

ANDREW MAGWOOD
Magwood Seafood, Mt. Pleasant, SC

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Date: September 15, 2014

Location: Mr. Magwood's home, Awendaw, SC

Interviewer: Sara Wood

Transcription: Shelley Chance, ProDocs

Length: One hour, thirty minutes

Project: Lowcountry Maritime

00:00:00

Sara Wood: In the future people will know who is on tape here, so this is Sara Wood. And I'm with the Southern Foodways Alliance and it's September 15, 2014. I'm sitting here with Mr. Andrew Magwood and we're in South Carolina in his home. And Mr. Magwood I'm wondering before you start if you could say hello and introduce yourself and tell me your name and—and where we are.

00:00:22

Andrew Magwood: Okay.

00:00:22

Sara Wood: And I'll go ahead and hold this.

00:00:22

Andrew Magwood: Okay, I'm—I'm—well they call me Captain Andrew and most of the shrimpers, they used to call me Uncle Andrew 'cause everybody loved me so much that they called me uncle 'cause I helped a lot of them and stuff. And born in 1938, April 22, 1938. I'm now seventy-six years old. And got a lot of good memories about all of it—shrimping and fishing and never—it wasn't all easy, don't think so. It was all hard work but the Lord helped me get by.

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Sara Wood: I'm going let you just rest that like that, and I'll just hold the mic here. You don't have to worry about the mic.

00:01:02

Andrew Magwood: Well I was going to tell you the story about my sister, Mary on Little Bulls Island. I don't know if you know about the little island. It's right straight across here.

00:01:10

Sara Wood: Tell me about it.

00:01:12

Andrew Magwood: Well, it's a small island in between Big Bulls Island and Capers Island. Well, my people in the old days used to own the Big Bulls Island—had part owner or something, my daddy and them was born and raised over there. And when they sold out my daddy had to move to a little island called—and we called it Little Bulls which at tide—when you'd get a big tide and a storm it comes right on over it. So we used to play in the yard during a storm and all, yeah and ran in the yard. And my mama raised eleven head of us up there. Yeah, and but we came to school and then summertime we stayed up there all the time and most of the time the weekends, fished up there, and daddy and mama kept chickens and we had a few hogs once in a while to butcher. And it's not a—now I got all that in my garden place up there. I would like to take you one day, you'd like to see it. It's a beautiful place up that way.

00:02:12

Well anyway we—me and my daddy and one of us stayed there with my mama and my daddy when they got older. Most of the children left and I stayed for a while and stayed with mama and daddy to help mama and daddy. We were fishing, I've done flounder gigging at night catching flounders and we would take a sand—stop sand and catch mullet and stuff and we used

to sell all the fish we'd carry it out of town and sell it. Well that's what me and daddy done for a living up there. And it was no amount of money, it took you a long time to accumulate some money. *[Laughs]*

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But it was good and I enjoyed it. And I used to set a shark line 'cause—at the inlet there when the big tide would come we—I'd catch four or five foot sharks and then I'd cut the head off and we had a little icehouse that daddy made that we put ice in and then I'd put him on ice and then when we'd go to town we'd carry it to town and I think we used to get about ten cent—ten or fifteen cent a pound for them. But it was good you know.

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And I had set a shark line with an old batteau. I don't know if—people usually don't know what bateau is. It's a rowboat. And—and I had a found an old one that wasn't no good so I anchored it out in the middle and put a shark line out there at night and next morning daddy said, “Well let's carry this fish we got in the cooler to the—to the market.” So we had a little old putt-putt boat and that's what we'd call it, putt-putt and it would take us an hour to an hour and a half to get to Sullivan's—back of Sullivan's Island where a Magwood lady and a Magwood—they had a property there. And they—we used to go to their dock and get a truck or borrow somebody's truck and loaded it and carried it to town, carried the stuff to town.

00:04:09

Well this time we left that shark line out there and we had some big tides, but—which is when you get a new moon tide we get you know it's like right now and last week, we get a six or

seven-foot tide. The tide run out so strong but the old batteau wasn't no good at all, so if I lost it, it wouldn't mean nothing. But it sank while me and daddy was gone and it didn't make no difference 'cause it was still out there floating but it would—. So my mama took my little brother Earl which is—I think he might have been eleven or twelve and they rowed out there and thought they was going to save it. Well they couldn't do nothing you know and I couldn't even do—nobody could do nothing when that tides gets big and runs out. I know you can get a full five mile an hour tide going out.

00:05:01

So they—they went up to the boat and got the shark line and tied it to—to the middle seat which was a bad thing. And both of them got on that side. Well the boat leaned like that and that strong tide made it go down like that and it sank. There my mother was can't swim, so my little brother give her—my brother Earl gave her an oar and she held onto that oar and he swam and tried to get her over to that island. By the time they got there the tide was going out. By the time he got her to a—they got on what—a sandbar we call it off of Capers Island that was just enough tide for his feet touch at one spot. He said he knowed that was the last, if he didn't make it then. So he made it to that little piece and he had to wade into water up to his neck to keep pulling her and that's what saved her. And my little sister Mary, next door to me, she was home and she saw what happened and no telephone, no nothing—she could do. She got to praying to our Last Supper picture we had in the living room at our house and she started praying to God. And she says, “God, if you save my mother and brother I'll—I'll become a Christian and I'll go to church all the time,” and she has been ever since 'cause God saved them. He had—it was a miracle they ever made it. It was very—her praying and she's still a Christian to this day. I mean just you can't meet nobody no better. I'll tell you. The Lord blessed us in that.

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And I felt bad about it. It was kind of my fault for leaving the boat there but they should have known it wasn't no good you know, so—. But anyway the Lord took us through that and she became a Christian and she still is. She's right next door there and she goes to church all the—little groups. She prays, she takes—goes to orphanages and helps people. They go to disaster relief her and husband, they do all kinds of good things. She's a—they're just good people.

00:07:15

Sara Wood: And what is Mary's married name? What's her husband's name?

00:07:19

Andrew Magwood: Her name is Causey, Robert Causey and he did—he had a lot of bumps in his life when he was young but you know the—my sister was a Christian and she kept—and never let up on him and finally it took hold with him and he's about as good a Christian as you want now. Yeah, he changed and he's a deacon in the church and I'm going to tell you. If the Lord can change you I'm telling you, if you ask him in a month it'll be changed. And I know people listen to and say, "Well I'd have never thought you were no Christian," but whatever. I always was good. I never done a lot of bad, just mostly women but running around with women, that was my worst vice.

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Sara Wood: And Mr. Magwood could you tell me your parents' names for the record?

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Andrew Magwood: I don't know if I—my mother's name is Ethel Rebecca Legare. That was her maiden name and then my—my daddy was Captain Clarence Augustus Magwood. That's my daddy's.

00:08:30

Sara Wood: Mr. Magwood I'm wondering before I ask you some questions, a few more questions I just wanted to know could you tell me some of the stories that maybe your father—did your father share any stories with you growing up on the big island and if you could tell me some about you growing up on Little Bulls Island.

00:08:47

Andrew Magwood: No, my daddy never did talk too much about being on Big Bulls Island. The only thing he told me about—used to tell me about is when he would—he had you know they—they got a lot of big old duck ponds and all and I love duck hunting. And he—he loved it too. And he told me some stories about him didn't have no shot and he took some lead shot and put them down the barrel and opened them old shotguns in the old days and he went out there and shot some ducks, but that's about the biggest thing he ever said—had talked about.

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But when we was kids now, young kids when my older brothers were there and we hadn't split up yet, you know growing up, we all used to go fishing together on the beaches with my daddy. He loved what we call hull sand fishing on the front beaches like Capers Beach and Bulls

Beach. In the wintertime when it got cold and the sea—you had to have almost perfect weather but when you'd get a calm day and it's cold we used to go out there and you—you'd make a circle with the sand. One rows the boat and one would throw our line out and the other person would make a circle with it and then anchor that boat. And then one gets on this end and one gets on—well there's four or five us, each one gets on each end and pulls it in. And the fish will be inside there and you'd pull them on up.

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We used to do that and catch bass, trout, some mullet, and mostly bass and trout and—but a drum once in a while but my daddy was particular. He was not a greedy person. He was very not selfish and any time he caught little—the littler ones or stuff he made us throw them back. He said, “Now y'all throw them back [*Laughs*] and we'll catch them another day.” So he was—he was a wonderful—I'm blessed with two of the most wonderful parents you ever want to meet.

