FR: This tape is the property of Tales of Cape Cod, Incorporated and cannot be reproduced without their written permission. Today's date is June 2, 1978, and we are at the home of Walter Nason Lewis of 320 Parker Road in Osterville, Mass. Mr. Lewis is seventy-two years of age. Mr. Lewis, are you native to the Cape?

WL: I am a native of the Cape, and I was born in this house on the kitchen table by Dr. Kinney.

FR: You were delivered by Dr. Kinney.

WL: I was. And they say it was the coldest day of the year, January the 12th.

FR: What year?

WL: 1906.

FR: Tell me, Mr. Lewis, do you recall your great-grandparents or your grandparents?

WL: Oh, I recall my grandmother and grandfather Lewis, but I don't remember any of my mother's. They came from Gloucester.

FR: Gloucester.

WL: On my mother's side. And on my father's side, they all came from Osterville and [inaudible].

FR: Why did your maternal grandparents move to the Cape from Gloucester?

WL: Well, as I understand it, she was a nurse for the chiefs from New York, and she was a nurse. That's how my father met her.

FR: She was visiting on the Cape.

WL: No, she was a nurse for one of the chief [inaudible].

FR: Oh, I see. What did your grandfather do for a livelihood?

WL: Well, near as I can remember, it was nothing. But they tell me he was a peddler or a drummer. What he sold I –

FR: That being a salesman

WL: Yeah. That was a salesman at that time. But what he sold, I don't know.

FR: Did he travel around the country?

WL: He traveled all over the Cape?

FR: What did he sell?

WL: I don't know. I don't know. I never was told.

FR: Did you recall your grandmother?

WL: Oh, yes. She was the boss of that family.

FR: She was the boss.

WL: She was the boss.

FR: What was her maiden name?

WL: Bliss from Centerville. They used to own all the land there. The other side of the bridge on the left-hand side of the road. That was before that bridge was put there. And before that bridge was put there, they had to go way down around [inaudible] River.

FR: That's the town near the Centerville River.

WL: Yeah. On the other side of all that.

FR: What did your father do?

WL: My father was a carpenter, and he was in the shellfish business, and he was an excellent carpenter. In fact, he built this house we're in now, and he built a good many of them on [inaudible] Avenue.

FR: Was he a contractor, or did he work for somebody?

WL: Well, he was half-contractor and half worked for somebody.

FR: Did he ever mention what he received for pay?

WL: No, I can't recall, but he had a good living, so I don't know. He must have –

FR: What did your mother do?

WL: My mother? She took in washing and ironing at different times for what we call the summer people. And I was the one that had to pump the water.

FR: Your father – other than carpentry, did he do anything else?

WL: Yes. He was in shellfish. He had the oyster grant. We had an oyster shanty over there on West Bay, and the land belonged to – let me think – it belonged to [inaudible] (Garrison?). And he owned practically all the land around the waterfront on West Bay. And my father had an oyster shanty there with his permission. One day, he was coming along at our own house, and he stopped to my father to talk. And he says, "Well, that land from here over to the shore, why don't you buy it from me?" He says, "I'll sell it to you for eighty-five dollars." And you know what my father said? He says, "Why should I buy it, Bill? You let me use it for nothing."

FR: [laughter] Tell me. Was that waterfront property?

WL: It was all waterfront property.

FR: How long was the distance? How much waterfront?

WL: Half a mile of waterfront property.

FR: Would you care to estimate the value of that?

WL: I wouldn't. I couldn't. I couldn't begin to tell you because there's a golf course there, and then there's two or three estates there – four estates. Big estates.

FR: It would be certainly up in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

WL: Oh, Lord, yes.

FR: Tell me, Mr. Lewis. The piece of property and the home you're living in today, was this a farm?

WL: Well, this was just a plain, ordinary piece of property with nothing on it. Fact is, I can't remember. But I can remember the little trees. I could jump over the top of the pine trees [inaudible] growing up. And another thing. We used to have a shed roof over the back door and put a ladder up on that shed roof, climb to the top of the house, and look on a clear day and see the train smoke come in at West Barnstable.

