

SIDE II

[CLARENCE HARDING , JANUARY 21, 1970]

C:And I'm nearly 75 (L:Yeah) and ah,-

L:Said you were born on the Island?

C:On Gott's Island and I had a few lobster traps when I was small that my father would go with me to see and I would pull them over the side of the flat boat. And when he O.K.ed it and said that I could do it alone I was quite proud and I probably was ten or eleven years old. So, I , I recall that I had 20 traps out this school season. We had a man teacher for a chage and he;d, he was an elderly man and he'd taught at differant times and evidently he'd met up with some tough kids in his career because he'd- I remember him saying to me "If all my kids had gone out and pulled 20 traps before school in the morning they'd worked off some of the surplus energy .[Laughter]

L:Well, were there a lot of people, a lot of people your age going to sea that early, when they-?

C:Ah, Gotts Island was just a small community. It was only about 68 inhabitants in all and probably about half a dozen of us boys about my age, and they, we all had a few traps out. Some of them had to have them out to earn money for their clothes but my money that I earned was mine. (L:Yep) I don't recall what I ever did with it, I guess I never earned enough to worry about it.

L:Did you save up for a boat?

C:Ah, I suppose I must have, because ah, my first, ah, my smallest one, the one that I told you was just a large row peapod with a knox motor put into it.

L:Yea, Eighteen feet or so?

C:Yes, my father gave me that (L:Yea) when he had a large boat built and ah, I think perhaps I might have used that for two summers. When I was eighteen, I had my first one built on my own, and I earned the money.

L:Who, who built your first boat?

C:Well, the first one was built by a man named Sargent and ah, he lived down on the Sutton, Sutton Island. There was a small year round colony down there at that time and ah, ah, I didn't like that boat and I only kept it about two years.

L:What was it like?

C:Well, it was the old steam boat stern, (L:Yeah) The steam boat stern.. It was twenty-six feet over all, which was a good size in those days. That was the average size but ah, I told you yesterday, he was suppose to have been a boat builder, but I never would call him a good one. Because ah, when he set the boat up in the beginning, he didn't properly ah, see those with the fan tails, they had the long, ah, horn beam they call it see, and ah, it wasn't ah, attached. It was attached to jast one palce to the stern post, (L:Hum) right here on this inner end, and then it run out probably ah, six feet and he didn't shore it up properly. In other words, he ah, before the boat was only part built that thing had started to droop, see. And of

*Gott's Island
Sutton
Horn Island*

course, he built that right into the boat because ah,, it would droop and he didn't try to get it back in place again. So when the boat was finished , it had that, ah, well, it run down hill ,I would call it, see?

L:Yea, yea, sort of like a leaning tower of Pisa!!

C:That's right and ah, ah, a man that ah, he wasn't in the native on the island but he married a woman that was a, a native and he ah, I use to go around the boats ah, would come out of the water down there in what we call the pool and ah, they were around on the low tide, and I would go around all the boata with my rule and I'd measure , because my boat, the new one wasn't as high on the bow as I wanted it to be. So I'd measure every other boat and just in hopes that I could make mine look higher. And I never could so I only kept it two years. But ah,-

L:Did it perform badly, too?

C:No, as I recall it, it was a good able boat, ah, whoever bought it, used it for, well, it had a short life as boats go. It probably only had about half the life of a, of a, ordinary boat, but it was seaworthy and I think ah, well, I can't quite remember but I think about a 150 or 200 dollar for the woodwork and I got a , a Hartford motor and they called them Hartford in those days- a single cylinder motor for about a hundred dollars (L:Boy) and oh, the equipment, I suppose wouldn't have been , another wasn't very much and you'd buy a compass and it would cost you five dollars. (L:Oh, my God) and all you had to have for a fire extinguisher was a bucket of sand. I don't know as they even had anything at first, but, maybe. And then the next thing that came out was a canister affair with well, I don't know, I guess just flour in it. Oh, yes, you could carry a bag of flour at one time for a fire extinguisher.

L:For certain kinds of fires, that wouldn't be too good.

C:Oh, no. Yeah, they've changed the fire equipment so many times now they did away with that , oh, pyrene stuff. and now we have a dry chemical. But most always we don't have many fires, I don't think it's because we're too awful carefull, but I think it's the type of boat, we have good circulation of air. Because in the old days everybody, in the winter when their water inlet would freeze up through the bottom, take a rag,wind it on a piece of wire, soak it in gasoline, light it, put it down in under that fitting and that would be right down in the bilge, and no one ever blew up that, I ever knew.

L:My word, well, well. Maybe they just had good pipes and tanks in those days.

C:Yeah, well, I suppose so.

L:Well, after that first boat, ah, after, you sold it, what did you do for a boat then?

C:Well, I always was, well, sort of, forehanded, there was only once that I caught I always had one on order when I ah. sold the one before. And ah,-

L:What was your, your, second built boat?

C:The next one was the one that Merton Stables built over at Atlantic, he built over there then. He was the one that I told you did the work, foreman for the Gamage yard, (L:Yeah) Mr. Gamage told him, ha- he wasn't his boss and , I, I get a chuckle out of that

Pisa (Stable)

because I thought that was a pretty good patch on the back. He , he didn't have to, didn't have to boass him.

L:He was a pretty good builder, heh?

C:Yeah, even then, he, he, he was a young builder at the time but, ah, de'd work with a now. The island in the days of sail, oh, every island or every fishing village for that matter, always had ah, builders. Some would only build for themselves, some would build one, ah, one perhaps during the winter for a neighbor but they ah, they all could turn out good work. I mean that seemed to be part of their skill.

L:General know-how?

C:Yeah, yeah, and he worked ah, I guess he, well he got his first training was working for one of those lobster fishermen that built his own boat during the winter and built one or more for, as I say, for a neighbor , for a price, of course. (L:Yeah) That boat, that boat I kept fifteen years.

L:What was she like?

C:That was the 27, the 27 that was the open boats in those days, with a spray hood and 27 feet over all.

L:Was she decked aft?

C:Ah, no, the motor was in the center in that one. All my boats, the motors in the center. Ah now, my father's boat, powerboat, the motor was in aft with a long deck. But in all of mine the motors were put in the center. And this one was the same, with just a short working deck aft. And ah-

L:Well, how was she equipped as a boat?

C:Well, ah, I don't think you have to have a large boat. I've watched some of the fishermen in ah, 28 and 30 foot boats and they go out with a 34, 36, and 40 foot boats and stay in just as tough weather. I think it's the ah, I think the boats ah, the boats are all the same type and just because one isn't quite as long, doesn't make it any ah, any more risky to go in. (L:Yeah, yeah) It ah, it's not quite as ahndy maybe, when you want to move lobster traps, you don't have the room to move as many at a time,(L:Yuh) But aside from that, I think the smaller boats ah, in some cases maybe they would be ,I'll say even more seaworthy ah, I always use for an expression ah, and I don't know anything about the horses or anything like that like, but there always an expression was well , give a horse it's head and let it, pick it's way, see? (L:Yeah) and I don't think you want to fight a boat when its rough weather and it gets going fast on a sea that's carrying , that's carrying it fast. (L:Yeah) Just don't , don't push the power to it, but let the sea take it where it will , and when the seas gone out from under, then then bring it back to normal, but just don't tru to fight it right on top of a wave, because if you do, why you might get it right broad side when the peak struck you, see?

L:Yeah, yeah. Well, she was an open foot, ah 27 foot open boat-

C:That was an open 27 foot boat with a spray hood.

