

Name of person Interviewed: Theodore (Ted) Pedersen [TP]

Facts about this person:

Age (if known) 89

Sex Male

Occupation Fisherman (retired)

If a fisherman (if retired, list the ports used when fishing),

Home port Brooklyn, NY and New Bedford, MA

and Hail Port (port fished from, which can be the same) Brooklyn,
NY and New Bedford, MA

Residence (Town where lives)

Ethnic background (if known) Norwegian

Interviewer: Janice Gadaire Fleuriel [JGF]

Also present: Mrs. Pedersen (Ethel) [EP]

Sound Tech: Jeff Sherman [JS]

Transcriber: Janice Gadaire Fleuriel

Place interview took place: New Bedford Harbormaster House

Date and time of interview: Saturday, Sept. 27, 2008

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KEYWORDS: Norway; Kvilhaugsvik; Karmoy Island; Brooklyn, New York; New Bedford, Massachusetts; Scalloping; Cape May, New Jersey; Great Depression; Long Island; Clothing business; Family lost at sea; Army; World War II; Army ski troops; Infantry; D-Day; Viking battalion; Boat shifts; Beliefs; Scallop cutting; Shacking; Deckhand, Mate; Skipper; Fishing injuries; Brighton Marine Hospital; F/V Fairhaven; 200-mile limit; Russian fleet; Polish fleet; German; fleet; Florida; Alabama; Mississippi; Louisiana; Texas; Shrimp fleet; Gulf of Florida; Canada; Georges Bank; Government subsidies; Fleet upgrades; Fishermen's union; Regulations; Close calls at sea; Navigation technologies; LORAN; RADAR; Weather forecasts; Storms at sea; Sports fishermen associations;

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[Start of Interview]

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[End of interview]

TRANSCRIPT

[00:00]

JGF: Whether you like it not? Is that...? [Laughs]

TP: Teddy. And Theodore.

OK. Today is September 27th, 2008. This is Janice Fleuriel. We're in the Harbormaster's House in New Bedford at the Working Waterfront Festival. And I'm interviewing Theodore (Ted) Pedersen.

[Sound check]

So usually... I know I have down that you're a retired scalloper. Yes?

TP: Yeah.

JGF: Usually we like to just back up and start by having people tell us when they were born, and where they came from, and sort of family background in fishing or whatever.

TP: I was born in [?]

JGF: In...?

TP: In [?] on the island of [?] in Norway.

JGF: Would you mind spelling those for me?

TP: K-v-i-l-h-a-u-g-s-v-i-k.

JGF: OK. And the island was?

TP: K-a-r-m-o-y.

JGF: OK. Thank you. I don't think I would have gotten them right. And that was in Norway?

TP: Yeah.

JGF: OK. And that was February something, right?

TP: February 4, 1919.

JGF: OK. And... So I'm going to assume that you grew up in a fishing family? Perhaps, if you grew up on an island in Norway? Is that correct?

TP: Well... My father left to come over here when I was about four. And, so I didn't see much of him. He came back home in '27.

JGF: Wow. So you were twenty-three... No.

TP: In 1923 he left. Came back in 1927. Then he—and then left again. Came back in 1929. We were going to go with him. In the winter of 1930. Only I caught scarlet fever. So.

JGF: Oh...

TLP: I couldn't [chuckles] go. Until... My mother and I, we left in May of that year, 1930.

JGF: OK. And where did your father come, to New Bedford, or...?

TP: No. My father lived in Brooklyn, New York. And that's where we landed. In Brooklyn, New York. 1930, the 27th of May.

JGF: Wow. Wow. Was that an Ellis Island thing? Or no?

TP: No. We... We got off the boat—or we got out of being in Ellis Island. My uncle, my father's brother, was at the dock to meet us. Because my father was out fishing...

JGF: [laughs]

TP ...when we arrived. But my uncle—my father's brother sent a note aboard. And it said, "Tell them you see your husband on the dock. And they'll let you go."

JGF: Oh...