FR: How far away is West Barnstable?

WL: About seven miles.

FR: Could you see the water from here, too?

WL: Oh, heck, you could see all of Nantucket Sound.

FR: That's because of the low scrub pine.

WL: The low – very low. You could hop over them.

FR: What was Mr. Garrison noted for?

WL: Well, he was noted for getting the rights for women to vote.

FR: Did you meet him?

WL: Oh, I met him out – the same time that he asked my father about that piece of property. My father introduced me to him. And I come up from the pond where I'd been swimming. I had a piece of soap in my hand – in my right hand – and I handed my right hand, soap and all, to Mr. Garrison. They thought that was just too much.

FR: Did you attend school in the village of Osterville?

WL: I attended school in Osterville, the grammar school there, and the Barnstable High School.

FR: How did you get to school?

WL: Walked.

FR: How far was it?

WL: Well, Dry Swamp Academy is the name of the school. I don't know how it ever got that name, but that's what everybody called it. And it was, oh, a mile, anyway, a mile and a quarter, a mile and a half.

FR: What was the school like?

WL: Well, it had a wood stove in it, in the classroom.

FR: How many rooms?

WL: Three. Three rooms. Had three grades in the first – let's see. First, second, and third, and then fourth, fifth and sixth. And the sixth, seventh –

FR: Were there nine grades?

WL: Nine grades. The other three.

FR: Was there a teacher in each room?

WL: A teacher in each room. But in the first grade, teacher was Miss (Oakes?), and her birthday and my birthday were the same. I have a book she presented me at one of my –

FR: Isn't that terrific.

WL: I was in her class.

FR: Do you recall anything about the school?

WL: Well, I know there was a very little playground. What little playground there was, was all sand and stone.

FR: Did you ever get a [inaudible] hand?

WL: Oh, heck, yes. A good one.

FR: For what reason?

WL: I don't know. Most any reason, I guess. I had plenty of trouble. Yes. Yes. I was fresher than the devil.

FR: Did you continue on to school after the ninth grade?

WL: Yeah. Went to high school.

FR: You went to high school where?

WL: [inaudible]; I attended that.

FR: Did you not tell me during your school years, you caddied?

WL: Oh, yes. I caddied every summer.

FR: Where did you caddy?

WL: I caddied at Seapuit to start with, and I caddied at Wianno.

FR: What happened to the Seapuit golf course?

WL: It was broken up for house lots.

FR: What did you get paid for being a caddy?

WL: Fifteen cents a round for nine holes at Seapuit. Then I came over to Wianno. We got – let's see – fifty cents. And then it went up to sixty cents and then seventy cents because they wanted caddies badly.

FR: What year was the Wianno golf course built?

WL: In about 1919, something like that. It was after the first world war.

FR: Was there some kind of a course there prior to that?

WL: Yes.

FR: Tell us about it.

WL: Well, I tell you. The first nine holes at Wianno was practically all pastureland. In that pastureland, from [inaudible] Pond up to Bridge Street, was three or four – a half a dozen holes, and they had clay greens dug down two or three inches into the sod. I don't know who was the ones that built that, but I have an idea it was the (Hinkles?) Homes and [inaudible].

FR: (Hinkles?) homes and [inaudible]. That was a company?

WL: No, that was brothers and brother-in-laws that lived just outside of the center of the village on the way to Hyannis.

FR: Did you, yourself, play golf?

WL: Oh, yes. Heck, yes. I played golf plenty.

FR: Tell us about it.

WL: Well, I started at caddying, and then I was caddy master at the Wianno club. And then I just played golf and played with about everybody.

FR: Tell us who you played golf with.

