

Field Notes- November 4, 1993

I was greeted by the neighborhood's pet pig as I got out of my truck and walked up the ramp to Adrian Beal's and Mary Wallace's house on the Wyman Rd. in Milbridge. Adrian and Mary were awaiting my arrival on the front Porch/sun room where we sat and conducted the first of three interviews held over the next few weeks. Adrian was ready to talk and told me a whole series of stories about his sea bird poaching adventures with his father, which I did not get on tape-regretably! He was reluctant to repeat any of these stories later when the tape recorder was set up and running.

There's a constant flow of Mary's sons, daughters and grandchildren coming and going from the house. They often stop and sit and listen to Adrian's stories- I'm not sure if my presence announces the "performance" or the presence of the tape recorder and microphone, or just the recognizable story-telling context by an acknowledged family storyteller.

Adrian served me a bowl of his "downeast lobster stew" for lunch accompanied by a story about teaching his recipe to a restaurant owner in Massachusetts to whom he delivers lobsters. The secret is in sautéing the lobster meat in butter, not margarine, in a skillet, then adding hot water, and half and half or cream, not milk. He says the real way to do it is use raw, not boiled meat, to start. He said he always kills the lobster before ripping off the tail with a blow to the head! In any case, the recipe produces a good stew with a reddish color.

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Maine Folklife Center

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Interview with Adrian Beal, Milbridge, Maine

November 4, 1993

Interviewer: Jeff McKeen

[C1478]

[005] opening announcements

JM: Why don't we start with you telling me a little bit about yourself so we know who it is telling these stories. Where were you born Adrian?

AB: I was born on Beals Island, January 21, 1908.

JM: 1908?

AB: Yea, 1908. In my grandfather's old home.

JM: Yea, what part of the island is that?

AB: Down on what they call the Cranberry Cove side.

JM: I was trying to figure out when they put the bridge out to the island?

AB: That was finished in 1957 if I remember right.

JM: That must have changed things quite a bit.

AB: Ruined it.

JM: Ruined it?

AB: In my opinion. (laughs) No it made a great change, it was a big help to people on there because when i was a boy and a young man growing up there was no way to get off the island in the winter time unless it was a rowboat or something or an old dory, there was no ferries run then for a good many years. And stormy night if you wanted a doctor it was a hard time to get one. Since the bridge was on, everything was like normal, you didn't have no problems.

JM: There was no ferry?

AB: No not for years and years. Just you took an old dory or an old fashioned pea pod we called it and row across over to town get what you want and back again. Weren't any ferry run there for long ,long years. And mail had to come across the same way in an

old row boat, we used to bring our mail back and forth. That's how we got the mail, first mail carrier on there was a woman. Matilda Kelly, she used to row the dory back and forth.

JM: How far is it?

AB: A fifth of a mile across there.

JM: Moosabec Reach.

AB: Yea. Used to get some mighty chop in there too if the wind and the tide was right. An easterly with a flood tide, or a west or northwest winds and an ebb tide going the other way, it was real snotty the other way. Old Tildy Kelley she was the first one to run the mail there on the island. And then a fella named Alec, oh what was that man's name? They used to call him Uncle Alec, he run the ferry for the mail for a good many years and then he took a partner with him when he got older, named William Beal, he worked with him for quite a few years and then he took over when Alec got through. And he run it until he got another fella to work with him named Chester Lenfesty and then of course when they got the bridge on that ended it.

JM: Probably the only rowing mail man in the state of Maine?

AB: Yea, they used to row back and forth for years and years, winter and summer.

JM: I was also reading about the boats on Beals Island, the fisherman used to fish out of reach boats?

AB: Little reach boats, yes. I had one of my own when I was a boy. You could row them or sail them either way. Anywhere from 13 to 18 feet long. The 18 footers you sailed but the other ones you rowed. But they had a sail with them too, a little spritsail we called it. When you go and come from the place you was hauling, if the wind was right you'd stick up your sail.

JM: What did you call the sail?

AB: A little sprit sail they called it. They used to sail that back and forth with the spritsails. And then we went to the muddleddeck (?) sail after that. [Adrian says goodbye to his daughter-in-law who was visiting with Mary Wallace in the other room.] Yea, the little reach boats, of course they were built

for years and years on the island. And they came down from the Beal family were boat builders there from the beginning of time. Or from the time the island was settled. Each family, somebody built boats. And the first one I ever remember being told about him, his name was William Beal.

JM: First boat builder?

AB: First one I know of, might have been some before that, but the first I was told of was William Beal, and then there were two or three other William Beals after that that was boat builders. My great-great grandfather on my father's side, he was a boat builder. And he lost his life on the New Orleans valley on the Red River Marsh during the w3ar down there. And that's where he's buried down there. So he was a boat builder and then handed down through the family, Dad was a boat builder, and my brother and I were boat builders.

JM: Do you have children?

AB: Yea.

JM: Did any of them go into boat building.

AB: Well, they worked with me. My own son worked with me and both his sons worked with me. Course they've all died now, passed away.

JM: Your sons?

AB: My son and grandsons both are all gone. I lost my son two years ago, between two and three years. And the two boys have been gone, his oldest boy, my grandson, he died before his father did. And the other one died about a year ago. But they all worked with me in the shop.

JM: Why were there so many boat builders on Beals Island.?

AB: I don't know, if anybody wanted a boat they built it. There was 13 shops at one time on there.

JM: How many are there now?

AB: I think there's three going.

JM: That are commercial?

AB: Yea, but most of them have gone into fiberglass, outside of

Willis Beal, he still builds a wooden one.

JM: Is he the only one now?

AB: He's the only one I know of building wooden ones, Willis Beal, the others are building fiberglass.

JM: Is it hard for a small shop to switch over to fiberglass?

AB: No I don't believe so, I don't see why it would be. As long as they have the molds, different places up around this way and west they use the same mold and make fiberglass off of it.

JM: Did you ever build a fiberglass boat?

AB: No I didn't want anything to do with it. I've used fiberglass on decks and flooring and stuff like that but when it comes down to any length of time I said. no, no way. I wasn't going to burn my lungs out for nothing.

JM: Are there some of the fisherman around here that prefer to use a wooden boat?

AB: Sure is.

JM: Why?

AB: Well, the fishermen that have owned a fiberglass, a lot of them have told me that they are hard on the legs because there's no give to them like with a wooden boat. There seems to be more of a rigidness and it bothers the legs after a while. Of course I've never been on one so I wouldn't know. That 's what they tell me that they are hard on the legs.

JM: Do they handle differently?

AB: Ahmm. A different feel in the water. Lot of the fellas that owns them will tell you the same thing, they haven't got the same feeling as a wooden boat has in the water. But a lot of fellas like them, I don't blame them, because they don't have any upkeep, hardly. And they don't have to take them in every week or two and clean the bottom, stuff like that, don't have to do a paint job every six or eight months. And so far they've turned out pretty good for the fisherman. But if I was going back to fishing today I'd still prefer my old wooden ship. Course I guess I come from the old school anyway.

JM: Yea, right. Did you learn the trade from working with your

father in his shop?

AB: No, my father didn't have a shop until I had one. I built my own shop myself and he worked with me.

JM: Then how did you get started?

AB: Just ordinary. Worked two or three years in different shops, here and there. Then I decided to go on my own so that's what I did.

JM: How many boats did you build?

AB: Numbers, I wouldn't dare tell you how many because I haven't got no idea. I know they go into the hundreds. But how many I don't know. I never kept any real tab of them. I wished I had now. I wished I kept a run of them, a picture of every one of them. I've got quite a few of them, but just a little smattering of what I have built.

JM: Different kinds of boats?

AB: All kinds.

JM: Mostly lobster boats?

AB: Most of them lobster boats. Biggest part of them. But still, I built sailing craft, and different kinds, sardine carriers and stuff like that. I built everything from skiffs up.

JM: What was the biggest boat you ever built?

AB: Biggest boat I ever worked on was a 141 footer. I didn't build that, I worked for another company when I did that.

JM: So when you had your shop there were a dozen boat shops.

AB: Well, when I started my shop on the island there was only, if I remember, there was only one other one there at that time. There was just one, owned by Harold Gower on the western end of the island. And then Clerman (?) Beal had the next one. And they started going from there one end of the island everywhere. And they ended up with 13 at one time.

JM: When was that?

AB: Well, I would say if I remember right it would be, when the whole 13 were on her I would think it was anywhere between the mid-fifties to the sixties, right along there. When the full bunch of them was going. And then it dropped down to I think there's

only three going now. I think there's three left.

JM: And only one of them is building a wooden boat, is he an old-timer?

AB: No, he's just a young fellow. And they used to build what they call the torpedo stern boat. And there was a lapse of around 50 years until Willis, the fella that builds the wooden boats, he built one around 3 years ago.

JM: What was the advantage of that?

AB: None that I know of, no real advantage. But they just come up with that style a good many years ago and they built quite a few of them, they built the torpedo sterned boat for a long time.

JM: Was that some distinctive of the boats from this area, was the torpedo stern something that was on the Jonesport-style boats?

AB: Yea, at the time it was.

JM: And not necessarily in other places.

AB: No, that was the only place I ever know that they was built.

JM: Now when you say there were 13 boat shops on Beals, there were others on the mainland, too, in Jonesport?

AB: Yes. There were 3 in Jonesport area at that time.

JM: For such a small place that was amazing.

AB: (laughs) yes, it was. Everybody was building boats. There was about 4 of those builders worked in my shop, and worked in the shop where Dad and I worked together, they worked with us. And then they went off on their own. They started building on their own. The other ones worked with Gower and others and then they went on their own. We end up with 13 different shops. Of course my brother he built a shop, he had one of his own, he was one of the 13, he had one. And Dad never had one of his own, the three of us had one together at one time. We had two different shops together. And then one washed down in a heavy gale, we tore the other one down

and took a larger one and that washed down in a heavy gale of wind and I built a smaller one back on the island after that. That's when the 13 were on there, after I built that smaller one we ended up with 13 on there.

JM: When did you close your shop?

AB: What was that, 4 years ago?

JM: Four years ago? You were still building in there?

AB: No, I tore it down. Between 4 and 5 years ago I quit.

JM: Last time I was up here...

AB: I was building boats up here. I helped the boys build one, I set them up and let them go to it, helped them build a boat. Oh, I had my choice you know. Either come home with her, Or I was staying at home and build boats, so I decided to come up here. (laughs).

JM: Y9ou still have a place up there on the island.

AB: Oh yea.

JM: Nobody lives there?

AB: No, we go up once in a while. I redone it last year with a couple of boys, finished the inside of it. It was getting quite old and in need of repair so we did it all over, new floors and doors and windows, new ceilings, did it all over. So we go back and forth.

JM: What about the songs that you were singing, you told me that you and your dad went around and sang.

AB: We did alot yes, everywhere.

JM: For boat launchings.

AB: No that was the only one we ever did for a b oat launching. The fella that had it built he requested it so we did it for him. No, Dad and I used to do a lot of vocaling in the churches here, and all around everywhere. We were even on the radio up in Providence Rhode Island for a church service. We used to go around to different places up and down the church.

JM: Did you sing in harmony?

AB: Yea, I used to sing a high tenor, and Dad was a tenor voice, and mine was a little higher and I 'd take what they call the high

tenor. We sang together for a good many years. Well, I started with him when I was 15. And we sang together until I was, oh, close to fifty when he quit. Well, he figured he was too old to do it and he figured he wouldn't do it anymore.

JM: Well he sang longer than he fiddled then. [Adrian had told me his father was a real good old-time fiddler and quit playing when he was in his mid-forties and gave his fiddle to Adrian.]

AB: Oh yes, he kept that up for years. Well, when he quit playing the violin, I was twenty five and he was 18 years older than I was, he was 43, I could never get him to do it again. He was 43. But he kept vocaling for a good many years after that.

JM: What else did he sing besides hymns?

AB: Oh, old-time ballads and stuff like that.

JM: Like what?

AB: Well, he used to sing alot of songs about Maine, mostly old fashioned love songs, songs about home and life, family. He used to sing War songs about WWI. The one I have taped in there now was "Uncle Sam needs you for Service," that was never published. A fella wrote the song and taught it to Dad and he never published the song. It was never ever published, but Dad used to use it. And during the war, the first World War when the boys were leaving to go overseas they'd always hold an evening service on the island before they left. And they'd get Dad to sing that song for them. And I've got a tape of him singing that. Somewhere in there.

JM: Did they ever talk about come-all-ye's, do you know what I mean by that?

AB: No.

JM: The songs that start out, come all ye....

AB: No, no he didn't do that type at all. I remember the first one ever hearing him sing down at camp one night was "Meet me tonight in Dreamland" that was one of the favorite ones he used to do. And he used to do a lot of them, and he used to sing alot about Maine. And then he used to sing about "Far Away Upon the hills of New Hampshire," he used to do one like that. And he used to do a lot of them old-time ballads that you don't hear anymore.

JM: Did he sing without piano?

AB: He could either way. He had a melodious voice whether he had accompaniment or not.

JM: So when you guys went around and sang in the churches...

AB: We had accompaniment all the time then. When we were down by ourselves at camp the only thing we had for music was a violin. So we used to sing without it. That's all they had for entertainment in them days before the radio come on. That ruined all the evenings of visitation of people coming to see you, they used to come to camp and set up with us bunch of em, and just be entertained by singing songs. That's all they had in them days. Telling old stories and singing songs. But that's back in the old days, that's gone now. That's when people used to socialize alot in the evenings, but not anymore. People now it's head stuck in the tube and you go in and it's "shhh." "Quiet." I'm glad I grew up in the age I did, in a way, but I'm not glad of it now because I know my time is getting short. But I'm glad I lived in the era when you could enjoy yourself. Today there's no enjoyment in anything, not to me.

JM: Did you ever know any songs that were local to this area, up on the island?

AB: No. There's two or three of the old ones I never learned them. My grandmother wrote one and had it published, I've got it somewhere in the house, I don't know just where it is. I've never done it myself, but I've got it somewhere. She was a great poet writer, my grandmother was. And she had this one published, course it was long before my time. I don't know just how far it went. Or anything about it.

JM: There was a guy I heard about, was he from the island, or Jonesport, Stuart Alley?

AB: Head Harbor Island. In the beginning and then the last of it he lived in Jonesport.

JM: He made up songs didn't he?

AB: I guess he did, some kind of little jigs, but he was quite a storyteller. I can remember when I was 15 years old my father

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attended a concert on Head Harbor Island, where the old mission was years ago. We went down there to stay over night and pick up some lobster bait off of one of the weir fishermen down there. And we learned they was having a time, of course there was quite a settlement at that time on the island. So we went up to the time and Dad and I took part in it the same night. And Stuart spoke a piece there and he got the laugh out of the people there, don't think he didn't. He was good at it. He told some stories, he could really tell a story. And this was a poem - story, kind of mixed in together the way he told it, and Mister man he did one good job of it. He was born on Head Harbor Island, a lot of people call it Steel's Harbor Island, but we always called it Head Harbor. And when I was a boy, well there was 70 odd people there to that concert, so you can imagine how many people lived on the island at that time, a lot of the old people didn't make it. Some of the little kids didn't make it, but there were 70 people there that evening at that big mission house.

JM: How many people lived on Beals Island when you lived there?

AB: Oh, it varies from year to year, but I've known when I was a young boy growing up anywhere from four to six hundred, I don't know what the population is now, but I know when I was small I heard the older ones say about 400 lived on there, of course I didn't have a way of knowing the real record of it. Then I heard one time them talking about it at the town meeting there was 600. But what there is now I wouldn't know.

JM: But it's a small town, everyone knows each other/.

AB: Practically, used to, but there's a lot of people moved in from out of state and they're a clique of their own and you might know them and you might not, and they don't want you near them. Destroyed the island as far as I'm concerned, when you get that outside element coming in, it's not the same island, there's no way to make it, not to my opinion. I got nothing against them coming, but it's a different people all together and they've got their life to live and they want to be left alone, not too friendly.

JM: But not everyone was friendly in the old days, you had to hide the ducks from some of the people [Adrian had been telling stories of poaching sea ducks earlier].

AB: (laughs) Oh yes. Them days are gone too.

JM: The stories about Tall Barney are pretty well known all over the island?

AB: All over the island, and all over the whole state, years and years ago. He was known as far east in Canada right through the whole New England states everywhere.

JM: He traveled that far, or the stories did?

AB: Yea. He had his own fishing schooner and he used to travel back and forth, fish down that way and then sell his fish to Portland and Boston markets and back home again.

JM: He died before your time.

AB: Oh yes, he died when my father was 9 years old, oh yes he died before my time.

JM: But the stories kept being told?

AB: Oh yes. I can remember my great-grandmother, his wife. I can remember her well, I was, oh, quite a boy when she died. I remember her well plain. Used to call her Grammy Pheobe. Little small woman, I don't think she weigh a hundred pounds wringing wet.

JM: Oh no and he was pretty big?

AB: Oh I guess he was.

JM: How big?

AB: He'd set in a house chair like this and put his knuckles right on the floor setting up straight. Mine won't come within a foot of the floor. He'd rattle his knuckles right on the floor. A regular house chair.

JM: How tall was he?

AB: That I couldn't tell you, I 've heard so many stories about his height I wouldn't know what it was. Some claimed he was over seven foot, others claim he was under seven. So to know exact I wouldn't know. But I've seen his picture standing alongside of his

son in a house chair. You take a house chair, they're sixteen inches from the floor. Then you measure that sixteen inches over his height standing up there he was quite a tall man. You saw the picture in the book with his son?

JM: Yea.

AB: You take that chair and divide that by 16 inches going up his body, that 's quite a few inches going up there.

JM: Was that his grandson in the picture?

AB: That was his own son.

JM: YOur grandfather?

AB: NO. He was my great-grandfather, tall Barney was. And his daughter was my grandmother. All those Beals, there was several diffe4rent groups of them, buyt they all came from Manwaring Beal that settled the island, it was his sons, five or six generations of them, they was all cousins, back and forth. Now my grandfather on my father's side, on his father's side instead of his mother's side, he was a Beal too. They came from the same group of people only they was five or six generations apart. But they all came from the old Beal family that settled in York, Maine years and years ago. So it's been so many generations apart they've never kept track of all of them, they're here, there, and everywhere.

JM: Right. That's why half of those boat shops are run by Beals.

AB: Yea.

JM: So Willis Beal.

