Interview Log

Interviewee: Joseph Bradshaw
Norma and William Carmine

Tape #: a4 e- (g5.1 _ 185.a

Interviewer: Virginia Jenkins
Pete Lesher
Tom Howell

of Tapes: 2

Date: September 27, 1999

of Sides: 3

Location: Hampton, Virginia

Topic: Workboat Foodways Project
Old Point

Corresponding Photography Log #:

Comments: Tape one malfunctions in several places. Phonetic Spellings: Ballard Fish and Oyster Company, Terpaville Funeral Home, minus diesel, Booder diesel, Cheeam's Creek.

BEGIN SIDE A

P.L.: We are speaking with Norma Carmine and William Carmine and Joe Bradshaw about the crab dredger old Point. And we are -- it's on September 27th, 1999, and interviewers are Pete Lesher, Virginia Jenkins and Tom Howell. And why don't we -- Tom, why don't you start with -- Joe, if you could take us through what a typical day of dredging was, crab dredging.

J.B.: Okay.

P.L.: From leaving the dock, from showing up at the boat.

J.B.: Well the dredge hours are from sunrise to sunset. So normally, we'd always go down the boat and -- when it was dark. There were probably 60, 70 boats on Hampton Creek --

(MECHANICAL PROBLEMS -- INAUDIBLE PORTION OF TAPE.)

J.B.: Dad loaned him some money -- he didn't show up. So from then on, he had a rule that he won't give anybody an advance on their salary until the week is over because they're going to go out get drunk, not come back the next day. And that's pretty well the dredging -- one year there, we had a lot of star fish all over the bay. A firm from Florida, I think it was, hired him to go out, and had to get a special permit to use the dredges to catch starfish so that they could make souvenirs and stuff like that out of `em, but you had to have special permit because you're not allowed to dredge crabs. And he had to throw all the crabs overboard. And in those days, any clams, you catch a lot of clams and everything else you know when you're dredging, they would go in a barrel and usually the crew would sell the clams, and that was a little bonus for them.

And I don't know, one day at the end of the season, we went out with my brother, and myself and dad, and we were dredging in *through* Georgetown, and we were catching a lot of clams. And dad said he'd had a good year, he'd let us make some money. So rather than look around for more crabs, we caught clams all day. Today, it's illegal for a dredge boat to keep clams because they have to throw `em back overboard. But in those days, you know, you could keep clams, conchs, you catch those, and you sell them on the side. But you can't do that no

more. So that's a typical day. Normally -- and of course you cook lunch on there, and you always had a hot lunch. We didn't never carry sandwiches or stuff like that because we had a nice little cook stove in the forepeak. And early, it was one that burned wood. So we'd, you know, pick up all kinds of wood and stuff like that. So you would always cook there. And a lot of times, you would cook breakfast on the way out `cause you get up four, 5:00 in the morning to go out there, it's too early to eat. So you'd have breakfast on there, but you were always home by supper, I mean to eat a late supper.

In some cases, he would dredge off of -- quite a nays up the bay, and then he would go into Cape Charles to spend the night. And he may be up there _wo or three days. Of course, he had two bunks in _he pilot house and the forepeak, they had two bunks down there. And so then, of course, you would eat all the meals on there. You didn't have refrigerators. You didn't bother to carry ice with you because it was too cold for stuff to rot. We had cold weather in those days. And so that's a typical dredge season.

T.H.: I'd like to ask you a few questions.

J.B.: Yeah.

T.H.: How long did they leave the dredges overboard? How long did they --

J.B.: It depend on what kind of bottom it was, and how many crabs you were catching. Because if au're catching a lot of crabs, you can only hold so many. If you're catching a lot of rock and stuff like that, because sometimes you'd be on the stone pile, you don't want to fill it up with rock. And so it's more or less a feel for it when you get out there. But I would say probably about 10, 15 minutes for all cases. Because you're going out slow, but it was no set time. Just `til captain felt like it's time to pull it up. And sometimes you're in a hard bottom. Of course, you're not catching anything except crabs, and you're catching a few so you go a little longer.

T.H.: How deep were you dredging?

J. B.: Dredging anywhere from probably eight feet of water until about, well (indiscernible) channel s about 40 feet deep. And then what you would do is if you pulled up the starboard dredge, you would go -- you'd pull the starboard dredge up, and while `hat's up, you would turn to the port and come around and go the other way and then throw your starboard dredge back overboard. Very seldom you ever -- I never remember dad doing it, and I've heard a couple people doing it, that they would accidentally dump one dredge overboard on top of another one, get `em tangled up. I don't remember in all the time I was out there, you would probably have, oh 60, 100 boats dredge in that area. I never remember in those days of anybody catching another person's dredge. But with the dead rise boats they're using now, they have that trouble all the time. Of course, one problem is you're dredging up here well forward, probably about a rnird aft of the bow, and your rudder's back here so you have good control on the boat. When you nave a boat with the dredge going overboard aft of =he wheel, you really don't have much control of a boat. And so you could do much closer maneuvering with this boat than you can with the dead rise boats they use now days.

T.H.: Where was the winch on the boat, on deck or underneath the boat?

J.B.: The winch was underneath the deck, just forward of the engine room underneath the deck with a shaft coming from the forward of the engine -- power take off of the shaft come from there and it juld go forward, and the winch, had two of `em, were underneath the deck. And then it came forward, and he had a big strong back across right aft of the dredge post with pulleys in there. Then it would come up and go through your pulleys on lour dredge post.

T.H.: Are there any boats still rigged like that dredging?

B.: I don't think so. There was one, the engineer on the JPD's from the shipyard bought one, and now they call these deck boats. And he was going to dredge with it, but I haven't seen him

for, oh, what 10, 15 years, I don't know. He didn't do very good the first time. One reason `hat they use dead rise boats rather than these coats, and these boats are -- there are a few of cnem around. But they're almost obsolete because Mou can't use crab pots on this boat, you can't fish gill nets on this boat. Where with the dead rise boat where you were down low, you were closer :o the water, you can do that. But there's no way in the world you could fish crab pots in this boat. No way in the world you could fish gill nets from it. And that's the reason that these are pretty well limited to dredging.

Used to be that these boats had worked year-round because dad would dredge during the winter, he would do what we call run fish during the summer for Ballard Fish and Oyster Company, which meant live inn Hampton, coming round the back river, and the people with the pound nets had driven a stake out there -- they would fish the pound nets, come in, call the fish. We would weigh `em, and put `em ; ~ a hole, and ice `em up either in boxes or if it's a whole bunch of `em, you know, just pour `em in the hole. And then take `em up to Ballard Fish and Oyster Company in Norfolk where they would offload it, we would fill up on ice, and ice always went in the aft end of the hold, and we'd come back to Hampton. And then the next day, do the same thing. We call that running fish. When it wasn't running fish, dredging, a lot of times, he would be buying sea oysters up in James Road, because oyster business was tremendous in those days. And we would buy `em from the hand tongers. They would bring `em to him, and they had the tubs, you would measure them by tubs, dump it on deck and go to the oyster ground and shovel `em overboard.

And then sometimes, this was after the fish pretty well fell off because the pound nets just weren't doing much, he would transplant oysters for Ballard Fish and Oyster Company. And then that, you would 0, they would put the -- oysters on Hampton Bar and Hampton Roads. Well it was polluted and you

couldn't sell `em. But, man, the oysters loved that, and they would grow fast. So then you would dredge `em up and use a smaller dredge, because oysters are heavy, and put a kind of a pen around the boat which was -- built up about this high, and you'd shovel oysters back there, go out to the oyster ground where the oysters purify themselves, novel `em overboard, then come on back in, go back =ne next day and do it. And we used to, my rother, myself, and sometimes my cousin, and sometimes another boy in Poquoson, worked with dad doing that. And when you were loaded up with oysters, one reason the engine room house was high, you're going to have probably about three inches of water on the deck back around the pilot house where she had loaded down so far. So one person start around each side of the pilot house and work forward, and one would start up on the forward end, `cause you would fill it up aft first, and then you'd put `em forward and just leave room enough to work `em where your dredge post is. And one would start forward and shovel aft, and the others get aft and shovel forward. But the people aft were shoveling more for quite some time there until we got most oysters overboard.

:?T1d it was a lot of fun. And we'd go out and dredge. Around noontime we'd stop. And then we carried lunch. Eat lunch, and listen to Eddie Arnold on the radio. When Eddie Arnold went off, then it was time to go back dredging. And, of course, you'd pull one dredge in, leave one overboard so it wasn't any need to anchor because you wasn't going anywhere. That's the reason I like Eddie Arnold. He's my hero in country western music.

T.H.: Do you know anyone who has the double-drum winch anywhere around here where we could get an old one to put back in the boat that we could rebuild? I mean we're not going to go dredging with her, but I'd love to have that gear down in there.

J.B.: Yeah. No, but you might ask around and find out. But -- because see with the dead rise

oats, they pull two dredges, but they're tied together with a beam across, and they only have one drum on that.

T.H.: I've seen that rig. You probably know the boat, I'll bet she's not around here anymore, the Florence Marie.

J.B.: I think I do.

H.: -- the Gloucester Oyster Company. She's a big --

J.B.: There's one deck boat --

T.H.: She had the rigging under there.