WL: I played with some –

FR: You said you played golf with a number of –

WL: Stockbrokers. They thought they were real good. And I didn't think I was too good. But nevertheless, we started playing for fifty cents, and then we started playing for a dollar, and they never paid me. I says, "All right, we'll play double or nothing if you want to." It got up to about a hundred dollars a hole, and I made plenty off of those [inaudible].

FR: They'd eventually pay you.

WL: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

FR: What kind of a handicap did you have?

WL: Well, then?

FR: Yeah.

WL: None. I played scratch with all of them.

FR: Did you play golf with any famous people?

WL: Sure. I played golf with J.P. Kennedy.

FR: What kind of an individual was Mr. Kennedy?

WL: He was really a nice gentleman. He really was a good sport. He'd drive up in his Rolls Royce, get out. "What do you say, young fellow? Shall we go out

today?" I says, "Sure, I'm all ready." Go out; I'll get my six or twelve dollars out of him. And he'd hand it to me with a grin.

FR: Were there any other people that you played golf with?

WL: Oh, well, when I went down south, I played exhibition down there with – they said, look at that little kid out there playing golf.

FR: How old were you then?

WL: Sixteen. I played with Walter Hagen. I worked for Harry Rawlins. He was the first winner of the National Open ever played in this country. And I worked for him, and he taught me plenty.

FR: What else did you do for livelihood?

WL: Well, I –

FR: You said you were a greenskeeper?

WL: Well, yes, I worked as a greenskeeper at the club.

FR: How long were you there?

WL: Seven or eight years. And then I worked for my father in the wintertime. He taught me how to drive a nail straight, which is his pride and joy to see me hit one

straight. Well, I learned the trade, and I became a good carpenter, a good cabinet maker. Then along came the Depression.

FR: Tell us about that.

WL: And I worked for five dollars a week, six days a week, from seven to four for five bucks a week during the Depression, and glad to get it.

FR: What did you do?

WL: Carpentry. This fellow said he had this piece of land and some old lumber and wanted to build a house. He didn't have any money, any more than I did, but he managed to pay me my five bucks a week.

FR: What else did you do during the Depression? Was there any kind of welfare or WPA [Works Progress Administration]?

WL: Oh, yes, there was. The WPA. I worked on that for – cleaning scrub –they were set out – the spruce down by the community college. Eight or ten of us went down there and released them from trash and underbrush so they could grow.

FR: How did you survive? How did you buy food?

WL: Well, my wife was a good planner, and she'd take that money and [inaudible], too. She kept track of everything. We bought our coal, five bags of coal. I don't know how she did it, but she did it. The kids all survived, and they all had enough to eat.

FR: Did the merchants or the storekeepers supply you with credit?

WL: We never asked for it. Never asked for it.

FR: Was the village hit very hard by the Depression?

WL: They must have been because nobody was working.

FR: How did they survive?

WL: Well, they survived. Yes. Well, we fished and went deer hunting. About everybody in this village went deer hunting. And the wardens would know we had to go to get food.

FR: And do you recall the year the Depression hit?

WL: 1930, 1931.

FR: That's when it hit the hardest.

WL: Yeah, we had those two years.

FR: Getting back to your childhood days, how many members in your family?

WL: Mother and father. I had an older sister, an older brother, and then my younger sister.

FR: Four children, a mother, and a father.

WL: That's right.

FR: Tell me, what were the chores that you had?

WL: The chores that I had?

FR: [inaudible] your brothers and sisters, too.

WL: Well, my brother and I, well, we – I had to get in the kindling. That kindling box had to be filled to start that fire in the morning. That was my job. [inaudible]. And I'd have to do some scrambling to get that kindling. Go all in through where they had these cedar fences to keep the sheep in and the cattle in, in different places. And they were all run down, and all – and the owners decided to get rid of them. So that's what I had to do.

FR: Did you have any livestock?

WL: We had a cow. And my father boarded the horses for the Wianno people that came down all winter. And you never saw such a mean bunch of horses in all your life.

FR: Was it part of your duty to take care of them?