AB: Willis Beal, he was my father's, let's see, his grandfather was my own father's blood cousin. Yea. His grandfather, Alfred Beal. Grandmother Beal, Tall Barney's daughter, Lucinda, she had a sister named Margaret, she had a son named Alton, and he had a son named Alfred, and Alfred had Willis. And they was all relatives of Dad's, and relatives of mine. Of course, five or six generations apart, six between Willis and I, but still they came from the same family. They came from tall Barney's side.

JM: What about Calvin Beal?

AB: He was a different group of Beals but its the same, I couldn't tell you where he came from but it's still the old Beal family.

JM: He's one of the boat builders.

AB: Yes, he's one of the boat builders.

JM: I see in the newspapers they advertgise his boats.

AB: He's very well known.

JM: I guess they use his hulls. So he designs fiberglass boats.

AB: But they're all good boat builders, every one of them, you can't say odd against any one of them as far as being designers and good boat builders, they was all good. I couldn't pick any choice between any one of them. Course a little jealousy went between all the boat builders one way or the other.

JM: I bet. Did they compete?

AB: Oh yes, they compete. Each one had a little different style of boat.

JM: Could you tell? If you see a boat you know it came from so and so.

AB: Yes, you know who built it. You could tell in a minute who built it. All basically had the same style, but just a little difference in it.

JM: But to the trained eye.

AB: Yea, you could tell the difference. Yea.

JM: They say the Jonesport boats are fast.

AB: Yea, now my nephew Bernard Beal got one, thatwe built for him, helped him build, Dad made the model of the boat and we helped set it up and he finished building it off himself as a kid, and he sold it and he bought it back a year or so ago. And last year he redone it over again. And there's no boat that can touch any where along the coast that's been anywhere's near it. So he cleaned up all the races this year, whereever he took it, and there's no competition to it what ever.

JM: What's the secret to the speed of it?

AB: well, the design of it. I can show you a video of it. You can see the difference in the sail of it. Lot of them sail up in the air, the sail in the rear end pushing, and she sails level. When he pulls the throttle open she just goes off and there's npo competition what ever. I don't know how long he can hold it.

JM: When you designed a boat did you use a half model?

AB: A lot of times I didn't , no, I used just a pencil drawing.

JM: But sometimes you did make half models?

AB: The first one I ever built myself I used a half model.
And other than that I never used one. All I ever built since
sI built from just a pencil drawing.

JM: Just a sketch you mean?

AB: Just a sketch and I 'd draw the lines I'd want for the hull
and everything right in it just like an architect would if you
were going to design a house.

JM: But you didn't loft them out full size?

AB: NO, no. I just put it on a piece of board where I was making
my mold frames, that's all. I never used a full loft of it cause
there/s no need of it. If you take a model and cut it up, you just
make your mold frame from it and scale it off, that's all, you
don't lay it out on the floor, just your sections where you make
your molds.

JM: The lobster boats that you built, the boats from the Jonesport
area are skeg-built?

AB: A greater part of them, yes. Once in a while, oh I built
several what they call the keel boat, built them down, the
'dead wood.

JM: Plank down.

AB: Yea plank down, I built a lot of those, but I don't care for
those.

JM: Why?

AB: WEll for one reason, buoyancy, underneath that it 's like a
tube down there full of air. Floats them up, and they're not so
steady as a regular old skeg boat.

JM: Skeg boat is flatter on the bottom.

AB: Flatter on the bottom, steadier in the sea. The only reason
they used to build them down that way, the bilge water would stay
down in there and it wouldn't be flopping around under neath the
floor get water that would amount to anything. And a lot of people

thought they were a stronger built boat, well, maybe they might have been, I don't know, I've built all kinds and I couldn't figure where they were any better than the regular old skeg boat. Cause I prefer a skeg boat 10 times over one of those built down boats. You could never get a built down boat as steady as a skeg boat. Cause they got that buoyancy in there, it's just like a barrel under the boat floating them up.

JM: They generally draw more water than too.

AB: Yea, they draw more water, well no not too much more, you can build them so they don't draw any more. But it's the shape of the bottom, just like a tunnel down there full of air. Just floats them up. Where the old skeg boat hasn't got that, he's sitting right on the water. Cause that's the old Canadian style, the old planked down boats. They always built them that way and they're still doing it today.

JM: Built down?

AB: Yea the built down stuff. Still build them. Nice sea boats. But they're good sea boats, but they've got a different feeling all together than what the old-time flat-bottom skeg boat's got. And they don't go as fast, haven't got anywhere near the speed. Cause they drag more water.

JM: So where did you learn to build boats, then?

AB: Picked it up myself. I learned to design boats when I was a kid going to school, didn't know I was doing it. Cause my father used to have racing magazines, yacht racing, he used to have this magazine come, all these different style yachts, he was a great man for sailboats. And I used to look at them, each one you could see the design, a pencil lines, and all the different lines, water line plan and buttocks and that stuff. And course when I went to school I started drawing out lobster boats that way. I didn't know what I was doing, I was learning to scale them myself. So that's how I learned to design boats right from scratch by myself by studying those books when I was a kid going to school . I picked

it up myself. And I used to go into an old fella's shop who used to build reach boats and watch how he used to lay them out. So that's how I picked it up myself, it was just self-taught. I designed the boats by myself with a pencil, that's how I learned. So I learned to use a scale rule and I had it licked.

JM: That's designing them, use also needed to know how to build them, use the tools and so forth.

AB: Well using tools just come natural to me. Down through the generations of family, everybody had a tool in their hand, a saw, a level and plumb, the only thing you use a boat for, it's not like building a house, everything is done on angles with boats, there's no squares to it. It's a different thing all together, use a bevel and a plumb rule to set her up by. But you don't use a 45 degrees and all that stuff cause there's no place to use it.

JM: A level and a plumb bob?

AB: Use a plumb bob to set them up by, a level to level your mold frames in stay them off and hold them solid while you're battening them off and timber up. And that's it.

JM: Where did the wood come from you used to build the boats?

AB: There used to be a lot of mills around here in them days. Around different places, but now its a pretty hard job to get it. It's a hard job to get the oak for the keel for wood boats, you have to go quite a ways to get that now. None of the local mills handle it like they used to. Cause there used to be several mills, no problem. All you wanted, anytime. And they sawed all the cedar you wanted and all the pine. But the mills have all gone out, there's none left. There's one here in Gouldsboro, and he can get the stuff for you and you want to pay the price. But, he'll have quite a job to get some of it. He said, to get oak, it's a hard job to get the oak, but he can get it, but it takes quite a job. But the last of my boatbuilding the oak I used to get I'd go clear up to Lincolnville.

JM: That's down my way.

AB: Lincolnville, and I noticed the little mill is still there on the side of the hill but he's gone into the lumber business in a big way, he sells all kinds of manufactured lumber, gets it shipped

in by the car load.

JM: I know where you mean, by the water. Bill Monroe?

AB: Bill Monroe. yea, old Bill Monroe, I bought a lot of lumber from him. You've seen his little mill on the side of the hill? I've bought a lot of lumber there. And then way up in back of there we used to buy lumber from a mill, it was all owned by the Sprowl Brothers. They had a mill in there, I used to buy lumber from those people too.

JM: Where did your boats go, all over?

AB: Oh yes. I've sold boats as far down as Philadelphia, New York. All down through that part of the country. Sold a lot of them in Massachusetts. And all along the coast of Maine. I used to build them and deliver them down the coast. Sometimes I went alone, sometimes somebody would go with me.

JM: Sail them down you mean?

[443] AB: Yea. I took 7 boats to Cundy's Harbor. That I built down home on the island. All up and down the coast.

JM: Were there some design elements of the reach boat that influenced the way the lobster boats were made up here?

AB: No a different style all together. They was a little plank down boat.

JM: Well, where did the skeg boat come from?

AB: Well, the first one I ever knew built a skeg boat in the Jonesport area, he built them in Jonesport, his name was Maurice Dow. The first I ever knew that built skeg boats. First one I ever knew of.

JM: Who was Will Frost?

AB: He came from over in Digby, Nova Scotia. He came on the island, but the first one that ever built skeg boats on the island was George Brown. And where he came from I don't know what town, but he was a great house carpenter and he started building boats on the island, and he built skeg boats for quite a while, my father had one of them. But Will Frost came there quite a few years after George built, and he set up a little shop and he

started building skeg boats to his design. And he built boats on the island for quite a few years, then he moved to Jonesport, then he moved to Portland and he went from Portland to Rhode Island and then he went back to Portland again. And that's where he retired from was in Portland. South Portland area. And then after he left, a fella by the name of Gower had a shop there on the island.

JM: You mentioned him before.

AB: Yea, he had a shop there before I did. Then the next boat shop after his I had. And then, I started building first outside by my house, outdoors. And then Dad wanted to come home and work with me, so we built a shop together, him and I did. My brother come worked with us. And then I turned the business over to Dad, left him have it. I said, you're older, you take it, and we'll work for you. So he did for a few years, and then he turned it back to me. Then after that shop washed down, we tore the little one down and bought a bigger one and that washed down in a gale of wind. And then I come back, we bought that on the Jonesport side. We worked over there for about 11 years, that washed down in a heavy gale and then I come back on the island and built one on the island that I run for 20 odd years, about 26,27 years I worked on the island myself.

JM: Did you work by yourself in the shop?

AB: No, I had my family work with me, I had my son, my grandson, even Dad worked with me for a while. He was an older man and he wanted to know if he could come and work with me and I said, just as well as not, so he come and work with me. So I just closed the shop up and called it quits.

JM: When was the last boat you built?

AB: The last one I built was a 34 , 35 foot. They average 34, 35.

JM: When was that?

AB: I couldn't tell you the exact date. I don't remember.

Never kept no regular record of it. I would say it was somewhere around four or five years ago.

JM: You said you closed the shop four or five years ago, so you were building until then.

AB: I was building until then.

JM: So fiberglass boats had come in by that time, but you were still building wooden boats.

AB: Oh yes, I built a lot of wooden boats after they come in.

And when I closed I had 7 orders waiting for me if I wanted them. I said, no, I don't want anymore.

JM: You got to quit sometime.

AB: Yea, got to quit sometime.

JM: So why aren't there as many boat shops now. Not as many fisherman?

AB: Yea, there are just as many fisherman. But they're not all into fiberglass. See, all the real old wooden boat builders, they quit. They didn't go into the fiberglass business. So a lot of them went away and worked in boat shops making fiberglass boats. Around here in Millbridge, Gouldsboro, Winter Harbor.

[End of side I]

[Side 2 was apparently not used on Nov. 4th or possibly it was used but did not record. Thus, it was used for the beginning of the interview recorded Nov. 19th.]

Thus:

C1478 Side 1 = Nov. 4
C1478 Side 2 = Nov. 19

- Steve Green
Jan. 12, 1999

2429 024

Field Notes- November 19, 1993

[C1478] Side 2

The second interview with Adrian Beal took place again on the front porch/sun room at his Milbridge house. Adrian still has a place up on Beals, he and Mary spend weekends up there once in a while. Adrian was in a pretty talkative mood, and told numerous Tall Barney stories. Again, several neighbors, Mary's children and grandchildren came in and sat and drank coffee and listened to Adrian's stories.

I asked Adrian a couple times to sing some of the songs he'd been telling me about, Mary also tried to encourage him to sing. He insisted that the songs should wait until we were in a music session- the next time I come, when we would get out the fiddles.

Maine Folklife Center

Accession # ; Tape # 1119.93

Interview with Adrian Beal, Milbridge, Maine

November 19, 1993

Interviewed by Jeff McKeen

[C1478]
Side 2

[003] opening announcements

JM: You were telling me some of those Barney Beal stories.

AB: Could be.

JM: I'd like to go back and see if we can start over on some of that business. It seems like everytime we talk about someone around here, one of the Beals, or anyone else, they're a relation of Barney Beal's.

AB: Well all the Beals originate from him, that's why.

JM: And he had a big family.

AB: And they had a large family of them. The old Manwarren Beal, the first settler of the whole business, see, this tall Barney was a first generation from him. And of course all these Beals still hanging around now are tied in some way with it.

JM: So that's why there's so many of them.

AB: So many of them. They all had large families, the biggest part of them did. So didn't, now my father only had three. But his mother and father, his mother was a daughter of tall Barney's, she only had four, but her sisters always had anywhere from six to eight to a dozen. And the boys did, his boys all had large families. Napoleon, the youngest boy he had eleven in the family. He had a large family, all of them did. Except C.H. he was one of the sons, he had three. And John never had any. Tall Will, I think he had three. He had three living ones, I think he had one more that died.

JM: You're pretty good at remembering all this in your head.

AB: I grew up in the family, I grew up with them all and I knew them all. I remember them pretty well, my memory still hangs in pretty good. (laughs)

JM: I guess it probably does. Let's see if I can jog your memory that hangs in pretty good. There was one story about Peaks Island.

AB: That was another story, old Edmund Alley. That Peaks Island story was Edmund Alley.

JM: That wasn't Barney.

AB: Tall Barney's chum. Close friend, they used to travel around together. But this Peaks Island fight, course wherever they went, the fishermen used to land different places, different harbors, there was always someone there looking to be the best. They used to call him the bully of the town, you know. It was quite a man to beat him. So Edmund went around to the barrooms and grog shops, one thing or another and he got in an argument with this fellow. And they were going to settle the argument so him and Edmund got into a fight. Well, I guess according to all the stories of people there who saw the fight, I know of one man in particular, I knew the man and heard him tell the story. He said they were a bloody looking sight when they got through. But Edmund beat the man, he beat him. But Edmund looked as bad as he did I guess before the fight was over. But anyway, when they got all through, they didn't hold it against him, he just beat the man fair and square in a fight. They said, well, they wanted to know where he come from. He told them. They said you got anymore down there like that? Like you. He said, yea, I'm the poorest one down there. They said, the poorest one, who's the best one? Well, I'll start off with one in particular, old tall Barney Beal. They said, say no more, we know all about him, we don't want to know anything about the rest of them at all.

JM: That was it.

AB: Yea, but then another time they got into a scrape up there and he [Tall Barney] told Edmund you stand outside the door and I'll throw them out to you and you pass them out.

JM: So he and Edmund...

AB: So he and Edmund used to travel around together. So he cleaned the barroom out and he'd throw them out to Edmund and Edmund would

scan them out in the field. They were buddies.

JM: And then there was another traveling companion of Barney's?

AB: Short Barney. They were cousins. Their fathers were brothers, see. So short Barney he used to travel with tall Barney and he used to get tall Barney in all kinds of scrapes. He liked to fight if he got drinking, but he couldn't fight a lick. So old tall Barney would have to get him out of the scrapes. So they used to travel around together and they called them short and tall.

JM: So they were both Barney Beals.

AB: Yea, both Barney Beal, and one of them, the short Barney was a brother to my grandfather's father, that was Dad's father's father, he was a brother to the other tall Barney. Short Barney's father and tall Barney's father, they were brothers.

JM: Right.

AB: So they ended up in pretty good scrapes. Him and short Barney used to get in awful messes.

JM: Where did you hear all these stories?

AB: Oh, from my grandmother and Dad and different ones in town, they used to tell them like folklore, you know, back and forth. Of course, Grandmother was tall Barney's daughter and Dad grew up as a kid he was around tall Barney a lot. And he heard all these stories and of course he passed them on one way or another and that's where we got them all from. And of course, he was a legend all around the surrounding towns and wherever you went if they found out you were anything to do with tall Barney, they'd want a few of the stories, you know. Get your version of them, here there and everywhere. And they all tied in pretty much, sometimes they might add a little bit to it, somebody did. So sometimes you didn't know whether they was really authentic or not, but.

JM: But they still made a good story?

AB: Yea. That's when they made good storytelling back in those days. That's all they did in those days, tell stories. Now you go into someone's house and they say, shhh, television on. Them days you

set down and enjoy the evening together, socially, but not anymore. And of course, I used to sit and listen to my grandfather, that was Dad's father tell all the old sea yarn stories. He went to sea for 36 years in the old square-riggers and 'fore and afters all down around the south Indies trade and everywhere. I used to enjoy listen to his stories in the evening, set right down by his feet while he was talking to the old sailors, you know, telling the yarns and stuff. I set there and listen and take them all in, just like I would the Barney stories. Only his was the sailing stories. Of course he was quite a man in his day too. He was one of the greatest clog dancers that ever had a pair of shoes on his feet.

JM: NO kidding?

AB: And nobody knew where he learned it either. But I know the story they told about him. The fellow that was with him saw it, witnessed it, and told me the story himself. He used to run a store on the island, his name was Wallace. He said that they was in Boston one night, they were on a vessel there. and of course went uptown. Went up and went into this place where they was having this clog dance. Of course, Grandfather used to wear what they call brogans. Old rubber boots, when they wore down they'd cut them off and make boot feet, get them on your feet but they're all loose on your feet. But they used to wear them around in those days. And of course aboard the vessel they didn't dress up or anything like that, just homespun clothes or anything they had. And they went up to this building where this entertainment was going on. So they watched the dancers, each dancer was competing on the stage. Well, one of the fellas that was aboard the ship with grandfather says, gory you can do better than that. Course he'd had a few little hookers in him make him feel real kippy and well he didn't know but he could. [quotes grandfather in a high pitched voice.] So he started down the aisle and the man that was running the show, you know, saw him coming and the ushers were going to put him out. He said, no, let the downeaster come down. They knew he was a downeaster by the way he was dressed. Said, let him come down. So he came down and he got

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up on the stage where they was. And he said, do you think you can dance? And he says, well I can try. Said, what do you want for a number.? Oh, anything, didn't matter to him what it was. So they started in playing. Of course, he went on the stage and started in with them old boot feet on his feet. He only danced a few little shuffles with his feet and the man called a halt. ^{He said,} You go get this man a good pair of shoes. so they went and got him a pair of clog shoes and brung them out and he put them on. He outdanced everything that was on the stage. (laughs).

JM: (laughs) Did he win some kind of prize?

AB: I don't know what he got but he out stepdanced everything that was on the stage and everybody was hollering Hurrah for the down-easter. So I know that to be a true story because the fella that told me the story was with him when it happened. And he said he never got such a kick out of anything in his life, why he said, he went all around them fellas. He knew steps they never heard of.

JM: That's fantastic. What was his name?

AB: His name was Elihu.

JM: Same as your brother.

AB: Yea same as my brother, you can pronounce it Elihu or Elihu, either way, EL-i-h-u.

JM: And nobody knew where he learned to dance?

AB: No, nobody knew where he learned to dance.

JM: Did you ever see him dance?