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Mama was kind of—kind of hard on us but my daddy was soft-hearted and he wouldn't—he wouldn't do nothing. He'd say maybe now, “Son, you oughtn't do that or something like that.” You know better than that. But when he fussed at you it hurt just as bad as if someone had spanked you. It was real—. Not my mama, she'd spank you in a minute [*Laughs*] but I guess you needed it you know 'cause I remember in the olden days mama, we used to have to light the fire, build a fire in the washtub. And then she would boil the clothes and then a lot of them she would take and scrub them on a scrub board. You know you'd take your hands, you ever seen them—scrub boards?

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Sara Wood: Yeah, my great-grandmother had one of those.

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Andrew Magwood: That's right. That's the way she used to do the clothes and then hang them out. And boy mama would be grumpy. You know most women get grumpy on cleaning day right, so my mama was always grumpy about that washday. I guess it was so hard on her. But you know doing everything by hand—

00:11:51

And then too when we used to oyster my mother used to take—I'm going to tell you these stories and they might not be in order.

00:12:00

Sara Wood: That's fine. I just love sitting here with you.

00:12:03

Andrew Magwood: And my mother would take and we'd go out and pick oysters at low tide. And we had some what we called oyster boards that we put them on. We had a platform built and at low tide you put the oysters on there and the tide would cover over and cover them. Well we'd leave them there a couple days, three days. Well she'd go pick her own oysters. Nobody else could pick them good enough for her. She had to pick—we tried and she fussed at us the whole time, so she would go out there and get her own and pick them two days and then we'd have to roll them up in a wheelbarrow to an oyster house that she had and she'd stand up there for two

days and shuck them oysters. She shucked four or five gallons a day just raw. I mean it's just standing there all day beating on that thing and you can see why she's—and then once she got them in gallons she had to put them in quarts and then she used to take them downtown in Charleston and daddy would take the little boat and they'd go to Charleston and go across the Charleston Harbor. Sometimes they got caught in rough weather too. But the little boat was a good little seaboat and they'd go over there and mama would get out and go up the street and walk down King Street and what they call it now—not King Street, but oh Lord I can't think of the name.

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Sara Wood: I'm really bad with Charleston. Was it Meeting Street?

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Andrew Magwood: It's Meeting but—Easy Bay, I think it's East Bay Street where all the banks and all that is and she got to know all them in rich people in Charleston selling oysters. Yeah, she couldn't even open enough 'cause you know shucked raw like that they were good, yeah. And then oh Lord, and DHEC [Department of Health and Environmental Control] and all them people started fooling with her a lot you know Daddy and them and that—that brought—that's one thing that really bothered my brother Junior a lot.

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Sara Wood: DHEC?

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Andrew Magwood: DHEC back in those days started, the health department. You couldn't have them in jars. You had to get a plastic container. And all kinds of different things that he [Junior] fell out with them people and then they fell out with the wildlife, they didn't like them 'cause they give them a hard time and—but I've gotten along good with them all the time. I got pretty good, but I'm going to tell you a story of what happened and this is really dangerous. But what happened, but I was up there with my wife and my daddy and mama and one morning, well these—like it told you, these oyster boards, we've always had them and you put oysters on them. And it—nobody said nothing about us and then all of the sudden they come one day this—there was about two boats of county—no, they didn't have a county, they had a wildlife and DHEC and they had two boats. It was about four or five of them.

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And they come up on the dock and was probing around. And I said, "What are y'all looking for?" He says, "Well y'all got—you're storing oysters illegally and clams." I said, "Well I didn't know nothing about it." They said, "Yeah, we sent you a letter." I said, "Well I don't remember no letter ever telling me about this being illegal to keep them oysters this way." So I called my brother and told him what was happening and I was really—I break up really easy so I was crying 'cause I—I cry easy. *[Laughs]*

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Sara Wood: Well that's a scary situation.

00:15:46

Andrew Magwood: Huh?

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Sara Wood: That sounds like a pretty scary situation.

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Andrew Magwood: It was but what really happened, my brother come up there and he got up on the dock and he says, “Well y'all—y'all get back in your boats and y'all get away from here and leave him alone.” He says, “This—y'all are not right,” and they wouldn't leave. So he went in the house and got his shotgun and came back down and says, “Now y'all got y'all's gun and I got mine. Now y'all do what you want to do.” And they all took off. But they arrested him anyway back down to Charleston, yeah.

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Sara Wood: So what happened?

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Andrew Magwood: Well I had to go to court and I went to court. And I got me a lawyer and they come to find out they—they let—they found me not guilty. And it wasn't no later than after the court there was a girl on the police force that I had a boy working for me named Jimmy Grant and she said—she came to my house and apologized to me about what happened. She says, “Mr. Magwood, I didn't mean to get you in this trouble and all this, this, we were trying to catch Jimmy,” but he wasn't doing nothing wrong either. So all of that was really a dangerous time in

my life, real bad, and I never—never did sell a lot of oysters after that, I kind of give up on it much.

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After that about two weeks or three weeks after I went to court and everything was over. The state sent me a permit to have that oyster board there. They made me the only one in South Carolina that had an oyster boards to store oysters in like that. They—they—they realized they were wrong.

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Sara Wood: So Mr. Magwood I just wanted to make sure I understand. So when you're talking about the oyster boards are they shucked oysters and then you keep them there or are they still in the shell?

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Andrew Magwood: No, no, they were still in the shell. See to understand this you got to realize how our tides are. They—they about—you know you get six feet up and then it goes down. It'll go on the oyster banks you got five—six foot down or seven feet down before you hit water. It'll come up that much every day and—and within five to six hours it's up and down. And if you put it down at the low-water mark we put it up about a—a foot off the oyster bottom. And then had cracks in it—in the boards that we put so the water could you know—. And it—we kept them clean and we'd turn them once in a while to make sure the sediment—you had to know how to take care of them 'cause if you pile them up there too high and just left them sit they would smother. So you had to spread them out and maybe turn them over if you want to keep them a

couple of days. And if the tide come low just like they do and see our—I don't know if you've ever been to an oyster like in the creek but our tides are up and down like that every day. Every five or six hours it's low, another six hours it's high or five hours—back and forth. So it's a—a continuous rise and fall.

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So I'm the only licensed one in South Carolina [*Laughs*].

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Sara Wood: That's pretty amazing.

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Andrew Magwood: Yeah, but—but well it's just lucky that nobody got hurt. That's the important thing. That's—that was the main thing. But my brother now he was not like me. I'm a little easy-going, like my daddy is and he's like my mother—hot-tempered. And he's really hot-tempered and he didn't like—he was real protective of our family. He—he loved his family. So he loved mama and daddy and all us kids too, he was a good person but just a little hot-headed. [*Laughs*] That runs in my mama's—all my family is that way. [*Laughs*] And hard-headed, on the women's side, not on the men's [*Laughs*].

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Sara Wood: So Mr. Magwood do you mind if I ask you a couple more questions?

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Andrew Magwood: Sure, you can ask me all you want.

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Sara Wood: Can you talk a little bit about—so was—was your father, was Clarence your father, the one who started the business ‘cause you were talking about—when you were talking about fishing on the beach with your father growing up I’m wondering since you guys were all raised on the island and I’ve heard—I’ve heard stories when I went to visit Bud [Hill] the other day. He—he copied me some stories from the papers and just all these great stories about how you guys grew up and you know it was very self-sustaining you know. You know and there were eleven kids. Could you talk about I mean did you all sell this fish that you caught or—and these oysters? I know you talked about your mom but—but for the fishing was it just really all for the family like when you’d all go fishing? Was that for you guys to eat or did you?

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Andrew Magwood: No, we sold most of—yeah we had to make a living somehow so that’s the way we started out making a living was oysters and—and clams and fish.

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Sara Wood: So is your father the one who started the business?

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Andrew Magwood: Yeah, oh yeah but he didn’t just only start the oyster business now. The oyster business they had it on the other end of Bulls Island. I don’t know if you ever got any

stories about that but they—they used to—they even had what I've been told now that the Magwoods) used to have an oyster house over the water down on the other end of Bulls Island so they been in the oyster business for almost forever. And some of my daddy's brothers had some leased land, too. [*Phone Rings*]—See, you got to lease—I guess you—do you realize how you do that? Well you—you lease it from the state. You have to pay like renting it, it's almost the same thing so they lease it from the state. But I'll tell you, my family has had them oyster lands so long that we had them before the state started leasing them.

