

Interviewee Name: Clinton Beal

Project/Collection Title: Jonesport Historical Society

Interviewer(s) Name(s) and Affiliation: Charlie Alley (interviewer), Ray Beal (interviewer), and Bill Plaskon (camera)

Interview Location: Home of Clinton Beal on Beal's Island

Date of Interview: February 9, 2006

Interview Description: In this interview, Clinton Beal talks about his childhood and schooling on Beal's island and jobs in the town. He describes how he and his friend tried to get a job with the Coast Guard and then about his work trawling for hake. He goes on to tell a story about going across the island to see his future wife in the winter and a boat he built in high school. Clinton tells a story about working with Riley Beal, building wooden boats. He tells a story about winding his pant leg while he was trying to drill the shaft hole in a boat and then how he went on to start his own boat-building business with his son Ray. Ray and Clinton talk about a structure Ray built with Jake, Jared, Uncle Shirley, and Ennis on the edge of a hill. He talks about his relationship with Priscilla and Douglas Williams and his work as their caretaker on Head Harbor Island. They go on to describe logging on Machias River and Clinton's father's experience fishing from schooners.

Keywords: Factories, trawling, hake, coast guard, Schoodic bridge, Machias Seal Island, hake, bait, Head Harbor, wooden boats, logging, Machias River, sea anchor, schooner,

Collection Description: Audio/Video interviews from The Jonesport Historical Society, transcribed by the Mapping Oceans Stories (College of the Atlantic) class in Fall 2020.

Citation: Beal, Clinton/Ray The Jonesport Historical Society Oral History Interview, Transcribed by Mapping Oceans Stories 2020 class in collaboration with The First Coast, (February 9, 2006), by Charlie Alley and Bill Plaskon, # pages, Maine Sound and Story. Online: Insert URL (Last Accessed: Insert Date).

Transcribed By: Sil Kiewiet de Jonge and Tess Moore

CA: Charlie Alley

BP: Bill Plaskon

CB: Clinton Beal

RB: Ray Beal

[Start of Track 1]
[00:00:00]

CA: Okay. We are in the home of Clinton Beal of Beals Island. The date is February 9, 2006. Would you give your name and when you was born and your wife's name and when she was born?

CB: Yes, my name is Clinton Beal. Do you want me to put the L in?

CA: Whichever way you'd rather do it, Clinton.

CB: I was born April the 15th, 1923. My wife Lottie (Evelyn?) Alley Beal was born April the 17th, 1924.

CA: [0:01:00] Okay. Do you want to give your father's and mother?

CB: My father's name was George Franklin Beal.

CA: Do you know when he was born? If you don't, it's alright.

CB: He was born 1883.

CA: And your mother's name?

CB: My mother's name was Emma Sabrina Woodward Beal, and then she married a Kelley after my father died.

CA: She was born in 1892, right?

CB: 1892.

CA: Do you want to give your wife's parents' names?

CB: My wife's parents was Edmund Leroy Alley, and her mother was Martha Octavia Crowley Alley.

CA: [0:02:00] Octavia?

CB: Octavia Crowley Alley ...

CA: Where were you born?

CB: I was born in the town of Jonesport, but it was on Beals Island.

CA: You was born before 1925. Okay. What house were you born in?

CB: I was born in a house that was just across the road but had been moved over on this side of the road, and it's part of Dana's house

CA: Oh, it's part of Dana's house.

CB: That's what Dana built [inaudible]. They lived in it when they was first married, and he built that on now after they were married. It was just across the road from where I live now.

CA: [0:03:02] Now, growing up, where did you go to school?

CB: Went to school on Beals.

CA: Now, was it the schoolhouse that was –?

CB: Schoolhouse that was tore down. It included all the grades through high school. To begin with, the high school went to Jonesport, and then after 1925, when they separated from Jonesport, they built a high school – had a high school on Beals. Of course, at the time that I was going –

CA: The high school was on the island.

CB: The high school was on the island.

CA: Yeah. Now, how has Beals –? Has it changed a lot since you was growing up?

CB: [0:04:00] Yes, of course, you don't notice it as much because you live in it, but if you had been here back in the '30s and '20s and had gone away and then come back, now you would see a lot of difference in what you notice while you're living right in it, but I see a lot of difference.

CA: It's probably a lot like Jonesport is.

CB: About the same thing.

CA: There seems to be a lot more going on when I was younger than there is now.

CB: Yeah, about the same thing.

CA: You could get a job a lot easier when I was younger than I think you can now. There's not many businesses hiring people.

CB: See, there was three factories that was running in Jonesport. In the summertime, they were going steady. In the winter, [inaudible] factory took clams, and people were working there, and people was [inaudible] the clams, fixing the clams, [inaudible] take them there, and they would can them there.

CA: [0:05:05] Underwood's was almost a full-time job if you had Underwood's. That was one of the few. But that was it.

CB: But there never was that much while I was growing up that was done here on the island as far as – they did have one smokehouse. Uncle [inaudible] had a smokehouse, and they used to string herring there and smoke them. But they didn't last very long.

CA: Now, where did he have his smokehouse?

CB: You know where Avery Jr. – Avery's father and mother, Osmond Kelley.

CA: Over that way.

CB: Yeah. Up on [inaudible] –

CA: The other side of – up on that hill there from where Jerome had his store.

CB: Yeah, that wharf [inaudible] – we called it a dock – run from the end of the cove right out to wherever bluff rocks went. It was all built up all along there. [inaudible] Henry, as far as I know, he owned the whole thing because his son (Destin?) had a machine shop there, and it was on the western end of it. He used to have a big derrick. He'd take boats and hike them out and put them right up on the wharf when he needed to work on them or do anything with propellers or shafts or –

CA: [0:06:43] He had a derrick big enough he could put boats in them?

CB: Oh, yes. He had [inaudible] hike the boat right out and put it up on the wharf.

CA: I never realized that there was one big as that around this area.

CB: Yep. I remember a little about him doing it, but they didn't do it much after I got – he moved away, and I think in Connecticut, he was a machinist. He worked there for years, and then when he retired, he come back home, and he didn't do anything. That's one reason why I wouldn't know – because he was gone. His boys didn't do anything like that.

CA: No, they all went lobstering.

CB: Yeah.

CA: Okay. After you got through school, what was your first jobs you did, Clinton?

CB: After I got through school, well, I went to – you mean high school?

CA: [0:07:47] Yeah.

CB: Well, I went to machine school after I got to high school.

CA: Where was that?

CB: That was in Dexter. Fay & Scott. I left that to join the Coast Guard. (Hermon?) Jr. and I went together, and we tried to join the Army when we were coming home from Dexter one weekend. We went into the place out in Bangor to sign up. The recruiting officer, a young fellow, said, "You fellows, you don't want to get into it now." He said, "You got plenty of time." We went back, and then we decided to see if we could join the Coast Guard. We took the train and went to Portland to join the Coast Guard, and (Hermon?) passed the physical exam, and I didn't pass on account of my arm; I had a broken arm, and it never –

CA: [0:09:06] Never healed properly?

CB: So they turned me down for that.

Ray Beal: It was your shoulder.

CA: Yeah.

CB: It broke right in here [points to upper left arm]. He went in the Coast Guard, and I come home. I went with my father lobster fishing at first [inaudible], and when I wasn't lobster fishing, digging clams.

CA: Now, did (Hermon?) Jr. go to the same school, the machine school?