WL: No, it wasn't. No, I kept as far away from them as I could. Had nothing to do with them.

FR: Did you have chickens?

WL: Oh, heck, yes, we had chickens and guinea hens.

FR: Did you plant your own vegetables?

WL: My father did. And my mother and I had to hoe the corn. And it was funny this day. My brother says to me, "I don't want to hoe this corn." I said, "Neither do I." He said, "You watch this. Before Pa gets up here next to us." You take your hoe and corn right off. Don't bother to hoe it; just cut it right out." He said, "Then we won't have to [inaudible]. He did. My father said, "Get out of here. You can't hoe corn either."

FR: That took care of that chore.

WL: That took care of that.

FR: What about weekends?

WL: Well, weekends, what we did mostly – my father had a skiff, which was his quahog skiff over to his shanty over the shore.

FR: What's the description of a skiff?

WL: Well, it's a twelve-foot open boat with a pair of oars. That's about what my description of it is. Along with a bailer to help bail the water out once it leaked in. And with several of my friends, we'd get together and get some hot dogs – mostly hot dogs – and some bread and go over to the shore, get into that skiff, and row up to Sampsons Island, start a fire, and cook them and have our suppers there, which be on a Saturday. Turn the skiff over, sleep under it, and come back Sunday morning, rowing all the way.

FR: Would you do any fishing?

WL: Oh, heck, yes.

FR: What kind of fishing?

WL: Well, we'd dive down and get the oysters if we wanted some oysters. And then if we wanted to catch some fish, why, we'd catch some flounders. We'd always bring a drop line with us. We could stop most anywhere for it.

FR: Did you caddy on weekends, too?

WL: Oh, heck, yes. Well, you know, I'm talking about when there wasn't anybody here to play golf [inaudible].

FR: What did you do on a Sunday?

WL: Play golf if it was a golfing day and –

FR: Did you have any social activity at the church?

WL: Well, I don't recall too much of it. It was all work and no play at the church. Group of us had to [inaudible] following Sunday.

FR: What did you do for entertainment?

WL: Well, let's start in the winter.

FR: Okay.

WL: Well, in the winter, why, I'd have snow on the ground. We'd go sliding. And when you'd get a little ice on the pond, we'd build an ice boat out of old skates, crosspiece –

FR: Tell me more about the ice boat.

WL: You couldn't keep those skates on those ice boats; they'd rattle off. They needed their little springs on them, so they'd tilt with the –

FR: Was it built [inaudible]?

WL: Yeah.

FR: Two skates on each side? Did you ever skate in the back to steer it?

WL: Steer it with, yeah.

FR: What kind of a sail?

WL: Sheet.

FR: What shape was it?

WL: Well, I cut it out. My mother hemmed it or something, so it wouldn't fray all to pieces. And I took a pine tree, which was just about the right size for a mast and boom. Tied it on, off I went.

FR: What else did you do in the wintertime?

WL: Well, they had the minstrel shows. We used to go to them. They'd put one big one on every winter.

FR: Was that local talent?

WL: All local. All local folks

FR: Do you remember anybody that was in it?

WL: Well, I know Ed Crocker was in it. And Mr. Lovell was in it. And all of the (Scudders?) – there's some (Scudder?) boys who were in it.

FR: What about movies? Did you have movies?

WL: Oh, they had movies up here. And a man by the name of (Windsor?) from Sandwich put them on.

FR: Do you remember any of the movies you saw? Or the actors or actresses?

WL: No. No, I can't. Well, I do know that it was those – they had those kid movies. That's about all. I don't know. I can't recall. I've seen some of the old shows on TV.

FR: How did you meet your wife?

WL: Just met her.

FR: Where?

WL: Met her at the golf club.

FR: How did you court her? What did you do?

WL: Well, that's all there was to it. [inaudible], well, this is it, and that's it.

FR: Well, if you went out for an evening, what would you do?

WL: Well, we went to dances.