J. B.: Yeah, it was underneath there. See it had, up forward here -- these are pictures that -- from up at your place. All right, here's the pilot nouse. Up here, he had one small hatch right here. And it was a little further forward of the pilot. And she was centered probably right about here. And then forward, he had a big hatch with two hatch covers on it. I think it was two. And that was hauling fish and stuff like that. And opened those up, and the people on the boats that they fish -- the dead rise boats, would take one of them and put one end on his engine box, and the other on the side, and they would shovel the fish up there, and they would use that to call the fish with. And then we had our scales tied up here on the boom, and we'd take `em from the baskets, put `em in the scales, weigh `em, and then dump them in boxes or whatever we were going to dump them in.

I.H.: Okay. How many -- up in Maryland, verything goes into bushel baskets, crabs.

J.B.. Yeah.

T.H.: How many bushel baskets would make one carrel of your barrels?

J.B.: Well usually dredging, I think it was about three or four. You know, they would use a barrel that was about this big around, and I think it was about four. And with the crab potters during the summer, I worked at (indiscernible), which he has a picture here, a couple of summers. It depend on who it was. You could probably fill the barrel up with a bushel of crabs. Because they would come out, you would see the crab potters coming in. As they come in, they got the draw

cket that they can -- point it on the crabs, they -,3n get crabs and everything else. And so you send the barrel down, take a shovel, carefully put them in the barrel, and you'd pull it up. Sometimes a barrel would hit the dock. `Cause I wasn't big as a minute, and the barrel crab goes zoom, drop probably about a foot. Send it back, say that's not a barrel of crabs, send it back. What does he do? He don't have crabs. He takes that, he dumps it overboard, pours water on `em, gets `em (indiscernible) and then fills it back up again. And that's probably the smartest thing that they've ever done now is a barrel of crabs is 100 pound of crabs. Because you know what you're getting. But in those days, I mean what do you do? That's just the way to do things.

T.H.: When you agitate crabs, it takes up a lot of space.

?. B.: About three shovels, you could fill the barrel up. It's the same --

T.H.: Same with oysters, I guess.

J.B.: -- buying seed oysters when you go up the James River. Anchor up there, he'd have two booms. It wasn't these booms. He had longer skinnier booms up here, one on each side. To pull the tubs up, `cause you buy it by tub, and dump it on the deck. And if you hit the side of the boat, they would settle if something happened. And dad always required a full measure of crabs, I mean of seed oysters. Because inspectors would come through sometimes when you're offloading, and get you to check your tallies, see how many bushels you got, and measure what you have. And you're only allowed to have so many shells per a bushel, and of course, you got to have the bushel. So, in fact, a lot of dad's kin folks wouldn't come sell crabs to him -- I mean sell seed oysters because he required a full tub. And you could take those like a king crab, end you could stretch `em a long way when you fill up a tub.

T. H.: You can shovel oysters into a tub, and you watch a waterman shoveling `em in, you'd like to have `em all just go straight down on their end.

7.B.: Yeah, and they were the same way with crabs. But I think officially, there were four bushels in a barrel.

111. C.: If I could add, this tally boy, when the 33llard Fish and Oyster Company and any other, Miles or any of `em that had people running cysters, occasionally they would come aboard and measure you to check to see if you were an honest captain, if you were really taking a cut tub, or if you were getting full tubs, so they wanted to get their money's worth too. And so there was a little bit of -- I don't know whether you call it fear or respect for the man you're working for that I'm not going to buy him a half a tub of oysters and pay a full price. I'm going to be assured, because they may come aboard me and measure is one thing. But in Captain Ernie's case, if he was never measured, he would be that honest.

J. B.: Yeah, he never had any truobles with the inspectors on his measure.

T.H.: The captain's pride.

J.B.: Well, honesty. But some of them, a lot of boats, you know, it was the ballast boat or the :aptain. And the captain didn't care. And so he'd come along, mark up a couple extra, something like that, give the fellow a little piece of work money, you get a little piece of work. Used to be that way in the shipyard until they did away with piecework. But he was always trying to make sure he got a full measure.

T.H.: Tell me about his -- Captain Ernie's relationship with this Ballard Fish and Oyster Company. How much of the work that he did in these different seasons was for that company?

J. B.: Used to be as long as I can remember until -hey stopped catching fish in the pound nets, he always run the fish -- what we call run the fish, during the summer from the first time they would start fishing the pound nets until they would finish. Then from then until dredge season, he would either buy feed oysters for them, or use -- _ransplant crabs. Usually in those days, it was ,5eed oysters.

T.H.: You mean oysters?

J.B.: I mean transplant oysters. Because when you're transplanting oysters, when the water hits 60 degrees, you can't transplant `em anymore. So usually during the fall, it was buying seed oysters for `em. And that happened until probably I guess about the early or mid-50's, something like that.

W. C.: Well fish would drop off about this time Df year, and then oystering didn't start -- or crab dredging didn't start until December. Maybe you'd allow a week for upkeep on your boat, but the rest of the time, you would be working for Ballard either transplanting or buying. October's when the James River season would start, so that's when he'd start buying oysters. And then in the spring, of course, then the dredge season lasted three months. So it was December, January and February. So then in March he's ready to go back and run more oysters for Ballard. And then through the summer, he runs fish for Ballard. So you should say, except for the three months of December, January and February, he was working for Ballard Fish and Oyster Company.

?. L.: On almost a daily basis?

J.B.: Yes.

'^1. C.: Oh, yeah. Every day that the good Lord would allow that boat to go, and fishermen to fish, or oystermen to work.

1. C.: And that was a long distance. It took a long time to get over there when he went to Ballard's Fish and --

W.C.: To Norfolk.

J.B.: But it was a nice ride.

[MECHANICAL PROBLEMS -- INAUDIBLE PORTION OF TAPE.)

J.B.: -- I mean I've been coming down there during the summer and a squall would hit. And, of course, we'd always go down the channels, and you couldn't see the masts (indiscernible). And all you do is just slow it down and cross your fingers ˜here's no ship coming. Of course, you always stayed on the outskirts of the, you know, just enjoy the -- the channel side of the markers. But you couldn't see anything. Just pull it down 'til it blows over, then go ahead and wrap her up and come back in.

N. C.: Dad always said I was with him in his very worst storm he was ever in. And when my -- the stool started slipping with me, he said okay, chum, it's time for you to take a nap. So I didn't know a thing about it.

(INAUDIBLE PORTION OF TAPE.)

T.H.: -- that Joe was a twin.

W.C.: There were two -- he said my brother, they were twins.

J.B.: Yeah, my twin brother.

W.C.: Jim died much as dad did, very suddenly with a heart attack.

J.B.: With an aneurysm.

:a.C.: In September of `86.

r.L.: You've told me before, but if you could do it again about Captain Ernie's arrival back at the dock -- signaling and such.

J.B.: That was a long, long time ago. That was when he had the -- diesel engine. And he had that until, I guess, in the 40's. And it was a two-cylinder, 35 horsepower engine with a dredge-drive shaft, and it was heavy, and it started with air. So we had the little diesel engine that had two cylinders. One of `em would run the engine, had a great big fly wheel on it, one would run the engine and the other would compress the air to put in a tank. So when he was coming in -- just off of it, everybody had a stake driven in the ground where they would tie their boats. And when he'd get there, he would blow that air whistle, it was a Bteam whistle, but he had it hooked up on air. And it's about a mile and a half or two miles, I think.

W.C.: One-point-eight miles.

J.B.: One-point-eight miles, okay, from where he would be until where we lived. So we would always be out in the yard or, during the summer, you know, we didn't have air condition, all the windows and everything open. And so you hear that whistle blew three or four times, and then mother knew it was time to get in the car and go down and pick him up at the wharf. Used to be a lot of -- go to the dock, get right to the boat. And every now and then, about twice a summer, you get somebody to get in the bateau, and the bateau would move away from

-he dock, and they'd be holding on the dock, and they'd go plunk in the water.

N.C.: My friend mentioned that the last time I saw her. She went -- all the children liked to go down with us on Sunday to pump the boat out. And so whenever they could, they would arrange to be at my house for Sunday afternoon, go down. And this one Sunday it was some big Sunday like Easter because she had on her good clothes, and she kept holding the dock and the boat went out and she just went face down. And she mentioned it the last time I saw her.

(MECHANICAL PROBLEMS -- INAUDIBLE PORTION OF TAPE.)

'Al. C.: -- go down and pump your boat out, that was a must.

J.B.: And then during the summer, with ice melting.

(MECHANICAL PROBLEMS -- INAUDIBLE PORTION OF TAPE.)

N. C.: Of course, the boats leaked a little, and :hen rain too. I guess probably most boats had a little leak around the stuffing box or someplace. And so if you hadn't used the boat for a few days, you'd have to go pump out, even if you didn't have rain water. As you know, it's kind of hard to get `em all leak-proof.

T.H.: We have to pump ours every day. We check `em every day.

N. C.: Yeah, you got to.

J. B.: Now see he had, in this hole, he had beams across, of course he had timber -- whatever you want to call them underneath, and then you had a decking there so that your ice and everything would be above the water if it melted. Of course, you're shoveling fish and all, you've got to have a level place to do it from.