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Sara Wood: Oh wow.

00:21:54

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, it's been in my family that long, the ones we got now. And if I ever get you up there I'll carry you and show you some there's some posts left and all that my daddy used to put—they used to put little old—a little old shack, you know what I mean just like a little old outhouse or something sitting there and they'd put lookouts in there to keep people from stealing oysters.

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Sara Wood: Was that a problem?

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Andrew Magwood: Yeah, in the old days that was and it didn't seem like it was but—but it was, yeah. Well the main thing was the oyster factory used to steal a lot of oysters 'cause they

needed—they took a lot for that oyster factory. But it's unreal how much oysters have disappeared from our state. And I know it's happening everywhere. And I've tried all I know to do to try to keep it up. I plant what they tell me I should plant every year. I put out things that—the crab pots and that catches oysters real good. I do it all kind of stuff. We never—when I was oystering we never picked everything. We always picked oysters like they're doing—making them do in North Carolina now. You had to crack them and we'd take a cracking iron we called that. That's just an iron about a foot and a half long and it got about two inches on the end turned just like a seven and you—you'd crack them right off. And now they're starting—they're doing it North Carolina now and they're going to start here, which we've always done but it's still—that's not completely the whole answer. I just don't know why the oysters are—our environment is just getting bad. It's just—everything is deteriorating.

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Sara Wood: Did y'all ever use—I know that some people like up in Virginia they let them dredge the oysters. Do they do that here in South Carolina?

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Andrew Magwood: No, our oysters—no. We used to—my daddy used to buy oysters from the—the black people and the small ones and then he'd take them up and shovel them up out in the bottom of a creek and then do it after about—yeah he could go there and take oyster tongs and take them back up and get big old single oysters. But now that has disappeared. I mean you—if you take them and throw them out there in the bottom of the creek and go back they die. They—just our environment has changed and God only knows why. Everything has changed.

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And he used to buy clams and put them in some creeks but now we—I have dredged—had to dredge doing my clams on the bottom of the creek, in the big creeks and I done well with it for quite a while ‘cause I used to have a load of clams but they done thinned them out but—. It’s like anything else, when you—when you take too much away from something it’s bad. You’ve got to find out what’s—and that’s—and in this world you got to—you find out that everything that’s bad and then you got—and then there’s good and you got to weigh whichever you can stand. If you get the good, you’re going to get some bad. And how much bad can you stand is what it—it’s all hard on the environment, even the dredging clams is not—it’s not all good. I know that. But I done it to get the money and I tried to not let them—‘cause it’s lasted for quite a while. I mean it—it’s done good, so—.

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Sara Wood: And I just wanted to ask you a couple questions. You mentioned that your father would go buy the oysters from a black family but do you know where that was where he—was it Backman’s [Seafood]?

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Andrew Magwood: Oh no, no, no, right from here They’d go on the other land up—whoever’s land they had or State land or whatever they could get and they’d pick them. Back then I never heard nothing about it you know. It was only about two or three fellows that live up here in Awendaw. Let me see, where are they at [*Gesturing direction*]? No, yeah well they’re down a little further down this—toward Mount Pleasant but there’s a couple of them that he used to have

two or three over from over here that used to come over, row—some of them they'd row over all the way to my daddy's yeah.

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Sara Wood: So you remember their names?

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Andrew Magwood: Ah—

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Sara Wood: If not—

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Andrew Magwood: Well there's one that we had that helped raise us and used to live with us a good bit come over and work with daddy and his name was Tiger Bill. That's what we called him.

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Sara Wood: Tiger Bill?

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Andrew Magwood: Yeah, Tiger Bill. One—another one of them was Border Brown and another of them was Henry Wayside. And they all used to work—come over and help daddy work or they'd pick some oysters sometimes or whatever help what daddy needed to be done.

Yeah. But they all—they all loved mama to death ‘cause they loved her cooking. *[Laughs]*
Mama would feed all of us and daddy had one little house up there with a one-room house that
he—with a big fireplace that he kept for his help when they would come over if they’d spend the
night yeah.

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Sara Wood: And I wanted to ask you about your mama’s cooking because I’ve read stories
about how you know there were eleven kids and she—she got everything she needed from that
island.

00:27:21

Andrew Magwood: No, we didn’t get everything now. Mama used to—mama and daddy used
to go to town and they got to know the people in Charleston real well by them oysters. And she
met these people that I guess wholesalers and when she would go to town she’d usually buy a
fifty pound or a 100-pound—fifty pound bag of rice, grits the same way. So we ate rice every
day with our dinner and what we didn’t eat for dinner we had for supper. And mostly we had
grits most every morning for breakfast with eggs if we had eggs from the chickens or not hardly
have I had bacon, just eggs and butter. We would put—when we were kids we’d put
mayonnaise, ketchup, anything in grits. It was all good. *[Laughs]* We—we didn’t fuss. *[Laughs]*
We ate it, oh yeah. So we had—we had it good.

00:28:28

Then we was lucky too. Mama, in the old days where I come across that down here
where I’m living now it’s only about a—it’s only about a mile down that way, the golf course—

did you see that? You know where it is? All that was farmland, yeah when we was kids, and we got to know the man that owned the farm and he would let us come over when he got finished with the crops, before he'd plow them up he'd tell us and we'd come over and we'd get tomatoes, cucumbers, green beans, all you—all we wanted and like—and like everything else, mama canned and jarred beans and tomatoes and—. So we—we didn't—we had some rough times I think mama said when we was younger and she said that she told me many times, says—she says, “Andrew I'm going to tell you.” She says, “I never—many a-time I never knew where the next meal was coming from.” She said, “But God supplied it somehow.” I don't know but she—that's what she said. So I mean we weren't—we had hand-me-down clothes. Somebody give them to us and rich people would give—donate them to people you know how they do—donate clothes, yeah. So but we didn't care. **[Laughs]** You know when you're poor you're poor, you don't realize it when you're a kid. No, and we had fun all the time on that island playing. I don't know what we done but we always done something. Never got in no trouble, wasn't no trouble to get into, so yeah. **[Laughs]**

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And we used to—I'm going to tell you this now but way back yonder when my daddy was young they used to get the turtle eggs.

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Sara Wood: I wanted to ask you about the turtles.

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Andrew Magwood: And we used—he used to take them and they told me that the bakery in Charleston used to buy them, that they loved to make the—the yellow in them [yokes] is good for—for cakes, making cakes and stuff. So they used to sell turtle eggs too, I mean you know—and we kids, we ate them. We ate—I could eat five or six, that’s about all. But—but the white in a turtle egg does never get hard. It stays—it don’t cook. [*Laughs*] The yellow gets firm but the—the—the white doesn’t, so—. But then we had people that come up in yachts, rich people from Belton, South Carolina with a yacht and he got good friends with mama and daddy and daddy would—we’d—mama would make a little money opening clams and making them a big pot of clam chowder. And they loved turtle eggs. This one—we used to get him a bag of them, go out there and find him a bag and he’d pay us maybe five dollars for a bag of turtle eggs. And man as soon as he got them he—he’d just crack it and suck them right on out. [*Laughs*] He loved them turtle eggs. He was from Belton, South Carolina. Yeah, Mr. Brown was his name. They were rich you know. He brought his clients from all over foreign countries and all.

00:31:59

Sara Wood: Wow.

00:32:01

Andrew Magwood: The island yeah, yeah that was—and he’d—they’d drink and eat and yeah he had a lot of—. Well he was in I think his—he had mills. I think they were cloth mills though I think in Belton, South Carolina, but—.

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Sara Wood: Now did—I heard that y'all—so you're talking about the turtle eggs but your family was also known for—I mean oysters and clams?

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Andrew Magwood: And the cooters.

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Sara Wood: The turtles?