CB: Yeah, same school. We went together. We hitchhiked back and forth together.

CA: Okay. You hitchhiked?

CB: Oh, yes. We went up on train as far as Newport, and they came with a truck and took us from Newport to Fay & Scott area [inaudible] school. Yeah, we hitchhiked. As far as I can remember, every weekend, we hitchhiked home just for a day and right back. [laughter]

CA: [0:10:13] We'll turn it off for just a second. [Recording paused.]

RB: What was the NYA [National Youth Administration]? Have you interviewed people and got the –?

CB: National –

RB: Was that one of the new –?

CB: It was one of the federal programs.

RB: Roosevelt.

CB: Of course, I was on that before I went to the school in Dexter.

CA: Okay. You got him on now?

Bill Plaskin: Yeah.

CB: At that time, we would try to find clams. We'd dig clams down there for [inaudible], and that was while I was in high school. We'd try and find some over on that beach over there.

CA: Not (Cummings'?) Beach?

CB: I guess that's what you call it.

CA: Between George Beals and the Middle Factory.

CB: Yeah.

CA: That's (Cummings'?) Beach.

BP: Why don't you introduce yourself, Ray?

RB: [0:11:14] I'm Ray Beal. I'm Clinton Beal's oldest son.

CB: Let's see. Did I answer your question? You wanted to know what I did when I first went into –

CA: Well, you told me. You're working up. That's progressing, right? You went to the school, and you come back and went clamming.

CB: Went with my father lobster fishing, and then handlining and trawling.

CA: Now, did you trawl for hake, or would you just –?

CB: We trawled for hake when hake was going, but we trawled – a lot of times what we'd do, we would probably go west [inaudible] –

CA: Schoodic Ridges, probably.

CB: Schoodic Ridges and that area. Some of the bottom – we would set out trawls on the edge of the bottom while we hand lined, then haul them back, and then wait for – then while we're waiting for the next slack, probably bait the trawls to reset them.

CA: [0:12:24] Now, did you leave your trawls out a long time, or did you bring them back every night? Every day you come back?

CB: Well, as far as I remember, most of the time, we brought them back then. But of course, when we trawled for hake, we'd used to leave them overnight. Whatever we trawled for hake was on that mud bottom [inaudible] –

CA: [inaudible] western mud?

CB: Yeah, this side of Petit Manan.

RB: Do you remember getting anything unusual other than hake on those trawls when you went out with grampy?

CB: The only thing mainly you got other than hake when you were trawling for hake would be skates or whatever you want to call them.

CA: Now, I never done much trawling for hake. They say if it's good haking, they'll float the trawl right up, and you can see them flapping on the water way ahead of you.

CB: What we call [inaudible] inwards [inaudible] bubble. They just like –

CA: They're flapping right ahead of you as you haul them. Now, is that what your father did mainly for a living was trawling or lobstering?

CB: [0:13:25] He did everything –

CA: Anything you could do –

CB: – anything you do to –

CA: – to make a living.

CB: – in the business – the way things was, each year, he'd build out twenty-five new traps. Mr. [inaudible] – of course, at that time, they was using that –

CA: Manila? Sisal?

CB: Sisal.

CA: That's not as good as manila.

CB: During the wartime, sisal was all you could get; you couldn't get manila.

CA: That won't go a year.

CB: No. Dad had [inaudible]. He knew [inaudible] trap – that was in the spring [that] he'd work on that. While he was trawling – now, he would trawl Downeast. The way he worked it – he knew where the fish would be –

CA: At certain times.

CB: – certain times and where to trawl for them and where to handline, down where John Beal caught all them fish that time, and he brought them up there.

CA: [0:14:29] Okay. From Libby Island, [inaudible] up towards the head?

CB: Well, that's where he used to trawl.

CA: Oh, he was trawling that bottom?

CB: He was trawling there.

CA: He didn't go offshore very far there. That's quite [inaudible]

CB: Well, that was in the spring, I think. But in the summer – go off Schoodic Bridges, and then he went from Schoodic Bridges to Machias Seal Island. But he knew the bottom like the back of his hand. He could run to it in the fog with nothing.

RB: This might be a good place to interject. The last conversation that I remember that I had with Avery Kelley, he mentioned Grampy Georgie because Grampy's nickname was Georgie [inaudible], and that's what Avery called him, Georgie [inaudible].

CA: Yeah, that's what I've heard him called. I asked [inaudible] why they call him [inaudible].

RB: He said in that conversation that Grampy Georgie was known locally as the highliner a lot of the time. I guess there were other people besides him, but he was quite frequently the highliner for the area.

CA: [0:15:38] What would be considered a good day trawling? How many pounds?

CB: Well, I don't really remember how much they'd catch. But, of course, they used to – before I went with them, they used to load the boat. One time, my brother Arnold was a young man. They went off on Grand Manan bank, and they loaded the boat, had the skiff on the stern, put fish in the skiff, and she was loaded down, so the water was right on the deck. Of course, when they got going, they started dressing the fish and –

CA: Lightening her up.

CB: – shifting them around [inaudible] bulkhead by the cabin was. They had a kickboard that was between [inaudible] engines, and they'd dress them and put them in that area. They would level the boat off and bring her up. So that's what they used to be able to do, but the time I got to go in with him, well, you weren't catching that kind of –

CA: [0:16:47] Didn't you used to get pretty good catches on that western mud hake, though?

CB: Oh, yeah. There you'd catch – yeah, it was good fishing there, but we weren't into as much. Some of them hired people to make [inaudible]

CA: Oh, yeah. I know.

CB: My father didn't like having [inaudible] baited trawl.

CA: Well, I understand.

CB: No, because he [was] pretty clever at setting trawls out and stuff like that. He didn't want a hook [to] drop down inside of the [inaudible] where the trawl's running out to pull all the trawl out [inaudible]

CA: And have a big snarl and get nothing.

CB: So he got to bait his own trawls. So he never hired anybody to bait trawls. So we didn't run anyway – probably ten times would be the most we'd ever run.

CA: That was fine here. [Recording paused.] That's a lot of baiting.

CB: Of course, a lot of time, what he did was – before I went with him, he would go trawling. He'd bring a couple tubs of trawl home. Of course, [inaudible] shore up here over the hill. He put a tub trawl on his back, hold it [inaudible] did it. He'd lug it up. Of course, we had a bunch of lights at that time. He'd take it down the cellar and (light?) down there, and he'd bait a couple tubs of trawls in the evening. So then he'd have them ready for the next day. Then he'd carry them back to shore, take them aboard the boat, and bait all the way out.

CA: [0:18:27] All the way going? Yeah.

CB: [inaudible] going.

RB: Was that in the *Iona*?

CB: Yes.

RB: [inaudible] got a half model of the *Iona*.

CA: That's the half [inaudible]

RB: No, no. But there's a model of the *Iona* out there. It's in the torpedo stand.

CB: Arnold made it.

CA: Arnold?

CB: Yeah. That was after he had a stroke.

RB: I don't know if you'd like – are you interested in seeing that half model [inaudible]?

CA: When we get done, I'm going to take some pictures of the boats. I'd like to see it then. Would that be okay?

RB: Yep.

CB: So I don't know if you want any more about –?

CA: Well, that's interesting. I don't know. I think that's interesting enough to talk about.

RB: Well, I got one question. What's a kickboard?