TP: So she did. So that got us out of going to Ellis Island.
JGF: Wow.
TP: My father came in from fishing the next day.
JGF: Oh, huh. He knew you were on your way?
TP: Oh yes. But he—evidently... I don't know, whether it was a storm or if it was just a fishing trip that lasted that long I don't know.
JGF: Right. Right.
What kind of fishing was he doing?
TP: Scallop.
JGF: Yup? He was doing scalloping too?
TP: He was always scallop. Well, I don't know if he—he might have done something else before I arrived. But after I came to this country, that's all he fished was scallops.
JGF: Yeah. Wow.
And how old were you when you started doing it?
TP: The first time I opened scallop, I was thirteen. [Laughs]
JGF: [laughs] Wow. Were you on a boat or did they get brought back in?
[04:45]
TP: No, I went on a trip with my father the summer of 1932. And..., that was just that one trip. We fished off of Cape May, New Jersey. I don't know, there were seven or eight men on the boat. My father was skipper.
JGF: OK. Huh.
So, that was during the Depression. And so..., being a fisherman was probably a pretty OK living at that time, was it?
TP: Yeah. It was..., better than a lot of the shore people.
JGF: Yeah. Yeah.
TP: It wasn't too good for anybody in those—you know, in those Depression years.
JGF: Right. But I suppose when they came back, they had to have someone that could buy the scallops? Right?
TP: Yeah. But... He stayed with it. And there was—there was, quite a little fleet there. I don't know how many boats. There must have been..., eight or ten boats going scalloping out of New York. Out of Brooklyn mostly.
And... And then, starting in 1932, '32 or '33, there was boats—they came and fished off—out of New Bedford for the summer.
JGF: Oh. OK.
TP: And, they'd come in and out of New Bedford all summer long. But then they'd come back to New York in the fall.
JGF: Is that because New Bedford had refrigeration trucks? Or because of closer to the Banks? Or why?
TP: No, well, the fishing was better up there.
JGF: It was. OK.
TP: And... But then [laughs], you're farther away from home.
JGF: Right. Right.
TP: Up there. You know? You're down off of New York, scalloping, you weren't too far from Long Island and not far from New Jersey.
JGF: Yeah.

TP: But here, when they—up here, they... Well, you'd leave New Bedford, took you twenty-four hours to get out there and twenty-four hours to get home, in those boats in those years.

JGF: Oh, right. Wow.

TP: They got a little speedier later on. But, the boats they had in those days, they only did about seven knots.

JGF: Wow. They were the old wooden boats? Right?

TP: Yeah. And they were small. I mean, they were smaller, much smaller. They weren't *half* the size of what they [laughs].

JGF: Yeah [laughs]

TP: So.

JGF: Your first trip. Did you go because you wanted to?

TP: Yeah.

JGF: Yup?

TP: I lived to regret it. I was sick as a dog.

JGF: Were you? [Laughs]

TP: But then I went again in 19—the summer of '35 I made another trip. '34. But then in 19—1935 my father stayed up here. In the wint—in the winter of '36, my mother packed up the furniture and she came up here.

JGF: OK. Into New Bedford?

TP: She and my sister came up here. And I stayed in Brooklyn.

JGF: Oh. How old were you at that point?

TP: Seventeen.

JGF: OK.

TP: If I went with them up here, I would lose a year in high school. As it was, I was old, because, you know, when I came to this country I got put back a couple of years.

JGF: Yeah.

TP: So I stayed there until I got out of high school. And I got a job up there. And, I got a big promotion, got sent to Washington.

[10:03]

JGF: Wow. What was the job?

TP: The raise they gave me [chuckles]. The raise they gave me wasn't enough to live on down there. So I [chuckles], so I didn't last very long in that job.

JGF: Wow. What kind of job was that?

TP: I was in charge of deliver—it was a store called Best and Company. A clothing store on Fifth Avenue. It's closed now.

JGF: Yeah.

TP: It was like Lord & Taylor. It's expensive. And they opened stores. There was one in Brookline. There was a summer store in Hyannis. They had stores, branches... They had a branch in Washington, DC.

JGF: So you didn't have any sense—when you went on your first few fishing trips you didn't necessarily think that you would stay in fishing, it doesn't sound like.

TP: No... Besides that my father didn't want me fishing.

JGF: No? No?