00:32:34

Andrew Magwood: Well the—the little cooters. Cooters is about—they get about that big. But they—they call them terrapin—terrapin in the old days. Yeah, my daddy and his brother used to have a pen down there behind Morris Island that they would raise and my cousin Willy. I think he was in it too. They used to raise terrapin. They'd catch them and put them in pens and catch fiddler crabs and put in there and raise them and then they'd send them up north 'cause it was big up north, so—. We used to eat everything you know in this world when we was coming up. It was so plentiful. People did—I never have eaten terrapin and—. But yeah, but they used to come on the island all the time and lay—the terrapin, they find a dry place, they'll—a piece of high land and we used to find the little babies but we never did bother. We tried to let them go, little—they only have about five or six eggs—four eggs, three eggs in a terrapin. They don't have a whole bunch like the other turtles. You know other turtles have up 180 and all, yeah. We found a lot but—.

00:33:47

And more—later on the coons started getting so bad, they still do too. They—they will eat every turtle there—there is if they can find them. So the wildlife is doing pretty good. They put a wire over them now and protect them which I can see that. They need to be protected ‘cause they’re getting scarce, so—. A lot of things in this world is getting scarce—they’re going to have to protect, yeah.

00:34:14

Sara Wood: Now Mr. Magwood did y'all—did y'all shrimp at the time?

00:34:18

Andrew Magwood: Huh?

00:34:18

Sara Wood: Did y'all do shrimping at the time or—?

00:34:21

Andrew Magwood: We used—my cousin, I’m trying to think, my cousin Willy Magwood and—and another—daddy’s brother they started shrimping way back and when they started then my oldest brother Junior, the first one to leave—leave home, he started shrimping. And he had an old—an old boat. I got a picture if I can find it to show you of him standing on the back of it. It’s called *Ruth*. But it was an old oyster boat that daddy used to carry vegetables from—daddy done that too see, that’s another thing they used to do. He would—when—when farming—but

that wasn't a steady job. You know and like when produce comes in? He'd go—they'd go up for sale up in—and he used to sail too. They tell you can sell up to the farms and get up to the farms and then carry the market to town, I mean all their produce.

00:35:27

Sara Wood: What kinds of things did he grow?

00:35:29

Andrew Magwood: He—daddy didn't grow nothing. But—but the farmers yeah on the—they'd go to maybe Georgetown or all along the coast they—all this was farm country you know—everything. And they would—he would pick up the produce. A lot of people told me they knew some of my kin that where they come up to them plantations and go pick up the vegetables and carry—come back down with it. And daddy started out that when they were sailing. He told me something about that now. He told me, he says—says some days they would go toward Charleston and the wind would quit blowing and he said he'd sit there for two days before they could go anywhere. Count on sail, they had to—they were doing it by sail when they first started, yeah. They had some good patience, I'm telling you. Old people were something else. But then later on they got a Lathrop engine, that's a—it was real—one cylinder, big old thing and you had—it had a big old fly wheel on it and you had to put a bar in it and crank it and they were hard to start. I remember my brother standing on that bar and cranking that thing many times and cursing it 'cause they were hard to get started. They had some kind of what they call make or break firing on the motor. **[Laughs]** I remember him cursing that thing many-a-time and especially when he was going shrimping with it. But that's what they—they started out with an

old diesel Lathrop and old nets with lead bullets on them, real—made them heavy and cotton nets made it all heavy and it was all—it was a struggle for them to start in shrimping.

00:37:19

But now I don't know for sure, but my cousins are not the first to start shrimping in Charleston. It was the Portuguese my daddy and my brother told me. The Portuguese started it, the Portuguese. There was a lot of Portuguese here in Charleston but I don't know what happened to all of them.

00:37:38

Sara Wood: I've heard from somebody up in the McClellanville that—that was the case but he said it was like in the '30s [1930s] and maybe '20s and '30s or '30s and '40s?

00:37:46

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, that's right.

00:37:47

Sara Wood: And then they just sort of—nobody—. Yeah, I wonder what happened there.

00:37:52

Andrew Magwood: They disappeared yeah, there was one—we had one old Portuguese down at the dock where I was and he—he used to sew the nets or work on the nets for us and all you know—pay him but—. We called him Portuguese John, yeah. He's the only one left I ever seen but—. But the Magwoods wasn't first to start it but my brothers and Junior and dad was some of

the first to start when it started with diesel engines and all that and started—started out doing it for a business.

00:38:25

Sara Wood: Mr. Magwood can you talk about when you left the island and what did you do and what it was like to leave the island when you were—when you grew up?

00:38:33

Andrew Magwood: Well up on that island we—always had something to do, you know we—we worked all the time doing something with daddy but we would go fishing and we'd take on high tide, go take a sand and put it off—especially we had one good spot on—on Bulls Beach. When tide come up it had a slew that went out and then we'd put our sand around it—around the mouth of it and when the tide would go back down the fish would stay there and we'd pick them up. And we used—that's mostly what daddy and I done was that and then gigging at night for catching flounders. I've caught a lot of flounders when I was young—a lot but—.

00:39:20

That's what we done mostly for making a living. You always had something to do. And then in wintertime you know, oyster time, I always oystered and clammed and bagged oysters and all. but when I got younger—grew up a little bit, my brother Jimmy which is well he's—he was about three or four years older than me, but he decided to stay up there with my daddy and mama. So I—so my brother Junior was building a boat called the *Skipper Wayne* and we had—it was a bigger boat so he hired me to go down there and help the Cuban—what was it—Cuban? I don't know if he was, yeah I think he was. But any—no, he wasn't a Cuban. He was

Greek, a Greek fellow, George Cotellas was his name—had me to help build a boat. So I did, I stayed there with George the whole time. I really loved that too. And the boat work, I loved learning to build a boat.

00:40:24

And—

00:40:24

Sara Wood: Where did y'all build that boat?

00:40:27

Andrew Magwood: Right in Shem Creek. Yeah, on the—on the right hand of the bridge did anybody give you a picture of it?

00:40:36

Sara Wood: Rocky [Magwood] showed me a picture last night but it was of the orange and green and white boats. I think that was later on.

00:40:44

Andrew Magwood: Well anyway we built it right there and but it used to be—oh they got a restaurant down there now—as you go to—to get ready to go across the bridge on the right-hand side about maybe three—two or three blocks up that way right where that road goes straight down to it. But when we built it the tide was kind of up and the boat was too big so we had to sink it to—to let it go under the bridge 'cause it wouldn't go under it floating, yeah. [*Laughs*]

00:41:18

Sara Wood: Were you scared at all?

00:41:20

Andrew Magwood: No, no. We just filled it full of water and drove it on under, yeah. Then we pumped it out when we got around the other side back up. But my brother done—he—that was a beautiful boat too. It's still some up—but he had a little boat called *The Hope* and when we got the boat finished right there see I never done no shrimping or nothing hardly, I did it a couple times when I was real young with my brother and them but I didn't like it.

00:41:52

Sara Wood: How come?

00:41:53

Andrew Magwood: Well getting up so early in the morning and then you—and that—my brother Dan had a—him and Junior had bought a yacht like and made a shrimp boat out of it. And my brother would always want coffee the first thing in the morning. And them bilges always smell on a shrimp boat if you don't put something in them to stop smelling and they didn't have nothing in the bilge and they smelled. And I put—I'd go there and make that coffee and you had to use alcohol. It was one of them alcohol stoves. You ever seen them? They start—yeah, you'd heat it up with alcohol and then you'd turn it on. And then it would burn kerosene. Yeah, and—

00:42:34

Sara Wood: I've never seen that.

00:42:36

Andrew Magwood: Oh yeah, they smelled, oh that—that alcohol burning, it got me—I would get almost nauseated from the smell and it's so hot out there shrimping too. I just didn't get into it. But somehow I got away from that and my brother Junior—when I got older after I finished the *Skipper Wayne* he asked me, he said, “How about you—.” I crabbed with him a little bit but—but I didn't do much shrimping but I did shrimp with him a little while maybe six months. But I never was a seasoned shrimper. I should have been—I should have been out there taught a lot more than I was taught. But my brother Junior he—he was extra smart you see and I'm slow. I am. I—I—it takes a lot for me to learn something. I'm a real—I'm not a quick learner. It takes me a while to learn something. And but my brother Junior he was good. He went through Maryville Vocational Schools, real good grades, he could have gone to college. He's a draftsman, he—he was a draftsman and took up drafting and—but he wanted to shrimp. But he done good, he was—wasn't scared of nothing. I'll tell you but I was always—bad thunder squalls and all kind of stuff like that, we got caught in bad weather, I would get nervous but it didn't bother him. It—I was nervous. I would just—I liked the island. That's where I wanted to be. I didn't want to be out there shrimping. But anyhow, he gave me the boat and told me and says—he didn't give it to me now, he—he said, “Well Andrew you run that boat while I rig my—my new boat and get the engine in it and get the rigging and all on it and you can run this and make me some money.”

