUNGE: So it was a fairly new car for you.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah, it was.

MARK JUNGE: Man! Did you wake up in a hospital?

JOHN DILTS: Well, you know, I remember talking to people on the -- going to the hospital. And I was in there a month, you know, the...

MARK JUNGE: Did they have your jaw wired up?

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah, it was wired together here, and (inaudible).

MARK JUNGE: Did you have to drink through a straw?

JOHN DILTS: A what?

MARK JUNGE: Did you have to eat your meals through a straw?

[01:22:00]

JOHN DILTS: I don't know. I don't remember.

MARK JUNGE: Of all the memories you have, John, and I know we spent almost an hour and a half here, but what is your strongest memory? Your parents? Your kids? Your accidents? Your flights?

JOHN DILTS: Well, I think I've been a successful rancher. I think -- and that's what you set out to do, be successful at whatever you do.

MARK JUNGE: Wouldn't you -- would you have done anything
 else in your life, if you could have?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: There's nothing else you would have wanted to
 do?

JOHN DILTS: No.

MARK JUNGE: What about being a professional pilot?

JOHN DILTS: No, I wouldn't want to be one of those.

MARK JUNGE: To you, then, a plane and a helicopter were
 tools.

JOHN DILTS: Yes. Mm-hmm.

MARK JUNGE: And one last question. What's the best time
 you've ever had in [01:23:00] an airplane or a
 helicopter? Can you remember the good -- good time?

JOHN DILTS: Well, I just enjoyed it all. Enjoyed being in
 an airplane, and -- and, you know, well, I don't know.
 It seemed like I always enjoyed flying -- enjoyed flying.
 And you have to be alert when you're flying a helicopter.
 And, let's see. Well, I was going out to the ranch about
 (inaudible) 60 miles from here to the ranch out there,
 and I used to drive back and forth. And it used to be 60
 miles from the ranch to Gillette too. [01:24:00] So it
 was about halfway between Gillette, and... Well, at one
 time I went to sleep driving out to the ranch. And about

15 miles out, and that's when I run off the -- this kind of a hill. Then I went off over the hill, and [went?] 120 feet down there on an end, and rolled [underways?] once, and -- and then sideways once.

MARK JUNGE: Well, I said that was the last question, but I did want you to tell me if you -- if you like the idea that your kids, and your grandkids --

JOHN DILTS: Oh, yeah.

MARK JUNGE: -- became pilots.

JOHN DILTS: Yeah. They all want to, most -- most all of them that do are doing it.

MARK JUNGE: Is that a good thing?

JOHN DILTS: Yeah!

MARK JUNGE: Why?

JOHN DILTS: Why?

MARK JUNGE: Yeah.

JOHN DILTS: Because they want to. [01:25:00]

MARK JUNGE: I get the impression you -- you like the idea of freedom.

JOHN DILTS: Mm-hmm. Whatever they want to do, that's fine.

MARK JUNGE: Yeah, OK. Well, listen, I want to thank you. It's been fun.

JOHN DILTS: OK.

MARK JUNGE: I've enjoyed it.

JOHN DILTS: All right.

MARK JUNGE: And --

JOHN DILTS: Well, I hope I didn't bullshit you any.

(laughs)

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) Did you tell me any lies?

JOHN DILTS: I don't think so. Not particularly. (laughs)

MARK JUNGE: (laughs) OK. All right, I'm going to shut this
off.

JOHN DILTS: OK.

MARK JUNGE: There's your pen.

JOHN DILTS: Thank you.

END OF AUDIO FILE