TP: [chuckles] Well, when I quit—I quit my job in Washington—I quit on the day of the '38 hurricane by the way.

JGF: Oh, boy.
TP: Well he said, he kept saying, “Go back to New York.” [Chuckles] He didn’t want me fishing.
JGF: Why not? Did he say?
TP: Well, I don’t know. Maybe he had warnings [chuckles] or something. But, my grandfather went down in a boat off of Cape May, New Jersey in 1903.
JGF: Oh... Yeah.
JGF: Was this his father?
TP: No, that was my mother’s father. Then my father went down in 1950.
JGF: Oh, boy. Oh yeah. Huh.
TP: So, maybe he had warnings. I don’t know.
JGF: But that destiny wasn’t going to be yours, I guess, then.
TP: No, I guess not!
JGF: [laughs]
TP: I guess I’m going to die in bed.
JGF: [laughs]
So..., you came up to New Bedford? And then did you end up fishing here?
TP: Yeah, that was... I tried Boston, the Boston stores. Stores in New Bedford, here, but they weren’t hiring. ’38 was still a bit of the Depression.
JGF: Yeah.
TP: So... And I started fishing in ’39.
JGF: ’39. OK. What boat did you go on?
TP: Well, I was [chuckles]. On several boats. I was on the [?Shannon] and the [?Dargnee]. But my father went skipper on a Boston boat. In September of 1939. And then I went with him. And I stayed there until 1942. And then I went in the Army.
JGF: Oh, OK. Hm.
TP: I got out of the Army in ’46. And I went fishing again.
JGF: Yeah. Out of New Bedford then?
TP: Yeah. Well, I got married in 1942.
JGF: Oh my gosh [to Mrs. Pedersen]. You got married and then he took off for the Army, huh?
TP: We had four months.
JGF: You did? Four whole—wow.
EP: [chuckles]
JGF: So that was the beginning of you getting used to him going away? Like, either on boat trips, or...? Well the Army was the longest he went away? Yes?
EP: Yeah.
JGF: Wow. In the Army where did you go? Did you stay here or did you go to other parts of the world?
TP: I went to Minnesota, to Colorado. And ten thousand feet up in Colorado on the skis.
JGF: Wow!
TP: Ski troops!
JGF: Wow!
[14:58]

TP: But then they took the skis away from us. And we were just ordinary infantry when we got over to England. We were in England—we got to England in September of '43. And, then '44, D-Day. Luckily I missed D-Day. We landed on the beach eighteen days later.

JGF: Wow. Was it still crazy or all cleared out?

TP: The beach was cleared out. It was [chuckles] plenty crazy. The beaches were clear though.

JGF: I see.

TP: I was a truck driver.

JGF: Huh. So at this point would you have been trucking supplies around?

TP: Yeah. I trucked engineering equipment. See we were a separate battalion. And... The way they used us, was, the ship was around fast. And we had—we had trucks enough to carry all the men around. There was only a thousand—there was a thousand men. It was the Viking battalion. It was supposed to be all Norwegians.

JGF: The Viking huh [laughs]?

TP: Originally there were about nine hundred out of the thousand that were Norwegian born or of Norwegian heritage.

JGF: Wow. Were people still speaking Norwegian with each other? Or would you all speak English?

TP: No, we didn't speak Norwegian in the Army. Funny thing we got—after the war—after D-Day, they sent us to Norway.

JGF: Huh!

TP: And those of us who could speak Norwegian, you know, we spoke Norwegian to the people on the dock in Oslo. But they replied in English.

JGF: [laughs] You all got to practice each other's—well, you weren't practicing either language, you knew them both.

TP: Yeah. It was fun.

JGF: Wow. Was that your first time back in Norway from when you left as a boy?

TP: Yeah. That's right. Well yeah [chuckles] I didn't get much.

[To EP] We went to Norway in '91? 1991?

Bad place to go.

JGF: Bad place to go you say? Why?

TP: Well, three days afterwards I had a heart attack. [Laughs]

JGF: Oh, geez. Oh no. Wow.