00:44:30

So it was the time of year it wasn't shrimping, it was crabbing, so I took it—we had it down in Rockville so I went out in Rockville crabbing. Now we used to drag for crabs see to make a living in the wintertime, shrimping too. We've done all kinds of things.

00:44:45

Sara Wood: You'd drag nets to catch the crabs?

00:44:46

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, yeah catch the crabs and we went down there. There was so much crabs down there that you'd catch so much at one time and we had to take the nets up and put them on deck and cut 'em off so the place for them to go down would be bigger. There was a lot of crabs in them days. You would not believe it. But they brought them by the barrel to you, we'd carry a fifty-five gallon drums and fill them up. So that's where I first started shrimping and then after that I kept—and after I shrimped for his—with his boat for a couple of years it was called *The Hope*, he—he told me. He says after about two years he said, “Andrew, I'm going to sell you the boat. And I'll let you work it out. And you can pay me along.” So I said, “Okay, that's good. I'll do that.” And then I was working, shrimping and then the—the Berlin crisis come along. Do you remember that? I know you don't, no—people don't. Most people don't know really about the Berlin crisis where we were supposed to go to war with Russia over the Berlin Wall.

00:46:08

And—

00:46:08

Sara Wood: What—what was the time period here do you know?

00:46:11

Andrew Magwood: Well I don't know. I can't remember. You could find it at—if you look up Berlin crisis. They—I tried not to remember this but when they started talking about drafts and well I had done got married. I went and got married. I thought that would help me keep from getting drafted [*Laughs*] 'cause I didn't want to go in the Army. I wanted—'cause I had just started buying a boat. I wanted to finish—my future. But anyhow, I went down to the draft board in Charleston and they said, "Well, Magwood you got about, another month before you get drafted." So I said, "Well that's good." I—I went down to the National Guard. They said, "Well them boys is off at summer camp. When they come back we'll get you in the National Guard." And then I went—'cause I could stay home and shrimp and still you know pay and buy my boat.

00:47:19

But about after—I'd say two weeks after I went down there I got my draft notice when I got home. I—I was so mad with the draft board that I went down there and I give them the devil. I said, "What the heck, y'all taking me like this. I—I'm—I'm joining the National Guard." They said, "No." She says, "On count of the Cuban—I mean the Berlin crisis we stepped it up, the draft. We had to step up the draft because we need so many people." And so I was drafted. And so I had to go in the Army for two years. I put two years in water transportation. And when I went to Columbia that—it was so many people drafted—so many people they had tents up there, all over the place for the people. We was really on the edge of going to war. And that's when I kind of got wild. I got—it wasn't real bad but I didn't make no money. But I got in Virginia

for—I stayed in Fort Eustis, Virginia two years but during that time after the Berlin crisis then came along the Cuban crisis. I don't know if you know about that.

00:48:42

Sara Wood: I've heard about it.

00:48:42

Andrew Magwood: Where they started to bring the missiles over to Cuba. Russia was bringing them on ships and stuff. We were getting ready to go to war again so we took landing craft all the way from Fort Eustis, Virginia, carried them down to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. And I stayed down there about two months with them getting ready to go to war and I thought my life was over, so—. I got to drinking and running with women and that's when I got ungodly. *[Laughs]*

00:49:12

Sara Wood: And Mr. Magwood how—do you remember about how old you were at this time?

00:49:15

Andrew Magwood: When I was in the service yeah I was twenty-on when they drafted me I think, something like that. Very—you know you went to—usually when you get up around the twenties they didn't bother you back—but they was just—they were wanting men, yeah. Yeah, and I—really they were drafting—putting people out to Fort Eustis so quick I got to—we didn't even do the full length of time. They let us out of Boot Camp two weeks early trying to—yeah to get—keep people going 'cause they thought that was a real scary time and so was the Cuban crisis. Them people in Florida were scared. But that's a little bit—.

00:50:03

And when I got out the service then I come home and went to—but I was lucky when I was in the service. I got—I didn't like the company I was in so they wanted somebody on a pile driver so—on a special duty they had up there in Virginia, so I went on special duty to the pile driver, yeah. And I got—I got three days off sometimes on the weekends so I would come home and go fishing. And I was real lucky. One—one time I came home, I went out fishing. We used to catch black fish in the wintertime when we had the boats. You know what them are? They go offshore and—we used to do it with handlines when I was a young man, all handlines.

00:50:51

Sara Wood: Can you explain that for somebody who is not familiar?

00:50:53

Andrew Magwood: About the—the fishing? All right. We—we used to—we used to go offshore and you'd take a handline. You know what a handline is? A line that you pulled—you got a lead on it and two or three hooks to catch fish with, and what we'd do, we'd catch an octopus or something—'cause they had a lot of octopuses out there. You'd catch octopus or some good bait to put on this or squid, we'd carry squid. We'd carry some shrimp in our freezer 'cause it's tough and it stays on there. And then we'd go offshore and then we had a—a big boat. My brother Junior's and I had *The Hope*, my little boat but first well when he got that bigger boat we'd go out there and ice the boat down, full of ice and fuel, go out there and stay three, four, five days fishing.

00:51:47

Well what you do, we didn't have no modern equipment in them days. All right. You'd take a lead line. You'd take about a two-pound, two to three-pound lead and have it tapered to about two—three inches around at the bottom and come up tapered where you'd get a hole in it with the line. You leave a hollow spot down in the bottom. And you'd put white octagon soap, white Ivory soap or something like that, and once you got—you had a lot of positions to go to these fishing areas, but you had to run the tide and you could miss them. So what you had to do is carry these lead lines and you tried to stay in the depth of water by measuring it. You'd measure it by films and you'd put marks on it. After you get so many films then you start marking it with leather. Drop it over the side and when it went down to the bottom and hit the bottom you'll pull it back up and you checked the depth of the water by the mark on it and you'd pull it back up, look on the bottom where that white soap is and you'd pick up samples of the bottom. You'd pick black you're on the wrong bottom. Black bottom is not good. If you go around and you find some yellow bottom with yellow in it that's good, it's got coral and different stuff in it. So we knew to start fishing.

00:53:19

Andrew Magwood: And then you would drift with the tide and the boat would be sideways and you had a—you put up a two-by-four for a hand rail and some fish on the bow and some fish on the stern and you got about—we had about five or six people on it.

00:53:40

[*Coughs*] All right, you got three to four hooks on each one, each line you put. You put that heavy lead overboard and you drop three of them or four of them. And when you get in these

black fish you get—you run across the schools of them they would bite so fast that you would have to go from this one to the other. You'd take the fish off. If it needed bait you'd throw it and let that go back, go to the next one. After about four or five days when you come back in your hand will be swelled up four or five inches like that. [*Gestures*] I mean you couldn't—you couldn't—your hands wouldn't do no more like that [*Gestures hand swelling*] from pulling fish, yeah.

00:54:21

Sara Wood: Wow, that's very labor intensive.

00:54:23

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, that was hard work. [*Laughs*] But we done it and then filled up the hole full and then come home and then sit in the—sell them and clean up the boat and all. It was making a living, help you in the winter when you didn't have nothing else to do.

00:54:37

Sara Wood: Where did you sell them Mr. Magwood?

00:54:38

Andrew Magwood: Huh?

00:54:39

Sara Wood: Where did you sell the black fish, in Charleston or—?

00:54:42

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, most of them was in Charleston, yeah. I'm trying—I can't remember the name of the—doggone it. I know the man good but my mind ain't going to let it come to me—the fish market. It was down on Market Street right down at the end of the market. You'd go right to the market and he was right across on that corner. I can't think of his name. But we—now we always grab it and the old fellow always beat us on the fish. Never give you no price, always was bad prices. But we done that and then later on some guy decided to try a crab pot and then we started using crab pots to—to catch the black fish in. Put the bed in there and drop that overboard, sometimes we would catch so much you'd pull it up and you'd put a flag out and then make you a—a line, put your fish and sometimes you'd catch so much that—that when the trap come up it would float to the top with the fish. I mean full, you wouldn't believe it. It was beautiful. I don't know if—they still might let them do it a little bit, yeah. But we used to catch a lot of fish like that. But that hand lining now that was a—that was a job when you had to do like that just from—'cause that's the way you'd do your hands all day long was like that. **[Gestures]**

00:56:12

Sara Wood: And what was the line made out of? Was it like a—more like a rope or was it thin like fish line, like what was that line made of?