L.: This is sort of a little ceiling built in the --

J.B.: Yeah, yeah. Keep it up off the haul, so you got a space between your deck and the haul.

P.L.: Now both of you worked as crew on this boat from time to time.

W.C. : Joe, as he's told you, had much experience on the boat. My own, I knew the boat since I was just a child, but I only worked on it some after we were married in `47, January `47. And sometimes when he was short of crews, I would take off a few days and go with him. And then in the summertime, as Joe talked about transplanting oysters and all, shoveling oysters, I did that some and I told my wife the other day I have a pair of boots out here that has a hole in the foot, and it's patched. But it's where the teeth of one of those dredges went through my boat transplanting oysters. I still have that boot. I've cut the tops off `cause it rotted, they were hip boots, you know, but -- so every time I see that patch, I remember -- know where it came from. So I never did run fish going to Norfolk. When I was growing up, we -- my family, as I told you, I guess not on tape, that we were the fishermen that he bought from. We didn't nave pound, but we fished drift nets.

end at the time you -- hook and line, you stand by --he deck with an eight-ounce sinker and two hooks, and pull big croakers and spot just as fast as you could. Well you'd bring `em into the mouth of the river, and.Captain Ernie would be there waiting for you. And so we would sell him the fish. And then along with the bulk of fish he got from the bigger nets, ours was trivial. But he would take it. But there were a lot of us doing that hand lining, and drift netting. One time my aunt -- my dad, this must've been right after World War I -- World War II. My dad had gone to the shipyard. So then my uncle and I used to run fishing parties, and we'd go fishing when we didn't have parties and clamming and all of this stuff. And my cousin, a girl, Mary, who's about a year, two years older than I am, we were in the bay doing just this, bottom fishing. And we had a storm to come up. I don't know, I guess it was a tornado. We didn't recognize it as a tornado in those days. But all of the sudden, it became black, and we were about five miles offshore. And pretty soon, you could see nothing. There were maybe 20, 30 boats out

there, but we saw no boat until we got in. Our fear was we had to what we call scrud, and it was a square stern, 24, 26 foot boat with a Chevrolet engine in it. And I kept the engine dry, and my cousin was in the floor, and my uncle was at the filler. And so we were lucky that the storm cleared before we were about to hit bottom on the Egg Island Bar, which is a bar that runs off the -- and Hampton in Yorktown. Then had we hit that, then we would've swamped. But when we got in with our fish, and it was a shortened day because we didn't have that many, we got into Captain Ernie who was inside of the mouth of the back river behind this factory point that I told you about earlier, they said that luckily you were able to scud in. You would not have survived had you been here. Your boat would have sunk. And then as we came in the river after putting off the fish and all, you could see all along the side of the river where boats had broken loose from their moorings, people that had been clamming, treading clams or raking, some of `em had gotten their boats to the snore and turned them over and were underneath them for protection, and there were boats coming out from the dock coming to look for us. And fortunately, nobody in Poquoson lost their boats. Everybody made it in but the people at home, and it went through this area and up through the Mennonite Colonies, which is in upper Newport News, across there. And it destroyed (indiscernible) and barns and everything. It was one of those strip storms. But my cousin and I always remember that. Of course, my uncle was dead.

N.C.: I don't have to worry about his safety in the boat --

W.C.: I have great respect for the bay.

N.C.: -- because he had that experience. But you see, during that time, nobody had phones, nobody had air conditioners and all those things. So that people were just always out talking over the back yard, the back fence and that type of ~ping. So probably a short time after that happened and before they even got home, everybody n the community knew about it. Did you hear that

Austin and Mary and William almost sank today? And had it not been for William, they would have. Because he was big enough, I don't know what age, but --

W.C.. Knocked the exhaust pipe off the engine.

N.C.. -- but he could do it. And his uncle was going blind. That may be another reason why the storm came up and surprised him.

W.C.. No, no.

N. C.. No?

J.B.. Didn't have anything to do with the storm.

N. C.. I mean he couldn't see, he couldn't see --

J.B.: Yeah. And so we had lots of clothes when -- of course, when you rake clams, you change to old dungarees, or probably bib overalls, and all long sleeve shirts because of stinging nettles. And there's a lot of clothes on the boat that we, of course after you finish clamming, you go to the dock, sell your clams and go home, you take those off, lay them over the side of the boat and let `em dry so next time you go clamming, you put `em on. Well because of those clothes, and it was like just a cover across this Chevrolet engine, and otherwise it was wide open. And with those clothes, I was able to protect that engine and keep it dry so it couldn't die on us. If it had died, then we'd be at the perils of the storm. But we had enough cower so we could scud, and I could see that thing reeling now with the stern up on a wave, and her just reeling down.

?.L. • -- about who crewed on this boat and how many were crewing when you were out *crab* dredging and --

J.B.: You would have two deck hands and the captain. And most cases, they were black people that didn't have a whole lot of education. Only thing they could do was to work, work on deck hands on boats. Then, of course, the kids -- you know, my brother, and --

W.C.: Well there were some --

J.B.: -- but most of `em were people that just couldn't get a job anywhere else, just working on the water.

V. J.: Can you tell me who cooked?

J.B.: Well during the summer, when my brother and I used to go with him running fish, we'd take turns. One would have to cook one day, and the other would *have* to cook the next day, and then the one that didn't cook would wash the dishes. But usually, we would have boiled croakers every day for lunch, and cook croakers in a pan of water, clean `em, cut slices across the back, and put `em in a big pan of water, and while you're doing that, you would fry some streakolean, streakofat meat. And I would always, when I would cook, it was three of us, `cause we had good croakers, I would always cook four, and that was my stabber. So I could stab him with a fork. When the fork went through it real easy, I knew they were done. Then take `em out, put `em on a platter and pour that grease over top of `em. And Dad make bread. He always could make real good biscuits. And sometimes you would have that, sometimes you wouldn't have any bread.

V.J.: Was there an oven in the stove?

J.B.: Yeah. The stove is about, I guess about so wide and about this high, a wood stove.

P.L.: A little over two feet wide --

J.B.: Yeah, about that.

P.L.: And maybe a foot and a half long.

J.B.: And, of course, wood stoves, you know, you pick the damper up off the top and you put your wood in there. And then we'd use, you know, broke up fish boxes and stuff like that for the wood during the summer.

W.C.: In getting the crew, it would always be desirable, these two men, and not when Joe and his brother were on, but the hired crew, you'd really have a prize if you could get a crew man that knew how to cook. A lot of times they couldn't, or Mr. arnie didn't trust them, they weren't healthy oriented, and he would have to go down and put the beans on, and that's usually what it was, a pot of beans, and they could just boil all the morning and sit there and simmer, and biscuits and beans, that was most of the lunches during the crab dredging and stuff. But it was always a prize to -- you got a crew member that was a good cook.

J.B.: Most of the good ones take a lot of pride

(TAPE MALFUNCTION.)

W.C.: Yeah, this is -- that's a sail bundled up. Normally during the summer, what he would do would be to take that top mast off and just have the other one, the mast back to the pilot house didn't have a -- during the summer.

T.H.: Did you use that -- for anything else besides (inaudible)? Did you ever use it for lifting barrels or anything like that?

W.C.: Well, you know, fish scales.

J.B.: Well just the fish scale hanging on him, and that was it. And kept it up mostly during the summer, because when he would buy seed oysters, he would take these off and maybe he would use that top one, have another one about that size that he would put up here for seagulls. But otherwise, it was just for the sail and then (indiscernible).

T.H.: And that was a square sail?

J.B.: Yeah, a square sail. You know, like this -- shaped about like that. You can see it's in between the boom. A lot of the boats have just a triangular sail, but this gave a little more stability.

T.H.: I can see that block right there.

J.B.. Yeah.

T.H.: It's like a throat halyard.

J.B.: Uh-huh (affirmative).

W.C.: That's with buying oysters -- it would be two -- boats offloading on each side, not one at a time. And sometimes it would be three or four boats wrapped on either side, and at least two of them. You could handle two at a time on either side.

(TAPE MALFUNCTION)

J.B.: -- Roosevelt died, my brother and I -- put this flag down at half mast. Then a few months later, the Coast Guard came along and wanted to know why the flag was half mast -- (inaudible). Said I don't know -- we raised it up to the top. And he used to, this was probably before your time too, when he had --

N.C.: Yeah, that's before my time.

J.B.: Yeah, his dad was with him. But he used to have (inaudible)

(TAPE MALFUNCTION)

J.B.: And they were coming around from Hampton Creek. I don't know if they were coming around to dredge crabs, or to come and get fish or what. But anyway, dad's at the wheel, and his father went on the deck, said, Ernie, it's too rough, even the Eagle has turned around. So he came back in -- broke that Eagle loose and one of the wings was knocked down a little bit. So they just took it off and put it in the outhouse at home. And then my brother had that (inaudible).

W.C.: I gave him a drawing (inaudible) -- I took off of that Eagle before it left the area before him. His nephew is in Charlotte, North Carolina, and I think he has the Eagle there. But I gave you a sketch was the best we could do. They were not to part with that Eagle. That was -- (inaudible).

N.C.: One day, they had the Eagle out. They were going to have it redone because it had to be complete, it was complete --

1'.C.: Just like the boat, it had lots of places had to be filled in.