AB: Oh, I seen him take a few shuffle steps, when he 'd gotten older. I know one day there was something going on, some music and he was tapping his feet, and he said, I don't know but I can do that. Grandmother said, .(?)

them feet were rattling, and he was an old man then, 80 years old. He could still step those old feet off and he hadn't done it I don't suppose for a good many years unless he done it by himself some time or another, you know. But I never saw him actually get on the floor and dance. But he used to play for dances like I did, he used to always play for dances.

JM: He played fiddle?

AB: He used to play fiddle, he played accordion. And switch from one to the other. He used to play for kitchen breakdowns back in the days gone by. He was a man I'd say, when he quit playing for dances, oh he might be in his fifties. There was a fire there on the island one Christmas eve and there never was a dance held on the island for seventy years.

JM: NO kidding?

AB: No. Never was one again for seventy years on the island.

JM: Because of the fire?

AB: Yea, the fire burned a woman up. They was getting ready to hold a kitchen breakdown that night and the little girl didn't want her to leave. And she promised her, she said I'll go get you a present if you'll be good while I'm gone. so she went up with the lamp, and an old steamer trunk to reach in and get the present cover fell and hit the lamp, spilled the kerosene all over and caught her afire. And before they got to her she burned so bad with all the oil, it killed her. So they never held another dance on the island for over seventy years. And then there was only one dance after that and my outfit played it. And that ended that one.

JM: What happened?

AB: Well, the high school boys and girls came to us one night, and said, we used to play locally there for entertainment, just play a few numbers for entertainment if they was putting on a program. So they come to us one night, and said, would you play for a dance if we get the hall? Sure. Didn't have an idea that they'd do it. They were so underhanded about it, that even the people they got the hall from didn't know what was going to happen. They thought they was just going to have music. Well they newsed it around so some of the people that they knew that liked to go to dances from Jonesport and different places what was going to take place. But it was hush hush. We didn't know anything about it. So we all gathered and of course a lot of the people came for the musical evening.

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Oh , a dance to them was something out of this world. They couldn't stand for that. But, they'd hired the hall. Couldn't do anything about it. So we played for the dance for the whole evening, that was the last one. (laughs)

JM: Everybody was mad?

AB: Oh I guess they was kind of mad at us for a while.

JM: Were they also quite religious, and feel that dancing wasn't...

AB: Oh very much so. The people that wouldn't allow it done in the town hall, see, cause they had to go along with the religious people. It was alright with us, we didn't care about that, but we thought we'd play for one dance anyways, and we did.

JM: First dance in seventy years.

AB: But old Tall Barney was noted for a lot of his stories. I know one my father told, he saw him do it himself, and I know my Dad wouldn't lie about it, he said he watched him do that. He'd haul a great big sixteen foot halibut dory, he used to go lobster fishing in that. Up here on Pond Island, off of Milbridge here. And he never used to use a mooring for his dory, he used to haul it up and down on the beach. And he came in from a haul, step out on the beach, if it was low tide, just the same, didn't matter what the tide was, low tide or medium tide or whatever/ He'd put his hand in that beckett on the stern, his left hand to guide her, and he'd push her right up to the high water mark. Up that beach all alone. Normally it would take four good men to even start it up the beach, but he'd do it all by himself. Used to do it night and morning. Haul it up when he came in in the afternoon or late at night, then take her down in the morning when he went.

JM: So what happened down at Pond Island?

AB: That 's what old Tall Barney used to do. Of course my dad's grandfather, he watched him do that.

JM: Every night.

AB: Yea he'd haul it, when he came in from work he 'd just take hold of that beckett in the stern and push her up the beach. He said he could see his old boots shoved right down into them

beach rocks and rattling away they'd go up the beach. He'd shove right up just like it didn't amount to anything.

JM: How much would a dory like that weigh?

AB: Oh I wouldn't know the actual weight, but they're pretty heavy. It would take four good men a good job to pick one up off the beach and then you ain't going to carry it too far. But he'd walk it up all by himself, shove it right up. And then they told another story, I don't know how true this was.

JM: What happened when he brought the dory down to Pond Island?

AB: He used to lobster fish here in Pond Island with it. So that's where he used to haul it up and down the beach here on Pond Island.

JM: Oh I see.

AB: And then they told another one about when he moved back down to Beals again. He used to go over to the Underwood factory and get bait, lobster bait, it was cuttings from the herring.

JM: To where?

AB: Underwood's factory, to the cutting machine to get the heads and tails from the fish. So he'd put his dory in there right along side the slip where there was a sluiceway that come down. And he went up town. Well, while he was uptown, some of the fellas there put his boat, his dory, under neath the sluice and filled her right level with herring. So when he come down she was all grounded out full of herring, oh the tide the length of the boat or so .

And of course the dory wasn't new, she was an older dory, but still and all it took a little bit of beef there to pull it apart. They said , Barney, your dory 's all loaded. He didn't say a word he just walked right down to it. Hooked his arm right on the bow and give a push. When he came up, he knew he had to put some strength to it, so he did. When he come up he took the top right off her, left the bottom on the beach, the herring spilled right out. He cleaned the top right off, timbers and all, peeled her right off. Didn't bother him a bit he just walked off and left her there. No dory. If they pulled a trick on him he pulled one back on them, he just ripped her.

Cleaned her.

JM: They were probably always trying.

AB: They was always trying to best him, stump him, but they never did. They used to try all kinds of tricks on him.

JM: Did you ever hear the one about betting he couldn't lift the anchor off the wharf.

AB: No, I don't know as I ever did. I think that was some relation of his, Frank Beal I think this fella was. That happened down Bucks Harbor when he lived down to Bucks Harbor. Now if Frank was a brother to him, I think he was. He was a big man. And the anchor was there on the wharf and he was the only man who could lift it. He could walk along and lift the anchor, but I think that was tall Barney's brother. I wouldn't say that for sure, but I'm pretty sure that was his brother. Because they moved down in there in Bucks Harbor. And this happened somewhere between Bucks Harbor and Machiasport on a little wharf. But I never heard a true report of how it went, but I knew that his name was Frank that lifted the anchor, now whether tall Barney could lift it, I don't know. I never heard anybody say, but Frank could lift the anchor. Wasn't nobody else around that could pick it up, but he could pick it up.

JM: Did you tell me something, or did I read this, that Barney always went barefoot?

AB: NO, I never heard of it.

JM: Maybe I'm mixing that up with something else.

AB: All the pictures I've ever seen, all I've ever heard, he used to wear what they called the grain leather boot, made to fit his feet.

JM: Grey leather?

AB: Grain leather, heavy leather, that's what they used to wear for boots in them days.

JM; Even out on the boats.

AB: Yea, always did, until they come up with rubber boots, they used to wear this grain leather boot.

JM: Seems like they'd be a little wet after a while.

AB: Yea, but that's what they used to wear. And that's what he had

fishermen years ago always did it. So when I started lobster fishing as a boy I had a rowboat and I did the same thing. Always rowed that way, watched my grandfather do it, watched my dad do it, until the powerboats come around, always rowed cross handed. Stand there and row away and you didn't tire half so much.

JM: Put your weight into it?

AB: Yea, put your weight into it. You cross your oars and your body went with it and it was easy to row that way.

JM: Imagine, what did you call it, rowing fishing?

AB: Rowboat fishing. Of course them good old days are gone by, all done away with. People lived a more simple life then and they didn't have everything they do today, today it's a humdrum business to me. All these new-fangled stuff to work with and there's no work to the fishing business, not what it used to be. When I first started out fishing if you fished in deep water you hauled them by hand. But now there's a winch and you press a lever and away they go up they come. The heaviest thing you handle today is your pot buoy. And that's all made out of styrofoam. It's just like everything else, they've destroyed the fishing industry completely. Dragnets, and beam trawlers, gill-netters, and all this stuff out, and big deep sea nets, and purse-seining. When I first saw the first beam trawler come down the coast, I told my dad, I'd just started fishing with him off shore, I was fifteen years old, we was hand-line fishing. You could go out there and load your boat with hand-line fish, load it. Now you go out there, if you catch one, sometimes four, you might not see one in a day. I told dad that's the end of the fishing business. What do you mean. I said, well, you see what's coming down there? He looked up and he says, yea, well I see that. I said that's a little trawler, what they call a beam trawler, so once we got down abreast that's what it was. And look at it today, there's no fish left.

JM: What were you fishing for?

AB: Codfish, cod and haddock and pollock. Now you go out to that same strip of bottom and you fish for the day, you might catch one, you might not catch one, you might catch four or five. According

on his feet when he had the picture taken with the boy standing on the chair along side him, did you notice the boots, they was grain leather boots. Yea.

JM: What was the one about the fourth of July race, that was one you told me the other day.

AB: Oh yea I told you. Well, of course, Barney he's been out fishing at sea, his dory was wet and dirty. It wasn't clean and dry, like John's, he'd hauled his dory up in the summer. He was home for a couple weeks and he hauled her up. Dried her all out and sanded the bottom, painted her all smooth and clean. John and his father always used to race and of course Tall Barney came in he didn't have to worry about his dory because he never did worry about it, so. Of course, John was a big tall man like his father, almost as tall as his father, he was a big tall man, I can remember him plain, he was a real tall man. He was strong too. So they got into the race. Well, the race was about 2/3 over, and John started to gb by him a little bit. Well, Barney looked around to see where his son was and he was starting to go by. Well he set back on the oars a little more strength. And he pulled up abreast of him and they was having it out. And of course Barney thought he'd lay on a little more strength and go buy him, and broke his oars, so John won the race. He always said he always felt bad for doing it.

JM: And Barney was rowing standing up did you say?

AB: No, he was sitting down rowing for the race.

JM: But he always rowed standing up?

AB: Quite a lot. A lot of the old fishermen used to row standing up.

JM: And something about they crossed their hands?

AB: They used to cross their oars. Yea.

JM: Why is that?

AB: Well, there's a little more strength to it. You take one oar coming over here and one over there, put one over the other so there was that much oar handle in by [about a foot] you get a lot of pressure on it. You caould row all day that way, it didn't tire you half as much as sitting down pulling on oars. I know the rowboat

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to how it happened to be. But it's cleaned and gone, there's nothing there. It used to be you go out and catch all you wanted. Now it's just destroyed and gone, overdone. I don't know how there's any fish left. Still they seem to get up a few, enough to keep the markets going. And then they told another story about old tall Barney. They was in a little grog shop there in Boston. And they got talking, and he says, well, he's going to hit the first thing he met when he went outdoor. Hit the first thing he met. The first thing he met was an old Jew coming down the street with his horse and cart, an old Jew peddler. Course they always told the story that when he got abreast of the horse he stepped right out and nailed him right between the eyes and down went the horse. Now whether he did or not, that's another story. But that was one of the stories they told about him, a feat he performed, that he downed the horse with one clip. But that seemed quite a little strong story to tell, but they claim he did it. But there's so many of the different stories that they told about him that sometimes you wonder. And I know another one they told, this one here I guess really did happen. There weren't no strength of feat [feat of strength?] come out of it. But he was there to one of his daughter's homes, her name was Margaret, Margaret Beal. He was in there and who should come in but this fellow from down to Head Harbor Island, his name was Grey. And one thing brought on another, and he spoke about Mr. Barney Beal. And he said, he'd like to meet him, he'd like to meet up with him. You know what he meant he'd like to meet up with him to see how strong he was. So there was a fella there named short Will. There was a tall Will and a short Will on the island. Well, this short Will was tall Barney's boy. And of course, wherever tall Barney was you'd always find his boy there with him. So he was there, he slid out the door easy, never said a word and away he went/. Went up over the hill where tall Barney lived, just up probably a quarter of a mile, don't know it was quarter of a mile, just over the hill where he went. So someone looked out the window, and he was coming back with tall Barney with him.

When tall Barney come in he had to stoop down to get through the door. He filled the whole door full when he swing sideways to come in. And he said, Mr. Grey I understand you were looking for me. He said, yes I was looking for you. He said, did you want to hook on. He said, no, no, I was looking for a man not a giant. So tall Barney turned around and walked back home, that's all there was to that one. Oh the legends they used to tell about the man, there was so many of them you couldn't ever remember half of what they used to tell, the things he did and different feats you know. And then they saw him one day rowing down the shore going by there. They had this old scow on the beach and a bunch of men were trying to turn it over. They saw him rowing down by coming into the cove and they hollered at him, Barney, give us a hand will you. And they made it up that when he come to lift they were going to see how much he could lift they were going to hold down if he could lift it. He went along and hooked on the side of that old scow and started picking it up. Of course it was one of those seine scows used to work around weirs with. And they found he was going to pick it up himself and they started holding it down but he threw the thing over and them with it. So they told that story too, but how true that was that's another thing. But all these stories, must have been some of them true, they couldn't make them all up I don't believe. But he was quite a legend around the town, not only that but in Jonesport and up and down the coast everywhere. He was well known for his feats of strength and things he did. He went over to Cummings store one time. And they used to have freight come, steamers in them days, vessels and stuff. And they used to haul it around in horse carts. He was just storing his stuff in the store room for the store for the winter, to sell it out to the customers in the winter time, that was the only way put in a large stock for winter. Well, two barrels of flour standing on the end on the floor, well they would have weighed about 190 odd pounds plus the barrel apiece. And he told Barney, Mr. Beal, he says, you take them two barrels of flour down to your dory at once and I'll give them to you. What did you say? He said, I said if you take those two barrels of

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flour down to your dory I'll give them to you. He'd squat right down put his arms right around each one of them, hooked up under his arm and away he went out the door. Took them down to his dory and set them in the dory. It didn't matter to him. So you see his picture in the magazine there, the little pamphlet they made of him, that's one of the pictures of him.

JM: That's right, that's on the cover.

AB; Yea, he took one under each arm and away he went, didn't bother him a bit, down the beach rocks, down to his dory and set them down.

JM: And they were always trying to test him?

AB: They were always testing him this and testing him that to see what he could do and couldn't do. And then when it come to getting the water for a fishing vessel, they used to have what they call hogshead of water, big barrel, it was heavy, cask, made of oak, just cut a whole in the top of it to put your water in and they had a canvas to cover it up. So when they take the dory to take the cask ashore to fill it full of water, it was heavy. It would hold probably 60 gallons of so or better, and of course the barrel was heavy itself, heavy metal castings on it, hold it, and they used to have shocks on deck where they put it so it wouldn't roll over board or anything. When they rowed alongside of Barney's schooner, he'd just on the rail hold his hand in the rigging and reach down with one hand and pick it up and set it on deck. All the rest of them have to take the mast head and tackle down and hoist it aboard. But he reached down with one hand and set it on deck, wham. Grandfather, my grandfather, that was dad's father, said he seen him do that time and time again. He used to go cook aboard the vessel some-time when fishing. And he said, he's seen him walk right along just as unconcerned as can be and reach right down and pick it up and set it on deck.

JM: Your grandfather was cook on Barney's vessel?

AB: He did for awhile. After he quit the sea, he would cook for tall Barney, fishing once in a while and he was cook at that time. He said, he seen him do that time and time again, reach over the side

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and pull it in, didn't mean anymore to him than it would to you a bucket of water. Oh, they told so many stories you can't remember half of them. I'd like to have seen the man myself, but it was beyond my time and then some. I know dad had quite a large painting of him and his wife, side by side, and I don't know who's got it now, what happened to it. Last I knew it was in the old homestead, but when he passed away I don't know who got it, but somebody did.

JM: A painting of Barney and his wife?

AB: Yea, a beautiful one. Dad had it for quite a few years, of course his mother had it and she passed it on to dad and I don't know what happened to it after that. After dad died I don't know what happened to it. Whether it's still there in the house or whether somebody's got it I don't know. I've never been to the house since. Since dad passed away I haven't been in the homeplace since. So I don't know what's left there and what isn't left.

JM: And nobody's living there?

AB: No. Noone lives there, the shingles on the roof are starting to give away.

JM: Wouldn't it be something if that painting was still on the wall.

AB: Yea, but I don't know where it is, it was in a frame, a large frame with a glass front.

JM: Who had painted it?

AB: I don't know. Well possibly, there used to be different painters around who would paint portraits. I've got two in the other room I had done when I was a boy. One when I was 8 years old and one when I was 16.

JM: Paintings of You.

AB: Yea.

JM: Well they had photographs then, but maybe they were not so common.

AB: No, it was photography, they took them from photography pictures and then painted them.

JM: Oh hand painted.

AB: I did know the name of that painter, but I can't remember it now, right off hand. He painted the two. After I grew up I knew he came around every year or so and gather up pictures from different people and if they'd have them painted then you'd pay him for it. I had those two pictures of when I was a kid and I gave them to him, I said, paint them and bring them back and you'll get your money. So he did, he brought them back. Make a picture talk to you, I can hear him now he'd say, make a picture talk to you. He did a beautiful job painting them, they came back just as life-like as could be. And when they come back my mother had one done of my brother, he did one of him when he was a little boy just 6 years old. And then she had one done of Dad and I had it and I gave it to my youngest daughter, she was the one dad was staying with her when he passed away. He was at her house visiting her when he passed away. He didn't pass away he was taken with a shock and he died in a nursing home. He came out of the hospital and found out he couldn't walk again he just gave up and died, he didn't want to live. So I gave her the picture, that was handpainted too, the same way.

JM: Let's see. [checking notes] Did you tell me about Barney being off the coast and the English ship?

AB: Oh yes, that's another one of the stories they told. His son John is the one who told that. He said, they were supposed to be fishing and they got to far into Canadian waters. And then days they didn't have a power boat, just an sailing vessel, old sailing cutter, of course the wind died out so they sent the long boat. With four men rowing and the other fella steered with the oar, coaxswain they called it. So they came alongside and they was going to arrest him. For fishing in Canadian waters. Well, he allowed they weren't going to arrest him for anything. So the fella took guns, one of the old musket guns at him. Well, he grabbed it. And of course he bent the barrel right up. And threw that overboard. [Mary Wallace enter the house] And then they started to come after him. Well, this fella steps in over the side, with an

oar. And he took the oar and broke that up and threw it overboard. Well, he thought he'd clinch Barney, he fetched to grab him, Barney grabbed his arm and twisted it right around. And his son, John, said the sound made him sick. He twisted his arm right around and broke it, broke his arm right there with one twist. He twisted it right around and broke it. He said, when that bone scrunched he said, I almost threw up, it made me sick. But he cleaned the oars out, stove all the oars up and set them adrift. Then he hauled his net in, and rowed back to the little vessel and when the wind breezed up they sailed away. Course they couldn't get anywhere, there were no oars and they had to drift around, and there was a cutter there becalmed, no motor in them days. So there they was. So when the wind breezed up they went and picked them up, but he was long gone then. (laughs) His son, John, told that for a true story. He said, when that arm scrounced and broke, he said, it really made him sick, he said, he'd never forget that sound.