FR: Local dances?

WL: Yeah.

FR: What was your wife's maiden name?

WL: (Maude Webster?) Kendrick.

FR: Was she a native Cape Codder?

WL: She was a native Cape Codder from Dennisport.

FR: Tell us a little bit about her family.

WL: Well, she had four sisters, and her father was in the Coast Guard. He was a Coast Guarder.

FR: Where?

WL: Chatham.

FR: Was there a story about some kind of a wreck that he was involved in down there?

WL: Well, he was in the First World War. Of course, I don't recall too much about it, but he was on the station when the submarine came in – German submarine – came in there, and they just missed it.

FR: Do you recall the name of the submarine?

WL: Well, it was (Count Von?) [inaudible].

FR: He was the commander.

WL: He was the commander of the German submarine. We didn't know that at that time. But in history, it came out.

FR: He went out to see it, did he?

WL: Well, they sunk a barge, and he went out to rescue the men on the barge. The submarine kept firing over the top of their heads, I imagine, just to frighten them or something. Her grandfather –

FR: What was his name?

WL: Captain [inaudible] Kendrick. And he was the one that told all the stories to Joseph Lincoln, and he autographed the first edition of all those stories that he told them.

FR: What did he do?

WL: He was a captain of vessels.

FR: Where did the vessel run from?

WL: Well, he used to go everywhere. He went all around the world, and he even took his son across.

FR: What kind of cargo would he carry?

WL: I imagine most everything, but he was down in – down south somewhere in South America, and he had to have ballast to come home, and he brought bananas, big bunches of bananas and green for ten cents a bunch. He brought them into New York and then sold them, and that's how they started the United Fruit Company.

FR: Was he a member of the executive group of United Fruit?

WL: Don't ask me. I don't know. I couldn't tell you.

FR: He was quite an entrepreneur.

WL: Oh, yes. Definitely.

FR: What did you do when you purchased clothing?

WL: Well, I didn't purchase it. My mother and father purchased it. And there used to be a man by the name of [inaudible] would come around with his horse and team, and he used to have pants and all the paraphernalia that went with it – shoes even. They'd buy them there. And sometimes what they couldn't get there, they'd get up here at [inaudible] Crocker's store.

FR: Would you go to Hyannis?

WL: Oh, yes, they'd go to Hyannis. They didn't do too much buying over there. We used to go – take the horse and team, go down to the railroad station in West Barnstable and go to Bridgewater and [inaudible]. That used to be the fall trip to get ready for school.

FR: The women in the family, where did they get their clothes?

WL: They bought them mostly from Mrs. [inaudible] from Hyannis. She came around with a horse and buggy.

FR: Was that Mrs. (Perlstein?)?

WL: Mrs. (Perlstein?). That's what it was.

FR: These individuals that came around, did they eventually go into business in the villages?

WL: No. They were in business in Hyannis. Mrs. – I don't know what the name of the store is now, but it used to be right there on the corner of Main Street and Barnstable Road.

FR: Do you remember any other traveling salesmen?

WL: No, I don't remember the names, but I do know that there was a horse and wagon that came around with ladders and chairs and so forth, selling that – but who he was or not, I don't know. But I do remember him coming around.

FR: What kind of industry did you have in the village?

WL: Well, the shellfishing and carpentry.

FR: You mentioned a brickyard?

WL: Well, they cut wood in the wintertime. They carted it over to Barnstable for the brickyard. If you'd get a hold of those bricks now, you'd have an antique – a real one. Says "West Barnstable Brick Company."

FR: How were they made? Do you recall?

WL: Oh, I wouldn't know. No, that's beyond me because I never saw them make any.

FR: What about cranberrying? Was that active in this area?

WL: Not too much. Not too much. Cranberrying was more or less the other side of the Cape.

FR: Would the people that came down for the summer hire a lot of the local help?

WL: Oh, yes. Oh, yeah.

FR: Do you recall how much they were paid or anything of that nature?