L:Did she have a square stern?

C:Ah, ah, yes it had the square stern it was the same type that Merle Black told you

that his father had, It wasn't the ah, now the sterns today are plumb, see?. (L:Yeah, yeah) But the sterns of the boats they built for a time were out so they were longer on the water line than they were on top and I don't know that was just well, some man's opinion, I don't know what of course with out any load in them, it ah, made a longer boat on the water, and I guess somebody thought well, it would go better, see?

L:Yeah, give it more chance to get that run flattened out.

C:yeah, but then that didn't last for very long and they came to the what do they call them?-the wood box stern and that's what they've been ever since.

L:That's ehat they've been, yeah, yeah. Well, let's see, that was your ~~third~~ boat, when, about when was that?

C:That- well, that boat was built in ah, 1914 and the next one, the one that Chester Clement built ah, was built in 1931 and the fall of 1931 and ah-

L:Was Chester working over, over at Southwest?

C:Chester was wroking, that was his own shop, the main, the main building is still there today. The old shop that he owned is the main part ah, you can tekl by looking at it, it's the old part see and ah-

L:Can you remember ah, what you asked him for, when you went to get that boat from him, or did you just take what he was building at that time?

C:Ah, for a model, you mean? (L:Yeah) Ah, I took what he was building because ah, he was good at it, (L:Yeah) and ah, all I told him was the size I wanted. (L:Yeah) Oh, yes, I've skipped one between the 27 foot one. I thought that the years didn't fit it quite right. Between the 27 foot one that was built in 1914 and the Chester Clement boat that was built in 1931, I had ah, a boat built here in town that was 34 feet, 33 feet and ah, I didn't like it, I didn't like it at all. Ah, and I kept it a year and a half. (L:Humm) that must have been , let's see, 1914, 24.29, about 1929, that would be right-about the Spring and Summer of 1929. I was sailing a pleasure boat for a summer party and I,, I ah, I got a model I never was, I don't know why, I never could make a model in my own but I would try to tell the builder what I wanted and in this case, I told the builder that I wanted atboat that wouldn't pound, (L:Yes) I wanted it sharp, but I wanted it to come up I ah, I like this see, sort of wedged shape see, and he got it too sharp, in other words, it didn't pound, but it didn't have any bouyancy (L:Yeah, she'd root too much?) Yeah.

L:Who was the builder?

C:That was Cliff Rich, Bobby Rich's father.

L:Cliff Rich, ah huh. So he didn't build on his standard model, he he-

Southwest (Harbor)

C: Ah, he, he took any model that you brought to him, yeah, and ah, I remember going to the shop when the boat was partly completed and ah, I was working now and had a little time at night, (L: Yeah) and ah, the boat was partly completed and I said I wish that I had that boat wider, Cliff, it doesn't look wide enough to me. Oh, he said, I can take care of that all right. He said, I'll spread it off on top. Wally Inewas ignorant and ah, he, ah, he wedged it apart on top and where the model called for about eight feet and six inches, he wedged it off or spread it, let it spread off so it was about eight feet, nine inches so it went off four inches or such a matter, but when ah, when they go off like that on top, they take it away from down on the water, see? In other words, I'd sacrificed, I got a boat like this because they (L: Taken the flab) taken the flat, taken the bearing away from it (L: Oh, dear.) And ah, so ah, it was an awful tiresome boat to work in and I guess I expected too much. Ah well, as I was telling, ah, it might have been Ralph Stanley, to day, telling someone, anyway that ah, we took the boat in at my deck down here to put the motor in it and it was only a four cylinder motor and not quite as large, of course, as they put in today and not as heavy and that was a cabin boat, and with the motor in the cabin, where they all are today, that went down by the head, it was so sharp forward, in other words, (L: Oh, yeah) It went down by the head so that the rudder came up out fo the water (L: Oh, my) and ah, after a year and a half, that I used it, I had two ah, bags of sand this close--- knit ah, like corn, ah corn sacks, you know those (L: Yeah) ah a, hundred pound sacks but they weren't too large around as I recall it. And I had all I could handle in two of those sacks. Way back into the back end of the boat, to hold it on an even keel. (L: Wow, yeah, yeah,) So it won't a good model, (L: Yeah) But yeah, ah Malcom McDuffy since then when Cliff was still in his right mind, he said, "Do you think that hurt your business?" "When Clarence sort of condemned that boat?" And sold it, because of the faults?" Cliff said, "No, I'm glad he didn't hold it against me, he said no, that boat went up to Cape Porpise and they used it for some years until it goet a shore a ledge and wrecked and he said "I've had several orders come down from there for new boats. (L: HUH, I'll be) So ah, they could see the workmanship was all right, that was what they were going by, (L: Yeah, yeah) Just because the model was off, why that was ah, part of my fault and (L: Humm) and part of his,

L: Just chalk it up to experience.

C: Yep, Experience, that's right.

L: Well, what led you to go to , to ah, Chester Clements? yeah.

C: Well, now I was down to Sim Davis and looked at his boat this afternoon (L: It's that's something, though) I haven't been down there since, oh it was partly planked and I said, "Do you remember ", we were talking about boats, . I said, "Who modeled this, ah, Sim, did they bring the plans down from New Jersey or did you model it?". He said Oh, it's my model, it's one that I built for a sardine carrier." (L: Yeah) and I said, "You know, there's an awful lot of difference in powerboat models, isn't there?" And he agreed and I , I was telling him about the different ones that I'd jad and ah , One would roll it would roll deep, but they'd roll easy and one wouldn't roll very deep. But they would stop quickly with sort of a slat like. (L: Yeah) and ah, I said, "Do you remember I came to you and tried to get you to build me a boat and you were busy on something". That was when he was a

New Jersey

small builder, (L:Yeah) before he'd really got started, I guess- no I don't know where he had a shop , but he didn't have this one that he's in down there, that I do remember. He built up over head in some building (L:Ah huh) and ah, I said , I said ah, I advertised this boat that I didn't like in one of the , through one of the brokers in Camden, and he sent a man to me. How the price of that boat was- to was only a year and a half old and a new Red Wing motor, \$1500,00 complete. (L:Huh) And he sent the man to me from Cape Porpise, and the man had the money in cash in his pocket,

L:My God.

C:And he came in December, (L:Yeah) and I said, I can't part with the boat now, I'm going lobstering all the winter and I have to have something to go in and he said, "Well, I was given to understand that ah, I could have the boat is I liked it and here's the money. "And I said, "Can't we work out something?" So we worked out that I had the boat until the first of April and I took off \$150.00, I think off the price. (L:yeah, yeah) And ah, so that left me ah, and my summer job started in June, that left me the first of April to the first or middle of June and I had to take an , an old forty foot boat that I had just for winter fishing, (L:Yeah) It was an old wreck that I patched up and that was ah, a steam boat stern in fact, it had at one time when it was built, it was ah, ah, it had a steam engine in it.

L:Humm.. It, she was pretty old then?

C:Yeah, that's right, but well built, and I patched it up and ah, I know I had a big old two cylinder motor in the center and I had on the spare bilge engine to give it more power. I had a six cylinder light, light marine through I think it was built around a Fordson, ah Ford motor block on the side. (L:Yeah) Well, the old big clunk was too heavy to work around so I hoisted that on to the dock. I was a one man operation, anyhow, I hoisted that on to the dock and I took the smaller one from over on the bilge and I, I jacked it up with pries and jacks and so forth and slid it over on the main beds and (L:Yeah) lined it up to the shaft a float. [Laughter] and I used that for a lobster boat for about six weeks and in those days, that was in forty-two, over all, but not too wide, but they didn't go in lobster boats that size, around here, in those days.