JM: And you heard that story from John?

AB: His own son told it, yea.

JM: How did Barney die?

JM: How did he die? Well, what they call dropsy in them days. But it was more or less, fluid. They say he taxed his heart, and everything in his body went to fluid and his legs swelled up at night. After a while, it got so bad, of course no doctors to do anything about that stuff them days. His leg bursted, it got sore from it and bursted, and after awhile he died. I imagine some kind of infection set in or something. And of course he overtaxed his strength, did more than he should do with his body and they claim that's what killed him. Of course no one knows for sure but they claim that;s what killed him, too much lifting. [little boy enters the house and Mary tells me she saw me in Ellsworth on the way down.

JM: I was asking you about Curt Morse, did you know him?

AB: Oh yes. I knew Curt Morse.

JM: And there was something about working on the church steeple.

AB: That was Hollis Morse, he was a relative of Curt's, Curt's nephew. I was doing a lot of repair work and carpenter work in them days around the town. And I repaired the church steeple on one of the churches there. And of course I was up on the top of the church on the top stepple, shingling it, and of course he was bringing me the shingles. Well, I couldn't see what was under the dome, I was up on top of it, I couldn't see what was under it. Anyway, I got up¹/₂ there and was hollering, I need some more shingles. WEll, he snuck up one bundle under there and I didn't know it. And he went and got another and brought it up to me. So when he passed me that bundle, you know the staging where I was working I couldn't see down below what was going on. He let that other bundle of shingles go down the roof, rattle, rattle, rattle, rattle, the old roofing shingles down on the main roof down on the ground, ca-thump. And he hollering as it went. And I thought He was the one that was going instead of a bundle of shingles, all the time it was a bundle of shingles going instead of him. And I down off of that as fast as I could to see if the man was killed, and he looked up from under the cupola grinning. I said, I ought to kill you. Laugh, didn't he laugh.

JM: I thought you said that was Curt, himself.

AB: No, that was his nephew, old Hollis. Well, Curt told me a story. His wife was baking biscuits and sent him out to the wood pile to get some wood. He went out to get the armload of wood and never went back. A fella drove up to where he was out to the wood pile getting an armload of dry wood, just as he got ready to get it, this fella says, come on Curt go with me. He says where you going. He told him where he was going. He says, how long be gone. Oh, he says, we'll be gone a day or so. He jusmped right in and away he went, never said a word to his wife or anything. When he come back two days later, he took an armload of wood and went in.

JM: (laughs) At least he didn't forget the wood. So you knew him?

AB: Yes, Curt, I knew him well. Yes, Curt used to come up to my house onece in awhile and tell a few stories.

[small talk]

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AB: Yea Old Curt was quite noted for his stories, different ones he used to tell. I knew Curt, knew him well.

JM: Why do you suppose they like to tell those Barney Beal stories, quite a long time he's been gone.

AB: Oh, he's been gone a long while. His stories will never die.

JM: why is that?

AB: Well I suppose because he was a man of super human strength. And things like that never die in a small town, it keeps. It's just like John L. Sullivan from Massachusetts, he was a great boxer. And he 'll always go down in history forever, John L. Sullivan will. There's been other fighters go down the line but they all hang for awile, but old John L. stories never died, he's still old John L. Cause they used to fight bare knuckles in them days and I guess he was quite a man. So the same thing with tall Barney, in my home town, a small town like that. And he was so well known up and down the coast for his feats of strength and stuff that I suppose that's why it's still kept going-it never stopped. And of course the old Beal family keeps it going all down the line. They always pop up with something, well, he's a relation to tall Barney. I could tell you a few stories myself but they're not worth repeating.

JM: What do you mean?

AB: Things I've seen happen through the Beal family one way or another. Little feat s of strength, or get in a little trouble, clean somebody up, straiten things out. All went into the Beal family and tied it back into the old tall Barney.

JM: Oh, I see what you mean.

C1478
Side 2

[end of tape, interview continues on another tape.]

Begin
C1479
Side 1

JM: I was asking you if you knew any stories where the punch line is Barney saying something clever, or funny.

AB: No I don't think I ever did.

JM: Mostly what he did rather than what he said.

ab: I never heard him say too much any more than what I told you about what he told Asa Grey. When he wanted to know if he were

looking for him. HE WASN'T much of a man like that. He was more or less a man of deeds instead of words. But still in all tall Barney , he was respected. Cause back in those days the only way the had to get food was shipped in by the vessels in the winter time sometimes food would get scarce. And some of them would get a little bit behind and not enough money to last through the winter. And they'd go to tall Barney. And he'd take them over to the store, fit them out, tell the storekeeper if they cant pay the bill I will. They'd give them so long a ^{time} credit on it, and he 'd say if he can't pay the bill I'll take care of it. And Barney always would do it. So if anybody got in need or anything, they'd go to tall Barney, he'd take care of it. Take them over to the store, and as long as he, ^{old} tall Barney, said that it was ok to ok it for them, they'd get anything they wanted, They knew that they'd get their money. So when the springtime come, time to pay off the bill. Barney would always go and see if they was paid, if they wasn't paid he'd take care of them, and they'd repay Barney. But he'd never see anyone go in need in any way, they said he had a heart of gold. So he was respected in every way, good and bad.

JM: He didn't take advantage of his position in the community.

AB: No,no.

JM: Now was he a gunner himself?

AB: Oh yes, he used to go gunning alot. And in the winter time in those days, when my grandmother was a young girl, they'd go down to Head Harbor Island, go down to Spruce Islands, what they call the thoroughfare. And they'd tie up the vessel there. And dig and shuck clams out and barrel them and salt them. For shipping to Gloucester in the spring for fish bait. In them days , they used to use a salted clam for fish bait, bank fishing. So that's what they used to do there they'd go down there and load their vessel. All winter long they'd load the vessel with clams and in the spring he'd take them and ship them west. So my grandmother said that as a little girl she used to go down there with them. Cause they didn't

bother with school in them days, they'd go down and do that. Spend the winter down in the harbor.

JM: And shoot birds?

AB: Course in them days there was no fine on birds, you could shoot what you wanted to eat anytime you wanted to, so that's what they did.

[somebody comes into the room, tape pauses]

JM: Carl Davis. [I asked Adrian if he knew of Carl Davis, whom I read about in an accession in the archives. He knew of him, "Always walked wherever he went."]

[132] JM: Ever heard of Mother Hicks up on Beals? [Mother Hicks was reported to be a witch from Beals Island also in a archives accession.]

AB: There's a place down there called Hick's Head. There was a little story went with that.

JM: What's that?

AB: They started a quarry there years ago. There's quite a plumb rock where it slopes down over the bank. And of course they was cutting a lot of sods away where they was cutting the quarries of stone out.

JM: What kind of stone, granite?

AB: Yea, granite stone. So a fella was setting there and never noticed what they were doing. He was setting on the bank there on this little knoll, cutting away, they didn't know there was nothing underneath to hold it. They was cutting off a root. And he was sitting on this piece they was cutting the root off. When they cut it off away it went and he went with it. Slid right off Hicks Head right off that cliff right into the mud flat down below. AND they hollered, steer her straight Ikie, when he went. He landed down on the mud.

JM: He was alright?

AB: Oh, he was alright, yea, slid right down. That was called Hicks' Head, that was the only story I ever heard about Hick's Head. And they claimed that they cut that sod off and when they did away he went.

JM: Who was he?

AB: Ikie Alley was setting on it, a fella named Ikie Alley.

They cut it off and down he went. Slid right off the cliff.

JM: How about Art Church?

AB: Who? no.

JM: He was famous for the stories he would tell, the lies he would tell.

AB: No didn't hear anything about it, never heard of him.

[At this point Mary Wallace is in the room as well as one of her daughters and her husband. And when I mention someone famous for telling lies they all start laughing-the implication is that Adrian himself is quite known as a storyteller, but he plays it cool.]

JM: Like somebody else we know.

AB: No, never heard of him.

[JM explains one anecdote attributed to Art Church of Indian River. Also asks of other "local characters" such as John McGee. Adrian hadn't heard of him either. These stories were collected by Dorson from James Alley in 1957. Adrian did know old James.]

[190] AB: I remember when all those Alleys moved up from Head Harbor Island, there was quite a settlement at one time on Head Harbor Island. Cause when I was a boy 15 years old I took part in a concert on theat island. And Stuart Alley was in it, he spoke a piece. And Dad and I sang a song on that island that night, an old war song, back in the first World War. That was of course after the war was over, a few years, about 5 years, still those songs were still going good at that time.

JM: When you were talking about you and your dad going around singing, you sang in a lot of churches.

AB: Yea.

JM: I was hearing about the Seacoast Mission.

AB: That was on Head Harbor Island, that's where that concert took place. The Seacoast Mission. We went down there after a load of herring. Dad and I and we stayed overnight. Dad's friend down there used to run a fish weir, we went down to get bait, so dad and I stayed aboard the boat. Well, we heard about the concert so we went up.

And dad's friend on the island knew that dad was always into stuff like that, so he went along and told the head of it, the Seacoast Mission people, and they invited us to take part in the concert. There were 72 people there that night, that's how many people there were on that island. There were 72 people at the concert, course that weren't all the people, but that number of people that were at the concert, were 72 people, I always remember it. I was fifteen years old at the time and Stuart Alley spoke a piece that night.

JM: Did some of the other churches you sing at, were they Seacoast Missions?

AB: No, we never sang at a Seacoast Mission church, that was the only time we ever did anything with the Seacoast Mission. Course we were everywhere. I even sang on radio for a parish church in Rhode Island, went to Providence, Rhode Island over to the radio station and took part in one over there for the parish church in Tivinan (?). I've been all around everywhere, I've sung in churches from Providence, Rhode Island, down as far east as Machias, along the coast all different places everywhere.

JM: YOu also said the Islanders played on the radio, was that a regular thing?

AB: We did it for pretty near two years. Same as I got the record of. We was on the radio for pretty near two years.

JM: Every week?

AB: Yea, once a week, a half hour program.

JM: Who was it sponsored by?

AB: It was sponsored by four different groups, used to take turns and sponsor us. We were sponsored by Millers' Ambulance Service, then Rodger's Store, and then, oh, I think of his name in a minute, used to run the trucking business, can't think of the man's name, and then a big feed company in Machias had it for awhile.

JM: And you'd play for half an hour.?

AB: Yea, half an hour, we used to play and sing songs.

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JM: People request pieces?

AB: Yea, people request a song, we'd put it on for them. We had quite a bit of fun doing it.

JM: And then you'd tell people where you'd be playing a dance?

AB: No, that was just another thing by itself. It was just a program for the public, entertain the public for the half hour.

JM: Did they pay you?

AB: NO, we didn't collect any money, we just did it for fun. Get a sponsor to sponsor it on there. Course they knew we were playing different places, they knew I was playing all the time, all those places did. We just did it for more or less publicity, that was all it was.

JM: When would that have been, the 40's?

AB: No, that was the last part of the 50's. I got a tape of one of the programs, it's somewhere in the house now.

JM: A tape of one of the radio shows?

AB: Yea, one of the regular shows. I had one and I copied it off on one of those little cassettes. It's here somewhere, I don't know where it is. One of the programs just as it was put on the air.

JM: What was the station?

AB: One of the Machias stations, but it's gone out now. The one that Gene Hooper had for quite a few years after that. They used to bring the whole thing from the radio station down there and bring it up to the dance hall in Jonesport when we were playing Saturday nights, and put that out over the air for everywhere.

JM: Is that right, broadcast the dance?

AB: Broadcast the dance from Jonesport, all over the whole state. They'd bring the whole works and set it up, the whole dance evening, different talking and singing and playing music. He used to bring it up several times brought the whole outfit down.

JM: Did you do a program before the dance?

AB: No, just a dance.

JM: Where were the dances, in the old IGA?

AB: Where the old IGA store is now.

JM: Upstairs above it?

AB: No, it was all on one big main floor. But that used to be, in

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the beginning, it was a theater. And Boston and New York people used to come down and put on big shows in it. Eight or ten different curtains on the stage, different colors, different sceneries on them. And it went from that to a movie hall, they put a movie stage in it with elevated seats. And on the big main floor with just regular chairs and the settee seats all the whole length of that. But the big dance floor was quite a big floor plus the elevated seats. They didn't remove the elevated seats they left them there but they cleaned the rest of the stuff out. And renovated it back over into a regular theater again, the way it used to be. So he decided he was going to make a dance hall of it and hired us to play there for him, and we played there for two years. So that's how that got back into that. He had a nice looking hall, colored lights, revolving lights, it was a beautiful hall. He renovated it back into the old original style, beautiful hall the way he fixed it up. We played there for two years, and we quit, and they tried other ones, (laughs) but they couldn't get nobody to go. And then he turned it over into a store.

JM: Is that where they sold wood tools?

AB: No that was on the west end of town.

[we talk about no dances on Beals Island again at someones suggestion. And then wondering about the next Hayseeder's Ball. Hull's Cove sometime in December. Eliot Foss runs the orchestra and he usually calls Adrian to go. His leg fell off one time at the dance.

[330] Eliot lives in Gouldsboro, he loves to play music, he plays piano.]

AB: Course I've played with so many different piano players up and down the coast. [Lottie Geel...Adrian played with a group down at Cundy's Harbor when he was delivering a boat.]

AB: Mr. Man he could play the piano, don't think he couldn't.

He was a real professional at it, he was good. I was invited to sit in with that group one night. I delivered the boat for him and he knew this was coming up, he knew the people, he knew them all, you know. Course first thing I know I was sitting in the audience, fella got up and invited me up to play for the evening. There were four violinists, so I made the fifth one. We had a ball (laughs).

And the little fella that did invite me up, he was a French fellow, played a little 3/4 size one. He sat in a chair and his feet wouldn't touch the floor. Little small man, but he could play, don't think he couldn't. He could rattle that thing off in good shape. I told him, I said, well Bub, I says, you do an excellent job. He says, you're not so bad yourself. (laughs)
[he talks more about the fellow in Cundy's Harbor.]

AB: I played with a lot of pianists./ Stonington had a lot of them. Good piano players, had a lot of them. One by the last name of Cousins, she was good. another one there who's last name was Robbins, she was extra good. Helen was, Helen Robbins, she was good. Each one had a different style you know. I can't stand a thumper, what I call a thumper, just goes thump, thump. I can't stand those kind of piano players myself. I like someone who sits down they flow the music as it ought to be. Some just sit there and go clunk, clunk, clunk, no more musical tone in it, than nothing in the world. Just like these modern songs they sing today, they turn my right inside out to listen to it.

[381] [talk about mutual friend Havalah Hawkins- his sailboat with a windmill.]

[400] [perpetual motion machine- Adrian has an idea on how to build one- he demonstrates on paper. And explains how it works.]

[469] Adrian talks about working as pattern maker in the Stonington ship yards with Capt. Hawkins during the war. Adrian's father worked there as well.]

JM: What do you mean pattern-maker?

AB: Used to take the patterns, same as if you make a molded-frame ship. Every piece that goes into the ship, you have to make a duplicate pattern of it. And transfer all the degrees and figures on it. And pass that little pine pattern over and take it to the mill and put it on a piece of wood the thickness you designate for it. And degrees on it, and they mark the block of wood, and lay the pattern on it and mark it out. And you have your degrees written on this little pattern you make, so when that's put through the saw they saw the degrees and bevel on it. So if it was 0 degrees or 45

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degree angle you've got quite a twist. So they used to go around on the lines on the floor. My dad was foreman at the time, and that was the first time I'd had experience with the big stuff like that. So him and Hawkins would go get the degrees with the protractor and bring them to me to put on. So I looked it over and kept using them, I worked I guess a couple three days with the things they brought me but they didn't come out perfect. They wouldn't come out perfect, every bit, all the way. I got the bright idea it could be done a different way. So I got looking at it and just like that it clicked in my head. So I thought it all over and figured it out in my head and I knew it would work. Just like I know this would [the perpetual motion machine], I knew it would work. So I called them over one day, him and dad, I said, come over here a minute. They come over where I was working, I said, why don't you do this a different way. There ain't no other way to do it. That's the only way it can be done. It's been done for years and years, the old shipwrights, it's the only way it can be done. I says, oh no, it can be done differently. How do you mean? Well, I explained to him how I meant it. He looked at me. He says, I don't know but you have got something. He went home, he never came back for two days. When he came back he said, you know you have got something. I said, well, I thought so. He said, you go ahead and make it. I made what they call a rule staff. He said, you go ahead and make your staff, it will work. I said, no you help me make it, you come with me. He said, no that's your baby. I said, no come with me, we'll make it together. So we went up. The timbers were 26 inches centers. So I took a square, I set my protractor right in it, in the corner. I set my little stick of wood right off here on the side of it. 26 inches up, 26 inches out, make a square of it. And just the same with the degrees. [He illustrates this on a piece of paper while he speaks.] like that. These ought to be close together, 1,2,3, degrees, 5 degrees up to 45 but up here they a long ways apart. Well my mold frames were 26 inches center on timbers. Well, you have your lines on the floor like this and you're coming down around sometimes they'd intersect, close together, and up on the top they had to be a long ways apart, then they'd shorten up and come together again. I said,

take this rule staff. You mark each one of these, 1,2,3,4,5 and so on until you get up to 45 degrees. I said , you take your rule staff you got them on here all marked, then you just measure from one to the other. They're 26 inches apart. He said, you got something. So I made that, and i used that all the rest of the time I worked in the ship yard. All the stuff I made. And there never was a piece of timber come back but that it was perfect bevels, just using that one staff. So I know this will work [the perpetual [530]motion machine] just like that did. [Hawkins borrowed this same principle for another invention, which he sells in a magazine.

AB: He always said, you tell me you never studied this stuff. I said, no I never did. You never went to school for it. I says, no. WEll, he says, I've been to naval architect school and everything and you're two jumps ahead of me everything I know. I says, Oh no, don't belittle yourself Hawkins, you know a lot of stuff I don't know. Well, he says, I teach you what I know if you just show me how to make a without lining the whole ship out. I said, that's simple, come with me. So we went into the boat, and I took a plumb rule and a bevel and a protractor. I tacked that piece of wood up in the boat where I wanted it, just tacked it up, and explained to him how I WAS GOING to do it. All I had to put a few lines on there and take a bevel or two with the protractor. He said, you got it. He says, I'd never known how to do it if you hadn't have shown me , I'd of had to lay out the whole ship to get that one piece of timber. I says, see how simple it is? He says. it's simple enough you know how, but I wouldn't have known how to do it. But we swapped ideas back and forth like that. But he was a smart boy, Hawkins was a smart man. I don't belittle him in any way, because he's a very clever gentleman, I can tell you. I've been around him, I know, I worked with him, I know he was smart, a very very smart man. [558] But then we came up with another thing to make a log stern on a boat. Dad was foreman of the place at the time and I was just a pattern maker, supposed to be a pattern maker. So, they was going to make a log stern, the lines were taken off of a steel ship. But the only way to build a stern like it, there had to be a log stern made.