00:56:19

Andrew Magwood: It—it was made out of—no. It wasn't—cotton I guess. I guess it was a cotton line. It wasn't you know they didn't have nylon much back then so it wasn't nylon. It was

cotton, some kind of cotton line. But I can't tell you exactly how the—it wasn't real big. I wouldn't know exactly how to tell you what size it was. It was—but—

00:56:45

Sara Wood: But it did some work on your hands though, huh?

00:56:48

Andrew Magwood: Oh yeah, oh yeah on your fingers and all that. You got—but your hands were—the biggest thing was them hands swelling up across here [*Gestures*] from working or using them so much. But I loved it. I loved that fishing. We done it—went out a couple times where was it—up to the—oh Lord I can't think of it, but we went out to the Gulf stream and done snapper and stuff and grouper and all that a couple of times. I loved that too. I love that fishing. I loved fishing more than I did shrimping. [*Laughs*] I loved being with my daddy inside the creeks, too. I miss that all the time. I loved being with my daddy 'cause my daddy was so easy going you know. It was like he would—he wouldn't say, "Well son you do so and so," and he'd say, "Well son, what do you want to do today?" He was like—like just like I have—you know. He didn't put his self above me. He just—"What are we going to do together?" [*Laughs*] He was a wonderful man and never ever got mad with you or break your heart. He was loving man, a loving person, yeah.

00:58:01

And after—you know he never did—on that island he never did go to church or never did—and people, my sister even said now, I don't know if she thinks daddy was going to heaven or not but I never knew him to do no wrong, don't steal nothing from nobody, he was always

good. He would give—always give when he'd see somebody on the street was charitable, would give them things, he always did, he was real charitable. He'd give anybody anything. I got that in me, too. My wife had to make me quit giving so much to these people that send you the stuff in the mail 'cause she finally made me realize they was just taking the money and not giving it to where it should be going you know, so—. But we all—I love to give and my sister Mary, she does too. She gives and gives and gives way more than I do—way more. But I guess I don't know why we got daddy's ways with the charitable. My mama was too. You know, I tell many a person, when we was kids I'd never forget my mama would lay in that bed every night and drink her a cup of tea at night. She drank coffee in the morning but she'd lay in that bed at night drinking a cup of tea and reading her Bible every night. And she always had a little folder with money that she put in there for God for the church all the time. She was a Godly person. She read that Bible every night. Yeah.

00:59:42

Sara Wood: Do you remember what—what church she went to? Was it—was it on the—I mean did she come into Charleston to go to church?

00:59:49

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, when we went to church we went to—see, we—Sullivan's Island Baptist Church is where we went. I'm still a member of that Sullivan's Island Baptist Church where we went. I tell you this story and now maybe I'm telling you these things I got all kind of—man I mean this might not have nothing to do to it but when I got to be older my brother Junior used to help my mother and daddy 'cause you know they didn't have no Social Security or no income from nowhere or nothing. So when I bought the shrimp boat *The Hope* from my

brother, my daddy give me a share in it and I took care of him. And I give my daddy half of what I made and I had a friend at the dock told me, said, “Andrew,” he said, “Son I hate tell you. You’re never going to make it like this. You can’t give your daddy and mama half of what you’re making. You need to be taking out stuff for being the captain and you know—taking care of things.” But I never did do it. I gave my daddy the whole time. The Lord blessed me for it, too. He sure did. I’m telling you. The Lord has been good to me. People don’t—just don’t realize.

01:01:09

What I’m going to tell you is when—you see this big house. You know where the money come from for this? From my mama. She didn’t have—my granddaddy was Captain Dan Legare All right? He had some property on Sullivan’s Island and my daddy, he give it to my mama. Said, “Well Ethel you can—if you can get this property back from the government you can have it—if it’s a lot.” And mama and daddy had met a lawyer called Byron Holmes that come up there to the island all the time and they got real friendly with him. And he said, “Magwood you give me the paper on that—that your granddaddy—that your daddy give me and I’ll see about getting it for you.”

01:02:05

So the lawyer, it wasn’t long he got that property cleared from the government and they gave us two lots instead of one [*Laughs*] for taking the first one, see. So she got two lots. But back then we needed money so bad mama sold it for \$800 on Sullivan’s Island. Ain’t that something? But anyway my brothers—I had my sister and my brother and two—one of my older sisters and my oldest brother Junior and stuff and all, everybody had used that house a good bit, but it was falling down so I moved over in it and done some work on it. And mama said,

“Andrew I want you to have that house. You can have it. I’m going to give it to you.” I said, “No mama.” It’s—and my brother Junior had put her in a house behind his house that he had so she didn’t need a place.

01:03:10

So I said, “Well mama, I don’t want to—I don’t want to do that but I will buy it from you,” so I give her \$10,000 for it and it was—the old house was just an old house but it was worth ‘bout maybe back then it was more probably worth \$30,000 but I give her \$10,000 anyway to just keep people in the family—. But my sisters and brothers I had two of them, like my oldest two sisters and stuff like—my brother Junior, they wanted me to have it. They wanted mama to give it to me ‘cause I was so good to mama and daddy, so—. But I’d help take care of them right on and my brother loved me to death for—you know ‘cause I was so good trying to help my family. But I tell you what. I don’t regret a penny I give my mama and daddy, not one cent. I would do it all over again right now to this day if I had to. I mean you get good people you got to take care of them. That’s what God expects us to do.

01:04:12

Man, oh my I tell you. I think of the old times. I loved my mama and daddy so much. Just being—even being with them, but my sisters and brothers were good to me, too—still are. Some of them can’t get along but they all love me. **[Laughs]** That’s pretty good eh, yeah. But—they’re good—they’re good people, good, yeah.

01:04:43

And well I’m—I done lost track of where I was at now.

01:04:48

Sara Wood: Well I wanted to ask you a question about your brothers and sisters. I know there are eleven of you. Could you tell me their—everyone's names for the record?

01:04:55

Andrew Magwood: I—my oldest is Junior, Clarence Junior. I think his—it's like daddy, Clarence Augustus Jr. Magwood. That's the oldest. I think the next one is—it might be Virgie Anne Griffin, that—these are their names now, their married names. One of them is Marcia Curran and then I got one named Dan Magwood, my brother. He's next and then I had—I can't get them in order now. There's one, Jimmy Magwood and—and then one close to me was Butler Magwood. We—we call him Bucky and let's see, there's Thomasine Magwood. There was—and Mary Louise is the baby and I'm in there somewhere, Andrew P. Magwood, right. I don't know. My mama gave me two Bible names, Andrew Peter, yeah. But all—almost all our married names are after our kin. So I don't know if I've named them all or not. I might have missed somebody.

[Laughs]

01:06:21

Sara Wood: No, that's great Mr. Magwood. I just—I wanted to ask you about that. And I just have a couple more questions. Is—are you good for a couple more questions?

01:06:29

Andrew Magwood: Oh yeah, sure. I can go all day on if you—

01:06:31

Sara Wood: I just want to make sure you're comfortable 'cause I know you said you like to move around.

01:06:34

Andrew Magwood: No, I can sit here just as long as I'm talking. Do you know. I tell everybody you know when you get old that's about all you can do is talk. **[Laughs]** But I'm blessed that the Lord gave me the strength to still do what I want to do. I can still go work in my garden or go fishing or—. I still—at my age I'm very fortunate. I go to that island by myself all the time. And people ask me, say, "Well you're going to that island by yourself. And you stay up there?" And I say, "Yes." "By yourself?" I said, "No. I'm not by myself. I tell you the Lord and my dog are with me." **[Laughs]** And there he is.

01:07:18

I got to tell you about last year I was walking up the path toward my house at that island and I was kind of feeling down and I started praying to God and I said, "Lord, thank you for letting me be here even though I'm all alone." And do you know I felt someone put their hand on my shoulder. I swear. I mean it wasn't but a second but I just felt someone like an arm on my shoulder. So sure, he's with me, yeah. Yeah, you ain't going to be able to write most of this 'cause most people don't like to talk about Christian stuff you know much no more.