CA: [laughter]

CB: Well, it's just a lot of boards that [inaudible] them together, and they fit against the side of the boat [inaudible].

CA: You put some boards on the side of the boat, and you just put them – make a slot, and you put those boards in that slot, and that's just to hold it so the fish won't go one way or the other. You probably have two kickboards; you make a hole on the [inaudible].

RB: [0:19:31] On the sides?

CA: Yeah, from the sides – well, the boats were small.

RB: I know what he meant by the bulkhead because that's the front. That's going across the –

CA: Yeah, but the kickboard's usually – well, you can make them anywhere you want. They make kits, so they keep them separate – different storage compartments.

CB: Of course, that would be the more civilian way of doing it, but they weren't so concerned about parting them off and that kind of stuff. They had just one board; they weren't fastened together. And had it so it fit right across the boat all the way over each side and had pieces fastened on to hold it so it wouldn't push ahead and put the fish between the two kickboards. But they didn't have them divided the way you're talking about [inaudible].

CA: Well, some do, but these [inaudible] were small, most of them, I know just the way you say.

CB: Of course, it's only probably about eight-foot-and-a-half wide. Couldn't have been more than nine.

CA: [0:20:35] That was the size in those days.

CB: Yeah, I had experience with that. My father did a lot of work on that.

RB: Was that the first boat that you really worked on? You were seventeen?

CB: Yeah, that was first –

RB: Was that the boat that you cut the torpedo stern off and put a square stern on it?

CB: Yeah, before that, though, while I was – I did that while I was in high school, too. At that time, we had some tough winters. I went across the island to see my wife.

RB: She wasn't your wife then, though? [laughter]

CB: No, my girlfriend then. I went across the island to see her. I went probably around seven or eight o'clock. When I come back at ten o'clock, everything was froze over from here to Jonesport.

CA: What year was that probably?

CB: [0:21:31] When would it have been? '40. Probably around 1940, somewhere around then. That's not exact, but it's around that time. When I come back [at] ten o'clock, that was all frozen over. Next morning, my father [inaudible] and the ice started running in the reach. After that, she was down off of Sheep Island. We went on one – I guess it must have been a vacation or something anyway. I went with him. He went over and got her to bring it in. Well, [inaudible]. He took a tin can and put some gas in it to prime her. Started by putting a rope around the pulley, and somehow, the can got upset, and she started and caught fire. I just bailed the water right to her, put her out. After that, started right off [inaudible]. [laughter] We took her in there to [inaudible] Point and hauled her up. Hauling her up got her hull broken [inaudible]. Next spring, passed it up, and he brought her over here to Cranberry [inaudible] and put her up there on the beach. There was no boat shops around here at that time. Harold Gower was probably building boats, but nobody else, and there wasn't lumber you could get ahold of. So what lumber you'd get, you'd get from going onto the lumber yard. I went over and got a nice piece of pine, [laughter] clear pine. I made a new [inaudible] and fastened the front end, put it in there, and jacked it in place. It snapped in without a nail in it other than just nailing the front end of it.

RB: [0:23:40] Was that while you were still in high school?

CB: Yeah, and so the next thing – she was leaking, and she always leaked, ever since she was built. We decided to cut the stern off because torpedo sterns, the way they were built, that particular kind was – the head bowed [inaudible] around and fastened into the cleats that was heavy. Plank went right straight around. [inaudible] fastened into a piece that went down the middle. I knew it would be an awful job to try to repair that because it was starting to give out where it [inaudible] and bent. The way that it was fixed – it just had a piece of hard wood that was bent around that went between the plank, where the stern went round and the bottom come up [inaudible] space about an inch square that this piece fitted in there. They take that out and

caulk inside of it and put a piece back down there. So the wood was getting [inaudible]. So we decided to cut the stern off and make it right into a square. [laughter]

CA: [00:25:09] Square stern.

CB: Make it right into a square stern. We took some rope, [inaudible] rope, and made a turnbuckle around the backend, and twisted her up tight –

CA: To hold her in.

CB: – to hold her together and cut the stern off. I made a new stern for her. Slacked off the turnbuckle enough so it can get the stern back in because, of course, it tapered. I got that in there and tightened the turnbuckle up again, and nailed her in. That was the first work that I did on that boat. But after that, I did a lot of work on –

CA: That's where you got your start, working on your father's boat?

CB: That's where I did my beginning. Of course, in [inaudible] high school, I used to make models. But that was nothing to do with building; they were just models – model boats, model airplanes, that kind of stuff. But the next job was a big job. I put new logs, new [inaudible] new [inaudible] make a cone out of it. Bent some hood bows and put a hood on her.

CA: [0:26:34] You'd almost have been better off if you started from scratch and built a new one.

CB: Put the floor from the stern right to the bow. Of course, when he got it off, I [inaudible] I said, "That's the first time the boat had ever been – it didn't leak since [inaudible] had it." Or put a new [inaudible] in it, too. Put new [inaudible] all that stuff.

RB: Were you still in high school when you did all of that work?

CB: No, I was first married when I did that work on her because my father was seining with (Doug and Paul's) crew he was with, but he with not his oldest son but –

CA: Let's see. James?

CB: James. He was in James's crew, and they was [inaudible]. I did that work while he was gone – while they were gone seining. Put a different engine in. Had that all rigged up for him.

CA: [0:27:39] He wouldn't hardly know the boat when he got back, did he? You did all that while he was gone? [laughter]

CB: No, he probably wouldn't have. But boy, I'll tell you one thing; if I had known much about engines as I would now, she really would have gone. But she'd go so fast that she'd run away from the gas, and, of course, it would all do with the fuel pump – fuel pump wasn't pumping enough gas for her. But she really went. She really could [inaudible].

CA: Now, when did you start –? You just kept progressing, or how did you start building boats? What did you do from there on?

CB: Well, the next thing, I had a co-op on the end of the point there. I don't know what it was called, but I belonged to it. [laughter] But they wanted me to run lobsters from co-op point or [inaudible] Point over to Sawyer Cove, and they told me how much they would pay me a pound to deliver them. So I went down to Jonesboro. I don't know how I found out about it, but [inaudible] father had built a boat down there.

CA: [0:29:02] What was the father's name?

CB: I can't remember.

CA: Never could find out. She was a (Fish?).

CB: Oh, yes. It was (Fish?).

CA: But I can't find her father's name.

RB: [inaudible], you said?

CB: [inaudible] father. He had that boat down there, and I went down to see about getting it, and I bought it. All he had done was just – he built the hull. It wasn't finished inside, or no deck on it. [inaudible] So I brought it home, and I had that on the shore here and finished it up. Put floor beams in, laid the floor, put the deck in, and built the cabin [inaudible] on it. That was the first boat building like that that I did. [inaudible] and his father –

CA: [0:30:10] Riley?

CB: Riley was –
[00:30:12]

[End of Track 1. Start of Track 2]

CB: [00:00:00] – they was building boats somewhere. I think at that time – I know before that, they had built boats in the building down [inaudible] Henry had there to the dock, and whether they were still building there or not, I don't know. But they just walk back and forth right around the shore, right up through there and to wherever they was working. I guess that's how they saw the work that I was doing.

CA: They asked you to come work for them?

CB: Yeah, they asked me to come work for them. At that time, they were building boats down [inaudible] house. They had stripped it out and used that for a shop.

CA: Now, where was that?

CB: That was located –?