L:Pretty big boat.

C:But I drifted around and ah, all the time, I was looking for a builder. (L:Yeh) and I went up to ah, the Rich Brothers' Duck Cove and ah, I told you, the one they let do the talking, he wasn't a carpenter by any means but he did the painting and we did the talking and he, I suppose, he heard that I was in a bad way for a boat to start out my Fall season after I got through my summer party. So ah, he jacked the price on me about 500 dollars,

L:Oh, boy!

C: And ah ,I couldn't see it. So I went to Slim Davis and Slim was busy on something and he couldn't build and ah there didn't seem to be any around in this area that was building and I was using Chester Clements dock, ah, my party was using his dock for a landing place.

Cape Porpise
Duck Cove

And we were getting gasoline and supplies and ah, this was mid summer at that time, mid July and he had this 80 or 80 some foot ah, ah, rum runner that he was already working on. He had a big crew, trying to get that completed and I said, "I don't suppose there's any use to talking with you about a thirty-four foot power boat?" And he took me with surprise and said, "Well, I don't know, why not?" And I said, "well, you've got all you can work here, He had a slow, moderate grin and he said to me, "I have space up at the head of the shop." and I said, "I guess we can find a few carpenters to put onto it,

L:Well, I'll be.

C:And his price, now he didn't make me over the barrel, his price was the standard price at that time- I think ah, that was a thousand dollars for the hull, (L:Humm hum) and ah-

L:A kind man.

C:I say this chap up here ah, they thought they had me and they wanted 14 or 1500 for (L:Yeah, oh boy) And ah that was ah. I was very lucky in the workmanship in that boat, ah for the man that got out all the plank was a old, one of them carpenter, mostly a house builder. But, he was one of the old time builders where everything went together that fitted, they didn't have to be planned, whittled out anything. When they made their cut they knew where they were cutting (L:Yeah) and he got every plank out and he explained to me he was nice that way. I was a young fellow. He explained how he got the plank and how he got the proper bevel so when the two planks came together they would be solid wood to wood and with the right amount of bevel to hold the cotton but still the right amount of wood behind the cotton and (L:Yeah, yeah) he was right because that boat, that boat is in existence today and it must be what thirty-one, thirty-two years old.

L:Yeah, Who owns it now?

C:Summer people over at Sorrento I sold it and I kept that for fifteen years. And I ah, the only reason that I sold it ah, in those days we ah, we didn't have the water-tight cock pit floor in those boats. They didn't build them high enough and ah, your floor anything, any water that came into your boat you had to pump overboard see? And ah, they were getting them higher sided and giving them the scuppers through the side and that's the reason that I got out from under it, That's the only reason, it would have been good for, well, I'd been satisfied with it, with everything else for another ten years, and I could have gotten by with it for ten years, in my work without any trouble ah, what so ever.

L:Was that a water tight platform, which...

C:Any water that comes aboard these boats ah, runs right through the side of them. The only thing you have to be, if you take in a heavy load, we have scupper pluges to plug the hole. Aside from that, why anything that comes aboard, all the water that you wash up with and what comes in off the lobster traps, why, it goes right out through.

L:Yeah, yeah, well, that's good. Well, let's see then, ah you sold her

Sorrento

after 15 years, that would be about 1946,?

C: That's right, 46, and that's, that's just right. Because I put the, in the order with Raymond Bunker and Ralph Ellis (L: Yeah) and I ah, I had these people I sailed, I worked for them for 15 years. The first two years, they had their own yacht, then the depression hit them and they lost too much money, and so they sold the yacht and they were sort of mourning. They didn't have any boat to get over the cabin, over at Gott's [Island] and I said my boat is that time, it was only about a year old, it's just a fishboat type but it ah, and they liked the looks of it. Money, jobs wasn't too, summer jobs wasn't too plentiful. There was always somebody looking for a good job and fishing and lobstering never was good in the summer. And so I made them a pretty good price, a pretty good offer, I think. I offered to go for the same as they were paying me and put my boat in the deal, and all they would have to do was allow me three days to paint it, if they would give me three days pay, extra pay (L: Ah huh) to put the paint on and I figured I just might as well be using it as to have it tied up on the mooring (L: Sure) you know. I, I didn't have the courage to go out and try to hunt up another job, because as I say, that boat never was all varnished, spish and span like they they, the yacht type, just an ordinary paint job and so I didn't stand a too good a show of competing with the, with the fellows that were after the better jobs.

L: Well, except-

C: That, there, that boat-of course I had several motors in it but that boat, the Clements, the Hull was a Clements boat, the hull was a thousand dollars, fifteen years after 1946, the hull of the one I have now ah, 20, 27 with the extra woodwork that I have, like the putting in a winter back in the cabin and ah, (L: Yeah) put in the trap sheathing on the side and putting ah, the labor of putting in the copper ice sheathing on and setting up my lobster hoist and all that sort of stuff, and the overall bill was twenty-seven hundred and fifty dollars, (L: Humm) And I was asking Raymond Bunker just a couple of weeks ago, ah, I said, ah, "What would that cost me today?" "Around 45 hundred," He said, "Nearer 5, (L: Yeah) nearer 5 thousand." So, ha. And I from that, I, I, got it just on the border line. From that year on, each year that they well they didn't build too many work boats because they had a good hook up for yachts, he'd only build ah, pleasure boats. They'd only build one or two a winter-

L: That's Raymond and ...

C: Raymond, yeah, but so it happened the winter they built mine, they built four identical. My, mine was the first one, those three others were identical oh, with some small changes like ah, ah, they didn't want them quite or a high out of the water as mine so they cut down on in the height a couple inches. But aside from that, they used the same molds and -

L: They were water tight?

C: Yeah, yes, floors. But they wanted the floors higher and I'd had one built that was the one that was built in Sutton's that I didn't like at all. And ah, he didn't get the sides up high enough and the

Sutton's Island

floor came so high that my knee, my kneecaps was right on the side of the coaming.

L:Oh no.

C:So I had sore knees,(L:Yeah) and so I've,that's every boat since then, I've always had it so that the kneecap goes in under the coaming,see?

L:Yeah, yeah, that makes good sense. Much sturdier that way,huh? so you had it built sort of high for you ?

C:Yes, yes.

L:Because you're fairly tall?

C: Ah huh. But it's gone down the water and it isn't noticeable now. He told me when they first started, I said I was afraid that it would look too out of portion, too high on the back, compared to the bow. But he said it didn't and I,it didn't because it's gone down in the water and they, well, after all, you carry quite a number of pounds of bait and (L:Yeah) and anchors and that sort of stuff, you carry that in the back and pretty much.

L:Yeah, yeah, So you didn't carve a new model then, he just added a few strakes?

C:Well, no ah, I took ah, I took the model that he'd been building pleasure boats off of. I'd seen a pleasure boat that he built for a young fellow, a young summer fellow, that I use to see over around the dock and ah, ah, I liked the looks of it and I said. "Build me one like that". So he took the ah, ah, he saved the mold from year to year so he had the same molds and he ah, made some changes I guess, but he still had the like Ralph Stanley, now Ralph, I know about every winter he builds at least one, and most always he uses the same mold but he varies in some way, like ah put them a little further apart to make them longer, boat longer or blocks off to make them a little wider. When he, when he gets one ah, one model that worked out pretty well, why, they sort of all boats that they built are sort of adapted from that.