01:08:01

Sara Wood: Well, this is your story though. You know so it—it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter, that's what you know and that's what you—that's your experience.

01:08:09

Andrew Magwood: That's what I believe in. That's what—I believe in God strong. I do, I really do. I always have and just—and like you say none of us are perfect, none—no, no. You ain't married?

01:08:22

Sara Wood: [*Shakes head no*]

01:08:22

Andrew Magwood: No?

01:08:24

Sara Wood: No.

01:08:25

Andrew Magwood: Haven't found the right one?

01:08:27

Sara Wood: Well, he's there but he doesn't want to get married yet.

01:08:30

Andrew Magwood: Oh my goodness.

01:08:30

Sara Wood: Yeah, but he's pushing forty so—

01:08:33

Andrew Magwood: Oh my goodness. How old are you?

01:08:35

Sara Wood: I'm thirty-four.

01:08:37

Andrew Magwood: You look young. You don't even look thirty yet.

01:08:41

Sara Wood: Well, I just wanted to ask you, how did you meet Becky [Magwood, Mr. Magwood's wife]?

01:08:46

Andrew Magwood: [*Sighs*] Well that's my third wife. My first one I—I made the mistake of marrying. I thought it was going to help me out of the service and she was a lot older than me. She's eleven years older than me. But she was a good woman 'cause she helped my mama and daddy too and drove when daddy had a truck and they needed—she was good. But it wasn't her—but I shouldn't have never married her. I knew that and you know—you know something, you do it anyway, well I done it. And then my—I don't know if you want to know about this second wife but my second wife had four children and I—I ain't going to go into all that 'cause it's bad. She was just—but I got me a good son out of it. I got my son that loves me and all the kids love me, all the four—she had four kids and all the girls loved me just like a father—their

daddy. All—and now I got two with this one, so all the kids I come across love me. People say dogs and children love me. *[Laughs]* Well—

01:10:01

Sara Wood: So how did you meet Becky?

01:10:02

Andrew Magwood: Well on my second—with my second wife, she was working in Charleston in an office and one of my friends, best friends had met her and she—he told her—told her one day said, “I want—I got somebody you need to meet.” And I went and met her and we’ve been together ever since, yeah. So it just happened.

01:10:31

Sara Wood: And what are your children’s names?

01:10:32

Andrew Magwood: I don’t have any myself but I got—I got—I got one now, Leslie Brash is my stepdaughter and Emmy Garris and one is—you know one is real good and the other one is on drugs, so—. But Emmy is perfect. She’s got her a good job working on—she’s a draftsman and went to school and got draftsman and she’s doing—working for the government now I think, yeah. She done good. And my other four they’re in—one of them died not long ago and I think might have been drugs with her. But my middle family, the four, all of them has been on drugs, all three girls and one boy. But my son, his name is—his name is Richard Spellman, that’s what—but he don’t claim his daddy. He claims me. He says all he ever prayed for when I come

by—I met him when I was in the service in Florida. And when I came by well he said that he had always prayed for a father ‘cause he never had one and his daddy never had nothing to do with him. So he um—and I came and he said I’m the answer to what God answered his prayer and he always wanted a father. And he still—he has done—he—well we lived on Sullivan’s Island and he got up with a good group of boys, young boys. And they lived in Miami so he wouldn’t have been much he said if he stayed there ‘cause they were kind of rough but I got him when he was—I don’t know, he was ten, maybe ten or eleven. I don’t know what it was. But got with a good group of boys coming up and went to high school and done good. He’s smart and went to Carolina College [University of North Carolina]. And he graduated and now he’s—he goes about—he sells computer software and he’s in—he goes to Canada now a pretty good bit and he sells the stuff. But he’s got—he’s made a lot of money. He does—but he is just a good—I couldn’t have a better son if you—if I grew him myself, you know. **[Laughs]** He’s got—he’s real good to me, real good.

01:13:14

So out of every—like I say, everything in this world you get a little bad and a little good so you got to look for the good, right? I’m really—but that’s—he just went with me the other day and we went to the island and he likes to go up there and we take the cast net and go catch mullet to eat. He loves fried fish. He gets me to fry him fish. **[Laughs]** And but he—he spends—he must—he must make a lot of money because he always spends too much on me. If he brings—oh Lord, if he brings beer, he’s going to bring two cases, it don’t even take a half a case ‘cause I don’t hardly drink anything no more. And food, he brings—oh Lord. He—he just overdoes it but he’s just trying to show me he loves me, I guess. But we—and he’s got two daughters and both

of them are going to Carolina. One has done graduated Carolina and the other one has got a second year in Carolina now. She's doing—and both of them are smart, beautiful girls. He lives on Sullivan's Island about a—about a block from where we used to live over there. They—and then he's got a place in Awendaw with a dock and house and—not in Awendaw—McClellanville. He's got a house on the water there. So he's—he's done real well for his self, a good—good son though. I couldn't ask for no better.

01:14:48

And he's done fifty. Well he's gonna be fifty-five, I think. But I—I tell you the Lord blessed me well.

01:15:01

Sara Wood: Mr. Magwood I just wanted to ask you one other thing. So after—well after you came back from the service and you were working with your family did you—you're a captain so did you—did you spend a lot of time working out there like fishing and—?

01:15:17

Andrew Magwood: Well, I went right back to shrimping. My brother, I was lucky that my brother Junior he kept somebody running the boat while I was gone and then when I came back I got back on it and started working it out. And I worked at it for oh, I don't know how many years I kept the boat but I kept it I know at least five years after I got back. And then this fellow wanted to sell us another boat called the—the *Wilhelmina Anne* and when I got back my brother, the man wanted to sell it for about \$25,000. And it was bigger. It was only five-foot longer than my boat but five feet made a lot of difference in boats. I mean it does. **[Laughs]**

01:16:04

And so I bought it from him and my brother Dan which is older than me, I sold him the one I had 'cause the one he had was deteriorating and didn't have the power in it like I had, so I sold him mine reasonable and then I got my second boat, so—. And that's when I really started making a difference in my life. I started getting better and started learning shrimping and I took the engine out of it and sold it to my brother and got me another one and got a more stronger one. I got him a better one and I really—I guess I started learning more I guess, what I don't know. God just blessed me and wanting me to do better I guess and I done good. I made some money in shrimping at the last of my years of it. But now when I got sixty-two the crews was so hard to—you know people with this part-time work around the waterfront people usually drink or drugs. And it's gotten worse so I just—after sixty-two, I couldn't—I said, "I just can't do it no more. It's just too much on me," so—and so I sold my boat at sixty-two and I can't remember the year but the next year, the market went out of shrimping and the boats wasn't worth nothing. So I was lucky. I got—I sold it the right year and got my whole—I got—I got just as much as I paid for it. But I kept it up. Now that boat is still—it's still working somehow. I—I wasn't no slack person. I kept my stuff up. Me and my brother Junior, the two oldest, we kept our boats like yachts almost. I mean down, you can go eat off the floor in the engine room and—perfect. We—me and him. It's not like these new ones coming up. I mean we kept nice boats.

01:18:14

Sara Wood: Well, I saw a picture. I think Rocky [Magwood] showed me a picture last night and they looked impeccable and they were—were they all painted white, orange, and green? Did each boat—?

01:18:22

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, yeah I painted mine that way too. I'll show you some pictures maybe after—. See that's a picture I gave to my—one of my friends from—. He was on Sullivan's Island and he went in the service in the Air Force and he ended up—what—I think it's not Arizona. It's—where the gambling is.

01:18:50

Sara Wood: Las Vegas?

01:18:50

Andrew Magwood: Las Vegas, he's in Las Vegas and that—he painted that picture of my boat for me. And you know what I done with it? I—I was in the time I was running around fooling around and my wife well, I was thinking about naming it after my mother and my wife wouldn't like that and I was going to name it after—and my mama and might not like it, so I said, “You know what?” You know what I named it? *Playboy*, [*Laughs*] that's what it as. It's still going down in Beaufort, South Carolina. [*Laughs*] They still got it down there and they tell me that he's still one of the—the fellow whoever got it must have got my luck 'cause they say it's one of the—one of the best-catching boats down there. But it was a good—I done good with it. The Lord, I don't know. I just—things just fell into shape good for me when I got shrimping. But I got myself straightened out.