CA: Was that on [inaudible] Point here?

CB: Yeah, right down the road here about where Charles Peabody and his wife lived, right in that area. You know where the –?

CA: Not sure.

RB: [0:01:00] You mean Charles and Rebecca? Was her name Rebecca?

CB: That's where (Benny?) [inaudible] used to live down there

CA: Okay, I got some idea. Now was this [inaudible]? Was this Riley's boy?

CB: That's his youngest son.

CA: Okay. It was his house?

CB: His house was just east of them, where Charles and Rebecca lived

CA: Yeah, but I mean, that was [inaudible] house.

CB: Uncle [inaudible], yes. Well, [inaudible] tore it down and built a new one. They built a new one.

CA: When you started working with them, what did you build then?

CB: First, we built just lobster boats. Then we built, while I was there – they were building before, then I started helping – and I guess they decided that they didn't have enough room or something, and they got permission from the co-op. As far as I know, the co-op owned it then. They built a boat shop there, where the lobster pound is there – (Albert's?).

CA: [0:02:18] (Albert's?)? Okay.

CB: We built boats there. Then I got an order for a lobster smack, the *Arthur S. Woodward*, and we built that [inaudible].

RB: Was that the first one?

CB: That was the first one. I helped [inaudible] laying it down, making the molds, and all that kind of stuff.

RB: That would have been about 1946, '47 because I was – when it was launched, I was just a little –

CB: Well, you were a little boy. There is a picture of you somewhere. It's you and (Dana?) in the wintertime when we was over there –

RB: Building it?

CB: We had it so that you could see the whole boat; it was all planked, and the staging was round it.

CA: How big of planking do you use on those boats?

CB: About an inch and a half.

CA: [0:03:19] Inch and a half?

CB: Because it was – it may have been different thicknesses for different boats, but as I remember it, about an inch and a half. Now, that [inaudible] we were telling about the other [inaudible] –

CA: [inaudible]

CB: – top of it was planked with Southern pine; hard pine, we call it. The bottom was planked with oak.

CA: Oak?

CB: We did a lot of work on that. I was telling you the other day about –

CA: Is that the one that you did the hull for the shaft?

CB: No, that was the one I bored a hole for the shaft. That was one that I had to [inaudible] the (stair mount?) with just a stick of [wood], just a big piece of oak that [had] come right from the forest [laughter] or wherever.

RB: [0:04:24] Had the bark right on it?

CB: Had the bark on it. I had to (hue?) that. I guess you'd call it (hueing?) it. Well, anyway [inaudible] edge.

CA: [inaudible] edge.

CB: And made the stern right out with just the edge. Of course, when I got it down to where you could plane it, of course, I planed it. I cut the [inaudible] into shape [inaudible], fitted it together, bowed it together, cut the rabbit in it, and had it ready to go. That was a big stick [inaudible] big wood; that was heavy.

CA: I bet it was.

CB: Yeah, that was one of the first parts of the work that I did on it. From then on, I was [inaudible] and doing everything [inaudible] –

CA: Anything they wanted you to do.

CB: Yeah. [inaudible] time to get it overboard – before it was overboard, I did the wiring on it. It had a lot of wires, going to [inaudible] headlights and running lights and lights in the cab and lights in the pilot house and then the engine room [inaudible] everywhere. I run wires, and I hadn't hooked them up. Had the box in the pilot house and had the wires sticking out through there. Vernal said – "Buddy," he says, "if you can get them together, so they work, you're a magician." [laughter]

CA: [0:06:03] [laughter]

CB: But it wasn't any problem. It all worked alright. [inaudible]

CA: Now, what was the next big one they built over here?

CB: I don't know if it was [inaudible] *Sally*. I never kept [inaudible].

CA: Never kept [inaudible].

CB: Some people could tell you all that.

CA: [inaudible]

CB: But I don't pay any attention to it.

CA: They built the [inaudible] *Sally* here?

CB: Yes, [inaudible] *Sally*.

CA: And the [inaudible]?

CB: And the [inaudible]. And there was one other one.

CA: The (*Maine?*) *Queen*.

CB: Yep.

CA: I think the (*Maine?*) *Queen* was the last one, wasn't it?

CB: I think so. I think that was – the [inaudible] and the (*Maine?*) *Queen* was the two that I liked the best that we built.

RB: I like the name [inaudible]. It's a neat name. [laughter] How long did it take to build one, like the *Arthur S. Woodward*? How long did that take?

CB: I think about a year.

RB: About twelve months. How many people working?

CB: I don't know exactly, but I think at times it was probably six, seven people. I was so that I had to do the technical work, I guess, you'd call it. When something come up that needed to be special, [inaudible] give it to me to take care of. Of course, (Robin?), when he was sick, well, he turned his [inaudible] over to me [inaudible].

CA: [0:07:35] Now, you built the *Arthur Wood[ward]*. She was a wet smack.

CB: Yes.

CA: How wide was the plank on the bottom where you had the holes? Six or eight inches?

CB: I would say [inaudible] they would probably be eight inches.

CA: And how close would you have the holes to get the circulation? And how big?

CB: The holes [inaudible], I would say, were probably about six or eight inches apart.

CA: How big would they be? An inch, probably? Or bigger?

CB: Oh, about an inch and a half.

CA: Inch and a half. Pretty good size holes, then.

CB: They might not have been an inch and half; they might have been an inch.

CA: Well, the best you can remember. That's okay.

CB: As I remember it, it was somewhere around an inch and a half.

CA: Yeah, it's okay. Now, did you work for them —? Did you keep working for them right along?

CB: Yes, I worked for them for about ten years.

CA: Ten years?

CB: Not quite. And then I started working for the Williamses down to Head Harbor, a caretaker down there.

CA: [0:08:37] Now, did you ever work over in Jonesport for them? They moved over there west of the [inaudible] there [inaudible].

CB: No. I was still working for them when –

CA: Before they went over there?

CB: – [inaudible] went over there.

RB: When did Ernest Jr. start working for them? He was like your assistant or something.

CB: Yeah. Well, he started working, I think, when we was probably building the [inaudible] or the (*Maine?*) *Queen*. Anyway, he was working during that time. I used to [inaudible] –

RB: Near the end of your time that you were working for them? Is that what you mean?

CB: No. I still worked for them for a while after I built all the boats.

CA: Now, which boat was it that you –? Can you remember which one it was you had to drill the shaft hole –?

CB: I think it was the [inaudible]. I don't know that that's –

CA: You can tell the story if you want [inaudible].

CB: Well, we had built the boat, and Riley had the shaft log cut to fit for a boat [with a] two-inch shaft. It might have been a little bigger than two-inch. Anyway, when the shaft showed up, it was a three-inch shaft, and Riley, looking it over, and I was out there working. I'd been putting floor beams in and all that stuff. He come out with a [inaudible] he had made a hook out of a piece of galvanized quarter-inch [inaudible] a quarter [inaudible]. You know what I mean by quarter. You can get [inaudible] –

CA: [0:10:23] Yeah, I know quarter round, half round.

CB: – and quarter round. This was about quarter round.

CA: Quarter round. Okay, I understand.