WL: Well, they weren't paid – [Recording paused.]

FR: Let's take a walk down Main Street in the village of Osterville in the early 1900s. What was it like?

WL: Well, there was a really narrow road built out of shells – oyster shells ground up by the horses clomping over it. On the west side of Osterville was the [inaudible] shop, which was then Leonard's garage. Then we came along to a row of houses. Nice houses. Then came through the [inaudible] and – Aunt Emily [inaudible]. Then the Smalls and then the Chadwicks on one side. Then, come on a little further, come to my grandmother's house. And then, after my grandmother's house, was a little bakery run by the [inaudible]. And then across from that was Scott Scudder's coal, and then across the street from him was the hay scales.

FR: What were the hay scales for?

WL: To weigh coal. Mostly to weigh coal. That's as I can recall. I don't know what else it was for, but it was right there in the center of the village. There's a flagpole there now, and then there was the – in fact, there was a little clothing store there, too, where Charlie's is now. There was a little clothing store there, run by Mrs. (Crosby?). And then across from that was a little bicycle shop; that was run by Roy (Bailey?). And then we come along; we come to the – I think the Methodist church and then Horace Parker's store and the movie place. Then across

from that was another bicycle shop run by the [inaudible]. And then there was a coachman's house where the stagecoach stopped. It was right in back of where the banks are now.

FR: Was there a stable there?

WL: Oh, there was a stable. Then you go down over the hill, and that's where the newspaper store was. Oh, yes, and then the post office was up near the hay scales.

FR: Was it a separate post office?

WL: No, no. It was the little store and everything.

FR: It was in the store.

WL: It was in the store. I can't recall what was in the store or anything. All I do know, that's what they say, that was the post office. Then it goes down over the hill where E.C. Swift's is now, and that was another post office later on in years.

FR: Kept changing from one place to the other.

WL: Yeah. Whoever took the bid, I guess. I don't know.

FR: Was that depending upon whether there were Democrats or Republicans?

WL: That I couldn't say. I couldn't say. I don't know.

FR: Where was the school? Was the school right up in the village?

WL: Oh, the school was right there opposite the – by (Crocker's) store up on top of the hill. And right in back of that was the Dry Swamp Academy's mudhole.

FR: Earlier in that conversation, you mentioned Dr. (Kinney?). What do you remember about Dr. (Kinney?)?

WL: I remember Dr. Kinney with a little satchel, and he would walk, no matter what hour of the day or anything. He'd walk from his office to our house carrying that little satchel. My brother was really bad off in the morning at one time. And my mother said that if it wasn't for Dr. Kinney, he was the one that kept him alive.

FR: Where would you go if you went to a hospital?

WL: Boston, if you were lucky enough to get there.

FR: What if you had to see a dentist?

WL: Well, then you had to get on your bicycle and ride to Hyannis.

FR: [inaudible] the advent of the automobile?

WL: Well, I can remember when I – on [inaudible] Street was just nothing but a little narrow road, that's all. And anybody who [inaudible] anybody was just out of luck. You had to back up [inaudible] try to let the other guy get by. Well, anyway, [it] was these people that built the homes up in Wianno. They'd come

down for the weekend. They'd come down in locomotives and the Stanley Steamers, and those horses had to get out of the way because they couldn't get out of the way. They'd come down there [inaudible] with all the paraphernalia going and the horns going.

FR: Were they very noisy?

WL: Yes. Yup. And the man that owned the next piece of property to us here now, he had four horses, really high-strung horses, and a tally-ho. And every time he –

FR: A tally-ho? What's a tally-ho?

WL: I don't know. They rode in it. That's all I know.

FR: A vehicle.

WL: Yes. And it was drawn by – I don't know – four or five horses. He'd have a man that would blow the trumpet every time he went by a piece of property.

FR: What was his name?

WL: Andrew [inaudible].

FR: And what did he do?