L:You can certainly recognize these from the different men's boats.

C:Yes, they are, there's just a little difference ah, enough so that you can see it, although some, sometimes boats will get shifted around, I'd have ,have an idea that I know who built the boat, and I get fooled,(L:Yeah, yeah) Bobby Rich's ah, they'll all practically the same.

L:Yeah, well, now, you were telling me down on the docks the characteristics you felt a boat ought to have.. I wonder if you would just reinterate what, what the good qualities a lobster boat should have, to your mind?

C:Huh, well, ah there all, I don't think there is any lobster boat on the coast anywhere today that doesn't have good qualities. I don't think they, they've been ah, everything's been proved out and ah, ah, any little flaw has been worked out of them and it's just a matter of a man's opinion. (L:Humm) Now, humm, Jonesport has a faster boat then we have, they have boats that are practically all a skeg boat. (L:Yeah) Now that gives them ah, ah, much flatter floor, because all in other words all they've got is four inch or five, whatever, kneel, just ah, on edge like this, on knife like -

L:All dead wood though?

C: Where a boat that's planked down, its got that amount of, well, I don't know what, displacement in there, that's what it is, it displaces the water, (L:YUp) But it also, I suppose, that's what it is, more displacement in the boat that makes them push harder. I don't doubt wheter there are boats up here that will go just as fast, no, I guess not, because they always win all the races, down at Jonesprt (L:Laughter) Cadillacs in them and they load them with power,

L:Yeah, and they build them lighter.

C:They build them lighter, that's right. The majority of those, those obats are thinner planked and the timbers are farther apart and the so forth and so on. But some harbors go all together for Jonesport, ah, dollar for dollar. I don't know what the difference in price would be, if any, if they built cheaper or not. I never had any occasion to ask, the price.

L:How about running cost?

C:Ah, they're good seaboats, that is. I ah, never had any real experience with one, so I don't know but I have heard..

L:Now, I'm speaking of costs in terms of what it costs to run one of those big engines?

C:Oh, I see. Well, it's like , it's like running, well, I don't know how to explain it but, you take ah, they all use automobile engines, and when you ah, when you hit the throttle, no matter how easy the oba drives, it's going to cost you money. (L:Yea) They get there a little quicker, but they don't get ther enough quicker ah , to make up for the difference in the oost even.

L:Yeah, I would think that that would hurt their income pretty bad.

C:Yes, well, that's the all part of the overall. Now, I ah, I use a six cylinder 135 in my boat and ah, ah I could put in ah, well of course the most of them are now 200 to 300 all depending on the motor you buy . But I could get now, two miles an hour or more of speed out of my boat, but it would cost me at least ten gallons of gas per day more, (L:My!) to push it, see? (L:Whistles Quite a factor) But ah, some harbors they have a longer distance to go to get to their grounds now. Stonington is now place where they ah, go in for quite a lot of power in their boats and they have gathered now quite a fleet of Jonesport boats up there. The newer boats are coming from Jonesport, and Swan's Island hasquite a fleet of Jonesport baots , But ah-

L:I noticed down here in Bass Harbor, there's hardly , there's just what, just two Jonesporters in the Harbor out of what thirty boats, (C:Yeah as many as that) So they haven't caught on here , here as much.

C:No, no they've been satisfied with the type , they've used around here and ah.

*Jonesport
Swan's Island
Bass Harbor*

L:Course they build their own here?, too.

C:Yes, now there's one boat, it's hauled out now up here ot ah, Jimmy Richards, that's Mertons' boat. Merton was the builder you know, of the two. The two brothers started the shop and Merton, Merton was the builder and he took his brother, Jimmy in as a partner and they built,.I don't know how many boats-they built some fairly large, ones that went ot the Westward as pleasure boats party fishing boats, and ah, he, ah, he is allergic to dust, any woodworking dust, (L:Yeah) yeah, he had to get out of the shop, that's all, and right now he had to take innoculations every two or three times a week, he's allergic anyway. (L:Yeah) But he built a lobster boat and it's the ah, well, we'll say it's the largest one in the harbor, it 's as, it's 36 overall and beamy. (L:Yeah) And he probably put ah, he, put ahe, put the ah, the

eight Palmer in it, 200 and oh, I don't know what the rate is, 230, 40 ,or 50 horse power and he burns as high as 50 gallons of gasoline a day and he does it day after day, and day after day. I can go out and I don't make quite as long a days, but the ones that do make a long dau as he does with a , with a 150 horse , will burn 20-25 gallons and he'll burn from 35 to 50 . (L:Oh, boy) So he's putting diesel , he's all out now for diesel power.

L:Yeah, yeah, that's really kind of too bad to see, cause speed is always expensive no matter in what-in automobiles, boats, horses, ah, [Laughs] a good many things. I was going to say women, [Laughter]

C:A boat's always a "She", isn't it?

L:Yup, yup.

C:She's a beauty or she's a bitch, just to how ever, how you happen to feel about it. Or she's in drydock having her bottom painted.

C:And my boat is named for my sife, Evelyn, and ah, I ah, was telling this fellow that used to come here , well, he moved back to town , how, but he came from wway, originally, and he wanted to know what kind of day I had and that was pne of the winter days and I said it wasn't good at all. I said I had to hang on with one hand and steer with the other when I was coming home . And I talked to Evelyn and I told her she was trying to throw me overboard.

[Laughter----]

L:Yeah, yeah, son of a gun. You told me down there on the dock about the possible origins for that, those double ended lobster boats.

C:Yes well, ah,, I suppose in a way they started from the ah, we'll say the Coast Guard Surf boats, were all double ended, Wou know-(L:Yeah) The boats they used with oars in the old days of the Coast Guard service and ah, a ship's life boat , or maybe a Seine boat , they used for mackeral, Seiners in those ah, days (L:Humm) And they just took that for a model and ah, and put the skeg on. 'Course they were m, I doubt, I don't know, I suppose there were some double enders around there that were planked down, but a good part of them were built on a skeg. And ah, (L:Originally?) Yes, yes, they didn't , well I don't know, what percentage there were, I suppose one time there might have been half that were the double enders as we call them, but then when we started to get the wide stern, they found that it would carry some much better , they didn't last too long, anyway. (L:That double ender?) That double ender. But I fuppose there were on e of the best mosels, they have to be- because that's the type they use over in the North Sea, and it', and they've got nothing in a following sea, they've got nothing to push them . The sea will split on the stern just as much as it would split on the bow. (L:Yeah) And ah, ah, I suppose that if they're built like any boat, the right proportion, the right beam so that they don't capsize, I suppose they're probably the most seaworthy boat there is today.

L:Yup, yup. Were there sailing pea pods when you were a boy? Were there any?

C:For, for our tenders ah, boat tenders, about everybody used a pea pod. Now the one that I first, first lobster traps I pulled was just in a flatbottom

punt. Add then my father had a pea pod built for me, and he didn't want me to upset it , so he had it vuilt ah, ah, quite full, you know, not extra wide maybe , but quite full on either end. L:In the ends?) Yeah, and ah, I used to row around in that when I was going to grammar school and pulling my traps in the mornings.

L:How big a boat was that?

C:Oh, that would be abbut 14 feet. Just abbut 14 feet over all. We had ah. ah, rowlocks that came abovr the rail, (L:OH yea) about this high I foot , so that you stand and push this way see? (L:Yeah) So that you didn't have to stoop over

L:Yeah, regular thole pins?