JM: A log stern?

AB: What they call a log stern, all oak. A heavy timbered oak stern to match the planking, and still be solid and rigid. And they didn't know how they were going to do it. Dad looked it over, Hawkins looked it over, they studied it, they went back and forth on it, I didn't say nothing I still worked on the floor making my patterns. I wasn't supposed to know anything I was just a pattern maker. So they was there, they even called up the head ones from the yard, the president, the vice-president, even the government inspector was there. They were all wondering what they was going to do. Getting down to that part of the ship and they didn't know what they was going to do about it. One of them, he was the brother to the president, he was the next one in line, he said, well, we'll have to make a mock pattern, set up a mock ship of it and see what we can do with it. So I listened to them awhile and I said, look gentlemen, will you give me five minutes.? What do you mean? Well, you give me five minutes and I'll show you how to make a log stern. Well, go ahead. Oh, I says, I'll be back in five minutes. Hawkins there listening to it too. There I went, I went downstairs to the millroom, a good friend of mine down there I told him what I wanted. He sawed me out about 15, 20 strips they were 5/8 x 5/8, little pine strips, oh they was anywhere from ten to twelve feet long. I took a hammer, some nails and a hand saw and away I went. Went on the floor, along the lines of the floor, a full size ship, along the lines on the floor. I just put one line on, tacked it on where I wanted it, on the lines, went along and made another one, made another set above it. Hawkins watched this for about five minutes or so, said, buddy, it's your baby, you build it, you got it.

JM: He could see you had it figured out?

AB: He could see I had it right. I said, no, you're going to help me do it, I ain't going to do it alone, you're going to help me. No, that's your baby you build that stern. I said, no you're going to help me with it, so we built it together.

JM: But you didn't have to build a model?

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AB: No didn't have to do anything. Off the lines off the floor, I didn't have to make the patterns, just lay my lines on the floor, with a pencil. [The rest of this story Adrian didn't want recorded on tape because of its sensitive nature due to the goverment project during the war and a possible infraction of law.]

[end of side I] C1479

[Begin Side 2]

JM: How did you happen to start making the little boats?

AB: Oh just curiosity, make them myself. That's handed down through different generations of people on the island. Different ones make minature ships.

JM: They've done that on the island for a long time.?

AB: Oh, yes, everybody used to make little sailboats for their kids, powerboats, lobster boats and stuff like that.

JM: To put in the water?

AB: Yea, to put in the water and play with. I got one that I showed you that Dad made me 70 odd years ago, a sailboat, she's still going.

JM: I think we looked at that the other night.

AB: Different ones on the island used to make them, everybody didn't make them but there were a few that did make them. And then 'their children started picking it up, too and making them. Had a fella on there who's name was Alley, Clifford Alley, he was one of my good playmates. He started picking them up himself making them. And Mr. Man he made some beautiful things, too. He made some beautiful sailboats. [Mary comments that her big sailboat will be beautiful if Adrian "ever gets it made."] Yea, I will someday.

JM: You've got one you're working on now?

AB: Yea, hers. She collects them a s fast as I make them.

JM: Where's the workshop?

AB: Here. I've got the hull of it all done, I've got to put the deck in, put the lead keel on, deck and mast and sail rig. Oh, it's quite a bit larger than that white one in there.

JM: A schooner?

AB: No, it's a yacht style. But it's going to have a Marconi rig. I've got my ideas on how I'm going to fix it up for her.

Only I don't think she wants it painted the color I want it.

JM: He wants it black?

AB: yea.

JM: What do you want it?

MW: I don't care.

JM: Well, I guess black is ok then, if you don't care.

AB: I want it black with a red bottom and a white boot top. Varnished deck and rails, varnished house, with a single spar. I made her a single-spar Marconi rig but she ain't got that no more. Her son has got that over his display room and he won't part with it. So she's lost that, she won't get that back. That's the only one I've ever sailed.

JM: You sailed it in the water?

AB: I sailed it when I first made it.

MW: It's just like remote control, she ain't got remote control, but put her on the water and fix those sails just right she'll lean right over on her side and come right back to you.

JM: Is that right, go right in a circle.

AB: I sail her just right, I'll set her off and she'll tack and come right straight around to where I set her from, (laughs) lean right over on that water line show just as pretty sail out there and turn around and come back.

JM: As long as the wind doesn't die, you'd have to go swimming.

AB: Well, down in the cove where I sail her you could wade all over that cove., flat water.

MW: I'd like to take them all down the water some day and let them go. On a good calm day.

JM: That would be quite a sight. So that's an old tradition on the island, to build those little boats?

AB: Well, that's always been a boat building place ever since the island first started. They started building a reach boat like we was talking about. My great-grandfather on my father's side, on his father's side [as opposed to his mother's side which would be tall Barney] his name was William Beal, he was a boat builder.

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He built boats for years. Until he went to war, and he lost his life down in the New Orleans valley. But he was a boat builder. Course it all come down through the family, and Uncle Freeman (?) Beal, he was the son of a boat builder, of the little reach boats. And I had one of the boats he built, yea, I had one. But that's where I learned a lot of lapstrake building was by watching him. JM: The reach boats were lapstrake.

AB: Yea, all lapstrake. I learned the lapstrake trade by watching him. j[lapstrake is pronounced streak.] As a kid going to school. And then I'd go to school and draw lines, and I was drafting boats long before I knew wwhat I was doing. So I used to set up in school. And dad used to take these yachting magazines and in it were all these lines for the Hershoff sailing yachts and the Shamrock and all the great racing yachts. The lines was there, all these fancy lines, course I looked at them. I started copying them and making my own lines and boats and stuff. And it came just as natural to me as if I'd studied it in school somewhere. So that's how I knew this stuff when I went to the shipyard to work and Hawkins said, y9ou never went to school for it. And I says, no, but I didn't tell him I was self-taught. SElf-taught myself through those magazines. So I knew all those things. What the lines meant, from what they didn't mean, I didn't know what they was called but I knew what they was used for. You got your buttock lines and your futtock lines, you got your triangle lines, you got your level lines, and you got your moor lines. And you put them all together and they show you how to straighten your ship out with and how to keep all' the humps out of it. But if you didn't know that stuff then you couldn't do it. But I learned that stuff when I was just a kid going to school just by myself, jsut studying old books. So when I went there in the shipyard I knew all that stuff without being told. He couldn't figure how I knew it.

JM: And he went to naval architecture school.

AB: And he went to naval architecture school . How is it you claim you never went to school and you know all this stuff. I said, just

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a little paractical experience, i says, If you'd been around the wood working business as long as I have you'd figure out why, but I never told him what I'd done. But that's how I learned it was just studying those magazines that dad had. And watching the old fellow put stuff together, and he was clever, he was good at it. So I never had no problem when it came to that stuff cause I'd seen it done. But Hawkins, he's a smart boy, Hawkins is, a very, very smart chicken. He used to come down the house and bring his accordion and his fiddle and we'd play evenings, night after night when we were down to Stonington during the war. He'd come over night after night and we'd sit there and play.

[Talk more about Havalah and some scuttlebut. And then they talk about the seafood truck and what they are hauling next. I ask Adrian to sing a song and he seems to be reluctant.]

AB: They're real, real, real old. I can remember three or four of them, there's some I only remember snatches of, and there are some perhaps you've heard. Did you ever hear of one When the Snowbirds Cross the Valley? Well that one was quite old, it was one of Dad's favorite songs. When the Snowbirds Cross the Valley,

When Jack Frost is in the Air,

It is then I'll be going to my Sweetheart,

Pure and fair.

[Mary asks about the song sheets that Adrian had down~~W~~ at his house in Beals.]

AB: Then there was another one, When the Sunset Turns the Ocean Blue to Gold? That's an old, old-timer. Then there was another one, Far Away On the Hills of Old New Hampshire. Then I do have the music to this one back home, Down in New England Far Far Away, There stands the Homestead on the Hill. That's an old, old-timer, but what the name of it is I can't remember. I got the sheet music somewhere down home I knwo it's in there, because mother had it for years and dad gave me all the music. And I divided it up between all the children and myself. [He talks about a book he made up with all the songs he sang with his father and doesn't knwo what happened to it. People are constantly coming and going during our conversation. Mary's children and grand-children. Adrian mentions he has tapes of his father, brother and himself singing.]

[tape is shut off for a short while then resumes.]

[236]JM: Were the hymns you sang out of hymn books?

AB: Yea.

JM: Was it one kind of church that you sang in?

AB: No, we sang in different churches, but we did one particular church more than any of the others. We used to go around to different places, but I turned down a good offer when I was 16 years old, I turned down a good offer, but I couldn't see it.

JM: What was that?

AB: WE were singing to a campground meeting up in Sargentville, Maine, Brooksville we called it, Walker's Pond. There was a fella there from Massachusetts, I didn't know the man. Anymore than I knew his name, but I didn't know him, he was a stranger to me. He never said anything, so it passed that fall down home on the island they was having a series of meetings and he came down there.

JM: Back home?

AB: Yea, down to my house. He come from Boston, Massachusetts. Come to find out he was the president of Fisher's College in Massachusetts. That afternoon we had a service in the afternoon, and he was there and dad and I did a duet together that afternoon. So after the service was over I went outdoors with my chums and the first thing I know dad come to the door and said, come on in a minute I want to see you. So I went in, and he said, Mr. Fisher has got a proposition for you. I says, let's hear it. He said, well, I've been talking to your dad, I've been following you and you didn't know it. He says, you've got the potential for what I'VE BEEN looking for. He says, How would it sound to you if I take you with me, you can come home every holiday there is, and every special event of your life, family affairs, you can come home. But this isn't going to cost you a penny, your clothes will be furnished, your room will be furnished, your food will be furnished and your spending change will be furnished. It won't cost you nothing, this will all be full and free. But I want to put you through the conservatory of music at Fisher's College in Massachusetts. I thought a minute. He says, What do you think about it? How does that sound to you? I says,

Well, it sounds might good in a way. But I says, Mr. Fisher, if it's all the same to you I'm going to stay home and go fishing with dad. So it passed on about a year after that, a fellow from the University of Maine up here, he had married a girl from Jonesport. And he was pretty well up in there. He approached me with the same proposition. I could go up and live with them in Orono, to the campus, and they'd put me through the conservatory at the University of Maine free of all costs. I t wouldn't cost me a nickel, they'd pay for the whole thing. I turned them down, and I said, no, I'm staying home and go fishing with dad. I'm not sorry. So probably if I'd gone to Fisher's College with him, if I'd amounted to anything it's hard to tell where I'd been. But I said, no. But when I was young I did have a very, very fine high tenor voice. I could go just as high as I wanted to with no crack in it. And I could control it anyway I wanted to, and it was smooth, there was no jerking motion, just clean and smooth all the way through. [phone rings]

JM: Well, you still have a smooth voice.

AB: Not now.

JM: For a man your age.

AB: It's too old, it's gone now, I don't have a voice.

JM: When I first heard you sing I was surprized.

AB: Well, it hangs in there fair. But I mean no comparison, none whatever.

JM: You have to take an extra swig of olive oil [which is what Adrian did the first time he sang for me at his house.]

AB: Have to. Of course I destroyed my voice, the vocal chords. Calling black ducks on icy cold days, wintertime. Cause Dad had a natural duck call and he taught it to me. And we could fool a black duck.

JM: Calling a black duck.

AB: Yea, calling a black duck and making a fool of him. Call him right up so he would look right down at you. Dad used to aggravate the hunters he'd go with. And I used to do the same thing. We'd go someplace by ourselves. He went out one time to what they call the

egg rock. And at low water of course all the hunters that were on her they went down to the ponds, where ducks normally feed down in rockweed, little seaweed, birds and fish to feed on. And those little sandfleas they feed on them. And they'd stop and get some little sea shells and feed on that. And of course they'd go down where those ponds were where the ducks would normally feed. well, dad wouldn't go there. He'd even go up on the highest part of that rock, where up in the air, on the highest part of it. Well when the ducks would start to come in, the time would go down, they'd start to come in to where that rockweed was, dad would always knew they'd came in by the leeward side of the rock, fly in by the leeward side where they'd come in to go and land, when they'd get right abreast he'd start calling. All he'd have to do is give a couple of calls and the old ducks would turn around and come right to where he was. He laid upon that rock that afternoon there was 19 ducks come in, he got all 19 and they never got off a shot. He'd get them anyplace he went.

JM: Just with his voice?

[322] AB: Just with his voice, so he taught me how to do it. I copied him doing it. So, down there one night, down at the cape shore, duck hunting for black ducks I was, I had my wife's brother with me, my brother-in-law, he was just a young fella. It was in the winter. We hadn't much more got there to lay for ducks when I looked coming around the shore was 3 other hunters. I knew all 3 of them, when they got abreast I knew them. The fella there used to call me snowfoot. He talked a little funny. He used to call Lawrence, Warence. He said, Warence, we might as well go home. WHY? Old Snowfoot here, we won't get no birds, old snowfoot get them all. We won't get no, we go home. Oh, he says. No, I know what me talk about, Snowfoot get them all, we won't get a bird, we might as well go home. I said, sure, Lester, you'll get some. Oh no, old Snowfoot get them all. So they went down, way down on

the lower pond where the ducks normally come in to feed. So I went up toward the bank, there's a small pond up there, just a small one, a big round rock to get behind. My brother-in-law says, what are you doing up here? I says, just for fun. So, sun started getting down. An old duck coming, I knew he had to fly to that runway, right by me to get to where they was. They was up $\frac{1}{2}$ to what they call the Marsh coast (?). They was probably a couple hundred yards from me, each one laying in a different spot in sand holes. The duck started coming by when he did I called him, he came right to where I was by that pond, When he got abreast of the pond I dropped him. Ten duc ks come in, I got the whole ten of them. That's the only ten ducks we see. (laughs) What did I tell you Warence, old Snowfoot get them all.

JM: Why did they call you snowfoot?

AB: I don't know why, but he always called me snowfoot. I guess because I used to wear a large size felts and rubbers make quite a track in the snow.

[Mary tells of someone she saw in Ellsworth]

JM: Did you know Cecil Kelly?

AB: Yes, I knew Cecil well, he was an old storyteller too. Yes, he used to tell some crooked yarns.

JM: He used to tell some yarns?

AB: (laughs) Yes, old Cecil would, he'd tell some yarns that boy would.

JM: Is he gone now?

AB: Yes Cecil and his wife both. His wife was a great pianist too. She used to play for silent movies. When they used to have music, she used to play for silent movies for years. She went to high school when I did. She graduated three years ahead of me. She was good. She played for silent movies for a long time after that, until they quit.

JM: I thought you were going to give a duck call at the end of the story. What does it sound like?

AB: You got that turned on? Turn it right off.

JM: Why? You're not going to get arrested for that.

AB: No.

JM: Probably just need to back the microphone off.

AB: (laughs) I haven't done it for years.

JM: Give it a try.

AB: Don't think I could do it. But I used to call black ducks in the winter time. And I used to call old Squalis in the fall of the year. Out in the cold wind, call old squalis.

JM: What is it?

AB: Old squalis. Haven't you ever seen old squalis flying around on the bay, white bird with the black feathers on them, pretty colored head.

JM: Are they a duck?

AB: Yea, they're a waterfowl.

JM: Is the black duck what you were gunning for when you were talking about that the other day?

AB: Yea.

MW: Call a duck Adrian. [phone rings.]

AB: Quack, quack. [tape pauses and resumes...]

And he was sent forward to clew in the jibs. You know they was running before the sea. So they went forward, him and another fella, went forward to clew the jibs. A heavy squall, a hurricane squall come up quick. They was running fore the sea, and they went forward when they lowered the jib down to clew them up. Well, the fella that was to the wheel lost control of the ship and she come around and broached. Come around and dove into the sea. And when she did he was underwater deep, and when she did she broke the topmast off and all the rigging came down on top of him and the other fella. Well, he was a good swimmer, an excellent swimmer and he took care of himself but the other fella washed overboard, he was drowned, they didn't get him. He said, he could hear him hollering for help. Then lightening come and they could see him hung out there on that mast. The vessel stopped and broached to, and they lowered all the sails down. But he was washing out there. Well, they threw a line out to him, they couldn't get out to him, so they threw a line out to him, and it went out over him.

Course he was tangled in there. And they hauled it to, slip-locked, like you would a lasso, and it went down over his arms. Course went she went under a surge of sea, they took turns holding him. Well it peeled the skin, clothes and all, right over him, skun him alive. But he still hung in there. And they threw a line back to him again, by that time he had his feet clear, and they hauled him aboard the ship. And when they got him to port, course he laid in the ship until they got him to port, and after they got the ship straightened out again, the storm went over. They had to cut all the rigging away, get the stuff cleared away and thn they could hoist the mainsails. And sailed her back to port. They got him in and to the hospital, and he was in the hospital a long time. Skun him, right from here straight up over.

JM: Right from his waist up.

AB: Yea, that line taut. Took the skin right off him, peeled him, clothes and all.

JM: Where were they sailing?

AB: That was down in the Gulf Stream. Coming across the Gulf Stream. He said, warm water, the water just as warm as it could be. But he said, boy, didn't that smart when it went off. But he survived it.

JM: So he sailed pretty much around the world?

AB: He was a deep sea traveler. Went everywhere.

JM: Were there a lot of men from the island/

AB: Oh, an awful lot used to go to sea. Yea, a lot of them did. And then when the coast guard started up, I was just going through it in my mind the other night, in my day, I could count 27 boys on the island joined the Coast Guard. Most of them made a career out of it too. I counted I think 27 or 29, I could count right off hand that joined the Coast Guard. But I didn't, I didn't want to. I had plenty of chance, but I said, no , I didn't want it.

[pause in conversation- we talk about Mary's wooden centerpiece.]
When you come back down here I'll see if I can have some of this ready for you. [End of interview- 418]

[End of Tape CH79 Side 2]

The third interview in a series with Adrian Beal took place again on the front porch of the house in Milbridge. As usual various members of the family, Mary's family, came by and sat with us.