N.C.: Right. And they had all these little claws, small. They put them all in a bag, and one of the boys came home while the other three people were gone. And they were cleaning up because the garbage people were coming. Took that bag of claws, threw them in the trash, and away they went. So when my brother and his wife and oldest son got home, that was first thing they missed. And everybody went down to the city dump and found the Eagle claws. Now I wouldn't believe it, but they did, in the brown bag.

J.B.: Sometimes you're just plain lucky.

N.C.: Uh-huh (affirmative).

V.J.: Can I ask you both the layout of the forepeak? How was the stove located, and where were the bunks?

J. B.: Well you can see from here. The forepeak extended from just forward of the mast all the way up, I mean there wasn't anything else in there.

W.C.: Below deck, it was all --

J. J.: And you said beans for lunch generally?
J. B.: Beans right often.
W.C.: Most always have, when they used to cook -- now they don't do it anymore, but they used to, they'd always have a pot of beans on the stove. It was a hardy meal, easy to fix, and you'd go down about once or twice during the morning and stir it up. And then when lunch time came, you'd go down one at a time and eat so you didn't have to stop what you're doing.
V.J.: What kind of beans?
J.B.: We used to use baked beans. I mean we never cooked them other kind. Campbell's baked beans. And I remember the first time that I ever cooked beans. And it was my brother and my dad on there. And I went down there, and I put two or Three cans of beans in the pot. And it says now ;you got to add water. And I figured two or three cans of beans, two or three cans of water. So put the water in there, called them when it was done. And they went down, and they strained through it and got all the beans out. And I had a few beans, and almost colored water. But I learned then that you don't have to put a whole can of water for a whole can of beans. But that's the way I learned.
W.C.: Joe, you're younger than I am. My remembrance of the beans, and even on my daddy's boat and all, they weren't canned beans.
J. B.: No, we had --
W.C.: Bag of beans you soaked and you cooked all morning.
J.B.: We always cook canned beans, either that or fish. And then we used to -- during the fish season, quite often we'd be going around to balance the load of fish. And we would see the watermelon boats. They were boats -- they got -- but they would have watermelons piled up on the deck, taking `em from Carolina to Baltimore. And we'd go alongside of `em, wave at `em, they'd slow down. Go alongside. Hey, trade you a mess of fish for some watermelons. Great. So we'd give `em a bunch of fish, they'd give us a bunch of watermelons. Sit on the deck and eat watermelons. Man, that was the best watermelon you ever tasted.

J.B.: Yeah, below deck. And, of course, that's -- oh about like this. And on each side, you had a seat like so, and then your stove was right here. And, of course, right here was the entrance. And :hen you had a table built in here. And then they stored the -- near the bunks and all, they'd roll them inside. And when they were gonna sleep on the coat or something like that, they'd take those out. But --

W.C.: The tables were -- you'd raise them up out of the way when you weren't eating. They'd just drop down like an ironing-board type thing.

J.B.: Yeah, and that's basically the way it was. Simple, comfortable, and then up here you can see, right up here, the stovepipe, of course, came up here. And right up here on the forward end you had a vent with this gadget up here on it. And then on the deck, of course, that came like so. And right here is where we always kept the water barrel. And then this forward light was mounted on a plank here. And right here, between the barrel and there is where we'd always use to get the water we're gonna drink.

V. J.: Just one water barrel?

J.B.: Just one water barrel.

iAl. C.: One cup. Everybody came on board and had _he same cup.

J.B.: Get a can, you know, get a can and -- you didn't have these nice little openers then, but you'd open one of `em up real good. Can about that big around, about that long. And then you would go through and get it down so you didn't cut your lips up, you know, all them little rough spots on the inside, and everybody used the same water cup.

N.C.: And they had a piece of canvas, and on the top --

J.B.: Oh, yeah. And on top of it, you had a piece of canvas, you know. Here's your water barrel. And then you had a piece of canvas that was tacked down here, and come over here, and right over here you had a little piece of rod in it to help --

(END SIDE A OF TAPE 1.)

(BEING SIDE B OF TAPE 1.)

V. J.: And while we're talking about the forepeak, where did you store firewood?
W.C.: Just in a little box down there. Wherever we could find a place. Usually you'd probably set your firewood in a little box right here. And usually we was running fish. In those days, that would be broken up fish boxes. And you'd go over the Ballard's, go around and get the pieces, dump `em on the boat. And on the way around to Hampton, my brother and myself would sit there and chop it up with the hatchet. And then about once every Three or four months, we'd go tell dad, well we'll finish it up later. Where's my hatchet? It's over `_here in the water. We'd be chopping it, talking, slip out of my hand and go overboard, and you'd have to go get him another hatchet. And the same =ping, you know, you didn't have pumps and all that to wash it off. You'd have to get the fish and everything else, you'd get a draw bucket, put a rope on it. And then coming around from Back River to Norfolk, we'd be out there doing that. A little while later, we'd come back. Dad says we'll wait and finish it up. Get the ballards. Where's my bucket? Back there. I mean if you work it right, you know, got to let it hit the water and jerk it, you don't have no problem. But if you let it get Jown and fall in the water, it's no way in the world we can hold that bucket. So we lost a lot of buckets, and a lot of hatchets.
I. J.: What did you have for breakfast, generally?
J.B.: Right often -- it was always eggs or something like that, but right often, we'd be going in, we'd stop by a bakery that was on Queen Street and Back River Road. I guess that was called Back River Road, wasn't it?
N.C.. Yeah.
W.C.. Yeah.
J. B.: We'd stop there and get some doughnuts or cinnamon rolls or something like that, have that for breakfast. Of course, have coffee on the boat. That was good days when we had those.
W.C.: Most days, it was a hardy breakfast though, bacon and eggs, standard thing.

V.J.: Did you ever have a propane stove?
..B.. No.
F'.H.: Everything was wood stoves on the boat?
J.B.: In those days. And see, up here in the pilot house, you see this stack up here. During the winter, he had a little tin heater. You remember the tin heaters that, you know, they used to burn wood and --
T.H.: Tin heater?
J. B.: Yeah. That's what we used to call `em. The metal heaters, space heater. And it was real thin, tempered metal. Sometimes, those things get so hot they turn red. But he had a small one of those in the pilot house. Of course, he had it screwed down to the floor. And then this was the stack for it. During the summer, you'd take that off and cover that up. And that's the way he heated the pilot house during the winter when he was dredging crabs. And sometimes it would get so hot in there, you'd have to open the doors and the windows, `cause you didn't have --
T.H.: What was the fuel for that?
J. B.: Huh? The fuel for that would normally be wood. But quite often, when you're dredging crabs along the (indiscernible) channel, and in Hampton Roads, you'd catch a lot of hunks of coal that has fallen off a ship. Right now, I think almost all the coal you get is pulverized coal. But in those days, it was clumps. And burn some of those in it. in fact, he used to get all those and bring `em home, and because we had a coal burning space heater in the house. And bring `em home in the barrels and set `em out. And, man, they would have sea growth on `em and everything else. Put out a lot of heat, and they were still snapping and popping and everything else -- burning.
T.H.: Did I hear you say that the bunks in here folded up?
J.B.: Yeah. The pilot house was -- this is the pilot house. Of course, you had your windows up here, and your steering wheel -- I don't know what it's got on it now, but he had a big steering wheel, and everything was done with ropes. Probably has hydraulic steering on it now --

T. H.: Still -- no, it's all ropes.
J.B.: All ropes. Okay. And then the pilot house, you got your door, and then you came here and you had a ledge over top of your engine room. And then your bunks would fold, one of them up here, fold up there, and the other one was down real low here. And it would fold up here when you're not using it. And that --
T.H.: Were they pipe bunks, big berths or --
J.B.: Yeah, pipe type things with the wires between it with a little mattress on it.
T. H.: Okay.
J.B.: And now this thing was -- it was probably about, I guess about so wide.
V.J.: Three feet?
J.B.: Yeah, probably about three feet or so. And then on the port side of this, it had a hatch. Because it used to be that you had to change your engine, shift it from the engine room. And they had a hatch here so that your crew could go down and come back up without going on the deck in real bad weather. But then dad put in, I think he's probably the first one ever put in a manual shift for it. It had a clutch on it. But I mean the one that you could control in the pilot house. Because before then, they always sit in there, and you had your two bells where you had a small bell, you'd right that to wake up the person in the engine room, call `em engineer, but to alert him that you're going to be maneuvering. And then you had the other one that would go clung. And if you're going ahead, you'd ring it once, and that means go neutral. If you're neutral and you wanted to go ahead, you ring it once. If you're going ahead and you want to go astern, you ring it once, say neutral, and then twice, say astern. And then the fellow back there with a lever that was about this long, shifting clutch. So he's probably the first one ever did that. All of `em have it now. Some of `em has the type that rotates, but his was one That you raise it up and down, and then down here you had a lever, you know, you'd push it down and it would pull your clutch forward. You'd pull it