CB: He'd bent that end of it like a hook, and he sharpened it on a [inaudible] wheel and grinder. He come out with that, and he says to me, "You have to hook that out so we can get that shaft in there." Well, I didn't hook very long before I knew it wasn't going to be hooked. I'd still be there hooking if I would take it out with that. So I went into shop, and I made a tool to – the way I made it – I took a piece of round galvanized iron, half-inch, galvanized iron long enough to go through the shaft and sawed out a piece that would just go through shaft log [inaudible] and fastened that on the front-end of it. In back of it, I'd made one that was the size of – so it'd be big

enough for the shaft and made a cutting tool out of a piece of [inaudible] ground that and made a cutting tool, [inaudible] on that ball while it was round. I took the – hooked a drill onto it, and drilled it out. When it was cut out, it was just smooth, clean right on through. So there were no problems with it, but I didn't know if I'd ever get it cut out or not, but [inaudible] knots and stuff [inaudible] and twist – it was a hard job to hold it in place sometimes.

CA: [0:12:15] If anyone had ever tried to drill a bigger hole from a smaller hole, they don't realize what a job it is, do they?

CB: They don't. No

CA: You have to be able to hold it so that it'll stay there, so you can get the [inaudible] back and forth you can.

CB: But, of course, having that piece on the front end [inaudible] –

CA: Yes, that held it.

CB: – made a bearing for it to hold it in place.

CA: That would hold it right where you want it to.

CB: So [inaudible] jumping up and down that way, but it would catch. If you hit a knot or an [inaudible] or something, it would catch on that. Of course, you had to be right on it all the time to see that it didn't. Of course, I almost got killed building that *Arthur S. Woodard*, putting the bulkhead in for that smack [inaudible]. I put them in. I put in [inaudible] bulkhead in, and [inaudible] 5/8 bolts we was using to bolt them together, and they was three-inch plank that we were using – old plank we're using to go across her. I had [inaudible] up above it [inaudible] timbers, and they were right above the bulkhead. Of course, I'd have to draw that bit out to clear the boring out to keep boring it. I bore it up, and I had the thing fastened on, so it would keep turning because I couldn't turn the switch and bore it at the same time because it was too much job [inaudible] switch on the whole time. I brought it up [inaudible] up to the top and tipped it so as the bit struck me right in here. Of course, the thing was turned – it was fastened on. The only way to stop it was to [inaudible] it off. You had to release a switch, and of course, the drill – half-inch drill wouldn't stop turning just through your switch.

CA: [0:14:25] No, you'd have to have something to stop it.

CB: I didn't know whether it was turned off or not, and it wound my pants – took the front right out of them and bore right down into my leg right here. So I went to go to Dr. (Young's?), and Dr. (Young?) sewed it up. He said, "You're lucky. If that just gone just a half an inch out of the way from where it did, you wouldn't even have lived to get out the boat."

CA: Bled to death.

CB: Yeah. So there's some danger in [inaudible].

CA: Yes, there is. [Recording paused.]]Now you say you were with him about ten years.

CB: Close to ten years

CA: Close, right around there. Then you started – you went down from [inaudible] worked for Priscilla down Head Harbor.

CB: [0:15:25] Yes.

CA: And started your own boat building business then?

CB: I started working for them in '54, and in 56, I built my shop and the *White Stallion*.

CA: What ever happened to White Stallion?

CB: Well, some kind of relation, I think, here. Young Edmund.

CA: [laughter]

RB: [laughter]

CA: Lord knows where she is now.

RB: (Merle?), I think, wasn't it?

CB: Yeah, (Merle?). There's probably nothing left of [inaudible] by now.

RB: Maybe not, but he renamed her (*Alley's Way?*). He renamed it (*Alley's Way?*).

CB: [inaudible] hauled up down –

RB: Cranberry Cove.

CB: – Cranberry Cove. I had built the (*Eight Caliber?*) – [inaudible] Calvin, and I decided, "Well, I couldn't just let it lay there on the bank." I tried to give it to Dana. Dana didn't want it. He wanted to build it, and he wanted his own boat [inaudible] the way he wanted it. I tried to give it to Ray. He said he wasn't able to take care of it. So I said, "Well, I'll fix it up and get it overboard." I just started working on it, and I went down after I got back from work and heard this noise [inaudible] scratching [inaudible]. Went all around. There was young Edmund in there digging around amongst the timbers [inaudible]. He said, "You sell this boat to me?" I said, "No, I don't want to sell the boat." He said, "Well, I'd like to have her." Well, he come back. He said, "You sure you won't sell this boat to me? I have her; I'll buy the (*Eight Caliber?*)."

Well, he only wanted it for himself. Of course, [inaudible]. He knew what he was doing.

CA: [0:17:19] Oh, yes.

CB: Well, I figured I'd put a price on it enough. Back then, the boat wasn't worth anything anyway. So I figured if I put enough price on it, he wouldn't bother. Of course, it wasn't much money compared to what you'd pay now. I said, "Well, if you want it, you can have it for five thousand dollars." [laughter] Then I was building – by then, building boats for two thousand dollars. [laughter] He bit right onto it. He got (Shirley?) to help him get it painted up, fixed up, got an [inaudible] and put a –

RB: Uncle (Shirley?)?

CB: Yep. They put a V6 Buick – Chevrolet or Buick? I don't know if there's any difference in them or not. Anyway, [inaudible] old Buick – V6 anyway. Put that in there for an engine. She went right on good with that little V6.

[Recording paused.]

CA: [0:18:22] After you started your own shop there, what year was that probably?

CB: That was in –

RB: [inaudible]

CB: – built the shop in '56.

RB: No, it'd have to be the fall of '55 because you launched the *White Stallion* –

CB: In '56.

RB: – in '56.

CB: Well, yes. That's right.

RB: So you started building the boat shop in the fall of '55.

CB: Boat shop in '55 [inaudible] *White Stallion* and launched it in '56. Then I built the – that's how I built three or four outboard boats.

RB: I think it was four.

CB: Well, nobody expected anybody to have me build a boat for them anyway.

CA: Why is that?

CB: Well, I don't know. [inaudible] talking to me one time, and he said, "Well, you might get a (tent?) to build some skiffs." I thought that was quite encouraging.

CA: [0:19:22] Yeah, I'd say so.

CB: But I really – the main thing was I wanted to build my own boat. I didn't have any place to build it. So I built the shop. I figured if things worked out so that I had a chance to build a boat, I'd build them. So then I started getting – after I built those outboard boats, I got some orders for up around (Spruce Head?). I started building boats then. I had a crew to help me build the boats. Ernest Jr. was my number one man.

CA: Ernest started with you?

CB: Oh, yeah.

CA: So he learned from you. Well, no, he learned from Riley, too.

CB: Yeah, because I showed up a lot of things while I was working there.

CA: Oh, yeah.

CB: He said that I taught him all he knew. [laughter]

CA: Yeah, well, he'd done alright.

CB: One fellow said – this (Perinton?) man –

CA: [0:20:25] John?

CB: John (Perinton?) had a boat built over there, and (Ernie?) said that I taught him all he knew, but John got it kind of twisted up. He said, "Well, if you taught him all you knew, then he knows more than you do." [laughter] I didn't say anything to him. If he wanted to think that way, fine with me.

CA: Now, did you build [inaudible] way around or just the winters?

CB: No, just started late in the fall or winter and built until spring. By the time spring comes, we was working down Head Harbor. One season that we built, we built seven boats from the time we started in –

RB: October.

CB: – October until – I think it was May.

CA: That's a lot in the winter

RB: [0:21:25] You had a crew of maybe – what was it altogether?

CB: About five.