01:19:49

But I wasn't never a worker like my brother Junior. He was—he was a workaholic. He could—he would shrimp back in them days you could shrimp all night and sometimes he'd shrimp all night and half a day. I had trouble going up all—all day you know 'cause you got up at three.

01:20:08

Sara Wood: It sounds like a really difficult life to live because it's so much hard work.

01:20:13

Andrew Magwood: It is yeah, it was so hard but you know what? I look back at it and it wasn't that hard, no, it's just—. I guess you get used to what you're doing I guess. But I enjoyed my life coming up shrimping. And I learned—I just wish I was a little smarter and could have learned a lot more. But as the years went by, you see, back in the old days when I first had that first boat, *The Hope*, when you went out there you had nothing but your knowledge of what you get. You'd have to use line ranges to see where you're going or a compass and time. You run so far, you got—you get caught in bad weather and bad squalls and all that was always nerve-racking to me. You know, I was nervous.

01:21:03

Sara Wood: Well sure. I can't see how you couldn't be.

01:21:05

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, but that's what we had. And we'd—lot of my shrimping was around the jetties in Charleston and you had to be careful by them but I got—I got so I could drag right-side of them. But my brother Junior now he'd go down on the north side and drag at night and catch these big old brown shrimp like that [*Gestures*]. But they cut—the law finally cut it out dragging at night, so—. And now you can't put over 'til daylight and it still ain't no shrimp. But that's another thing I give against the state and the wildlife. I don't know if the wildlife done it but the shrimp baiting that they've done, they've created something that takes all the shrimp from the shrimpers. Now more than they should be because they can't—the law they got they can't—they can't stop the people from stealing the shrimp and selling them, you know? And they get—they're taking too much of them. Poor shrimpers don't get a chance no more. I'm going to tell you. That's what killing the shrimp industry.

01:22:11

The shrimp baiting and—and whatever is causing this brown gill that they get in them now, some kind of disease and now I heard they say that it could be coming from the menhaden bait that they're putting out to catch shrimp with. You know what I mean? It might be putting fungus or something in it. But they—you'll never know. But that was a bad blow when they started this—. I mean these boys don't catch half of what they should get anymore. They—it'll never come back. You can't—why, I don't understand it. They can't see that you can't catch something twice. Once that basket of shrimp is gone, see they allow a basket a day. That's sixty pounds. They can—somebody can go out there and that—I don't know how long the season is but—. And most people there's a lot of underhanded stuff going on with it. It's just something—they don't have the law enforcement or no way that you can—you can control it.

01:23:18

It was a bad, bad blow for the business. And now they tell me you can have—this year you can have the oysters and you're going to have to make—them be three inches. And that's going—I don't know what's going to happen to the market when it does that because you see, Rut Leland up there that's been doing oysters all these years he's been doing it probably long as I have, they always pick clusters. Well I—I agree, it's going to clean it off but when you get people that ain't going to go out and go get—and they're used to getting twenty-five, thirty bushels, they ain't going out there and get four, five, six bushels.

01:24:02

You can't make enough so—. It's just a problem because—. You get paid for doing this?

01:24:10

Sara Wood: This is my job. Yeah.

01:24:12

Andrew Magwood: Is that right?

01:24:13

Sara Wood: Yep.

01:24:15

Andrew Magwood: Which—what company you with?

01:24:16

Sara Wood: It's a—it's a nonprofit, we're based at the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Mississippi, and it's called the Southern Foodways Alliance. So I drive around and collect stories about food traditions in the South. So this is for a bigger project I'm working on collecting oral histories about the maritime trade in—

01:24:36

Andrew Magwood: Oh yeah maritime, yeah.

01:24:37

Sara Wood: Yeah, and everyone told me to talk to you.

01:24:39

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, I know a lot. My brother Junior and them they—I should—I'm going back but when—when they first started shrimping they used to go in Adgers Wharf in Charleston. That's the name of the pier and they would sell the shrimp to them ships that come by and he'd always get us a banana out you know about – a banana ships when they're unloaded them they'd always lose a bunch overboard and they'd get—he'd always bring us a stalk. That's what mama would give us—a banana when we'd give us a dose of castor oil. **[Laughs]** But he—but they used to—he used to sell them to the black people and the black people in Charleston would go down there and sell them and they'd go come along, come get your shrimp. Bring your pan. And they'd buy—buy or sell shrimp going down the street like that.

01:25:38

Sara Wood: Did they have carts or—?

01:25:38

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, yeah, they had little baskets and a wheelbarrow, little cart, yeah. They—that's where the—that's the first way they used to sell shrimp was just like that. And then but like I told you, my mama used to walk up and down Broad Street with the oysters selling them and she used to know everybody. The banks, she'd go in the banks. She had a lot of customers. She couldn't get enough of them.

01:26:04

Sara Wood: So she'd shuck them and they'd be in little pint jars and she'd sell those?

01:26:08

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, she'd sell them by the quart.

01:26:10

Sara Wood: By the quart?

01:26:12

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, she'd put them in quarts, yeah. She was—she—man, but you can't get a raw shucked oyster hardly anymore, not you know they usually steam them or something. But back then it was raw shucked, but—.

01:26:26

Sara Wood: Did y'all when you were growing up on the island Mr. Magwood did y'all eat a lot of—you ate a lot of clams and oysters and everything?

01:26:32

Andrew Magwood: Pretty good bit. More than people would think you would. We ate a lot of fish I know that. **[Laughs]** I loved—we all loved fish. I still love fish. Yeah, but I love it all but I love mullet which is—most people, “Eh, you love mullet?” You know? It’s mostly a bait fish I guess they figure it is but it’s good. If you get it while it’s fresh, clean and—and daddy would always take fish and he’d clean them and then salt them and put them in the icebox ‘til the next morning. But when I was a little kid we didn’t even have iceboxes for a long time. We just—mama had a little old chest like icebox and we put a hunk of ice in it. **[Laughs]**

01:27:14

Sara Wood: Where did you get the ice from? Did you—

01:27:16

Andrew Magwood: Big company would come all the way down to Mount Pleasant—or Sullivan’s Island and go get it. Pernato’s.

01:27:21

Sara Wood: Did you put it on the boat and bring it back?

01:27:23

Andrew Magwood: Yeah bring it back, yeah. We used to do that, that's how we done our fishing. We'd bring—used to buy 100 pounds, not 100. We'd get 300 pounds. You'd get them in 300-pound blocks and then we had to chop it up so we could handle it and put it in the boat and keep it covered up. Carried it up to that island and then we had a little ice house that was—well it's still there. That's one thing Hugo [Hurricane Hugo] didn't carry—the little ice house is still there. Yeah, and we'd put it in there, and one time I can remember we used to bury it in—in sawdust.

01:27:59

Sara Wood: Oh yeah?

01:27:59

Andrew Magwood: Yeah, to help—

01:28:00

Sara Wood: Help preserve it?

01:28:01

Andrew Magwood: —keep the ice yeah cold and then later on we put it in that ice house and we had a lot of canvas and stuff we'd cover it up. It lasted maybe a week sometimes, yeah it was something, yeah. We had it—we didn't have an icebox for a long time. That's how we done everything. But that's why this—to this day I don't like cold water much. I like water just—my

daddy had a tank right standing—an old cypress tank right outside our hose and I'll never forget. He kept a glass up there. Every day he'd go—he would grab that glass and get that water out that cypress tank and it would be cool just like a—. But I never—I don't drink ice water hardly now. I like it—just water.

01:28:49

Sara Wood: Well Mr. Magwood, you've been very generous with your time this morning and I'm wondering—I don't really have any other specific questions for you right now. But I'm wondering is there anything that you want to add, anything that you think is important that I didn't ask you or didn't know to ask you and I should have asked you?

01:29:09

Andrew Magwood: No, not really. I mean I just—I know I don't—more probably something will come to me later on. Maybe you better give me your telephone number. I wanted to show you some of them pictures if I can find some. I don't know—you know I just don't—.

01:29:27

Sara Wood: I'm going to go ahead and turn the tape recorder off, is that okay with you?

01:29:29

Andrew Magwood: Sure fine, don't matter to me.

01:29:31

[End Andrew Magwood Interview]