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T.H.: With a winder.
J.B.: -- and that would move it aft. But most of `em nowadays, they just have a thing up there with a lever on it. And then down below, it comes down, it's just got this one thing sticking off the side down here that moves it forward and aft. But his had a pivot piece here. And that piece there.
T.H.: Are you talking about for the main --
J.B.: For the engine. Yeah.
T. H.: How about for the winders, to wind in the dredges?
J. B.: You had rope. On each side of the pilot louse, here's the pilot house, you got your windows. A window and a window. But then you had a cord that came up through the deck, and that was right over here underneath the window on each side of the steering wheel. And it had a rod across it. And to engage this one, you'd reach down and you would pull that up. And that would engage your winch. And as long as you held it up, it would keep cranking, and then you know you would let it down, let it up and all like that to wash the mud off the crabs or oysters, whatever it is, and then pull it up. In fact, I -- I did it one time, I forget whether we were dredging -- we were dredging oysters, I think. And I reached down, and that Thing had rubbed up against the bulkhead, and had some little splinters, and I stuck one of `em from `here all the way up to here in my fingernail. Made me sick, and I had to throw up. So we had to call that off, and take me into the doctor, let him `ake that out. But that was all with rope.
N.C.: Somebody got -- I think it was daddy got a ring --
J.B.: Oh, one time when he was dredging -- dad is the only person I've ever known that has, on a deck boat, dredged crabs by himself. But I mean the crew don't show up, and you got to work, you need the money. So several days, he did it by himself. And one day he was on the boat by himself, and of course, with the right-hand rotation wheel, it always puts a torque on the runner. So we had a rope that come up, and we'd tie it around, wrap it around a spoke on the

steering wheel to hold it straight. So he would get that straight. Well he'd -- first of all, he'd pull the dredge up on deck. Then he'd tie that, keep going straight. He'd go out, he'd dump the crabs and he'd throw the dredge overboard. He had a ring. And the ring got caught in the dredge. And it pulled him down to the rail. It almost pulled him overboard. But the ring finally came loose. And that's the last time he ever wore a ring. But he's lucky he didn't lose a finger or lose his life.

N.C.: I thought -- maybe it wasn't, but I thought the ring did like this all the way up.

J.B.: No, it didn't come off `cause he had it home.

"l.C.: No. I mean bent.

J.B.: Oh, yeah, yeah. That's --

N'.C.: I think that's how he got --

J.B.: -- beat the dickens out of the ring. I think he probably had to cut it to get it off.

P.L.: You've told us a couple of interesting stories about your father's work on the boat. Could you tell us about the day the barometer broke?

W.C.: I don't think Joe was there.

P.L.: No, you told us about this.

W.C.: I told `em about this barometer. That we were going down one Sunday afternoon to go on the boat, and the boat was down in Hampton Creek. And we got aboard. I'm not sure. It was Norma, and Captain Ernie, and your mother, and myself. And I'm not sure if anyone else was going, and we were going out sailing around Hampton Roads. And we went aboard, and Captain Ernie looked at this barometer, and he said Chum, talking to Norma, his daughter, that's what he always called her, we can't go, we're not going this afternoon. Said .chat's wrong, daddy? He says I've never seen the barometer this low. Storm, something's going to happen. And so we didn't go. And subsequently, your daddy found that someone had knocked that barometer down on the floor of the pilot house, and it was broken.

J.B.: It was probably either me or Jim.

..C.: But that's why we said we want them to have this barometer. That's the faith he had in --hat barometer.

J.B. : Oh, yeah.

W.C.: No matter what the skies look like, if that barometer says weather is coming on bad, he believed that barometer.

J.B.: But you didn't have any weather forecasts in those days. And I mean he had all these things, you know, about the red sky at night, and a ring around the moon and all like that, and he could usually tell what the weather was going to be the next day. And I remember when we would be running fish, he'd always come in -- boys, you going with me today? And then we'd wake up like this. And get out, look out the window, say dad, we can't go Today, it's all foggy. He'd say that's just land fog, that's not water fog. And we'd go out and 'ae'd come on around. But, of course, in those days, they had to know a lot about weather even though one of the captains, when this `33 storm hit, he had a load of oysters on his boat, off of Ocean View, transplanted, you know, transplanted for Ballard. And he saw that storm coming, and he turned around and come into Hampton Creek. When he got to Hampton Creek, he didn't have a single oyster left on the boat. But we didn't know hurricanes were coming. I mean what is a hurricane, just a great big old storm. But you didn't have all that stuff to warn you of it like you got now.

P.L.: What sort of trouble did you have from that 1933 storm?

J.B.: Couldn't go out in the yard and play in the water (laughter).

N.C.: He doesn't know because he was three years old.

W. C.: I was three, but what I remember, very /Dung for three, but what I remember is I wanted to go out and play, and we used to love to go play in _he water when the tide would be out. They wouldn't let me do it because it was (indiscernible) in the house. And I remember boat people rowing boats up and down the coast over the

picket fences and stuff like that. But that's all I remember. She remembers more `cause she's real old (laughter).

N. C.: I was six years older than they were, so I was nine. And I told you, mentioned before, that I was having a house party with my friend, this same friend who had fallen in the water at the wharf that day. And mother wouldn't let us stay out here. So the next morning when we awakened, the water was up in the yard. Not in that house. But it did come in the house, and I don't know how deep, but I know that it absolutely ruined, everybody thought about moving furniture, but nobody thought about my quilts. And I was nine years old. I had finished one quilt completely the top on the sewing machine, and had three out of seven strips for the second quilt. And the first quilt was all the little corners, I don't know what they called `em, but they're little pieces in the corners of the stars and so forth were Halloween colors, black and orange. I can almost see it now, what a crazy looking quilt. But I was always ,flowed to do whatever I wanted to do. And if I wanted to make a dress, mother would go to the able and cut me out two pieces of material, and Chat would be my dress. And I would do it every year. So I was really disappointed when nobody thought about my quilt because I had worked hard even if I'd had fun on the sewing machine with it. But as far as the house was concerned, all of the drawers in the desk, everything down on the floors ruined, but we were carried next door. My daddy was caught in Norfolk, couldn't get home.

P.L.: In Old Point?

J.B.: In Old Point at Ballard's dock. And that happened very seldom.

W.C.: Now the boat went up, in the storm, the boat went up on the land.

N.C.: That was another storm.

;v. C.: Oh, that wasn't the August one?

N.C.. No

"I.C.: I thought that was the August storm.

N.C.: That's why I said I know that was not the

W.C. : I mis-spoke then. I thought that was in the August.
N.C.: No.
•.C.: These were the August.
P.L.: It survived the 1933 storm, but went ashore at some other point.
•.C.: During another storm, and I have no idea when. I have no way of recapping when or anything about it. But I do know that in a small community when anything happens, everybody rallies, and I do know that people in the family came down and dug every day until that boat was out of the -- off the land and in the water. And I remember the momentous day when they thought it might be the day that all the excitement of all the people, and I do know that when that happened, I shouldn't put this on tape, but not a single relative, close relative, because they worked different places, like the shipyard, not a single relative did any digging for the boat. But dad gave everybody who helped a shovel. And that was just like saying a great big thank you. It meant a lot to them too. And it was not in the storm of `33 because daddy wasn't home.
W. C.: I thought it was `33.
•.C.: And mother was there with us, four of us really.
a. C.: Was that `33 when it went aground?
N.C.: No. I said it was not in `33.
W.C.: It was the one in `28, `29, something like that?
N.C.: I don't know.
J.B.: I remember when it happened when all those boats were spread around, and I was thinking it was `33.
•.C.: Now boats did go on the shore.
J. B.: You always had these things up, like during every hurricane, up Langley and everything else. In fact, my uncle would go down and get on his boat and sail back and forth down Back River until the storm was over and then come back in land because the stakes you had driven in the ground just wouldn't hold.

F.L.: Now you tell me that your father worried a lot about the boat, and from season to season. Can you tell me about that again?

W.C.: You want me to?

J.B.: Almost everything worried dad.

W.C.: I was telling Joe --

J.B.: I mean everything would worry him. And that was just his way, he'd worry about things.

W.C.: Well the story that I told them, Joe, before you arrived is that, as we have mentioned, your daddy had transitions all during the year from fish, to oysters, to crabs. And at the beginning of every season, he would have sick stomach, and Throw up, and for about a week or two, he would be worrying about the onset of the next change in his year's work. And so it got to where it was known around the neighborhood, and certainly us in the family, I can see him now throwing up, going up and down the steps, and just as soon as fish running starts, he's going to be fine. And that would always be the case. It was never cancer, never something catastrophic. It was just a nervous stomach. That's what the doctor said. Ernie, you got a nervous stomach. And someone even insisted, said why don't you go to Johns Hopkins, his brother did, someone did. Oh, his brother said, Ernie, why don't you go to Johns Hopkins about your stomach? And the doctor, the local country doctor, Dr. White, says Ernie, did he tell you who's going to pay for that trip to Johns Hopkins? He said no. Of course, he never did go. He'd always survive. 3ut this was three or four times during the year that Captain Ernie had a week of I mean sick, throwing up stomach. And it was always worrying about -- and he never had a problem. It always -- it's like worrying whether the sun's coming up tomorrow. And it is. Might not be able to see it, out it's coming up. So it was that kind of a thing.

N.C.: Let me say something here. Uncle Willie came down and talked dad into going to Johns Hopkins because there must be something wrong with your stomach.

J.B.: Uncle Willie is dad's brother.