I brought up some oysters, so around 5 pm we retired to the kitchen and I 'shocked' oysters while Mary dipped them in flour and Adrian fried them in the skillet with a bit of salt pork.. He tried one and decided that he'd take a clam over an oyster any day. He told of the one place on the back side of Beals Island where he thought the best clams came from. Carter Newell arrived while we were cooking the oysters and mentioned the downeast lobster stew that I had told him about so Adrian whipped up a sample with a package of frozen lobster meat he had on hand. After supper we got out the fiddles and the guitar and sat around the kitchen table and played some tunes. Adrian played harmony to Carter's leads, much like he did in the Islanders to the saxophone. He played one fiddle tune that we didn't know, he didn't know the name of it, we suggested the Beals Island Breakdown. Adrian seemed to be getting warmed up as the session went on and started singing towards the end. We packed it in around 9 pm and headed home.

Maine Folklore Center

[C1480]

Accession # : Tape # 1126.93

Interview with Adrian Beal, Milbridge, Maine

November 26, 1993

Interviewed by Jeff McKeen

[No opening announcements, we are looking at an article in the Nov. issue of Wooden Boat magazine and Adrian makes a few comments.]

JM: I wanted to ask about naming boats, how do most guys come up with names for their boats?

AB: Fishermen?

JM: Yea.

AB: Oh they happen to name them for someone in their family or a girlfriend. Some of them name it for something that happened around, or some island or some bay.

JM: A lot of times it's a woman's name, right?

AB: Yea, most all the time. Either a daughter or a wife. I can remember years ago on the island, I don't know how many boats, my Uncle Hiram, he had three or four different boats in my time. I know he had one named Lovina, he had another one named Martha, the other one was named for one of the boys. And I know my grandfather he had one named Eliza, that was my grandm other, so he had one named for her. And both power boats he had he had named for her. And both power boats I had, my new ones, I bought one built, Frost built it, and then I built one myself. I named them both for my wife, I didn't use her first name. I used her middle name, I used the name Leona B., see for the Beal part, Leona B. Her name was Elanore Leona, but her name was Leona B, and weren't her grandfather some mad at me. (laughs) He named her the Elanore part, see, and he was some mad because I didn't put that on instead of the Leona. And Dad named his boat my mother, named her the Addie L.

JM: So that was pretty much the standard.

AB: That was pretty much the trade of It. I remember Alton Beal he had one named the Janet, after his wife.

J

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JM: Is it good luck or something to name it after your wife?

AB: No, I don't think there's any luck to it. It's just the way they felt about it. I remember Erwin, by cousin, he had a boat named the Doris, named that for his wife.

JM: But sometimes people would name them after an island.

AB: OH, name them after an island or some other thing. NOW her son [Mary Wallace's son] named his boat, the Wild Thing.

JM: The one you built out here?

AB: Yea, he said he wouldn't take a million dollars for it though.

MW: He came in the other day and he told Adrian he wanted a 45 footer built. Adrian says, Why ain't yours good enough. He said, I wouldn't take a million dollars for it.

AB: And they used to name them for their children, you know, their sons, or something, the girls.

JM: You know that picture of you singing in the newspaper [Bangor Daily News, May 26-7, 1951], did they most often have some kind of celebration when you launched a new boat.

AB: When they had a large boat built. See that was the only large boat built on the island in years and years. And they asked for that to be done.

JM: But when you built a regular fisherman's work boat you didn't do anything special?

AB: No, no.

JM: NOT even break a bottle of champagne over it?

AB: No. We christened one with a bouquet of roses. His wife wouldn't have anything like that done, so he had her christened with a bouquet of roses.

JM: The sardine carrier?

AB: Yea, well one of them. Well she was built for a lobster smack in the beginning, wet smack, a well smack. [Arthur S. Woodward] She was built for that in the beginning. Then a few years after, after the well smack went out, he had me rebuild her into a sardine carrier.

JM: But you built it in the first place as a lobster smack?

AB: Yea, built her for a lobster smack.

JM: Are those boats still around?

AB: That one's still going, yea. And one of the sardine boats in Eastport is still going. But the other two they sunk one last year full of lobster bait. The deck got leaking, it got old and they never did repairs to her, and he loaded her too deep, And she started taking water into her, before he realized it he got too much water and the engine stopped and he couldn't pump her. And he was on her alone and he had to take a skiff and get out of her before she went down. She was quite a while before she went down, but they couldn't stop her. Other boats got there, but she was loaded so deep and heavy they had to watch her go down in the night. They said, weird sight to see her go out of sight, but she went down.

JM: So one is working out of Eastport?

AB: Yea, one's in Eastport, what they call the Bo1fisco, as far as I know she's still going. I saw her a couple years ago and she looked as good as she ever did, cause they kept her up, took good care of it.

JM: And they use it to haul sardines.

AB: Yea, yea.

JM: and where did you say the other one was?

AB: The other one is built over to a sardine carrier, last I knew she was rigged over into a dragger. Just the other side of Bailey's Island. what's the name of that place?

JM: Orr's Island?

AB: No , the other side of that.

JM: Cundy's Harbor?

AB: No, Cundy's Harbor is this side of it. There's Cundy's Harbor, Bailey's Island and the other one. I knew it just as well as cane be, last I knew she was over in there. [We're looking at some pictures in the Wooden Boat Magazine.] Will Frost designed and built this boat for MalcolmLowell, that was this Lowell's grandfather. That's her right there.

JM: Do you remember that boat?

AB: Oh, yes, I remember it just as plain as can be. I remember all the boats that Frost built, he was the first place to build on

the island.

JM: So everybody kept a close eye?

AB: Oh yes. I had one of his boats. A little 26 footer. And I took some mighty rough weather in that little thing. Ten miles from land in the winter time right out in the Bay of Fundy. I tell you you see some rough water come in nights after dark, snowing.

JM: What were you doing out there?

AB: Lobster fishing. What we call the Bay of Fundy, it's the mouth of the Bay of Fundy, Bay of Fundy comes out through between Grand Manan Island and Seal Island, Machias Seal Island. Sweeps out along the coast of Maine right up through what we call the Ridges. It's all broken bottom, you talk about tide coming. On the ebb tide she roars, especially full tide. I've been out in might nice weather in her. Do you know what happened to that boat?

JM: Which one are you talking about, the torpedo stern[the plan of it is sketched in the article in Wooden Boat 11/93.]?

AB: I can tell you the history of it. This fellow Malcom had it for quite a while. The torpedo stern. A fellow, he was an old rum runner, it was in rum running days. What was that man's name. He came down and bought up a bunch of old boats, he bought three this particular time and had them put into the bootlegging trade. They'd go off there and load up and back they'd come with it. They were supposed to be fishing boats, but it was rum running days. I remember the fellow, she always had an old make and break engine in her. And this fellow went and put a 20 horse , 4 cylinder motor. That fella said you better tie your hat on with that power, they thought she was going to fly, you know. (laughs) That fella says, I guess I can handle it. I know he hired my father and another fella named Alton Dobbin, and Malcolm Lowell, they took the three boats up. Dad took one boat up and Malcolm took his own boat up.

JM: They took the boats to New York?

AB: They took them to New York. And this fellow, Winkenpaw his name was, old Winkenpaw went with them, he was the one that bought the boats.

JM: And he was from New York?

AB: He was from that area, I don't know just where he was from. He took them up and gave them around the city. Of course they got a kick out of old Malcolm, he was a very old-timer and he didn't use a spoon to eat his beans with, he used his knife. He shoveled em right in with his knife left-handed. They said they never laughed so hard, Al Dobbin got so embarresed about it. (laughs) Winkenpaw was laughing himself, him and Dad. But Al says, God, ain't this awful, ain't this awful. He was so embarresed about it, in that big restaurant and that fellow shoveling the beans in with his knife. Dad said he never laughed so hard in his life. Course he was laughing at Al more than he was Malcolm. And one of the boats Dad took was built over in Jonesport. Old Frank Smith built it. And the one that Al took, I think Frost built that.

JM: But these boats had a reputation for being fast?

AB: Oh yes, they would sail good.

JM: Cause these guys wanted them for rum running.

AB: Yea, they wanted them for the rum running business.

JM: Were they making them for that?

AB: No, Frost built some real rum runners up here, they had the twin 12 cylinder engines in them, and Mr. Man they would move. He built one that sailed out of Tivanan, Rhode Island (?), headquarters in there, but she came out of the mouth of the Seconi (?) River, last I saw her, named the Wild Goose and another one named the Blue Goose and she was tied up in there after the rum running days was over. But the old Blue Goose, they put the bullets to him one night, the fella laid right on the engine box, right over the engine so they couldn't shoot it, but they did they shot him instead. And he belonged in Fall River, Massachusetts, the man did. They was running rum.

JM: Now was that the same kind of boat?

AB: They was built on this style here, more the cut-off stern, they never built the round ones for that business, but the cut off stern but they were more of a speed boat type. But they would sail, and don't think they wouldn't, they would go. Cause there weren't any Coast Guard cutter that could touch them, they could run right off

and leave them. Now my uncle, tall Barney's son, youngest son, Napoleon, he had a little boat named the Virginia. And he worked for the goverment, a little patrol boat. And he used to go out nights and chase these rum runners. Down in this vicinity, down here all around the shore off Milbridge. Up off the tip of Mana'an, coming in among the island and in these coves. And one fella there, he got the bright idea how to fool uncle. Course in them days, they didn't have no keel, they had struts, double engine on each side with a strut. With the propeller all out in the open. So, this fella named Lewis Norton, ha d this other boat was running rum, and of course she was full of rum she weren't so fast. She could just hold ahead a little bit. So he was sneaking in this night, coming in here to Gouldsboro, or Dyer's Bay somewhere in this area. He was coming in. Of course Uncle Poli was laying for him in the lee of the island and he didn't know it. Well he got in by and Uncle Poli put the chase to him. Well, before he went out that trip, he went and took an old seine. Got a seine with lead on the bottom, corks on the top so it would float and put a weight on the end of it, throw it overboard with and a keg to hold that end and stretch it right out. And of course it was dark. And he waited for Uncle Pol, let him come, he would let him gain a little. Course probably he was gaining a little bit too, the way he was loaded, right full in. So just before he got right to him, he cut off a little bit to one side and threw that rock and swung right back across his nose again, made a zig zag course. Pulling that seine over the stern. Course it was dark and he couldn't see what he was doing. When he went over that seine he was wound up solid full of lead, corks and everything, twine, (laughs) stopped, lay there adrift. Lewis said, he looked around and said, what's the trouble Poli? You know what's the trouble. He said, Yes, I'll be back out and tow you in by and by. So he went in and discharged his rum and come back and towed him in. There was nothing he could do about it, he had to catch him with the goods. But he went in and unloaded and came back out and towed him in. (laughs) [Adrian tells the story again by way of explaining] Old Lewis sailed along side and says, Are you in trouble?

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He says, you know I', m in trouble. I'll be back by and by and tow you in, so he went in to discharge his load went back out and towed him back in.

JM: Of course they knew each other?

[269] AB: Oh, they knew each other, yes. But he didn't catch him.

JM: That's part of the game.

AB: That's part of the game, if you outsmart him it's alright. You had to catch him with the goods you know.

JM: They called him Poli?

AB: They used to call him Poli, Uncle Napoleon. He's got a grandson down there now, his name is Napoleon, we call him Poli. He belongs to the Masonic Lodge, we call him Poli. He's the treasurer of the lodge. I was treasurer for quite a few years, and when I come up here I turned it over to him, so I wouldn't have to travel back and forth.

JM: Where's the lodge, In Jonesport?

AB: Yea, in Jonesport, there's one right here in town, too. Uncle Napoleon was an awfull nice man, but Lewis outsmarted him. You see in them days they used to put the motors outside the cabin. Balances the boat better, makes for better handling in the sea.

JM: You said before you liked it in the center of the boat.

AB: Oh, I would every time. If I built a boat for myself today I'd put the motor right out there I'd never go in the cabin, stay right out there. Course people always thought it was in the way, and of course it'll keep dry and everything. But to me a boat don't handle as well with your motor up there as it does in the center of the boat. Of course, that's my opinion of it. I followed the water and the sea for a good many years.

JM: Did you ever race your boat in the races?

AB: Oh yea.

JM: IN Jonesport on the fourth of July?

AB: Yea.

JM: That's a long-time thing, isn't it?

AB: Oh that's been going ever since I can remember, ever since the first motor boats were around. They always have races on the

fourth of July. That was in the old one-lunger engine, the little make and breaks, anywhere from four horse to five and tens, I remember that used to be a great going thing. Every fourth, of course they'd take the boats out and dry them out and paint them all up, some of them would paint them red, white and blue just for the fourth of July race. And they was pretty on the water, flags on the stern, and they'd have the race.

JM: Well, you said they raced before they had motors.

AB: Rowboats, yes. And then they used to race sailboats, sloops, they used to have them races too.

JM: Reach boats?

AB: Yea.

JM: ON the fourth of July?

AB: They used to do that on the 4th, yea.

JM: So that's been going a long time.

AB: Oh, a long, long time. I can remember when the first power boats were ever in town.

JM: So did you build boats that have won those races over the years?

AB: Oh I did yes. I designed one that built the Frost boat that never was beaten. And that was the old Thoroughbred, she never was beaten.

JM: Frost's boat, the Thoroughbred?

AB: Yea. She never was beaten. She was a fast boat, but I knew that she could be beat. So I designed this particular boat, the same style of motor, they both had what they called the old straight 8 Buick in them. The old straight 8 Buick, quite a heavy motor it was. Each one had it in it. And I built the boat for a fella that lived here in Milbridge at the time, lived on Pigeon Hill, that was Leon Alley. So he tried out, and it sailed so well he thought he'd try it in the race. So he beat the Thoroughbred. So they got the idea that they'd take the Thoroughbred and put more power in it. But Leon didn't change his motor, he kept the same one. But they put a v-8 Olds in it, a bigger motor, a faster turning motor. Course, Frost's boat didn't have the stability, when she lifted out so fast she didn't ride, she'd fall over. She would go a certain speed, that's all she'd go. And what the Buick would drive it that's all she'd

stand. Anymore than that. a couple, three or four miles faster, she'd lift up and fall over on the side and stop, the speed would be done that minute. You'd have to slow her back to get her going again. And he beat her worse that time than he did before. Beat her worse with the big motor than he did with the small one. And that was the last race that the Thoroughbred ever raced. And Frost was some mad at me, oh, wasn't he mad at me. He come home for the fourth of July races, he knew the Thoroughbred was going to race, he come home to see the race.

JM: Oh, he'd moved away by then.

AB: Yea, he was living in Portland, and he'd come home to see the race. And when I met him he was livid. He didn't think much of that, but his boat didn't stand a ghost of a show.

JM: But you had designed this boat to be as fast as it could be.

AB: Yea, I designed it to beat his boat, and it did. (laughs)

JM: There was obviously some competition between the boat builders?

AB: Oh yea. Now my nephew down there now has got the fastest one around. This boat we helped him build, designed and helped him build it, Dad and I. Dad designed it with a little coaching from me, I never took no credit for it. But I got Dad to make one change in it. I showed it to him, and he said, yea, I think you're right. So he made the change. Of course, Ben, that's the one who owns the boat, never acknowledged it. But Dad took my advice and changed that one thing in the boat. And there's nothing that can touch it. This fourth of July, she's raced everywhere this year, and they can't begin to touch her at all. I've got a picture of her sailing.

JM: What's her name?

AB: Her name's Stella Anne. He had it built when he was a boy, I don't think he was much more than 21 or two when he had it built.

JM: And he built it in your shop?

AB: Yea. And he sold it and got a larger boat, had a larger boat built, sold it, cause he wanted a larger boat to fish farther off-

shore with. And he always felt bad cause he'd let it go. Course he worked himself up, now he don't worry about anything. If he wants anything he buys it now, he's made so much money off shore fishing 200 miles on the banks, and everywhere else. And he's in business, so if he wants a boat he buys it. I helped him build one a year ago, nobody can touch that at all, they don't have to race that, because it's no good racing it, they can't even look at it. And he bought this little one back again. And last year he bought it back and he rebuilt it in the winter and spring and last summer he put a rebuilt Chevolet motor in it. They build them up, you know. And put that in it and tried it out to see what it would do. And he walks off leaving the other boats just so they're achored. I'll show you a picture of it.

JM: How big of a boat is that?

AB: If I remember she's around 28, 26 or 28. She weren't an awfull large boat. He just runs her to play with her. All the race, just before he gets to the finish, he opens her up. Course when he first put her on he didn't know if he turned that motor up if it would heat the shaft so it would stick it, he didn't dare when he first got it hooked up just for the fourth. He didn't run it too hard, he just run it moderate, and he could see he could hold anything that there was there. And he'd do that until he got to the end of the race and then he'd open her up. The minute he'd touch that throttle, he was gone. The rest would stand there looking at himn. So he took her up the coast and they haven't a thing that can touch him. They'll build another one some day that can outsail him no doubt. But they built one special to do it this year. Light, two men can pick her up. But his is fiberglass over wood. Course the wood was old so he sanded her down and fiberglassed over the wood. And she's heavy. But she don't come up and stand up on her end, she just lifts up and scoots. I told him I was going to design one that outsail him.

JM: It doesn't tip up you mean?

AB: No, it 's not supposed to tip. Supposed to ride level. But it could be designed to outsail his boat. But I wouldn't do it. (laughs) But it can be done. The only thing I'd have to do is put

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just a little bit lift forward and just a little wider so she wouldn't be cutting so deep. So she'd just lift and slide. But his is quite deep forward and she's got quite a bit of displacement in the water than I would like to have one to really get some speed. And she'd be lifting out but she'd be riding level. Where his has got quite a bit of displacement so she's cutting. And you could eliminate a lot of that and you could get more speed. And he thinks the world of her. He says, of course, they'll out-sail me one of these days, they'll find one that will beat me. But they haven't done it yet, nor anywheres near it.

[389] JM: Did you ever hear that story about, I was reading some of the stuff Professor Dorson heard when he talked to people up on the island, you know he talked to your dad among others. And there was a story about buying the wind.

AB: Oh yes, yes. A fella on Head Harbor Island did that.

JM: Who was that?

AB: I don't know what his name was. But he was on Head Harbor Island.

JM: What did he do?

AB: He got all the wind he wanted and then some besides.

JM: do you remember how it happened?

AB: Well, they was heading somewhere and kind of got becalmed and wanted to get there in a hurry and the other fella was ahead of him. He bought some wind, he bought more than he bargained for.

JM: How did he buy it?

AB: Oh just take a penny , a nickel or a dime whatever you want, and toss it to the wind overboard and he had his wind. that's how the story went, he bought the wind. I've heard a lot of old fellas tell that story, how you can buy the wind. So nobody ever tried that afterward, they didn't try buying anymore wind, he got mopre than he bargained for.