TP: [laughs] I got home and three days later I had a heart attack. Too much cream cake. [Laughs]

JGF: [laughs] Huh. I guess you beat that one too, though. That's good. Doesn't look like you're eating too much cream cake anymore.

TP: No. [Laughs]

JGF: So, when you got back from World War II, you came back to New Bedford? And then you started fishing again?

TP: Yeah.

JGF: At that point, what were you—like a deckhand or a higher up?

TP: Yeah, I was a deckhand. Well, my father—that boat, that boat that I was on before the War, my father and two other guys they bought that boat.

JGF: Oh, OK.

TP: And then I went aboard there. Well, first I went on another boat.
JGF: Yeah?
TP: But then I went aboard there. And... But then the engine conked. Then they had to overhaul the engine. So then I shipped out on another boat. And I stayed on that boat. So I didn't get back with my father anymore.
[20:03]
JGF: Right. How was it to work with your father in close quarters on a boat? Did you guys work well together?
TP: Yeah. It was no different than any other [chuckles].
JGF: That's good.
TP: You don't... have much—Well you just work... At that time, you were working six on and six off. Six on and *three* off.
JGF: Ugh! OK [laughs]
TP: Until 1948? Or something like that. Then they got it up to six on and six off. Before that you were pretty tired.
JGF: You didn't have time to not get along or anything, right?
TP: No.
JGF: [chuckles]
Do you remember, like back in some of those earlier days, were there... like many beliefs for good luck? On the boat? Were there beliefs about keeping good luck on the boat? Like not putting the hatch cover upside down? Or things like that?
TP: No... Not to my thinking [laughs]. I've heard—you know I've heard.
JGF: Yeah? But none of the skippers that you've worked with or anything really?
TP: No.
JGF: Yeah?
TP: No... You know, you don't, whistle. And stuff like that. No.
JGF: But you didn't really worry about those things too much? Yeah.
TP: No. Not... I don't know.
JGF: How long did it take you to get good at cutting scallops?
TP: Well... I mean—as a man, I went out, I had training on, in 1932, 1934. And I forgot to tell you I went out of New Bedford in 1936, one trip. And then I went one trip as a shacker. So, when I went, as a man, I mean [chuckles], I was fully proficient.
JGF: Yes. Right.
TP: As far as opening—as far as doing the work.
JGF: Yup. You'd gotten all your training earlier on? Yeah. Huh.
TP: And that one—I mean, even without the other stuff, that one trip shacking, that toughens you up.
JGF: I bet it does! Yeah.
TP: Well, you know, you're supposed to... All the stuff that the men go through taking the scallops, you're out there picking what they left behind. And then you've got to shovel all that stuff overboard.
JGF: Oh. Wow.
TP: So [chuckles]. That's not easy.
JGF: No I bet not.
TP: But...
JGF: Builds up your back muscles, and your arms? Huh?

TP: Well... Some people can't handle it.
JGF: So when—After you finished being on your Dad's boat, and you went on the other boat, were you a deckhand or...
TP: I was a deckhand on that boat. Then I..., went out on a boat called The Flamingo and I went mate there.
JGF: Uh huh.
TP: And then from there I went on a boat called the [?William Eldridge]. And I was mate there.
JGF: Mm hm.
TP: And... And then, with the same skipper I went on..., on another boat and I was mate there. It was called the Vivian K.
Then I went skipper on a boat called the [?Lauren K].
JGF: Uh huh.
[25:00]
TP: For a year.
JGF: Hm.
TP: After the [?Lauren K] where did I go...? [Chuckles]
JGF: [laughs] You have a big boat resume.
TP: Hm?
JGF: You have a big boat resume, right? You've been on a lot.
TP: Oh, a lot of boats.
JGF: Yup.
TP: Well there was a lot of—I had a lot of skipper jobs. You know. Skippers take trips off. They get sick, or... I had a lot of those. Quite a few of those.
And then... '58, '59, I was out on a boat called the [?] and I got back trouble. And I was flat on my back for six months.
JGF: Oh. Wow.
TLP: More than that, I guess. I was in the hospital, Brighton Marine, for a month.
JGF: Wow. Was it a disk?
TP: Yeah. But, I got over it.
JGF: Oh, that's good.
TP: They told me I'd never go fishing again, but I went.
JGF: [laughs] It was in your blood. Was it in your blood at that point? Yeah.
TP: Then in '60 I went on a boat called The [?] and I stayed on that one until I retired.
JGF: What was it called?
TP: The Fairhaven.
JGF: The Fairhaven. OK. So you were skipper of that?
TP: I was skipper, and mate. I was—the owner would be skipper unless he stayed home. The last couple of years he retired and I [?] skipper steady. And then one year he went to work for the canal down here.
JGF: So what year did you retire?
TP: '80.
JGF: So you were on that boat for twelve years?
TP: Twenty.
JGF: Oh OK. Oh '60, 1960. OK. Wow.