N. C.: They even had this -- Uncle Willie's his brother, my dad's brother. And they even had the ambulance in line. I do not know if it had left and was coming to pick dad up, but the ambulance was one from Terpaville Funeral Home. The funeral homes had ambulances in those days. And I'm not dead sure about Terpaville, but I believe that's the one. And that's when the doctor going around in the community, you see, and everybody knows what everybody else is doing. So he got the air that Ernie was going to Johns Hopkins. So he came in, and I mean he just came in and he said where's Ernie? Upstairs in the bed. And he just went right upstairs in bed. He said what's this I hear about your going to Johns Hopkins? Oh, yes. My stomach hurts. And I don't mean to imitate him, because that really was a true thing. And it really was sad. And I mean I know I even taught a sixth-grade boy who had a problem. After the -- well I'll tell you that in a minute. But anyway, he said uh-huh, going Johns Hopkins, coming home with a big bill, have more stomach trouble. Nothing wrong with your stomach but a nervous stomach. We all know that. So he said who told you they're going to pay for the bill? Willie going to pay for the bill? No. So dad wouldn't go. Right then he said call `em and tell `em, let them know I'm not going. But anyway I taught a child in sixth grade who had to take medicine before eating, so many minutes before eating, and that was -- I could very well have compassion with him, because it was a true thing. But dad never had any problem after World War II, because Dr. Kline came down to the community, and he gave dad this pill that they had used for the service people. Dad had to take it 20 to 30 minutes before eating. And by that time, everybody had telephones and so forth. So when dad would come in and he was also docking his boat in Hampton, he would come in and call mother. And that meant let me know if I should take my pill before I leave, or should I wait until I get home. It was just an automatic call. So if mother had dinner almost ready, she'd say okay, go ahead. If not, she'd say why don't

you wait `til you get home, and then she wouldn't have to rush. So he had no more trouble. It really was a nervous stomach, and it was caused from the tension of worrying. Very serious nature.

W.C.: The captain, I guess, is getting more coverage than the boat, but it's kind of hard, you know, they go together like hand in glove.

P.L.: They do. And you said that he was awfully thrifty, and that he did a lot of his own work on the boat. Can you tell me something about the work that he did?

J.B.: Well I think -- I don't think most of it was done because of thrift. I think most of it was done because he knew he could do the job, and he could do it right. I mean like when he replaced the mast in the boat one time, he got his father-in-law, my grandfather, to make a mast for him because he knew that he was going to make a mast, the mast was going to be right, and put it in the boat. When they put it in the boat, they didn't Nave to chock anything, anything else, just set it right down there. So I think most of it was he knew he could do it better than anybody else. I mean if -- something like rebuild an engine or something like that, no. He'd get the right man to come do it. But I think most of it was that he knew he could do it, and he knew when he finished it, the job was done right. And you get a lot of other people, it cost you a fortune. I mean money has something else to do with it also, but you don't get the job that you could do yourself.

P.L.: You were telling me about the job that he did of replacing the rail around the stern.

J.B.: Yeah. Well he could've gotten -- but I mean what are you going to do? You got to use the boat every day, and while you're going from Hampton Creek to Back River, you got 45 minutes or so, why not? And so he -- it just broke a little bit, it wasn't torn off or anything like that. But why not do it yourself and do it?

W.C.: Well replacing the rail or bending the rail, I don't know if that was on tape or not. Joe, tell them --

J.B.: Oh, on that, there are two ways to -- and it's a piece of oak, you can put it in the steamer and heat it up and then bend it. But he would had to have done it in sections with that because my uncle's crab steamer wasn't big enough. So he took the rail, he said -- what, two by two, oak, something like that. And secured one end of it, and tied a rope to the other end. And then each morning, we'd go paint it with diesel fuel and take up a little bit on the rope by twisting a stick between the rope, and then at night we'd do the same thing. And it probably took about a month or more, but we got the rail bent around the stern and took care of that. And it would've been a whole lot easier to do it the other way. But what are you going to do? You're just riding along in your boat, and it's not that much to see.

P.L.: You told me that he actually -- he died at the wheel of a boat, but it wasn't Old Point. Is that right?

J.B.: Right. It was the Pauline D. `Cause after his brother died, the Pauline D was a plank boat. It was a little bit wider, had a more powerful engine, it wasn't as pretty, but it was a good boat, good condition. And the Old Point was old, and it continually needs work, and it had a 68 horse diesel in it. And so he sold the Old Point and bought the Pauline D. And --

W.C.: If I may enter here, that was not without lots of sleepless nights and thinking. Should I do that, should I not, should I do it? Is that cost effective? You know, should I really buy that boat? And that went back and forth, and it was off again, on again, until finally he bought it and I think he made the right decision `cause the Old Point was getting to where it needed a lot of maintenance.

J.B.: And a plank boat's a whole lot cheaper to maintain than a log boat. One problem was, is that the only place that he could find anybody that could work on it was Smith Railway up in Seaford. And, of course, he was getting right old, and you don't have the people that can do stuff now in those days that you had previously. I mean

previously, they could do everything at the smith's. But they were getting so that they just didn't have the skilled people to do it. On a plank boat, almost anybody can work on those. What do you do? Rip out a plank, cut another one, put it back in, nail it up and that's it. So I think that had a whole lot to do with it.

T.H.: Smith's Railway in Seaford, Delaware?

J.B.: No, Virginia.

W.C.: Right off. Right off the Pearson River. Up Cheeam's Creek. And we went to school

J.B.: You don't have a chart, do you?

W.C.: No. We went to school with the boys in the family, but that was where he would always carry his boat to the railway. There were other, there was a railway downtown Hampton that maybe we'll get to show you a little later that could've done all that work, but that closed down and turned into restaurants and waterfront property. So the only place left was up through this railway that we're telling you about. And again, Joe, if -- maybe you could've gone to St. Michaels to the museum and gotten some work done on the log boat.

J.B.: No, they pick it up with a travel lift. Don't you?

(Laughter.)

N.C.: And, Joe, when they were moving the Old Point, they were pulling, and pulling and pulling, and nothing was happening --

J.B.: You already told me about that.

N.C.: Did I tell you?

W.C.: You told him.

N.C.: Okay.

W.C.- We told him about the scag coming loose, the keel or the scag, I forget now, when you tried to get it up, and told you all about that, that amusing story about what's holding it. All the lines are loose. Had to get a diver to go down and find that --

N.C.: Had to get a diver.

W.C.: -- that it was burning mud. Only thing I remember him having a problem with, and I guess that was constant, was the water cooler system, of course, was copper tubing running under the bottom

of the boat, nailed up to the logs, and sometimes have to replace that or it comes loose, or driftwood or something would hit it. Basically, mix some concrete and fill up the holes.

T.H.: What engines do you remember in the boat?

J.B.: They had the 35 horse Minus diesel. And that's the one that was used then.

T.H.: What kind of diesel was it?

J.B.: Minus. Fellow gave me a brochure on the Minus from a ring book he had. They had cylinders for more horsepower. And this was 35 horsepower. It was rotated probably up to about 350 rpm, very low speed. Direct drive through the shaft. Then it started with air. And the way they would start it, you had a plug that you would pull out and either put a little piece of rope or something like that, it uses a glow plug to get it started, put that in. And it started rotating with the air, and it had a great big flywheel on it, and that's the way you started it. And one reason he got rid of that, and this was in the 40's, I think, when he bought the 68 horsepower Booder diesel, was he couldn't get parts for it. Up until then, there were enough engines of that type that had been taken out and laid up by Mallory's machine shop that he could go over there, and something would go bad on this and he'd get a part for it. But he'd used all the parts off the old engines, and he couldn't get no more parts, so then he replaced it with the Booder diesel.

T.H.: That was a four or six cylinder Booder?

J.B.: I don't remember.

T.H.: And that was military surplus?

J.B.: No, no.

T.H.: That was before World War II, I guess.

J.B.: Oh, no. I mean he got it during -- that was probably in the 40's. Probably got it during World War II or something, but it wasn't, you know, like an engine off a landing barge, something like that. Mostly they used, I think General Motors diesels and stuff like that. But it was a Booder company made marine diesels. And that was nice because you had a button to press for your glow plugs to heat them up, and then press a starter.

You didn't have to go down and throw valves and stuff like that, start it like you had to with engines. And when he put that in, that raised the stern probably about four to six inches from where it was before because of this great big massive modest engine versus this relatively light new diesel. And it had a two-to-one reduction gear on it. He'd really ordered a three-to-one, but it came with a two-to-one, so he just kept that one, the reduction gear.

T.H.: And then he put a General Motors 671 --

J.B.: No. This -- had this in when you sold it, the Booder. The people that bought it after that put the other engine in it.

T.H.: Is the 671 lighter than the original two-cylinder diesel?

J.B.: I would say they're about, probably about the same weight, `cause 671's a right good-size engine. And, of course, the other one's this massive steel construction. But I would say they were very close to the same weight.

T.H.: So in this picture, it probably had a Booder in it?

J.B.: No, because this is when he had the sail, and so this he had the Minus diesel engine in it.

T.H.: The GM 671 has a 1.3 to 1 reduction gear.

J.B.: Yeah, this is more horsepower. So it's -- a bigger wheel.

T.H.: I was a little surprised that it had a 1.3 to 1 instead of some more reduction.