RB: Five besides? Six with you.

CB: Five all together.

CA: Most of the builders built one and possibly two in the winter. That's mostly what they wanted to build.

CB: Yeah. Well, we had one going out every month because we didn't build a boat a month. But the way it worked out, there was one going out every month.

CA: Now, your boat's a lot smaller than the boats now. That was the style then.

CB: At that time, it was ten feet and a half wide, and thirty-six to –

RB: You did a lot of thirty-fours.

CB: [inaudible] forty-four. But most of them was anywhere from thirty-six to thirty-four. But most of them were about thirty-four.

RB: Yeah, quite a few of them.

CB: [inaudible] thirty-four. They're about ten feet and a half wide.

CA: About how many boats did you build all together?

CB: [0:22:27] I don't know. Ray could probably tell you better than I can because my figures ain't too good on it. I never kept any track.

CA: Never kept any track

RB: My guess is – we don't have any hard evidence, but it's somewhere between sixty and seventy, I think, including those four outboard boats.

CA: For small boats, yeah.

RB: Yeah, including the small ones.

CA: Yeah, that's okay.

RB: Between sixty and seventy boats altogether.

CA: That's quite a few.

RB: [laughter] Yeah, that is quite a few because he did most of that from '56 to – basically, your crew was done by '68, right?

CB: Yes. What happened – I got what they called Ménière disease – fluid in your inner ear. I had orders for a boat, and the [inaudible] had let go in the front end of the shop. I had it dug out. When I got back from [inaudible], I'd work on the shop [inaudible] ready to work, and I got outside of about the Eastern lighthouse and hauling. I couldn't [inaudible] shore. Just glanced to shore to see where I was. After [inaudible], I'd get dizzy if I concentrated on anything [inaudible] just getting dizzy. So I come home from hauling and went down there – had bailed it out because it had rained and filled that trench full of water [inaudible] I left my [inaudible] right on, went down, and the bailed the thing out with it that way until you couldn't hardly stand up; you were so dizzy. And put that [inaudible] and got it in there. I couldn't stand the sound. The noise bothered me. It really [inaudible]. I don't know what it did to my hands. So I [inaudible] until after [inaudible] shore. So I had that boat to build, but I couldn't stand to have anybody pounding, working. I'd do it myself, but – so I knew it was going to be a lot of noise. Other than what I was making, I couldn't stand it. So I had to let the crew go [inaudible] a boat that I [inaudible] right there and was [inaudible]. So I built that alone –

RB: [0:25:18] This one.

CB: – after that year. Well, when I was working on it, if I got down under the bottom of the boat to work, I'd have to lay there until the dizziness would go away, enough so that I could see the work. Then, when I'd get up, I'd have to lay against the side of the boat until the dizziness would go away so that I could get around to work.

RB: I don't know if you want to hold it up right there. We'll get to that next.

CB: That was the last of building boats for anyone.

CA: Yeah, other than your family.

CB: Yes.

CA: What was the last boat you built? The (*Little Darling?*)?

CB: The (*Little Darling?*).

RB: Well, what about the (*Gwenevieve?*), the skiff?

CB: Oh. [laughter] I guess that'd be counted as a boat.

RB: It's a boat. What is she? Ten feet? Is she ten feet?

CB: Yeah, ten feet long.

RB: [0:26:19] The only boat he ever built was clinker-built lapstrake. He never built a lapstrake boat. What was it? 2003? When did you do that?

CB: I did it in 2001. It was after I had my knees operated on.

RB: It would have to have been at least 2002 or 2003 because it couldn't have been 2001; that was the year it had it done. You didn't do it the same year, did you?

CB: Yeah.

RB: I don't think you did it the same year.

CB: Well, then in 2002. I don't know.

RB: 2002 or 2003, one or the other.

CB: Well, it wasn't 2003.

RB: Well, then it was 2002.

CB: I was still recuperating from my knee operation when I was working on it.

RB: Well, it was probably 2002 then.

CA: Who influenced you the most in building boats?

CB: Oh, I don't know. I think Harold Gower influenced me the most.

CA: [0:27:19] Harold Gower.

CB: Because when I was in high school, I used to make visits there quite often. I used to visit when Riley and (Damien?) were building boats up there near Charlie's place and where they were building. Of course, when I went to school in Dexter, they wanted to know what I wanted to do. I said, "Well, I'd like to build boats." They said, "Well, you ought to transfer up to" – in northern Maine, they had another school up there for building airplanes. He said, "You ought to transfer up there," but I didn't. So years afterward, when I was building boats, one of the head men from down that school come down to visit me – Mr. [inaudible]. He says, "Well, it seems you got done what you wanted to do."

CA: [0:28:26] That's right. [laughter] When you was building, that would be the – I don't know whether you'd call it the heyday, the best part of –? There was so many builders on the island then.

CB: Everybody was into building boats – in their backyards, anywhere.

CA: They did. But you got to give them credit, though. They done well for what schooling they'd had and everything to build as good boats as they built.

RB: I think at the heyday there, when you were still actively building, I think it was eleven boat builders right here on Beals. Plus, there was three – at least two or three in Jonesport.

CB: A lot more on the island [inaudible].

RB: I think it was eleven here, and whatever there was in Jonesport. So this Moosabec Reach had –

CA: There was a lot.

RB: – at least fourteen boat builders.

CB: Yeah, fourteen, fifteen boat builders in the area at that time.

CB: Well, I had some things that helped me. By going to that school in Dexter – because I took drafting and reading blueprints and that kind of stuff. Because, for the work that I was doing, I had to be able to read blueprints.

[Recording paused.]

CA: [0:29:39] – working for Priscilla Williams all this while, even though you was building boats?

CB: From '54. Yeah, building boats all the time.

CA: Now, what did that entail working for her?

CB: Well, when I first started working for her, the [inaudible] roof was in bad shape; the shingles were going, and they had started to shingle it. [inaudible] –
[00:30:12]

[End of Track 2. Start of Track 3]

CB: – [00:00:00] they quit with it about half-shingled, the building. That was the first job that I had to do was finish the shingling job on the roof. Then, other buildings, I'd half shingle them – some of them [inaudible] shingle twice, the roof. Some – the outside of them, especially the main building had southern [inaudible] had to be re-shingled. When Page's daughter had, I guess what they called, coming out.

RB: She was sixteen. It was her sixteenth birthday.

CB: She was sixteen. She wanted me to build a building for her, a split-level. It was right on the edge of the bank. So half of it was done under the bank, and half of it was on a level with the [inaudible] hill. So I had Ernest Jr. and Shirley Kelley. I don't know what Jake –

RB: [0:01:26] Jake helped. I think (Jared?) helped, too.

CB: Yeah, I don't know [inaudible].

RB: I think when you was building that, I think you had a crew of four people.

CB: Yeah, that's what it was.

RB: Jake, (Jared?), and Uncle Shirl.

CB: You know who Jared is.

CA: No, I don't. [laughter]

CB: Mr. Ennis Wright.

CA: I know Ennis, but I didn't know that –

CB: Ennis worked for me for quite a while. He was working at the time, yes. We went down then to get ready to build it because they wanted it for that summer. In March, we went down, and, of course, everything was froze. Swamp was frozen, and [inaudible] went up in back of [inaudible] and found some cedar posts. Of course, we had to do work on the main house before we could build a piece on it because it had settled out of shape, and had to level that up before we could start building it on. But [inaudible] up there [inaudible] to see the posts to put under the main building and under the new parts that we were going to build on, hauled that out on the ice, and put it into the skiff, and brought it up around. When we got ready for the posts, it was – under the part, we're going to build on, we just took [inaudible] and cut the [inaudible]. Then we could dig down below and touch the post.