TP: But... Well, I probably would have stayed until I was '62 but she had stomach cancer and had her stomach out. She wanted me home. So. I was ready. I had forty-one years [laughs]. So I was ready. Besides we had moved to another house in Mattapoisett, so there was plenty to do around there.

JGF: [laughs]

So, even in the twenty years that you were on the Fairhaven, did you see a lot of changes in the way things were done. Or...?

TP: Yeah. Well, the changes were—I guess what changes there were ruined the whole fleet [laughs] whole fishing industry. The ruination came... The Russians and the Polocks and the Germans and everybody came over here. You know, and, “Oh! We’ve got to get rid of them. We have to have a limit.” Then came the 200-mile limit. Nobody thought [chuckles]—they only thought of the benefit, they were going to get rid of some people. But no, that wasn’t what happened.

JGF: What did, then? What happened?

TP: Well, down in Florida, and Alabama, and Mississippi, and Louisiana, and in Texas, there were huge ship companies. And they owned an awful lot of boats. And all those shrimp boats, that those companies owned, there wasn’t enough shrimp in the Gulf of Florida to support that fleet.

JGF Huh.

[29:55]

TP: And *all* the shrimp that was caught came from the Coast of Mexico and Central American and all the way down to the northern coast of South America. Well, you put 200-mile limit, well those fleets they couldn’t go down there.

JGF: Oh.... So they came up here.

TP: Yes.

Not only that, but Canada took half of Georges Bank.

JGF: Wow. And before that...

TP: Wait a minute.

And then those, big fleets, from the Gulf, and Florida, they wasn’t doing anything. They wasn’t making any money. They said, “Well, look up in Massachusetts, up in New England. They seem to be doing alright.” So they sent the whole [chuckles] bloody fleet up here.

JGF: Wow.

TP: Well.

JGF: Hm. Now did they come up here for scallops?

TP: No, not necessarily scallops. But fish.

And then in Washington, that Studds out here on the Cape, he got up the rule that said fishermen are no longer employees.

JGF: Oh, right.

TP: [chuckles] There went Social Security. There went the income tax.

JGF: Hm.

TP: Oh... And, you know. Those changes... Not only that, but “Oh, we have to upgrade the fleet.” You got too many boats in the first place that’s there with all the fleets up there. “We have upgrade—We’ll give them fifty percent subsidies.” [Laughs]

So they started building boats. People got..., got boats worth seven hundred thousand dollars for three hundred and fifty thousand. [Laughs] Or four hundred thousand.

So, that's the big change there, you know. The big change that I saw.

And besides the union. Well the union got lost in the shuffle. And the union was a good thing I thought. If only for the working hours.

JGF: Right. Yeah.

TP: But not only that. The government got in it. Now, you can only have seven men—seven man crew. Well. You have to have—To make it fairly comfortable, you have to have four—two deckhands on each side, man in the pilot house. Cook. That's how we worked. I mean, all the time I worked. The cook didn't stand watch. He stayed up all day. He turned in after supper. And, he got up at four o'clock in the morning. And the rest of us we had six and six.

But anyway, seven man crew. Well you can't have four men on deck with a seven-man crew. Not and go six and six.

JGF: OK. Right.

TP: If you want five men on each watch, the man in the pilot house and two men on each side of the deck, that's ten men. Plus the cook, that's eleven. Well, you take four men away from there, you go back to...

[34:50]

TP: One of the first boats I was on was kind of a scab boat. That was in 1939. The union was new then.