J.B.: Yeah. You would think so, but it wasn't used for pulling and stuff like that. It was used for a coastal type thing. And usually with the higher propeller speed will give you higher velocity. Of course, she's only going to go so fast no matter what you put into it. But you want the low propeller speed and the big power for the pushing power. So that's the reason he was going to get the three-to-one, but he got the two-to-one. And, of course, that increases speed some, but with a boat like that, you're not going to increase the speed much no matter what you put in it.

T.H.: This was her fuel tank right there on deck?

J.B.: Yeah, this is the fuel tank right here. And this was the square one, `cause this was before he had the other one, because the one that blowed up.
T.H.: How much would that hold?
J.B.: It would probably hold about, probably about 200 gallons or more. He used to be able to go out and average about 15 gallons of fuel a day. And with the Booder diesel, it was very efficient. My uncle, when they built the Mildred Bell, put a General Motors diesel in it that he got from a landing barge. And he would run air to fuel a lot of days. And he had a tank about that size. When my dad would have to tow him back into the dock because he'd run out of-fuel.
T.H.: Your uncle built the Mildred Bell?
J.B.. Yeah.
T.H.: In 1947?
J.B.: Somewhere in there. I don't remember when.
T.H.: I was a part owner of her for a while.
J.B.: Is that right?
T.H.: Yeah.
J.B.: They made her, they made her into a real nice little -- just a good boat.
T.H.: Yeah, I liked her. That was a good boat.
W.C.- I haven't seen her for years.
J.B.: Yeah. She was built out in Seaford, and -

T.H.: Her papers said she was built in Odd, whatever that is.
J.B.: Yeah, that's in Poquoson.
W.C.: It's in Poquoson. You had Odd, you had Jess, and then you had Messick. And then at one time, East Messick.
N.C.: And Ernest.
W.C.: And we told you Ernest was at the dock, the infamous whistle-blowing dock that's up on the wall there.
J.B.: That was in East Messick.
W.C.: Ernest, that was the post office. And then there was a Messick post office, and a Jess and an Odd. That's how everything went by post office. But that boat that you're talking about

N.C.: You know the man that --
W.C.: -- yeah. That was used, he used to carry -- go in the ocean.
J.B.: He started
W.C.: I think he trolled it for a while.
J.B.: Yeah, yeah He dredged.
W.C.: Dredged.
J.B.: Never trolled. Sometimes he would, you know, get seed oysters in the oyster ground. And sometimes he would dredge up the oysters to shuck. But then he's the one that started the deep-sea fishing out of Chesapeake Bay `cause everybody else was fishing out of -- inlet in Cape Hatteras and stuff like that. So he said well my goodness, they can do it, we can do it, so he's the one that started it.
T.H.: With the Mildred Bell.
J.B.: With the Mildred Bell. And he used to go out long -- swordfish with her.
T.H.: That Mildred Bell is a good, good boat.
J.B.: Oh, yeah, she's a nice boat.
T.H.: We owned her for three or four years.
J.B.: They made her into a real nice little --
T.H.: She was a little yacht with that cabin on her.
J.B.. Yeah.
T.H.: But that -- the only thing they really changed on the boat was just cutting those deck beams and raising that cabin.
J.B.: Yeah. I saw one time after, you know, they got rid of and all -- just cruised right along. Right in the bay someplace, they took her fishing.
N.C.: That may be when you had it. How did you use the Mildred Bell?
T.H.: We licensed it to carry passengers.
J.B.: See, they made a yacht out of it.
N.C.: Uh-huh (Affirmative).
T.H.: We bought it after the man made the yacht out of it, and we did everything that we had to do to carry passengers with it.
W.C.: Were you running from the islands like Crisfield and places?

T.H.: We ran out of Cambridge, and Oxford, and St. Michaels, Annapolis. We went all around with it.
W.C.: Do you know where it is now?
T.H.: It's in Baltimore. It's still carrying passengers. It belongs to a school up there. What's the name of that school?
P.L.: Living Classrooms.
T.H.: Living Classrooms. We sold it to them.
N.C.: Now that uncle was not the uncle that we've been talking about.
J.B.: This is my mother's brother --
W.C.: Mother's side.
N.C.: That's on the other side of the family. And they had two daughters, Mildred and Bell. Mildred Lee and Haddie Bell. And both of them, Mildred Lee died with -- had to have kidney transplants. Haddie Bell died with --
J.B.: She never did get the transplant though.
N.C.: Yes, she did.
W.C.: She did.
N.C.: Yeah, yeah. She lived about two years after --
W.C.: Both of the daughters died with kidney problems.
N.C.. No --
J.B.: No, Haddie Bell died of heart problems.
N.C.: Haddie was the first patient that the doctor at Johns Hopkins had lost when they first started the open heart, because the doctor had never lost a patient. And when she left, she said he hasn't lost one yet, and I hope he doesn't lose this one. And he did. But that's interesting how things get --
J.B.: She had a problem with a hole in her heart, and it was getting worse and worse.
W.C.: I remember now.
T.H.: We bought that boat up there at Diegel's, it was at Diegel's. And we bought it from -- I can't remember the owner's name, for $12,000. And we spent a total, buying it and improving it, of $40,000.
J.B.: Tax people get this.
T.H.: We had $40,000, and --

J.B.: You still had a good boat for that, price of boats now days.
T.H.: We did. And we sold that boat -- we ran lots of crews on it, we were making pretty good money, and our books were showing that we were paying this boat off. And then somebody wanted to buy it from us, and we told them we wanted $85,000 for it, and they paid us. Which was a small fortune. We paid off the loan and divided up the rest.
J.B.: Uh-huh (Affirmative). It was a very profitable enterprise.
T.H.: It was. Two of us, there were three of us in the partnership, and two of us did all the work on it. The other one --
J.B.: He was just an owner.
T.H.: He was just a partner.
J.B.: Had his name on the --
T.H.: He was the reason we sold it because he had another boat too, he was sort of competing against himself and us. He was making more money with his other boat. So we decided if we were all going to remain friends for the rest of our lives, which we are very good friends, we decided we were going to sell the Mildred and make a little money.
W.C.: Very interesting story.
T.H.: She's still going and it's a great boat.
J.B.: We used to be down there at Messick's Point, and -- had that General Motors diesel on it

W.C.: By the way, that's on Back Road with this -- it was operating from --
J.B.: Yeah. Back River. And you could hear a boat roar. And you'd say okay -- another race. And you look, you see `em coming through, in fact, they're -- a big wake at the bow, and somebody else behind him puffing smoke trying to stay up with him. She was a fast boat.
T. H.: Old Point was a fast boat too.
J.B.: Not like the Mildred Bell was.
T.H.: No, but I brought Old Point home from Diegel's Railway too when we first got her. And she hadn't been hauled out in a year or so. And when I got in her and started her up, took all the

cheaper. So he would get all of his work, like his rudders and his tanks and his dredgers and stuff like that done at normal school. Whereas the people lived in Hampton didn't have that privilege.
N.C.: Now Hampton normal school is now Hampton University, and a great university too. But at that time, not any, I want to say academic work.
W.C.: Nursing and skilled trades.
N.C.: They were all on-hands, bricklayers and, as they said, nurses.
J.B.: It wasn't a liberal arts college.
N. C.: No.
J.B.: It was more or less a trade school, that's all.
N.C.: Uh-huh (Affirmative). And that's it, a training school is the word.
W.C.: And I'm sure he wasn't the only person that used that --
J.B.: Oh, no. Everybody outside of Hampton used to do it. In fact, some people in Hampton would give `em to somebody else, and they'd carry `em down and get it done.
N.C.: Friend of a friend.
W.C.: Friend of a friend.
J.B.. Yeah.
N.C.: But that's what bothered dad.
J.B.: He wouldn't do that.
N.C.: He would not take anybody else's. And he was the type of person he didn't think that his friends ought to expect him to, ought to respect him enough not to do that.
P.L.: Two other things I wanted to ask. One, could you tell -- could you repeat for me again the eime that your father had to replace the stem on Old Point and what led up to that?
J.B.: Oh, yeah. He was running fish back over to Norfolk. And it was a very stormy day. And coming out of Back River, going to Norfolk, there used to be a buoy, it was almost like a lighthouse, but it was a round, metal, real heavy canister-type buoy with the light up on top of it. And as he went past it, the wheel rope broke for his driver. And before he could come astern -- I mean he came astern, but he couldn't stop the boat, then they

slammed into it. And, of course, this great big object in the boat has smashed the bow in on the front part, probably -- bow on the front, probably almost down to the waterline. And so what he did, he moved everything aft and he took it in Hampton Creek and used his brother's boat. And then he had to get it rebuilt at that time. And that's when they -- it's got a new stem on it. And, of course, new wood up in the upper part of the bow. And you may possibly see marks, you know, where they normally do that in steps. Then he used to have a big king post type thing. I mean it was wood, it didn't have the -- right up on the bow. And then they took that off when they did that. But used to be up here. We had another name for it I won't use on here, but right up here on the bow, and that's where we'd put a dock and we'd mark it and stuff like that (indiscernible).

P.L.: Yeah. Okay. I think that might show up in some of the older pictures, that post.