C:No, we always used the old oar locks , the row locks, but in this case ah, these ah, hum, were made so that they would slip down between the ah, see the ah, plank, the timber and then ah, (L:The shear clamp) and that made a strip between the timbers and the sheer clamp (L:Yeah) and you would have these ah, row locks, (L:They were wooden of course ?) and they're made so that they;d just fit in between the timbers, which would be perhaps 6 or 7 inches apart.(L:Yeah) and it would come up here to the height you wanted , then there would be a double-board probably at the top or else there would be a thick piece that was thinned down to go into the strip , the sheer strip, but it was broad enough at the top so that you would get a row lock socket., in the top of it and they were used just the metal row locks, with that.

L:Yeah, I see. You had a socket on top (C:Yeah) and put your oar locks in that. Sort of an extension of your gunwale.

C:Yeah, it's an extension.

L:Well, the first first, boat that you had that had power was a peapod, wasn't it?

C:That's right but my father had a top put on it,(L:Hum) He had it ah, that was probably ah, that was an oversized one, I don't know what, don't know what it was put oversized for, except maybe I told you that in the days of the sail boat, ah, when they towed one of these large peapods, and if it, the wind, if they got becalmed, well, one man would get out in the peapod and he'd haul traps from that as long as it didn't blow too hard and then when it did he'd come back aboard the sailboat and they'd tow that peapod behind them.

L:Humm, did those ah, ah, larger peapods that were used like that ever have ah, sails with them? Did they-

C:Oh now, just a sprit sail or something like that.

L:Just a sprit sail?

C:Just a sprit sail, ah huh.

L:Just one or-?

C:Yeah, just one.

L:They never carried too or-?

C:NO, I don't ever recall seeing any. Now except the,these around here now, that

a Hurricane Island outfit, with that (L:Yeah) with that rig, (L:Yeah, yeah) No, we only had just the one.

L:Oh well, let me ask, let me ask you another thing, what were the , what was the most , what were they small sailing boats that were in use here, when you were young?

C:They were all Morse built. Practically all Wilbur or Charles Morse -or there again, these local builders, now there was a builder, a lobster fisherman and a builder here in this town and he built his own and he built ah , as I say, one a winter or something like that, for a neighbor. So there was a mixture , but the majority of the boats you could tell them as you can today, they had the Morse line.

L:Yeah, that sort of S-shear with the hegged bows sprit and all. So people went down to Friendship to get them then?

C:That's right. My father had ah, one and of course he had to sail all his life, but the last sail that he had was built by Charles Morse and the harbor at Gott's Island, the inner harbor, where boats had to lay in rough weather, the tide left it completely on the low tide. So ah, there was probably 6 or 8 or even as many as 10 sailboats in there at that one time. But they were all 26, perhaps 28 feet overall would be the largest, but there were fairly shallow draft. My father's was 26 and it was a centerboard. His was one of the few that Charles Morse built. Most of the Morse boats they built deep enough, they didn't use centerboards. They had [Coughs] , they had ah, part inside hallast but they didn't have an iron keel to get the , the weight that they needed.

L:But there was an older type , you know before those, before the ah, keel Friendship.

C:That Muscougas Bay, type , you mean?

L:Yeah, yeah, It looked just the same, I guess.

C:Yeah, yeah, I guess so-pretty much the same .

L:Perhaps his was just a Muscougas sloop too.

C:Yes, yes,, Ah, ah, McKlain, McKlain, I think built ah, ah, they ah, was mostly a difference in their sheer and I'll ah, ah, the Morses, Charles and Wilbur were brothers. I get this more from my brother which is, he's 12 years older than I, and ah (L:Yuh) ah, it seemed like there was a feud on between the two brothers pretty much. One , one ah, one thought his er, was the best , you know, design . And I asked ah, my brother what was the difference. And he said well, Wilbur Morse ah, he guessed probably he built the most boats of the two ,(L:Yuh) and, but he was the most ah, well, ah, the way my brother would use the word, domineering of the two. (L:Ah huh) Ah, he was one of these fellars , well, I guess I know, you know, I'm just ah, saying that -

L:Pretty headstrong?

C:I guess I know that the model A is the best and , and my boats are the best. And (L:Hum) and I said what was the difference? And he said ah, "Well, ah not too much," he said ah, "Wilbur Morse's boats for ah, what they call hollow bowed." Ah, Charles Morse had a , his boats would be, ah, more full forward. (L:Ah huh) And ah, Wilbur's would be inclined to be hollow, and then they'd come out to

*Hurricane Island
Friendship
Gott's Island
Muscougas Bay*

their bearing, see? (L:Yes) and ah, something to do with the sheer too, the top ah, sheer that ah, Wilbut's had ah, ah, more of a crook up on the sheer aft. (L:Uh uh) But little things like that, ah, that ah, someone that was familiar with the two could pick out but anyone (L:Umm) ah that didn't know wouldn't, you know just saying well, that's a Morse Boat

L:Yea, yeah, yeah,. Well, sir, you like a boat that ah, handles well running as well as ah, going , going into the seas?

C:Ah, I don't , I don't think there's a boat in this harbor that I would be afraid to take out or go out eith. And , and run 'em in the following sea as hard as you want to run a boat and that's ah, and my experience there is like ah, I say with a horse. (L:Um um) I give 'em it's head. Nowm, ah, if you get going faster on the sea , ah, I've heard tell , say oh, I like to look out over. I like to have the boat run so I can look out over this way and see it hanging (L:Huh) I says nothing doing, [Laughter] But ah, I'm an old man but I never, I never play that kind of a game. (L:Yeah) Ah when the boat gets travelin' too fast, I take a little power away, (L:Yuh) and I'll ,I let it ah, (L:Go back-) I let it, ah pull back.

L:Is it ah, is it ah, um, at all dangerous to have the sea behind you like that and ah, you, you've got to get yourself cantered down?

C:Yes it could be, (L:HUh huh) it could be ah, there never ah, well, I can't recall when there was every getting capsized. I recall one Jonesport boat getting capsized on a tow line. They got disabled in the winter time and they ah, ah on a tow line and, the following sea and it rolled over on 'em. (L:Yeah)

L:The the, the tow line would tend to drag atound them wouldn't it?

V:That's right , yeah. It had to go pretty much the way the oh, the tow line was draggin' it. And it just , it took away that right, that it had to ah,

L:Keep its own head, (C:Yeah) Yeah, so she broaded then? She rooted-

C:Yeah, you know we ah, they haven't been, too many fishermen lost, after all when you think of the ah, chances-we don't realize the chance that we take. But we do on these gasoline motors, you're, you're haulin' right in around the rough shore, the wind's blowin' on and ah, (L:Yuh) just one little wire drop off your ignition somewhere, ah, ah, take ah, time ah, to smut the points ah, shy , it would be just too bad, that's all (L:Yuh) I , something seems to look after us, I guess, (L:Yeah) Now use to worry about those things but after all that's ah , and of course, if there was a big casualty list and anything like automobile casualties, why, people would worry so, they probably , huh, (L:Um) They probably wouldn't go out but only on the choice days, (L:Ah huh) But we don't have that.

L:Well , you've had pretty good , pretty good life lobstering , haven't ya?

C:Yes, yes. Ah, its ah, lobsterin' is ah, is a one man job. You never get rich at it. I'll tell you that right now. The ones that goet rich at it , have had some other, ah, some other way of ah, gettin' rich. (L:Um um) They haven't ah, they haven't did it all this way, (L:Yuh) But ah, you ah, you have ah,, you have a good free life and I guess its a healthy life because ah, well some thing like , like McCarther's soldiers , we just fade wway. (L:Huh) that's all, we just simply slow down slow down til , ha, ha, that's it,

L:Yuh, yuh. There , there wre a great many men around the harbor here now that have been lobsterin' for as much as fifty years.