RB: [0:03:02] You're talking about adding onto the main building –

CB: [inaudible]

RB: – the main camp.

CB: Yeah, I got lost. I got lost. No, we weren't building that.

RB: You built [inaudible].

CB: When we built that, it was March, and we did go in there and get the posts for that new [inaudible] we built on. Of course, that was afterward.

RB: You built Page's cottage first.

CB: Page's cottage was built first. We built that. We started early, but we didn't get the posts down there to Blackhead, towards Blackhead. But he got the posts there up to (Cedar Cove?). That was a hard place to build it because it was right on the edge of that hill, and the ledges are all slanted right towards the shore. We got it built for her. She had drawings [inaudible] she wanted it just a certain height and certain place. It had to be just lined up just right from the cottage. So they had a flagpole as a marker to go by. It's not where it is now, but it was over on – you probably remember where they used to have it.

CA: [0:04:24] I remember. I used to look in there to see if the flag [inaudible] – you could tell if she was down there or not because the flag would be up when she was there.

CB: That was the marker I had to go by from the cottage – how and where to build what we called the Page House. There was [inaudible]. I built new floats and new ramps and that kind of stuff a couple of times. I built at least two new floats and two new ramps [inaudible], and then we built that piece on for the new dining room onto the main cottage. That third time didn't have that many working. It was Ernest, Jr. – I know he was working, but I don't think Ennis was.

RB: No, I think it was just Ernest Jr., and Uncle Shirl helped probably.

CB: [0:05:24] I think that was all it was when we built that on. I got the lumber from [inaudible] interesting thing about the lumber for that. They had taken the logs up out of Machias River, and they saw that lumber come from that – and logs were taken up [inaudible] –

CA: You mean ones that had sunk to bottom?

RB: Yeah.

CB: Yeah. They was the prettiest kind of stuff to work with. Of course, it was pine. That roof [inaudible] part [inaudible] eighth of an inch. You'd think them logs being underwater all that time – you don't know how many years they'd been there. You'd think that stuff would shrink [inaudible].

RB: About that wide?

CB: Oh, yes. A big board.

RB: Big, wide board.

CB: I thought that was interesting that [inaudible] like that.

CA: They're still doing that, getting them places. They say it makes the very best. I think it's more valuable than the ones you cut down.

CB: [0:06:30] Oh, I think so.

CA: [inaudible] new.

RB: Oh, yeah?

CB: Would be because that's the best lumber that I'd seen for that kind of lumber.

BP: What were these boards from? Underwater?

CA: They used to have log drives over the Machias River. In going down, so many logs were soaked and sank to the bottom. After a period of years, there would be quite a few logs on the bottom, and they started to reclaim them. They've gone down and brought them up and sawed them, and they make the best kind of lumber.

RB: That's what that addition was made out of.

CB: Yeah.

RB: At least the roof part.

CB: The whole thing.

RB: The sides, too.

CB: The whole thing was. The first floor. But the second floor was hard pine.

CA: This had nothing to do with this. I don't even want it on there, but we went to New Zealand
—

[Recording paused.]

CB: — other places where they was getting logs underwater — when they were doing it, they'd poke [inaudible] and pump them up, and float them up. Then they could tow into the [inaudible].

RB: [0:07:41] Probably one of the last big jobs you had down at Head Harbor was building the wharf, rebuilding that wharf.

CB: Yeah, build that wharf for them. Well, built one first for us.

CA: Yeah, I see you had a few.

CB: Come around to it — I don't know how, but she decided that she would allow me two thousand dollars to build a wharf and float [inaudible]. We first had to shingle our camp because that had to be shingled. Well, shingled that. Then after we got that roof shingled, we started on the wharf. I got the posts and stuff and driftwood around the shore. Some [inaudible] — no, wasn't [inaudible] — hemlock.

RB: [0:08:43] Hemlock.

CB: And I used that to run ashore from the outside where I put the outer –

RB: Piling?

CB: – piling. [inaudible] had a [inaudible] and used that to run shore [inaudible] double. Some of them, I guess, triple.

RB: This is the wharf on our side?

CB: Yeah. So she wanted me to tear down – that was a couple of times that I had to do that – the building there at [inaudible] –

CA: Okay. Up at (Tom's Point.)

CB: Yeah.

CA: (Dan Dobbin?).

CB: (Dobbin?) had that. She wanted that tore down.

CA: You tore that down? Didn't burn it?

CB: No.

CA: I thought that was burned. I [inaudible] –

CB: No, tore down and saved the lumber and brought it up, and used it to build the float [inaudible] with.

RB: [0:09:48] Our float or his float?

CB: Yeah, our float.

RB: Our float.

CB: So I didn't have to take that out of the two thousand.

CA: [laughter]

RB: He's got Scottish in him. [inaudible] got to be.

CA: Well, that's [inaudible].

CB: So that's how we built the float. Well, the ramp I built with cedar that I had [inaudible] up with the cedar, but the boards – some of the boards [inaudible] come from that camp. Then, after we had that, they decided they wanted a new wharf built because all they had was just some [inaudible] that went up, and they had walkways that went on them. Of course, my father had it – when she had it, when I first [inaudible] there before I built the wharf, full tide would go right on top of it.

CA: Now, did you start working for her or for her father?

CB: [0:10:51] Started working for her.

CA: For her?

CB: The father died, I guess, just a year before I started working for her. I didn't know him.

CA: Well, I've seen him. I didn't really know him that well. I'd seen him – they used to [inaudible] seen him once or twice when I was a kid.

CB: I'd seen him, but –

CA: – but I didn't really know him.

CB: – I heard my father tell about him.

CA: I didn't really know him.

CB: I didn't know him. They're different than what we are.

CA: Oh, yes.

CB: When I first started working for them, of course, we had to, I guess, get acquainted. We had come from different backgrounds, and our thinking probably wasn't always the same. I found out that a lot of it was – some ways that they had of doing things, like construction companies and stuff like that [inaudible] why I say that is when I was working on that addition for the –

RB: [0:12:05] Dining?

CB: – dining room, I had Ernest Jr. working for me and doing something down in the Page house, and instead of telling him what they wanted done, they told it to me, so I have to tell it to him. So I told them to tell him what they wanted. He'd do it. They didn't have to tell me. But that's the way it started out. Then there were things different. [inaudible] always known each other. It was altogether different when I started working for them. If they wanted me, they'd blow horn, and I'd go over and see what they wanted.

CA: You mean over to the cottage where you [inaudible]?

CB: Yeah.

CA: How'd they get in touch with you afterward?

CB: That's the only way they had to get in touch with me. They'd blow a horn and –

RB: This was back in the '50s.

CB: [0:13:06] Then it go so that I'd go over around nine, ten o'clock –

RB: In the morning.

CB: – in the morning.

RB: Then sometimes they'd have you come over around two o'clock in the afternoon, wasn't it?

CB: Yeah.

RB: So you'd go over maybe – when they were there, you might go over twice a day, nine and then again at two.

CB: Then they wanted us to stay and talk with them and have coffee. Ray would probably have tea.