JM: I see, did he run into trouble?

AB: No, but he had an awful lot of wind though. He had more than he needed. There was a young fellow on the island there, named Obie Peabody, he's still there, they had some old sailing vessels in them days and they used to run a load of fish to Portland. They take fish, 100 pound kenches (sp?) salt them and pack them up.

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Take the barrels and stuff they have them salted in big tanks, and they what they call kench them, tie them together in 100 pound bales and load the vessel with them. So he took this old vessel, her name was the Moonlight. He took her and they loaded her, and of course he was only a young boy. He left Jonesport Reach in a heavy easterly wind, east northeast. And he put the canvas to her. He made the quickest trip that ever was made from Jonesport to Portland. He still holds the honors for the fast sailing trip ever was made from Jonesport to Portland. JM: How fast was it?

AB: Don't know how fast it was. But at the time he beat all records of any sailing vessel, coasters, ever made. He beat it all. Course he was a kid, he put the canvas right to her and let her take it. They said, don't know why he didn't sink her. Course she was quite an old vessel at the time. I remember when he went but I never knew about the time till after he beat all records as far as they could see. Course that was a story, there ain't no way of proving it was right, but as far as they could find on the records there was no time that ever compared with it. With that load.

JM: What did you call it when they bundled up the fish?

AB: Kench they called it. They didn't call it a kettle, I don't know what they meant by it, but that was the way the old fishermen handled it, they called it that. They took some cording and tie them so they could handle them in heavy junk, pick them up, instead of separate fish, they put that amount of weight in bundles and tie them together with rope, hitch down the tails and upper part then put a line through it just like a becket pick them right up and handle them. So they used to put it that way and tie them together, they called it kenching them. I don't know anything about it.

JM: Another thing I read, there was someone on the island that could tell fortunes.

AB: There was one In Jonesport who could.

JM: Who was that?

AB: Pheobe Torrey.

JM: Do you remember what they used to talk about?

AB: Oh she used to tell all kinds of stories about people doing all kinds of things, forecasting. And they did come true. Quite a few of them.

JM: Do you remember any incidents?

AB: NO, I know I 've heard them telling about different ones. I never paid no attention, but she told quite a few things that came out.

JM: What they call a forerunner sometimes.

AB: It's just like people does it today, You've read about how people predict these earthquakes and things and they hit them right on the nose. A lot of people used to go and get their fortune told by her. A lot of them would. I can remember when they did that, of course I was just a small boy to home, but I can remember them going to old Pheobe Torrey to get their fortune told. Now what they learned I don't know, but I know I did hear stories that some of the things did come true.

MW: When we were at the Blue Hill Fair, you were going to have your fortune told. She said, come in the back room. Adrian didn't go in the back room, he said, the devil with this.

JM: Do you know who Capt. Horace Smith was?

AB: No, I 've heard of him but I didn't know who he was. He was before my time.

JM: They told a lot of stories about things that he'd done.

AB: Oh yea, I've heard of the man, but I didn't know him. I knew a lot of the old timers around there but I didn't know him.

[phone rings and tape pauses then resumes...]

AB: That's the farthest outlying island downeast.

JM: What's that?

AB: Fisherman's Island and Crumples Island. What the call they Crumble Island. It's a big high bald rock. It used to be a Coast Guard look-out station on top of it. It stands about 60 feet above water level. And just beyond that is what they call Fishermen's Island. And of course my grandfather had a little fishing camp on there for a good many years. At one time there were four or five camps on there. His brother had one that stayed there the last. That's still there now, but the rest of them went

down.

JM: AND they stay out there for a while?

AB: Used to stay out there all summer long until cold weather in the fall of the year. And then they go back there for a couple weeks gunning in the winter, I used to do that when I was a boy. I used to go down with my grandfather, duck hunting, whistlers and sea birds.

JM: Down on those islands?

AB: Down on Fishermen's Island, stay there at my grandfather's camp, stay there for a week. Used to have some good old times there.

JM: Why did they stay out there, because that's where the fishing was?

AB: It was closer to work. Cause in them days all they had was rowboats and sailboats and they'd go down and put the sailboat on the mooring and use the rowboats to haul the traps with in them days, down around the islands, they didn't have 5 mile travel to get down there. So they'd stay there and put the lobsters in a crate and they'd be a buyer come and buy them twice a week. So they'd stay there on the island. Then after they got the powerboats, they still stayed there. They liked it so well, take the family and stay all summer long until school started, and they'd have to go home. Of course they'd stay there, them and the boys. And weekends come home and get the family come back down and spend the weekend with them down there.

JM: Did you go out in the summer too?

AB: Oh yea, I used to go out in the summer stay with my grandfather, stay a couple of weeks with him in the summer. Of course Dad had his own camp over on Great Wass Island, across from it, about two miles across the bay, dad was on the other one. A little farther inland.

JM: That's where you talked about going hunting?

AB: Yea, used to stay on there. Dad and I built another little hunting camp.

JM: Did they own the property too?

AB: No.

JM: Someone would let them stay there?

AB: No, they didn't pay no attention. If you wanted a camp moved on, you built it, that's all there was to it, nobody bothered you. You built a camp there and you're welcome to stay as long as you wanted to.

JM: Who owned it, you didn't know?

AB: Sometimes you didn't. The fellas that owned it didn't mind, they let you go and stay as long as you wanted to. All the islands down there had camps on them, every one of them. After a while it died out and nobody does it anymore.

JM: Are some of the camps still out there?

AB: Some of them are. Falling down. Once in a while there's one that's kept up but very few. Down on Great Wass Island there's only three original camps there that was there when I was a boy and they're still there. They've kept them up pretty good.

JM: Are there any newer buildings that have gone up?

AB: Oh alot of them, all around. I can remember down on Wilma's Cove we called it, the lower end of the Island, there was a camp there, and three fogs there was another one, and what we called Rover's Ware Cove, Short Barney's Cove, where Short Barney had his camp, there was two camps there. His and one of his sons had a camp. Then coming up to Sheep Ledge Cove, my father had one and my grandfather had one just a little ways up the shore. Then up in Brightner Cove I can remember when there was one, two, three, I can remember when there was nine of them camps in there. And now there's just three of them left. The other six are gone, no there's four left there. Yes, there was 10.

JM: You've been out there recently?

AB: I haven't been there this year, you can drive right down there now in a car. But it's all summer people there now, destroyed the whole island, ruined it.

JM: There werent any summer people, just the fishermen's camps?

AB: No, no. They've only started coming in the last few years, buying up property and buying up property and far as I'm concerned

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the whole thing is destroyed. It's no more like it used to be like nothing in the world. You can't step here and you can't step there, you're on somebody's toes. They just as soon you wouldn't be around. Chain across the road, so you cant go in here and you cant go in there. I guess they think somebody's going to lug them off or something. Nobody wants them, all they got is a pocket ful of money and as far as Im concerned they can keep it, no benifit down our way.

[520] JM: Beals must have been deserted in the summer if all the fisher-men moved their families.

AB: Not all of them. On Brownie's Island there was a family, my uncle, he used to go on there with dad's sister and her family. And then on Fishermen's Island my grandfather and his family and Charles Leighton and his family. And Uncle Hiram and his family, there were three families that would go on there for the summer. Then on Wilma's Cove, just a fella that stayed there by himself, old Charlie Falkingham, then he moved up to Three Falls and had a camp there and used that one instead of the lower one. Put one up there and stayed there. And then Short Barney and his son, his son would take his family once in a while, take his sons down, but he stayed there alone most of the time.

JM: So people down on the islands did they get together and neighbor back and forth?

AB: They used to. Evenings gather round the camps. No drinking parties, spend the evening, play music, sing songs and tell stories. Just to get together as friends.

JM: There are a large number of churches on Beals Island.

AB: There used to be one, two, three, four, five, on there now.

JM: That seems like a lot for a little town.

AB: There's two on the bay side and three the other way.

JM: Did they have camp meetings in the summer.

AB: They used to have them in the winter. When they get everything quiet. Everybody get home.

JM: Too busy in the summer.?

AB: Of course they had the regular service every week. Sunday service and mid-week service. And when they get home for the fall

and winter, men home all the women to home. Then they'd have what the call a series of meetings. Each church would have a series of meetings. Sometimes two weeks, then another church would have his for a week or two and they'd go around in a circuit like that. But there was more or less a rivalry. They 'd kind of bicker back and forth and didn't agree on each other's belief you know. It got kind of rough sometimes. Neighbor didn't speak to neighbor (laughs). And then that feud has died out now, you don't hear those slanders and stuff like that. But it would get nasty sometimes, but it has died away so everybody gets along like a family now. Although they have a difference of opinion about how the bible should be expounded. They have a different opinion, one thing or another., Some don't believe this and some believe the other way. And some can back up what they say by what the scriptures says, and still in all they are skeptical of it, they don't want to accept it, but it's what is says. And they bicker back and forth, but you don't hear it like it used to be. I can remember when I was a young boy to home they'd have regular feuds in the winter over it, they'd get into it. Rough. I know one time two of them were having a feud and one of the ministers on the other church he was ridiculing the other church and of course some of the members of the other church were there and they heard it. Well, they were ridiculing and calling slanderous names. So they wrote to headquarters of the other church what was going on. Something they'd never do unless they have to. So they challenged him for a debate. A biblical debate. I was quite a boy by that time and I remember it quite plain. And they held it in a different town. Held it over in Jonesport in the big auditorium where everyone could go in and listen to it. In the big movie hall, what they called the auditorium. Where they all set and listen to the whole thing on the stage. And one minister sat on one side and the other minister on the other. Course this man they sent from headquarters come in, he was smart, weren't he smart. He knew more about the bible than any 40. So he let this fella get up and talk first and

he got back and rebuttled it. Then the other fella sat there and asked him what he was going to do about that. Well, he had no answer, he had to accept what he said, he couldn't rebuttle it in any way cause it was in conflict with the scripture. So he made a regular fool of him, made a laughing stock of the whole twon. It was supposed to be a three day debate, but it didn't last three days, the second day he gave up.

[end of Side I]

AB: It's all died away and you never hear it anymore. It's something that should never have happened in a small community.

JM: You were telling me about how they hadn't had a dance for so many years, partly because of that fire, but do you suppose it may have been because of the religion?

AB: No, I don;t think so because they use to have the dances just the same for years and years. And this was Christmas Eve when this happened. And when that happened they stopped the dance. She was the last one to come in and make the last couple. It was the old square dances and quadrilles. And her and her husband were the last ones to be there and they were waiting for them to start the dance. When she went upstairs to get the gift for the kid so she'd keep quiet while she was gone. And of course holding up that lamp, the old steamer trunk, come down and hit and broke that lamp and there was a splatter of oil. Burned her so badshe died. That stopped the dance and they never held another one for 70 odd years. That was the last one that was on the island for 70 odd years.

JM: Where did they hold them?

AB: They used to have them around to old farmhouses in them days. What they called the kitchen breakdown. They used to have farmhouses with great big spacious kitchens. The living room part too, the door would be open and it made a great big space. And of course there wouldn't be over six to eight couples to each one. They'd go around one house, and somewhere else next time And they'd do that all winter.

JM: Do you remember that?

AB: No that was before my time.

JM: Your dad played for dances like that?

AB: No, Dad never did, his father did, my grandfather did.

That was before Dad's time, the fire was. I don't think he was even born when that happened. He might have been but I don't think he was.

JM: But he played that type of music.

AB: Oh yes. My grandfather he played the accordion and the fiddle both. And he was supposed to be the head musician that night, for the group that was there, it was going to be held at his old home. But it never transpired and there never was another one there for 72 years.

JM: The fire wasn't at the place where the dance was going to be?

AB: Oh no, no, no. It was at her house. They were waiting at the place where it was going to be held for her to come. And instead of her coming to the dance they came in and broke the news of what had happened that she wouldn't be there. and of course nobody wanted to dance then, nobody wanted it. And they never ever held one again, that was the last one.

JM: When you played with the Islanders did you play for dances mostly in Jonesport, or did you travel around?

AB: Oh, we traveled everywhere, but we played mostly in Jonesport. Played there steady every Saturday night for two years. But we played all around, we played here in Milbridge, Cherryfield, we played all around, Machias.

JM: Did you travel by boat?

aB: No, we traveled by car in them days. I can remember when the baseball team used to travel by boat, come up here and play ball. They'd hire a boat, bring them up here, land them here in Milbridge and they'd walk clear over to Steuben or somewhere.

JM: Did the dances you played at get kind of rough?

AB: NO, never had no trouble at all.

JM: I've heard stories down my way about one dance hall where they dance inside and they fight outside.

AB: Yea. No the last two years we played there, well all the dances we pplayed everywhere, we never had no trouble. Never had no trouble at all. I played in cocktail lounges in Columbia Falls

for 7 years. At the old Spa they called it. In Columbia Falls where you swing off to go down to Jonesport.

MW: Mid-way Spa they called it.

AB: Mid-way Spa, that was quite a building. I played there for 7 seasons, and I never saw any trouble there. I don't know why, but it was very quiet. [he talks about the lack of trouble]

JM: There were a couple of songs mentioned in the article I read, one was a song it said your grandmother sang called Will, the Weaver.

AB: Bill Weaver.

JM: Bill Weaver, do you remember that?

AB: Yes.

JM: It's a funny song?

AB: Well, not really funny.

JM: Do you remember how it goes?

AB: I'd have to think back to get it, but I think I could remember it if I had to. How it went was this fellow, he went away and when he came back he went to his mother's house and she told him what was going on. So when he went over to his house, his wife saw him coming so she put old Bill Weaver wise, and he climbed up the chimney hole, on top. The old fashioned fire place. He climbed up and sat on the chimney pole. And he smoked him out. (laughs) Oh I used to know the whole song, I've heard dad sing it so many times, people would come in and get him to sing that old Bill Weaver song. And I'd have to set down and think it out I think I could remember it after a while. They said Bill went home with two black eyes. At the end of it. Said, Never was a chimney sweeper, half as black as Bill the Weaver.

JM: There was another one that I think Stuart Alley sang, what do they call it when someone gets married and everyone else in town goes out to their place and makes a racket.

AB: They serenade them, used to call it serenade them. Yea.

JM: Do you remember when they did that?

AB: Oh yes, I remember when they did that. They used to do that in my time.

JM: Did they do it to you when you got married?

AB: No. If you didn't give them a treat, you got it. If you had what they called a cat wedding, if it wasn't in a church, they come around the house and if you didn't treat them, look out. But as long as you went to church, and had a church wedding and everybody came there, and the treats was there, a whole stream of candy. Great big buckets of candy and treat everyone at the church. And as long as you did that why everything was fine. But if you did it otherwise outside, and tried to get away with it, they didn't get away with it, no, no.

JM: What would they do?

AB: Oh they'd do everything. Break windows out of the house. I remember one night they threw one of those hard candy marble things, took one fellow over the eye and split his eye open and everything else. (laughs) Oh they would get rough with it,.

JM: And they called it serenade, did they sing too?

AB: No, just called it serenade. Fired shot guns. The last one I can remember they had, a fella had his house with pretty trimming, you know this grille trimmin under the eaves, scroll work. He didn't get his gun pointed up quite clear of it, and ripped it right out, cleaned her right out. He was going to make some noise, but instead he got a little bit too far in the dark and took the scroll work right out, every bit of it. They did get a fine for that, they got hauled over the coals for it. And had to pay a fine to repair it. Defaced the property.

JM: I think that was what they were talking about in the song.

AB: Yea, they got carried away and had to pay a fine.

JM: Stuart Alley made up a song about it.

AB: Yea, down on the island, it was quite a story. The fella that had that they called him John Norcha , his name was John Beal. But the way he talked he called north, norcha, old John Beal.

JM: He called north, norcha.

AB: Yea, heavy norcha, he said. Used to call him old John Norcha, and he's the one that got the candy ball over the eye.

JM: There were a lot of nicknames on the island?

AB: Everybody had a nickname, I won't say everyone but 90% of them.

JM: You don't see that as much anymore.

AB: No, once in a while but it used to be almost everybody had a nickname.

JM: Well out there since everybody had the same last name.

AB: Most everybody was an Alley, or a Beal, or a Falkingham. Then the Peabodys and then they got it mixed up so there's everything on there now. But I can remember when the ruling names was Alleys and Beals. Then the Wallaces came on there and the Falkinghams, and that stayed for quite a while before it changed anymore. Then the Uriqhart family came on, he married a woman on there and raised a family and then that started spreading out. And once in a while one of the girls would marry someone on the mainland or some fisherman come in on a fishing vessel and he'd end up marrying one of the girls on there. And someone from Grand Manaan or Nova Scotia or somewhere so we got some Burkes in there and some Griffins.

JM: And Lenfesty?

AB: He came across from the Isle of Guernsey. In the North Sea. When he was just a boy came over on a vessel and landed in Head Harbor, don't know why he landed, but he ended up in Head Harbor Island. And of course my wife's grandmother, her husband was drowned a while before that and he met her and he never left. He stayed there and married her, then they moved upon the island and run a farm and run the Lenfesty farm for a good many years. I can remember him when he used to be around in his cart delivering stuff around the island. I was in my 11th year when he died, I was 10 that summer, and he died the latter part of that summer, I was in my 11th year, I was 11 in January, and it was in summer when he died, it was in the month of August. I can remember that jsut as plan as can be. So that's how they got mixed in. And the Falkinghams came from Prince Edward Island. Course now there's several Falkingham families on there, course they all came from the original one.

MW: Now they all marry cousins and everything else.

AB: Yes, I don't know but were all foolish, probably we are. I don't know why we wasnt.

JM: Did you ever hear the story about the fish peddler at the cemetary?

AB: No, I never did.

JM: I can't remember how to tell it. The fella hid in the place where they keep the bodies in the winter.

AB: In the tomb.

JM: And someone came by and he said something and they ran off.

AB: Oh that was down in the Greenwood cemetery, down in Jonesport. I've heard that story, yes.

JM: How did it go?

[242] AB: Well, he was in there and the people come along and started going in there because it was storming. When they went in he spoke, and they took on a run, they never came in, they never stopped. They thought somebody come alive, come to in there.

JM: That would be pretty strange.

AB: Yea I remember that story. Course they used to tell all kinds of stories but you never knew if some were made up or what.

JM: Or somewhere in between.

AB: You could hear a lot of stories in them days, now, I'll tell you. Cause all there was in them days was to tell stories, something that had happened, comical things, and some serious things. But so many years have gone by you don't pay attention but if someone jogs your memory it'll come back to you what happened. I'd have never thought of those.