JGF: OK. Yup.

TP: There was a lot of boats that didn't go too much by the union rules as far as working hours. The union said you couldn't work more than six and three. I mean, six on and three off.

But then there was... The third trip that I was on this boat, they said, "We're going to break watches." Well, me, the owner of the boat who was mate, and another guy, we stayed up thirty-three hours in a stretch.

JGF: [sucks in breath]

TP: [chuckles] Working.

We were supposed to—And after that... The other two watches they stayed up thirty and twenty-seven.

And we were going to turn in for four hours. Luckily... And, the owner, who had stayed up thirty-three hours, he woke up. After four hours. But he couldn't get the skipper up [laughs].

JGF: [laughs]

TP: For two hours. The rest of us got to sleep six.

But, you know... That's how they used to work in the old days, before the union. Now there's no union. I don't know how they work now. There's no, controls, I guess.

JGF: No... I know people have told me what they do, but I can't remember if it's six and six. Yeah.

TP: I don't know. We were still going the old—When I was working The Fairhaven, there was a couple of boats that had started—they had two gangs. They had two

gangs. The boat came in. They took out. They had another gang ready and the boat left right away.

JGF: Wow. OK. Huh.

TP: But that was just a couple of boats.

But, I don't think that worked out too well anyway.

JGF: No?

TP: But... After I retired.... But things got pretty hectic after I retired and... They was working on scallops no bigger than that.

JGF: Just a few inches?

TP: I mean I'm talking about the shells like that. Now you see the meats are [laughs].

JGF: Right. Right.

So after you retired was when the industry sort of took a dive for a little bit? Or a lot maybe?

TP: Well I don't know. I mean, I stayed away pretty much, from the docks. For a while.

We got to going—We got to going to Florida in the wintertime, so.

EP: And he had a sailboat.

JGF: You had a sailboat?

TP: Summertime we sailed.

JGF: Yeah? Wow. Huh. Did you get that after you retired?

TP: Yeah. In '83.

But now for three years, it's been sitting alongside the garage. [Chuckles]

JGF: Yeah. Huh. What's the name of it?

TP: Princess.

JGF: Princess. Hm.

So after you retired did you miss fishing? Or were you ready to just do something different?

TP: No. I didn't miss fishing at all. Nothing about it.

I missed nothing [chuckles] about fishing.

JGF: [laughs] Oh...

TP: We got fresher fish. But that's about all.

[40:00]

JGF: Hm.

TP: I didn't like fish—I mean, it was a,... I don't know it was a good enough—good livelihood. But... You know, you're gone from home all the time.

JGF: Yeah. Yeah.

[To EP] Was that hard on you too? Yeah. You got used to it maybe. [Laughs]

EP: [?]

TP: Well, I don't know.

We've been together sixty-six years, so.

JGF: Wow...

TP: I don't know. Maybe absence makes the heart grow fonder.

JGF: [laughs]

But did you miss like, family things here and there? Like, important days, of people, and stuff like that?

TP: Yeah. Well, I missed all the bad stuff.

JGF: Oh. [Laughs]

TP: I was—Anything happened, anything bad happened I wasn't there.
EP: [?You were there when the children were born.]
TP: She had a miscarriage.
JGF: Oh...
TP: I was out battling a snowstorm out off the Cape. [Chuckles]
JGF: Wow.
TP: The furnace blew up. I was out fishing.
JGF: God.
TP: What else happened?
JGF: But you said he was there when the children were born?
TP: Yeah I was there when all the children were born?
EP: Yeah.
JGF: That's good. That's doesn't always happen.
EP: No.
TP: I was supposed to be gone when the last one arrived. But the—but we got [chuckles] engine trouble.
JGF: Oh [laughs]. Huh. Wow.
So, did you have very many close calls with storms and things.
TP: No... Not really. I mean, there were—There were times [? ... a few times], and this ice—icy spray would build up. And we'd have to pound away. You know. And that was dangerous.
And one time the—one time that [?], we were all through with the trip. My father turned the boat around, going fair wind, and she took a freak—some kind of freak sea. It wasn't that bad a weather. But she took some kind of funny sea under the stern. And opened up a seam under the bow. We were eighteen hours from home. For eighteen hours, we had to bail, had all the pumps going. That was kind of scary. But I guess that's the only—about the only scary part.
JGF: So on that one did you just head right for home and hope you were going to be able to keep up by pumping.
TP: Well, we were already going to go home.
JGF: Oh, I see.
TP: This happened just as we had—We got the dredges on deck and my father turned the boat. And so the wind was—the waves were coming astern of us. And this funny wave... I don't know, caught the stern and lifted the boat up, and... Well, next thing you know, water's pouring in down below. Down in the cabin aft. In the aft cabin.
JGF: Hm.
TP: Luckily there was a—It was an old boat, you know, and it had a... Well, it had oil burners on it, but, it was built to take coal. And underneath the floor they had constructed this coal locker.
[45:00]
JGF: Huh.
TP: And the water that was leaking out of the busted up seam was leaking *into* the coal locker [chuckles] before it ran into the engine room. So we were able to bail out of the coal locker.
JGF: Oh... Huh.