J.B.: It might. And I've got -- I looked through my other stuff, and of course I used to have a lot of pictures. I don't know what happened to `em. But see this does have something up there, but it's not like the other one `cause that was, you know, square, about that square like this. But I have some nine millimeter, or eight millimeter movie film. And my projector won't work. And I'm going to try to rent one if I can find one. And if I can, then what I'll do is I'll go through and edit out the parts with the Old Point on it. And I'll send `em up to you and you can go ahead and do what you want to with it and send it back. Because I got a stack of movie film about that big. I haven't looked at it in, what, probably 30, 40 years. And no wonder the thing went bad.

~'.L.: One last thing. Your brother-in-law asked you earlier on to relate your worst experience on the boat, and I wonder if you could do that again. The day you fell overboard.

J.B.: Oh, (laughter). I was trying to think, `cause I didn't have many bad experiences. We were taking the Mennonite colony, 74 Mennonites out for a moonlight cruise on Hampton Roads. And out

lines off, put her in reverse to back away from the dock, she wouldn't leave. The barnacles were that thick on her propeller.

W.C.: Probably so.

T.H.: We got a guy to come over there, and he jumped under the boat and scraped it all off clean, and Schaffner cleaned the rudder. And she was, we had Mr. Jim down there, our other buy boat that we have there, and Mildred Bell was equally as fast as that or faster going up the bay. It's a new boat with a big engine.

N.C.: You mentioned -- go ahead.

T.H.: Oh, that's all.

N.C.: You mentioned -- when we were growing up, of course, nobody had any problem with this, you know, no food and food lines and all that, because they just go down and catch their food, or they go out and really have a farm. And nobody down there

W.C. : Go to Uncle Floyd's store.

N.C.: Right, not many stores. But anyway, now at Poquoson, which it was Messick, but the whole area became Poquoson City, they have the highest average income in the state, $58,000.

W.C.: It's a bedroom community for --

N.C.: Average income. And they have these million dollar homes, and it's just beautiful things.

W.C.: Well that's typical --

N.C.: But Rebel was that way at one time too.

P.L.: We're about out of tape here.

(END OF TAPE 1)

(BEGIN TAPE 2)

P.L.: If you could tell me about the

J.B.: Crab -- on a crab dredge, you have the barnacles across the bottom of it, and then you have square holes in there, and your teeth go back through the holes, and they're pounded on the back side so they don't come out. And they go down probably about six or eight inches or more, and they tape it down to a fairly narrow point on the bottom. But one problem they had was that when you dredge it, you hit something, and it bends a tooth backwards. And that's real hard to straighten out.

You know you're going to end them sideways, but that's no problem. So what he did is he had a little piece of iron. Weld it from the back side of the strength part of the bar down about halfway down the teeth so that it would reinforce it and they wouldn't bend back. Of course, they're all made that way now.

T.H.: They did this on each tooth then?

J.B.: On each tooth, yeah. Here's your back cart. Your teeth go through here, and this is, you 'snow, flattened out on the back. Your teeth come down quite a ways like this. And so he put this little piece up here, and you look at all of `em now. I can show you some if you want to see `em. I don't know if you're familiar with `em or not. And they give it a lot of strength because your tooth is shaped like this. So -- well a little more tape than that. But to bend it this way is no problem to straighten that out. But when you bend it back here like this, that's hard to straighten, but usually, you know, it would do this up here. So we got a pull of there. And bend like this. That's hard to straighten. And, of course, with a tooth like that, you're not going to catch anything. It's just going to ride up the boat. So his first one did that, and he did that at a normal school, out at Hampton Institute. And then now days, everybody does that to this.

V.J.: Can you explain about the Hampton Institute, and how people got work done there?

J.B.: It used to be at Hampton's Institute, it was a normal school, which was an industrial education type thing. And in order to give the students work so that they could learn how to do things, they would do work for outside people. However, since there were other blacksmith shops, and welding shops and so forth in Hampton, they were not allowed to take any work from anybody that lives in Hampton. Since dad lived in Poquoson, he could take his work over there and get it done. And the students, of course, they go extra special try to make sure they do a good job, and they did a good job. And the price amounted to basically buying the material. And it was much, much

there, we anchored. Then they had the church service, and a nice little meeting. And then we had some fantastic food that they brought for a picnic. And on the way back in, I was sitting on the water barrel with my foot on the anchor line. And the anchor line, of course, was wet. And we got into the dock. I stepped on a piling that was sloped a little bit on the top of it to make it look nice. I stepped on it, my foot slipped, and I fell overboard. Grabbed a piling. I didn't go all the way down because I don't swim worth a hoot. And Mr. Berkhauler turned to dad, says Captain, your boy fell overboard. Dad says he ain't never fallen overboard in his life. A little while later, I came back and I was soaked up to my waist. He said what happened to you? I said I fell overboard. And next year, we didn't get the contract for the Mennonites. And that was, what, $100 to take `em out on a moonlight cruise. Dad claimed I cost him two Mennonite contracts.

(Laughter.)

1q. C.: He said the food was better than the money, though, when they would take them.

W.C.: Another -- his twin, Joe, you can straighten me out if I make an error. But this dredging on Hampton bar transplanting oysters, and Jim had a plate, I guess, a dental plate, and he lost it overboard. He got sick --

J.B.: He got sick. When he went inside to throw up, it went overboard. And the captain said giminy, Jim, he says that costs me more than we made today. So we dredged that whole area. He said boys, now you all be sure to look good in there because we want them teeth back. We never did find `em.

(Laughter.)

J.B.: One day -- Dad never did cuss and all like that. But one day we were taking the dredge gear off with his -- around the sides and stuff like that to protect it. And I was helping him in Hampton at Smith Railway. And he was holding a pair of pliers with a punch, and I was using a little maul to drive out one of the bolts. And I missed and hit the pliers. Slammed his finger up

against the bulkhead, they were side there between the pliers and the bulkhead. He's running up and down. Oh, my goodness. You're going to ruin me, ruin me. I'll never be any good, I'll never be any good. He didn't cuss. He's just shaking. And I said well dad, remember what you always said. And had a saying. Said it could always be worse. Which meant that if he cut this finger off, it could be worse. You could've cut `em all off. So be thankful it's not any worse than it is. I said remember what you always say. He said what's that. I say it could always be worse. He said how? I says I could've broke the whole hand. But that was his saying if something happened: well, it could've always been worse.

W.C.: I never heard a word of profanity from him in all the years I knew him, and I knew him since I was growing up, standing on the church corner in the front of church, with my dad and all the others talking in between services, and around the water as we grew up. But you can say that. I've heard -- I'm sure he took a drink now and then when he was a young man.

J.B.: Oh, yeah.

•.C.: But I never, in his adult life when I knew him, I never heard an oath out of his mouth, or my daddy's either.

J. B.: His main phrase was giminy.

•.C.: Right. No matter how bad it was, giminy.

•.C.: One day I was going on the boat with him. And I could go any time. I mean I just went freely any day I wanted to go. But on the way, we had to stop and get gas. And so what do you do, you pull up to the gas station and you wait for the person to fill his tank with gas, and then you pull up and get your gas, five gallons for a dollar. This man came to the station, saw the car in front of the station, using the station, the car behind, which was daddy's, but no. He turned back into the station.

•.C.: To the gas pump.

•.C.: To the pump. Got out of his car, and looked at dad and said, Burt, are you waiting for gas? Dad said no, that's all right. He looked at

me. He said Chum, I've never needed gas that bad. He would never have done that to anybody. But he wouldn't say anything to anybody that did it to him. But I wish you had time to hear, my son went down and interviewed mother. And she was telling about all, you know, when they were young and everything. And she said -- she just laughed and laughed. And she said Ernie would let me do anything I wanted to do, and he really shouldn't have, you know. And that's what she said. He told me that she may not always do what should be done, but one thing I can truthfully say, she thinks it's what should be done.

P.L.: Do you have more to ask?

V.J.: Yes, I have a couple more questions. Where did you store provisions in the forepeak?

J.B.: Anywhere you wanted to.

V. J.: Were there lockers, or shelves, or cupboards?

J.B.: No, there weren't no lockers. But on the port side there, there was, you know, a little rail, and they used to set `em behind there.

V.J.: And you said that later on you carried your lunch.

J.B.: That was when we were dredging oysters, transplanting oysters. Because you didn't have time to cook and all that stuff. But most cases when you're dredging crabs or when you're running fish and all, you always cook.

V. J.: When you carried your lunch, did you carry t in anything specific or particular?

J.B.: The main thing was we'd always have fig preserve sandwiches because we had a big fig bush, and mother would make fig preserves, a whole bunch of `em. And so you always have, you always had fig preserve sandwiches. But otherwise, it was just ham or cheese or something like that.

V. J.. Did you have something to carry it in?

J.B.. A bag.

V.J. . A bag.

J.B.: Just a plain old bag.

V. J.. Paper bag?

J.B.. Yeah.

P.L.: Anything else?

J.B.: I got his compass out in my car if you want to see that. I mean dad, as she said he was kind of thrifty, but he never bought junk. And so I got that in the car. You can look at it out there, I can bring it in here, either one you want to do. But that's off the Old Point. And, of course, my brother got the eagle.

N.C.: That must've been the three things I was -

W.C. . Okay.

(END OF INTERVIEW.)