C:That's right, that's right (L:YUh)

L:Oh, I think it's a healthy profession. I wish in sense that I could be.

C:And ah, (L:Unintelligible) it ah, it's odd now of course, ah, my father lobstered or fished ah, one or both all his life. And ah, that's all I knew. (L:Humm) I did ah, ah, I did take time out ah, and I went to ah, Shaw's business school in Portland. I found there, nothing in that set of books that I (L:Umm) I cared about going into for ah to earn my living bu' ah, I had my wife and I had the twin sons and we wanted them to have a better life(L:Yeah) so we saw that they got ah, through the Un- University and ah, Dave, the one of the twins is ah in the Fred Lynam Company over in Bar Harbor. (L:Umm) He's a senior partner. Ah, the other one, ah, he had ah, what I thought was the best, I thought he picked the best ah, ah, course in college. He picked Mechanical Engineering.(L:Um um) And ha, they went right from ah, from the college into the service. This was the second (L:Um um) World War and they, they both went in as ah, the mechanical engineer, was ah, put into the ah, automatically put into the ah, heavy artillery and (L:YUH) and he got ah, he didn't get out of this country during the, during the ah, war, two years and a half. But he was sent to, some sort of school about all the time he was in the service, (L:Um) as, there was a gunnery school and radar school and he had ah, radar maintenance group under him, and he was interviewed by, of course by different ah, ah, concerns after, while he was still in the service. And he chose the General Electric and he worked ah, one year in Lynn for General Electric and one year in Pittsfield and he ah, he threw it up and come back 22 years ago (L:Oh) to catch lobsters (L:Ah huh, ah huh) less money but just a free life, (L:WEs, yes)

L:What does a daily schedule go like?

C:A daily schedule goes from ah, as early in the morning as you can see, 'til as late at night as you can see, when there's anything to go for. (L:Ah huh) When there's ah, eh, the seasons off why, ah, a man slows down, when the seasons' good, he has to push it because there's so much bad weather,(L:Yuh) You ah, you can't ah, now ah, ah, I fish a reasonable amount of bad weather -some say, I fish tougher days than I should. But ah, (L:Um um) There's other that do the same too, but ah, ah, if you get ah, well let's see now, I made a nine month year this year. If you get 170 to 80 days out of your nine months, ah, that's days, the full days on the water,(L:Yuh) That's, that's about, that's, that's a good average.(L:UM) But for the rest of the time ah, isn't your own because you have all this equipment on the wharf to keep ah, in order, (L:Um) and your boat keepin' order the days that you're not going out, there's always something that ah, is required, (L:Yuh) work, so ah, we put in we put in lots, lots of hours but its ah, it's your own, your own time. You can do it or not, just as you like.(L:Um um)

L:I suppose it catches up with you though if you haven't been doing your, your work.

C:The ah, ah, the ah, (L:Your work) the ah, young electric light man here this morning, he said, ah, ah, you're not lobsterin' this winter? And I said, no. This is the third winter now that I've stayed ashore.(L:Um um) I went until I was 72 (L:Um) I went every winter, too(L:Um) and ah, then he says, Well, you, you don't miss it, do ya? And I said yes I do. I turn my short wave on and I listen days that the other boats are out there and think well, now I ought to be out there too. (L:Yuh, ha ha,) And then I think well how lucky it is that I don't have to be out there,(L:Laughs) And ah, ah, ah, I said that it's a free life, I guess that's why anyone likes it, and ah, but I said you've got to ah, if you take too much time off, ah, you don't get anywhere(L:Umum) And i says, says now there's one man that died at the age of 50, but ah, apparently, I thought he was a well man but he died of a heart attack.(L:Um um) And ah, they performed an autopsy and they ah,

*Portland
Bar Harbor
Pittsfield*

they said that his body was ah, every part of his body was the age of way in the 70's. In other words, heah, he had sort of disappated his life away, (L:Yuh) Ah, he played around and drank too much and ah, but I mentioned the fact that my wife and daughter-in-law met him ah, this had happened a good many, quite a good few years ago now, (L:Um um) But they met him coming out of the drug store, and he was going in and the beautiful Fall morning, he couldn't have found a better day, (L:Yeah) and the lobsters were, it was a good season at that time. (L:Yeah) And ah, he made an excuse to, he knew that all the other boats were out of the harbor, he says, "Well, you know,, I'm takin' the day off. I'm takin' it easy," he says, "My traps are out there earning me money ." I explained to this young fellow, I says, "Yes," but when he went out to haul 'em the next day, he found the money in the traps, but if he'd gone the day before, he'd found the money too. In other words, he's just lost one day. (L:That's right) And I said he died, he didn't have anything, he, he had bills left for his widow to take care of, (L:Um) Because he lived that kind of life and still it didn't make a long life for him because, he, ah, sort of ah, well, burned the candle at both ends, (L:Yuh, yuh) and the young fellow says, well, you know, I'm from Bar Harbor and he says m I run, I run a string of beaver traps, and he says there are two other fellows over there and they tend the traps every weekend and he says I go out the nights with a flash light add I tend mine three or four times a week. (L:Um um) He says, one, one of the fellows, he says, has got more traps out than I have, he says, he's caught three beaver this winter, he says, he's caught four beaver, (L:um um) and the other boys caught three beaver, he says I've caught eleven (L:Ho, ho, ho) and he says one trap has caught me four beaver, (L:Um um) and he says if I only had tended it once a week, I wouldn't have got the four beaver out of that trapa

L:Right, that's right, leave one in there filling it up for the week,

C:Yuh, (L:Yuh yuh)

L:Oh, it's industry that pays, they say, Well in themorning, ah, I've never been lobsterin' ah, never been out with man, but ah like when we go down to the mooring. I suppose you have to get your bait ready.

C:We do all that the night before. (L:You do that) We're, we're all, already even if we work way agter dark, we have al- everything prepared for the next morning when we start out, (L:Uh uh)

L:Perhaps you could tell me how that goes?

C:Well, ah, we use ah, ah, in this harbor, oh, right around this section, we use ah, ah, the ah, cuttings, we call it from that ah, from the sardine, the herring, see (L:Yuh) the refuse from the sardine.

L:The chum? Is that what you call it?

C:No, ah no, we don't use chum. Ah that doesn't ah, ah, no now let me see now, ah, they don't make chum any more. I'm trying to think. (L:Uh uh) ah, they cut the fish now, they cut them raw. (L:Um um) Ah maybe Underwood's is this factory here in Mckinley I guess still make chum (L:Yuh) Bur we never did care too much for that since the old days when, when Underwood fried their fish, in ah, ah, (L:Soy oil?) what kind of oil was it?

L:Soy bean oil.

C:No that's what they use now, and the herring, I mean the lobster don't like it. (L:Ah) They use ah, they use ah, would it be cotton seed, I was going to say linseed,

Bar Harbor

but it twouldn't, it would be, it'd be ah,... anyway it would be. And ah, then ah, the soy bean came and that ah, sort of makes sort of a blubbery, it isn't, it doesn't apparently have the tollng qualities (L:Um um) and ah, the lobsters never liked it, so well, (L:Um) now with this new management, they ah, they cut their fish now. (L:Um um) pretty much. So it's just a matter of ah, junks of herring or whole herring. Ah herring is getting so scarce on the coast now, that you hardly ever buy a whole one anymore. (L:Umum) And other harbors , they use ah, ah, use ah, fish skeletons all together. When their near ah, a fish processin' plant, they use the, the racks, they call 'em.