TP: And... I happened to be engineer that time. And I had three pumps going down the engine—three pumps going in the engine room.

JGF: [chuckles] He's just checking that my equipment is working OK.

TP: And then I had two deck pumps. And those were going. [To JS] Thanks.

JGF: Wow.

TP: We got in and...

JGF: You must have been glad to see the walls of the harbor that day.

TP: Yeah. We got in. And we came into Kelly's and we took her up along to Kelly's dock as far as she would go and let her stand there [laughs].

JGF: [laughs]

TP: Everything was alright. Turned out alright.

JGF: Well that's good.

Did you used to tell her all these stories very much? Or not?

TP: Oh, I don't know. Did I, Ethel?

EP: [chuckles]

JGF: Did he tell you about the scary stories very much?

EP: Not that much. No.

JGF: Not that much? [Laughs]

That would be hard, I would think.

EP: Well. That *Perfect Storm* movie, you know? And the stuff they show on the west coast?

JGF: Yeah.

EP: If they would have that on TV, back when he was fishing, I probably would have been twice as nervous.

JGF: Yeah. That's true.

EP: You know? You really didn't know what it was like.

JGF: Yeah. I think it's... It's like you can't even imagine it, if you haven't been through it.

EP: Yeah.

JGF: Huh.

TP: Well. See, you mean...

We were fishing down off of Block Island one time. And, it blew a—they said it blew a hundred miles an hour. But, it before it blew that hard I'd gotten inside to Point Judith, so. [Chuckles]

JGF: OK. Yeah.

Did you find, while you were still in there, did a lot of the communication technology change?

TP: Oh, yeah. I mean the first—The first time I went skipper all I had was a compass.

JGF: Wow! [Laughs]

TP: Well, you know, it's... Then you got LORAN and then RADAR. That was a *big* change.

JGF: Yeah?

TP: Especially the LORAN?

JGF: Did it let people go to new areas? Or not change like that?

TP: No. It just let you know—No, it was just a safety thing. It let you know, where you were, exactly. You know, when you go out there, and you mess around, and all

you've got is a compass. You've got to think, "Where have I gone? And how... What direction am I from the nearest lightship? Or the nearest tower? Or the nearest buoy?" You know.

Now... I mean, with RADAR, [chuckles]...

JGF: You just set your heading for New Bedford when you want to get home. Right?

TP: Sure.

JGF: So with the compass, when you left say, port. Would you have to track, like "I went...this far at northeast" and then, so that you would know how to get back home?

TP: Yes.

JGF: Wow. [Laughs] Hm. Huh.

TP: You know, you're supposed to know what part of Georges you were on. Had to keep that—keep track of that.

JGF: Yeah. Huh.

What about with weather? In the beginning it sounds like you must have had to really know how to read the signs of weather. More than when the weather technology came in? Or...?

[50:03]

TP: Well [chuckles] the weather technology was kind of faulty anyway. And in '54 it was supposed to be very good weather technology. But I had—As a matter of fact I was on The Fairhaven the summer of '54. That was just the summer, because the owner he left—he had gone to Norway. And I had the loudspeaker on the radio, from the WHDH station. And Doc—this Doctor [?], he's a doctor there, the weatherman up in Boston. He said, "The hurricane has died out. We will get no more than sixty knots from the northeast."