JM: Do you remember who Will Groves was.?

AB: I remember Will Groves well, yes.

JM: Where was he from?

AB: Well, if I remember he was from Addison.

JM: What was the story on him?

AB: He used to come around on the fourth of July and take pennies off his nose with his tongue for the kids. Will Lowe, that was, Will Groves lived down in the Kennebec area. What they called Will Lowe took pennies off his nose.

JM: And entertained the kids.

AB: I've seen him do that at the 4th of July, he'd lay right on his back and put a penny on his nose and he'd reach up with his tongue and take it off.

JM: So Will groves, who was he?

AB: Now I think Old Will Groves, if I remember right, he was the old fiddle player, he lived in a camp down in Kennebec by himself.

JM: Kind of a hermit.

AB: Yea, a hermit, that was him, I 'm sure that was him. I never heard him play but they said he was a regular professional at it.

JM: Was there something about how he didn't keep his house very well?

AB: I don't know about that, I never was there, I never saw the man, but I 've heard of him.

JM: That may have been before your time.

AB: No he was still living when I was a young boy to home, but I never went there to see him. If I remember correct, his little camp was down on the edge of Kennebec of the stream running through there.

JM: Kennebec is not far from the island by water?

AB: I don't believe it's over 8 or 9 miles.

JM: A long ways to drive.

AB: No not so far, to drive from home on the island to go to Jonesport and down around ... 25 miles.

JM: And that was where Curt Morse was from?

AB: Yea, down in that area.

[talk about whether my friend Carter will come down and bring his fiddle for some music later in the afternoon.. Tape pauses and resumes.]

AB: Oh so plain and so vivid the way he told a story that when I saw a picture on the movie screen one time of it, it was exactly as he had described it. I said, there's the place my grandfather told me about. Just exactly like it. He pictured that story so vivid you could see it.

JM: What kind of a boat did he sail in?

AB: Square-riggers, all sailing ships.

JM; Carrying cargo?

AB: They'd take cargo down and bring .cargo back. Take it down inb the fall of the year, sail down there and come back with a load of rum, or molasses, or sugar, or sugar cane, or mahogany wood, dealings

they called them, square-timbered. They had a full load when they come back. Course in the winter time they'd travel from island to island different cargos, shipping stuff. Then in the spring they'd load up with a load of rum or a load of molasses, hogshead of molasses they called it, or sugar, they'd full her right full and head back north.

JM: So he'd have tales from all over the world?

AB: Oh yes. He was gone one trip for three years, never come back. Everyone thought he was dead. Never heard a word from him, don't even know what ever happened. Dad never knew, grandmother never knew, he never ever said where he was. Gone 3 years before he come back. He walked in one morning. Didn't say where he'd been, hung his hat and coat up just like he'd always been there. That's all there was to it.

JM: Did he remember to bring in an armload of stovewood?

AB: (laughs) No, he just walked in. But one thing I would have liked to have, course no way of ever having it, but I 'd give a million dollars if I could have it, and that's just to see my great-grandfather, on dad's side, on his father's side, he was a cousin to tall Barney, there was only an inch different in their height and 5 pounds different in the weight, both big men. I'd like to see his picture when they marched away that morning off the doorstep in the Maine militia when they went down in the war, and left his little family. Id like to see just what that old homestead looked like.

JM: In the Civil War?

[348] AB: Yea. And what the family looked like and how they was dressed and just see what reaction they took when he marched away. Id like to have just some inkling what that looked like. But of course never will, never could have.

JM: And you say he never came back.

AB: He died on Red River Marsh, he lost his life in New Orleans in "Red River Valley, He's buried down there now in one of the graveyards where they had all the battles, that's where he died. And I've often thought what that would be like, but I went all through school and never even knew he was in the war, all the while

I was a kid going to school. Never knew it until my grandfather told me years afterward. That's where he was buried down there. Of course the whole family was sea-faring men, all of them. And the oldest boy he died with yellow fever coming across the Gulf Stream and they buried him at sea somewhere coming across the Gulf Stream. They were headed for New Orleans. And then the youngest boy, Daniel, he was drowned on Briar Island, off Nova Scotia. they was towing her in, she was full of water. They was tied in the rigging, the men climbed the rigging, tied themselves to the rigging so they wouldn't wash over, winter time, snowing cold. And they lashed themselves to the rigging and they had her in tow. And they said, if they could have gone another 100 yards they'd have had her in calm water, but she surged on the sea and when the tug fetched up parted the hawser. And they couldn't get her and she went ashore on the high cliffs, stove up right there and all hands were drowned in the rigging there in the snow storm. Never found them. That's where he lost his youngest brother. And then the one next to him, they never did find out what happened. But in a fight somewhere, barroom fight, he got his whole chest stove in. Don't know what happened anymore than he was smashed up. They got him home, one of the vessels brought him home and he died. But the rest of the boys all died natural deaths to home. My grandfather did, his brother Albert did, and Uncle Irving did. I can remember Uncle Albert, I don't remember Uncle Irving. He was ship's cook too for years, until he got a tumor in the back. Cancerous tumor or what and of course in them days there was no anesthesia or anything and they strapped him to the table in his house, just below grandfather's house just over the hill. Oh 150 yards from the house. And they strapped him to the table and they operated on him right in cold blood. Dad said you could hear him howling just like a wild animal the way they cut him. He never did another day's work after that. He washed dishes around the house and cooked but he could never do another day's work. They said he was howling just like a dog. They operated right in cold blood, cut it right out. Took it out. They had no way of doing it in

them days, freeze or anything. Dad said it was wicked to hear that man howling just like a dog it hurt him so bad when they cut him. Of course they cut right into his back.

JM: That's terrible.

AB: And his son died right here in the Milbridge nursing home, 90 years old, he was dad's own blood cousin. I used to come up and see him.

[talk about Carter out looking for mussels in his 12 foot skiff]
[425] talking about the last few boats Adrian built, everything but the engine for \$15,000.

JM: And you have no idea how many boats you built?

AB: No idea, I do know how many I built in the last little shop I run. And that's just a flea bite. I built 46 in that, I did keep run of them, I built 46 of them.

JM: In the last shop.

AB: Yea, that was just a flea bite of what I did build. Cause I built 11 years in another place, and 13 in another one. I'd build anywhere from 6 to 7 to a dozen a year, so that adds up to quite a few.

JM: Do you see any of your boats around?

MW: There's one by the bridge as you go over to Beals Island?

AB: Yea. There's one over here in Prospect Harbor I built, still going, looks just as good as it ever did. I got a few of them on the island still going. I got quite a few in Cundys Harbor still going. I had seven in that one harbor.

[we talk about frying up some oysters which I brought up. Adrian says he'll cook them if I shock them out.]

[464] fiddle tune with Adrian and Carter on fiddles, myself on guitar.

AB: You picked it up right quick.

JM: What do we call it?

AB: Got me, I have no idea what that was.

JM: Beals Island Breakdown.

CN: The Lobster stew Reel.

JM: Who made that fiddle?

AB: Carlo Begunzo. 1733. The last i read an account, one of those

Carlo Borgonzo Cremonas, that was 10 or 12 years ago, they was worth 70,00 dollars. I never had it appraised, but I read in a maGazine that they were worth \$72,000. They are next in age to a Stradivarious. About the same time as Strad.

JM: Now that was your dad's violin. Where did he get it?

AB: I couldn't tell you he acquired it sometime through the years. I don't know where he got it, he had two and he gave me the first one, he wanted me to learn to play so bad finally I decided I'd try. And he gave me the other one and I gave it to one of my grandsons. And then after I started playing the foxtrot music and dance music, he wouldn't play anymore. He liked the other music better, and he never learned to play with me. He gave it to me, he put her right up and said, no, you take it. But he wouldn't play it again after that. So, I've had it ever since. I've had it around 60 years. It's quite heavy.

JM: It is heavy for such an old violin.

[Adrian plays a waltz]

JM: What's that? You know the name of that one don't you?

AB: That's one you've never heard. When the Snowbirds Cross the Valley. [plays it again] That's just the chorous to it.

CN: How do the words go?

AB: I'll have to think a minute to get it back in my mind.

[plays it again.] That's an old, old one. [plays it again]

JM: You told me you used to play in a cowboy band too?

AB: Yea.

JM: What kind of stuff did you do in that?

AB: Oh all the old western songs of the time.

JM: Gene Autry?

AB: Yea Gene Autry and Hank Williams, right down through all of them. That was a long time ago.

[Ragtime Annie]

CN: Did you ever hear that third part that goes with that?

AB: NO.

[560] [Galway Bay, Adrian playing harmony]

[end of Side 2]

[Tape II]

AB: Dad gave me that violin 60 years ago. And that was when I quit playing them.

JM: That was when you quit playing jigs?

AB: Yea. Cause I went to the other style of playing, playing for dance music, and he didn't play them anymore. So, nobody to play with so I just dropped it completely. But I wish I'd have kept it up, if he had played with me I'd have learned his style and kept it up but he didn't want me to do it. He said, No, you stick to what you're doing. He liked this much better than the old time jigs and reels, he quit, he wouldn't play one. You couldn't get him to. I begged him to. No, no way, he was stubborn. I wish I had recordings of him playing, you'd see what I mean. He was so smooth at it. But he'd get the tone, full violin tone. But he could double stop so smooth. All them fellas, Don Messer and all them other ones and they couldn't hold a candle to him. No, I guess they couldn't, he'd put them under the table. I've heard a lot of fellas play all around everywhere. I've been to these fiddle contests, I never heard one that could even compare with him in any way. Cause he was strong in his hand, none of that little soft stuff, it was all full tone, every bit of it. So doggone easy, you couldn't believe it from listening to him.

JM: Do you remember the guy he learned from?

AB: I never knew the man. I've heard about him, but I never knew him, he died before I was big enough to remember. But he was a Faulkingham and he came from Prince Edward Island. But, Mr. Man, dad said, if you think I can play you should have heard him. I would have liked to to see what it was like. I've got some fiddle tunes in there [on records] played by different people all around in different places, but it don't compare. Just don't compare. I can hear the old fiddle now the way it used to sound when he would play it. But I can't get that out of it.

JM: did he tap his feet on the floor while he played?

AB: No, but he could stick a pine chair and play just as well as under his arm, on top of his head, behind his back, down behind the

chair, down behind the chair legs, didn't bother him any.

[Adrian demonstrates the trick positions and Mary cautions him not to break his bow.]

Never miss a stroke and keep right on playing. Course he was just a boy when he start to pick it up, only 12 years old.

And he watched that fella and copied him, every move he made he copied him. Cause he lived just a little ways from him, and he spent half his time when that fella was home over there getting him to play for him. And he copied everything in the music the way he did it. And he said, I couldn't hold a candle to him.

Well, I said, if you couldn't I'd like to have heard him. Well, he said, you'd have heard a fiddle player if you'd heard it. But of course, by my time he was gone. But I never stuck to it enough to learn it. I used to play harmony with him. And I didn't have to do half the bowing that he did. I heard him play so much I knew his style. I knew every move he was going to make. Now if I sit down with you fellas here, if you play a piece I'm familiar with, you always play it a little bit different from the way that I heard it. Just a little bit. I'll be going along good and the next thing I know I'm somewheres else. It only takes one note to throw you off. But I was use to him every note he played, and I could play harmony right along with him and it didn't bother me any. But to set in with somebody new, it takes a little while to get used to each other.

JM: When did you start playing, how old were you?

AB: 17. Before I ever picked it up. I turned 18 in January and I started just before Christmas. Of course I could read music, cause I watched mother, she was a music teacher and I watched her give music lessons to the students. I learned all the notes on the piano and she begged me to learn piano. But I wished I had, but I wouldn't. It wouldn't do me any good now cause that finger is gone. I couldnt' play anyway. But I learned to read music and I could sing by written music on a piece I wasn't familiar with cause I knew the notes and I could do it. So I started singing with Dad when I was 14 or 15. And a piece I never heard, he says, oh, you can

Beal-p.29.

do it. But I was always singing high tenor with him. He'd say you follow your notes. I got so I could read. So when I decided to learn to play the fiddle he made me a finger chart for the notes. He said, it may not be exact but you'll find out where to move your fingers, when you see where you are. Whether you need to go up or down a little bit and that come natural to me. So he passed it to me and said it's all ready. He says, now you go in the living room and pick out a piece you knwo, either one in natural or with one sharp or one flat, you'll find them out when you start in. He says, you just pick that out, you know the notes and you knopw how to bow it. So I went in and I took a piece I knew pretty well out of the hymn book and I went through it two or three times. It didn't sound just right to me. And I h0llered to mother, I said, Mother, you come in here a minute. She was washing the dishes. she said, I'm busy. I said, come in here, just wipe them fingers and come in here a minute . So she did. I saw her wiping her hands on her apron as she come. I said , play that piece for me. In a weeks time she and I were playing dance music. Popular songs and anything that come along. And after I played a couple three pieces that I knew I threw the hymn books and music away and started playing by ear. It all come natural. It didn't bother me a bit, so I played from that time on. I dropped this stuff that I was playing with Dad, when he quit I dropped it altogether. It's been over 60 years since I've played any of it. So you see it's a hard job to remember it.

JM: I know. My memory starts to go after 60 years. How about a song, can you sing a song you used to sing with your father?

AB: No I don't believe I can. Frog in my throat.

JM: How about that Bill Weaver?

AB; Oh I have to write that down and get it.

JM: What do you call it?

AB: Old Bill Weaver song. Said, there never was a chimney sweeper half as black as Bill the Weaver. Said, As the husband slowly entered, up the chimney pole he ventured. There he saw the retched soul sitting on the chimney pole. Then he built a roaring fire, smoked him off the pole. Said, never was a chimney sweeper half as black as Bill the weaver.

JM: Can you play the tune?

AB: no, I'd have to get the words.

MW: He'll have to practice on it until you come down again.

AB: I never thought of it for years, I used to know the whole of it. Cause he come home, I'm trying to think how it did start. Can't remember, I think I could remember it after a while, but it's been a long, long time. [He keeps trying to put it together]

[185] AB: Tell me the story. Said, we went up town and seen this crowd of people going into the theater. And heard the music. In them days there were small theaters in all the cities. So grandfather heard the music he had to go where it was so in they went. Half drunk, both of them. Went in and they was having a dance contest, playing old jigs and reels and having clog dancing. Old grandfather had on his feet, they used to cut boots down after they wore them so much and make shoes of them. Shove the feet into them, no laces, just loose on your feet. Well, the fella that was with him says, Elihu, you can outdance them fellas. Well, he didn't know but he could. Felling just about right anyway. He decided he couldn't stand it, he had to dance. So away he went. He started to climb on the stage and the ushers were going to haul him down and the fella that was running said, let him come, let the downeaster come. He knew he was from downeast. So he come up. Said, what do you want to play? He says, anything. So the musicians started and he started dancing with them boot feet on. He made about four or five steps and the fella says, hold it, he says. Go get the gentleman a pair of shoes. They went and got him a pair of clog shoes to put on his feet and he outdanced everything that was there. He knew steps they never heard of. That fella said, he outdanced them so bad that they didn't even know that they was on the stage or not. He said, all you could hear in that hall was, horrah for the downeaster.

JM: He outdanced them so they didn't know if they were on the stage?

AB: They didn't know if they was on the stage dancing or what they were doing. They tried some of the steps of his trying to compete with him. But he knew so many more steps than they did and knew

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them better that they couldn't keep up with him at all.

So he won the contest, weren't entered either. He beat them all.

JM: Horrah for the downeaster.

AB: Horrah for the downeaster. He was quite a character, grandpa was. He went up town one day, Aboard the ship he was the cook.

[220] And of course the captain gave him some money to go up town one Saturday afternoon to get food for Sunday dinner. Well, he never come back, never showed up at all. Hunted all around couldn't find him. Come back aboard. So that evening they all went to town to see if they could find him. Course around those cities there was 50, 60 of those grog shops, dance halls. Pretty soon they heard a fiddle going. Looked and he was there playing fiddle. If there was music he was going to have his share of it. So that's where they found the money gone, he'd spent his money on booze. They had no Sunday dinner on the vessel. Oh, they said he was a character. He had to have a little booze so he got in there and used his money all up, supposed to buy the food for the vessel for the Sunday dinner. He was buying rounds of drinks.

JM: They sent him out to get food?

AB: He was the cook, see? They found him that night in the dance hall about two thirds cut, playing for dances. Money gone. He was a case I guess, according to all stories, he was quite a character. Then him and his brother -in-law went down to Eastport buying lobsters. And of course this fella's older brother gave them the money to buy the lobsters with. Course them days it was all silver money, quarters, and half-dollars, dimes and nickels. So he went ashore the fourth of July. Of course, the money box was aboard the lobster carrier. Change he had in his pocket. They were rolling pennies in the street for kids to chase, whoever got the most money why they won. So Uncle George, he's got some children in the town now, Uncle George has, he moved up here from the island, married a girl and moved up here. So he got the bright idea to go get his money box. He was about 2/3 drunk anyway he went down and got the money box. And him and grandfather started rolling money for the kids to play with. Silver dollars, quarters, and half-dollars.

And they used every penny there was in that money box for the kids to chase. Of course they were half drunk the pair of them. Had to turn around and go home and Uncle George said, somebody stole his money. (laughs) He rolled it on the street for kids to play with. Uncle John sent them down with the money to buy lobsters with. Put that crowd together they were quite a bunch I'll tell you. Quite a lot of old yarns about that little town. It was supposed to have been a pretty good town, but a lot of stuff went on behind the door.

JM: A lot of stuff went on behind the door? It does everywhere I guess. Have another tune?

AB: Get that thing going again.

[tape stops and resumes...]

JM: What was the occasion the first time you sang in public?

[270] AB: Just a public time there in the school house on the island. And they were doing all kinds of different things, and dad got me to sing that one song, and of course he was playing music there. And different ones were singing songs and playing music, mandolin and violin and stuff. And he got me to sing that one song and I never will forget it, The Rose of No man's Land, back in 1918.

JM: Is it a war song?

AB: Yea. I used to know every word of that I've forgotten that too. I've got the sheet music down home. It was written about a nurse, Amid the war's dark curse stands a Red Cross nurse, she's the rose of no man's land. I can remember that just as plain, I was just a kid, I can remember it just as plain as tonight.

JM: Were you nervous?

AB: No, it didn't bother me any. [He talks about community plays on Beals Island, and skits that his father used to put on. times at the school house; speaking pieces, tableaux, skits, songs.]

[end of tape]