L:The racks?

C:String those on, (L:Yuh, the heads?) It's all just a matter of ah, now, I was in ah, I was in Nova Scotia for a couple of days this early summer, and ah, just ah, to talk to the dealer at Digby and he wanted to know what we use for bait. And I told him. And he says well, you know, its odd but he says, there's three sections right around this area, not too, too far apart, and he says, on section , he says, right here, they want herring.(L:Yuh) and he says not too far away, they want mackerel. And he said ah, just beyond that they want flounder.

L:Well, I'll be

C:That's their , that's their best bait,(L:Yuh) and I says well, (L:Huh) and the days ah, are a of flounders are gone here.(L:Um um) completely (L:Yes) ah-

L:I remember catching 'em when I was a boy, but you can't find one now, yuh.

C:But ah, down there, he says oh, you just go drag anywhere around the harbor here, oh, in there, of course, days around here they used to spear them, go in the cove anywhere, and spear them, you know,(L:Uh uh) and they've gone completely.

L:Yuh, ah huh-nothing but sculpine (C:Um) Well, ah, sir, in the morning , you, you, you, go right down and get on , on your boat, and go right on out to your traps.

C:Yes, ah, plan on, on the days , oh of course, ah, June or July when the days are long , you don't go out before ah, the sun gets up , but ah, any time when the fishing is good, like ah, well, there's ah, there's ah, season starts about, oh perhaps the first of April, 'til the first of June. It's a good spring fishing.(L:Yuh) Middle of April or the first of June. And then ah, dwindles down to poor summer fishing and then after the new shells come out, in August or when ever, why it picks up to ah, good fall fishing. The Fall's the best of all.(L:Um um) And of course, the days are startin' to even shorten then and ah, everybody's out just as soon as they can see their lobster buoy.(L:Um um) that means they leave before dark. (L:Yuh) while it's still dark, yeah,

L:While it's still dark - before it's light?

C:Yeah, before it's light.

L:Where, where were your fishing grounds?

Well, I ah, I go out in the area , out beyond ah, Gott;s and ah black,(L:Um) and out through between ah, Long Island and Duck Island, off ah, when I go into the deep water, off toward Mount Dessert Rock, about half way,(L:Huh uh) to Mount Desert Rock.

L:That's in the winter time?

Mt. Dessert Rock

*Digby
Gott's Island
Long Island
Duck Island*

C: Yeah, yuh. Of course, when they ah, when the lobster are on the shore, you, you, have your choice. Ah, you, you can put them anywhere you want, .Ah, ah, there, there's always been a little , little feud, not too much, not too bad in this, in this section. But in some places they, think well, ah, you're supposed to stay in they call it, your own territory -not going into somebody elses territory. But (L:Ah huh) that ah, your license, you buy a license and it doesn't tell you what territory to go in. (L:Uh uh) so you go where you ah, where you want. (L:UH uh) But sometimes ah, it will be a hot head that will start a war as we call it, by ah, cutting a man's rope and tying great long horse knots , we call it [Laughing] (L:uh uh) just for , you know, but ah,-

L: Is there any particularly (C: Particular bunches-?) Are the Long Islanders that tend to be that way?

C: Long Islanders got a good bunch of fishermen. I don't ah, I don't fish near them (L:Um um) but I've, I've never heard any complaints. Ah, so , I will say that they're as good a bunch of fishermen that you'll find anywhere around, (L:Um um) yuh.

L: Oh, ah, I can remember hearing about soem time back- a real war- huh, or something this , this came down to me through my father , I don't remember, (C: Oh, yuh) some years ago.

C: Well, I don't know, there have been, there have been wars , there have been trap wars on and along when I was a boy, when I was a boy, ah, now my father was a great eh, bird hunter -sea bird. And ah, that's when ah, before so many gasoline engines scared the birds way off (L:Um um) so and they, you know, come in around the shores and set, (L:Yuh) so and they'd go gunning for them with their decoys and I recall that ah, ah, that was about the time that, oh I don't know, I probably was 15 or 16 years of age and ah, he ah, he took me with him ah, there was ahmofour in the party, I think, . And we went to Isle au Haut, ah, and that was , that was always a good sport for bird flying by, you know. (L:Um) and ah, being outside, Island and he ah, (L:UH) he and his cousins , man the same age, ah, they went ashore to visit-that was in Head Harbor on the south end of the island.. They went ashore, they visited this old man, his name was Grant and I was ah, and this Grant , they said, had shot a man, they had as a war some years before that and ah, he shot a , shot a fisherman, killed him. And ah, I was impressionable age of course, and (L:Yuh) and ah, I can see the old man sitting there in the kitchen huddled around the fire and he was , oh, I don't know probably he might have been even 80 years old. But he had this ah, gray beard and all you could see was his eyes you know, [Laughing] (L:Yes, yes) Showing out. And ah, I kept thinking, they were talking with him, cause they knowed him from other times that they'd been up there, you know, (L:Yuh) seem like people knew more, more people then than they do now. Now they're too busy to get acquainted. (L:UH UH) And ah, but I kept , ah, eyeing him up and thinking , you know, would he do a thing like that? Would he deliberately shoot a man? He claimed he was poaching and all, you know, (L:Uh uh) and all this , he tried to drive him away anyway and (L:Oh) he was outside [Laughs]

L: Yuh, it is funny. I oh- I have a similar memory that a fellow named , I think his name is Butler, ah, lived up there in Indian Point. And had been convicted for killing somebody with an axe. And had been paroled out of prison and had been living there in his house, up there next to Vernon Lunt, my uncle, up there almost [UNINTELLIGIBLE] where the road goes by his house , . Well, anyway, if, if you go out early in the morning, like that , how long would it be , before you finish up your traps? Say ah-

C: Oh ah, you put in , in the good fishing , ah, some of the men, some of the ah, ah, some of the tough fellows, they must put in ah, as many as 14 actual hours of work, you know, on the ah, (L: On the boat?) On their , on the boat.

Isle au Haut
Head Harbor
Indian Point

have to take the boat aboard and take care of the lobsters when they get in, take the bait on board before they go home, So they're putting 15 ah, 16 hours of of real-

L:If they come back at 6:00 at night, they left at 6 in the ~~morning~~ and came back at 6:00 at night? (C:Oh, yes) and then, where would they go, right to the lobster dealers and car up their (C:Yuh) their catch? And then , then they go over to Under-woods and get their bait?

C:Yuh, ah now, the dealers get their bait for them. The dealers have it come by the truck loads and ah,(L:Yuh) and put it right in their bait shed, so ah, ah, they're getting the bait is only just d~~ipping~~ ti up in dishes and putting it on board. (L:Uh uh) makes it a little bit easier that way.

L:Do you carry a tub? (C:Yuh) right on board? (C:Yuh) Do, do you put it in ah, oh I was just wondering, ah, no,-I've seen these little bait bags, (C:Yes, ah) do you do you bag it up (C:Yup, yup)

C:Ah, some ah, that's the way, they speed things up now. Now some ah, some hire boys to do it , fill up their bait bags, (L:Yuh) And while they're out , they have an extra set of bait bags and the boys , after school, ah, during the summer, when they're not in school,(L:Um um) They fill up ah, ah, a whole day's supply so that the man when he's lobsterin', he just reaches down into his dish and picks up a bag and he doesn't have to bother to, ah, you know, stuff ~~w~~em as he goes along.