RB: Yeah. Over the years, it's evolved that way, that when they come for the last ten years or so – probably longer than ten years. When we go over in the morning, we'll sit down with them, chat with them, have a cup of tea, coffee, whatever.

CB: Probably a brownie or cookie.

RB: Yeah, she makes a brownie or whatever – have a brownie with her.

CB: Visit with them about an hour.

RB: They consider you a friend; they really do. They consider him a friend.

CA: Well, yeah. Well, it's [grown] over the years.

RB: Over the years, yeah.

CB: They refer to me as part of the family, I guess.

RB: [0:14:07] Kind of, yeah, that way.

CA: How old is Priscilla now?

CB: I think she's about eighty-five.

CA: She's getting up there, isn't she?

CB: Doug's eighty – I think he'll be eighty-eight this year. Maybe eighty-nine.

CA: How old is Page, their daughter?

CB: She's sixty –

RB: She's, I think, three years older than I am. I think she's sixty-two, maybe.

CA: Now, does she come down much?

CB: Yeah. Last year is the first time there hadn't been anyone down there.

CA: I mean, does Page come down much?

CB: Yeah.

CA: She does?

CB: She's been coming down every year.

CA: Now, does she have children?

CB: Yeah.

CA: So it'll probably keep going right on the family then?

CB: She's got two children. Claudia is the one that comes. David, their oldest child – her son used to come when he was a teenager up until he got married. He hasn't been down there since.

RB: [0:15:14] He works in landscaping. So the busiest time of the year for him is the very time of year that they'd be coming up to Head Harbor.

CB: Claudia, the granddaughter of Mrs. Williams, comes every year, but last year, she was going to have a child, just about ready to have it in August. I guess she did have it in August.

RB: She did have it in August.

CB: But we saw them up to Ellsworth and had a visit with them. Of course, I'd been in the hospital. I wasn't able to do anything [inaudible]. So I had to go to the doctor, so Ray made the arrangement so we could visit them over there in Ellsworth.

RB: That was with Claudia and her husband and –

CB: And her children. Now she has three children and had that one.

RB: I call Priscilla "PW." PW and Doug came here and visited with us. That was the only way they saw us last year was to come in and visit. Because they didn't go out to Head Harbor. That's the first time since we've been involved that there was no one out there. We didn't even take the blinds off the building.

CA: [0:16:34] No, I didn't notice it [inaudible].

RB: Left the whole thing up.

CA: None of you ever went to – you didn't even go to camp last year?

RB: Well, we went. Because we did set traps. He and I –

CA: Oh, you'd go in once in a while.

CB: We hooked up our floating ramp, and we'd go into camp and probably eat our lunch in the camp. Then we'd work on traps and get them set. We didn't do a very good job as far as [inaudible] fishing's concerned. [laughter]

CA: Well, you did as well as anyone [inaudible].

RB: We didn't get the boat off until August 5th. That's the latest it's ever been, August the 5th, when we got the (*Excalibur*?) into the water. We only set a hundred and seventy-two traps last year. That's the least amount we've set.

CA: Is there anything you'd like to put on here that we haven't asked you about?

CB: [0:17:28] What I can tell you about it is – what I can remember about it is that my grandfather was the captain of a vessel, and they went to LeHave Bank to fish, and the way they fished – they had dories aboard the boats, and they'd take the dories and the trawls – I think they had two men to a dory. If they didn't, they fished alone. They'd go set the trawls out, and then they would get the fish to the vessel or schooner or whatever you want to call it and take them out in that to go back fishing again. [inaudible] go set the trawls, and my grandfather got up and looked the sky over, and he said, "I guess we won't [inaudible] them out today, boys." And come up this gale of wind, a hurricane. The anchor broke clear of [inaudible] whatever happened to it, and they would drift, and they put out a sea anchor. You know what a sea anchor is?

CA: [0:18:51] Just something to hold the water, so keep your head to it.

CB: Just like a parachute, only it goes in the water. They put that out. Then he put out – they had blubber aboard the boat where they'd been saving the livers of the fish. They put that blubber overboard.

CA: The (camel?) water?

CB: The oil from it. That helped still it down so it didn't break where you would have. Well, Uncle Frank – I remember him telling about it. He said that the boat turned right completely over. They saw the [inaudible]. Battened everything down when they saw what was going on so that she was tight and wouldn't leak, in other words, if she turned over. He said that the proof they had that she turned completely over [inaudible] stove [inaudible] she turned over, was in the top of the cabin. They said that they – I don't know how long the storm lasted, but a British square rigger, I guess it was – found them, took them in tow, and towed them in here to Jonesport.

CA: [0:20:17] Crazy.

BP: You said that was the same gale where the *Portland* sank?

CB: Yeah, same gale. The *Portland* was lost.

BP: About what year was that? Do you remember?

CB: No, I don't know.

CA: We can find out when it was. Let's get the names on here. It was your grandfather, James Franklin Beal, who's the captain.

CB: That's right.

CA: And Frank Wallace.

CB: Cabin boy.

CA: Who was the cabin boy.

CB: Twelve years old.

CA: Twelve years old. And how big was the boat?

CB: I don't know.

CA: You don't know how big it was. It had to be fairly good size; it was carrying dories.

CB: Oh, yes. It was carrying dories because that's what the fish did.

CA: That was the old-fashioned way of fishing, wasn't it in those days?

CB: Oh, yes. Yeah. The boat belonged to John A. Beal. That was Grampy's brother-in-law. He's the one that painted that picture that's over there.

CA: John A. Beal painted this?

CB: Yes.

CA: Okay. Now I'll know which picture to go look for.

BP: Where is this picture? In the library?

CA: In the library. In the meeting – you go in the library, and on the right, [inaudible] room.

RB: [0:21:19] Peabody Memorial Library, yeah.

CA: You go in, and you go to the right, and go in that room.

CB: I think so. That's where I saw it.

CA: Yeah, I think I know where you mean. I got to go look at that and see what the boat's name is. Any other stories like that you'd like to tell us?

RB: I can't remember it unless [inaudible] talking.

CA: No, but that is really a nice story.

CB: Well, I didn't tell it too good.

CA: Well, you did fine. [inaudible]

RB: You heard the story from Frank Wallace.

CB: Uncle Frank, yes. I heard him say that it was – and Oscar Junior Wallace got the story from his grandfather, and it was in one of our yearbooks. So if you can find the –

CA: Find the yearbook –

CB: – the yearbook. I've got it somewhere, but I don't know where. [inaudible]

BP: Where was the boat during the gale?

CB: LaHave Bank.

CA: That's down off Canada somewhere. Can you remember in the late '40s when those pollock was outside here? There were so many fish; people would go out [inaudible] headway [inaudible].

CB: [0:22:25] For some reason, I don't remember that. I know there was a lot of pollock around at the time.

CA: Do you remember the last time the Eastern Bay was full of herring?

CB: Oh, yes, I remember it because I was seining. We caught pollock down there in [inaudible] in the seine.

CA: Yes, in the weirs.

CB: Yes.

RB: [inaudible]

CA: There was pollack everywhere.

RB: That's the boat. It's not (Lightning?); it's (Lampson?).

CA: Oh, early Jonesport family. I don't have the book, but – [Recording paused.] Well, I guess, okay then. We'll bind this up, and then we're going to take some pictures with the digital camera. [0:23:05]

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----
Reviewed by Molly A. Graham 8/11/2022