JGF: Mm hm.

TP: So... So... I said to Jack, I said, "Do you think we should stay with the boat?" "Naaah," he said. Northeast wind, it's going to be calm as a pond in here. Which is true, northeast wind. We took the boat over to Hathaway's. We tied her up. And, we went home. Two hours later, Fairhaven was on Marine Park high and dry.

JGF: [gasps] Wow!

TP: [laughs]

JGF: Whoops. Huh. [Chuckles]

TP: Well... I mean, [chuckles] you had a lot more than sixty miles an hour.

JGF: I guess.

TP: And a lot...

JGF: And not northeast.

TP: And not northeast, either.

JGF: But it sounds like you sort of suspected it.

TP: Huh?

JGF: It sounds like you might have suspected something.

TP: Well... You know, I didn't trust, you know...

JGF: Yeah.

TP: And another thing, when my father was lost, they said—they gave the weather report that morning as small craft warnings. Twenty-five to thirty-five.

Well. We took out—We came in the night before. I talked to my father the day before. We were on our way home.

JGF: Yeah.

TP: And he said, well, he was coming in in a couple of days. And... That was ship to shore. And... Well. When we had got through taking out the scallops, that morning, we went to tie up at Kelly's. And this, Hank—this skipper—I was mate on that boat. He—He had to make three different tries. Every time he'd get [?] the boat, you know, and get somebody ashore, the wind was so powerful that we'd drift off.

JGF: Oh boy.

TP: And... It was a lot more than twenty-five or thirty-five you know.

JGF: [laughs] Yeah.

TP: Well, there were two boats... There were nineteen men that was lost in that twenty-five to thirty-five.

JGF: Oh boy. Huh.

TP: Twenty-five to thirty-five, you know, that's—that's not a storm.

JGF: Right. [Laughs] That's just a breeze or something?

TP: Well. You know, it's a *good* breeze, but it's not—it's not anything to worry about.

JGF: Right.

TP: But...

JGF: Wow. Hm.

TP: Two boats. Two boats with nineteen men.

JGF: Hm.

[54:52]

JGF: Well. I don't have any other—except that I could probably ask you questions all day, but. I don't have any other specific questions. Is there anything that you would have liked to tell us that I haven't asked you about? Any specific memories, or?

TP: No.

JGF: OK.

TP: Oh... No, I don't think so.

JGF: What do you think of the future of the fishing industry at this point? Do you have a sense of it? Do you think it has a bright future? Or, not?

TP: I don't know. There's too many people. With too many associations.

Now why is the—sports fishermen associations—why are they sticking their noses into commercial fishing?

JGF: Yeah.

TP: Why don't [chuckles]—why don't they just stay with their flies and their, oh, what do you call it? I don't know.

The state says one thing and then you've got these professors that say another thing. And...

JGF: Hm.

TP: Oh, I don't know.

JGF: Yeah. It's not what it was. It's not what it was. No?

TP: No. And besides—besides, you know, when you get companies that own a bunch of boats, why then, anytime...

[Interruption / talking to someone who stopped in]

JGF: So you said that you had....

TP: Well the old-time, you know, the old-time, when a man would scabble together a few dollars and buy a boat.

JGF: Yes.

TP: And, you know, go fishing. It's not like that anymore.

JGF: Right.

TP: I mean...

JGF: [chuckles] I mean, today, it's like buying a big business.

TP: You can't... And these—You don't, you don't, you don't go fishing with a boat, anymore. You go fishing with a permit. What do they call those things?

JGF: I think they get permits, yeah.

TP: [chuckles] I don't know.

JGF: Huh. Wow.

Well. My only last question is, what would you like to see, or do you think visitors to this festival should understand about fishing after being here? What would you like them to sort of understand?

[Chuckles]

TP: I don't—I haven't got any thoughts on the matter.

JGF: OK.

TP: No, I haven't got any thoughts.

JGF: Alright. Well thank you very much. I appreciate it.

TP: OK.

[End of interview]