L:Yuh, do you, is that tied inside the trap or is ti just dumped in?

C:Yuh, ah, it's tied , it's its' in the bag and the pucker string,(L:Yuh) that puckers it up add then they tie it around the (L:Uh uh) around the guy line (L:Yuh)
CAT ENTERS THE ROOM Hello cat.

L: Laughs Oh, he's a great cat. He's very interested about this, it's going around and around Laughs (C: Curious) He's very curious, I think he's a lovely thing. Well that's that's a long days work, isn't it? ummm.

C:Ah, yes, my, my, day generally runs ah, oh, I'll say, 10 hours , I there, th- th- there isn't a day that ah, will be less than 10 hours- sometimes I put in 12 hours a day but (L:Um um) they say they , the real drivers, the young, young blooded fellows, they put in, ah, ~~m~~uch longer day. (L:Um um) much longer.

L:In the winter time, do you , do you ah, spend a lot of time building new traps?

C:Well, ah, ah, we build our own so, it takes ah, it takes quite a lot of time to build em up. And ah, it all depends on how, how the storms use you and how many you put in the water ah, so now ah, my sons is building, he built , ah, a 100 last winter and he's building a hundred this winter. Ah, some of the fellows probably build even 150. (L:Yuh) and they just do it days when they're ashore,(L:Umm) there's quite alot of days in the winter time that you're ashore , too, but ah , ah, some ah, some hire, hire somebody to build 'em, hire somebody to knit their heads ah, but there there again , it just ah, the man. If he wants to have more free time when he's ashore , he hires it done,(L:Um) and takes it out of his income tax and the man that doesn't want to, ah, forces it so hard on the water , will force it a little harder in the winter, and (L:Um um) and save a few dollars that way. (L:Yeah) it's ah, just, just the man himself, how he feels.

L:One way or the other. Well, I notice a lot in the winter time, there's a lot of, alot of men go out in pairs , in one boat.

C:Well, they don't in this harbor- that's odd, to do, but most , most every harbor

on the coast, I'll say, they go , they, they carry that's an expression I never heard until , ah, some time ago, a stern man. (L:LAUGHS,] A stern man) Yuh, it's what they call a stern man, the one that handles the ah, the second, what I've always heard it called , the second man, but (L:Uh huh) this ah, ah, lobster buyer up in ah, ah, Booth Bay Harbor , ah, came to call on me last ah Spring and I hadn't seen him for about 20 years , He used to have my canned lobsters and then he sort of broke away and he came back and , and I was talking with him. And then he wanted to know if I carried a stern man and I ah, (L:LAUGHS] I couldn't think what he meant. I said well, what do you mean? He says , well, ah, up home , he says, they all carry a stern man, and, and, then I tumbled to what he meant. (L:Yuh) And I says no, we still go in the single here. (L:Yuh) and he says well, they have a system up there, they have, ah ah, 600 traps (L:Um) and they put them two on a warp (L:Oh yea) and they haul half of them each day, that means three hundred , ah, 300 that's 150 bouys, (L:Yuh) that they pick up (L:Um um) and the stern man he says, they handle them so much faster , he says, they're, they're through the day by 2:00 and then they take off and enjoy themselves for the rest of the day. (LAUGHTER] And I says, well, that's a good idea but I never , I never got to it, and I says, I'm too old to start now. (L:Yeah, yeah) But the general rule is ah, of fishermen , is so independent that, ah, if he ah, you got ah , you got to make it worth a man's while to go with ya, of course and if you pay by the day , and then you don't ah, get out, why the man's pay is going on, (L:Yuh) If you pay on a share basis , why ah, that's really the only way, I guess, to do it. And then, the man has some incentive to, to be around , But otherwise, ah, ah, he'll say well, I'm going to leave the harbor at 5:00 tomorrow morning and 5:00 comes and your man doesn't show up and you don't know if he's going to come at all (L:Yuh) and ah, maybe he's overslept, or maybe he's out late as- last night. (L:Sure, you can't find him) and hasn't got home yet,

(LAUGHTER]

L:Or can't find his way down to, to the wharf. (C:Yeah) yuh, there's got to be some there's got to be an incentive way to it, that's for sure. Well, umm, what was I going to ask you-Oh, did they ever use the term, Coolie, around?

Booth Bay Harbor

C:Coolie?

L:Yuh

C:Like you mean, the Chinese Coolie on the (L:Yuh yuh) ah, what , what would they use that word-

L:Oh, I heard that , heard the idea of a , of a lobstermen having the what, usually the term, Coolie, for , I guess it would be the boys that fill up his bait bags and this kind of thing.

C:I've never had it, never heard that word around here, (L:No)no (L:Ah huh) no.

L:No, I've heard this from somebody who wasn't a lobsterman, see?

C:Yuh, well, ah, ah, it hasn't been too many years that, that anybody even, even hired their bait bags filled. I'll say right around this area, it's just- it's just the young fellows have come in , the last years and ah, they sort of ah, brought a lot of new ideas with 'em. Ah, the banks have been very liberal with their loans, (L:um um) and ah, of course, the dealers to a certain extent are liberal because the more lobsters they buy, the bigger their profit is at \$.10 a pound , that's about what their turn over is, (L:YUH) and ah, if they've got extra dollars, why they'll, they'll fit out a fisherman , ah, partly fit hom out anyway , but the banks as I say have been very liberal and a young fellow comes in and ah, it's all borrowed

money and ah, he gambles the other fellow's money and ah, he will ah, he ah, doesn't even build his own lobster traps in the winter, he hires it built because it's just a question of money. And ha, they're doing alright at it, (L:Yuh, they're right) but ah, they haven't gone through the hard years that, that I've gone through (L:Yuh) and I hope they never do because if they do, why ah, unless they've paid up some of their debts, why they're going to be looking for the stern man a job.

LAUGHTER

L:Yuh, yuh They're going out for wages.

C:Yuh, because they ah, ah, they put in diesel motors, they have a snowmobile, they have whatever is going, they don't own it, (L:Yuh) but ah, they're making the payments on it, In the case of the ah, ah, we'll say the case of the house insurance, and the car insurance, they pay in installments and I heard my son, of course he's in that business. (L:Yuh) and he laughs and he says I went to this house and the woman says ah, "You're hading me, you're handing us another policy" and I says, "I'm just making the last payments on last years" LAUGHTER He syas and I told her that ah, that probably things were tightening up, there might be a different ah, different' from now on. He syas, it's got to be, he says ah, ah, when you ah, he says they're cutting us down on our premiums (L:Yuh) so that ah, ah, that if we have to, if we carry big accounts ah, or a lot of small ones, and we need ah, money, we go to the bank and we hire money for and leave to pay on a short term, I think he said nine percent and he says we're only getting 8% from out, from our deals, (L:Um um) and he says it's no use to run a business that way. (L:No) So ah, and ah, so he says that ah, ah, most of the companies now, that ah, working out where they ah, they charge are going to charge, ah, ah, interest on, you know, on over due accounts. They give you, well, I don't know what I, I'd say 30 days I'm just ah, using that for a figure but they, they give you so long a time, after that, why I there will be an interest charge added on (L:Um um um um) carrying- carrying charge.

L:Yup, Looks like somebody, hooks, hooks rugs.

L: END OF INTERVIEW WITH CLARENCE HARDING