WL: He was a stockbroker, and he was the – wait a minute. He was either president or owned American [inaudible] Company. And he built a big estate facing East Bay off of Seaview Avenue or Wianno Avenue.

FR: Do you recall the advent of the telephone?

WL: Well, I don't know. All I know, the workmen are going down and setting the poles and stringing the little things you have to run the wires through, pole to pole, and then they'd come into our house. That's all I can tell you.

FR: You had a telephone.

WL: Well, the minute they came down, the – same as the lights.

FR: Do you remember when electricity came in?

WL: I don't. Can't recall. I know they came in. That's all I can tell you.

FR: What about indoor plumbing?

WL: Well, my brother and I put that in, pump and all. Put the pump in –

FR: Was that after you had electricity?

WL: That was – we had to have electricity in order to run the pump. And that was – I think we put it in that winter.

FR: What year would you say that was?

WL: 1910, ’11 or ’12. Along in there somewhere.

FR: Do you recall prohibition?

WL: Oh, I guess so.

FR: Tell us about it.

WL: Well, if you wanted a drink, well, you had to go out to sea and fish it up.

FR: What do you mean, fish it up?

WL: Well, the rumrunners, if [they] got chased by the coast guard, they’d have to dump the stuff overboard. Well, I guess half the village or practically all the village that had a boat, they would [inaudible] water or tug – they could push around, and a pole or gaff or something, go out and fish up the burlap bags.

FR: What would you do with the liquor?

WL: Sell it. Hundred dollars a case.

FR: Who would buy it?

WL: Well, now.

FR: I don't mean the individuals. Innkeepers would buy it. The hotels would buy it. And sometimes, the owners that owned it would buy it. Because I know that I – some that I got, I paid my taxes on it. And I brought it over. "Where'd you get the money? You haven't been working?" I says, "No, I have been working but made a little something on burlap bags."

FR: It was quite well known.

WL: Yes.

FR: That was a lot of money at that time.

WL: Sure was. Oh, you'd still get two, three years' taxes you had to pay. Depression. And this lawyer [inaudible] because they'd like to get a hold of the places [inaudible] anyway. It was so – I don't know. There was too many houses sold during the Depression for taxes [inaudible].

FR: They were in cahoots?

WL: Sure. Sure. Well, anyway, he wondered where I got it and who told me about it, and I said, never mind. Come to find out, it was his bank that he represented that put up the money for it.

FR: For what?

WL: For the liquor. [inaudible] bank more crooked than the devil.

FR: The banks would back the bootleggers?

WL: Sure. To buy it.

FR: How did they bring the liquor in? I mean, was it brought from overseas or –

WL: No, no. Heck, no. The mother ship would be just outside of the three-mile limit. Then we'd have to go out. And then they'd load it, and they – a regular crane from the mothership. They'd load in so many cases into that crane with a big net on it and dump it down into the cockpit. Then you'd take it from the cockpit and put it on the deck – tie it onto the deck with a string or a rope. And so if you [inaudible] Coast Guard going to overtake you, give the rope a yank, and the stuff [inaudible] out there for two, three miles.

FR: Were there a lot of the local boys involved?

WL: Sure. Sure.

FR: It was a way of earning a living.

WL: It was a way of earning a living.

FR: Do you have any other interesting stories about bootlegging? Were there stills, for example? Did people make their –?

WL: There was, but I don't know anything about that. I know that they made the moonshine.

FR: Was there always a bar you could get a drink at?

WL: In Hyannis and Sandwich and Mashpee. In Osterville, I never did know.

FR: But a lot of young people used to do a lot of traveling then.

WL: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. They had cars then. [inaudible] fishing one day. Do you know how many boats were out there, dragging for that stuff? A hundred and thirty boats were dragging for that liquor with gang hooks.

FR: Would the –?

WL: And the coast guard came down that afternoon, and I had seven cases on my old dory.

FR: Would they bother the local people?

WL: They'd bother anybody because somebody in the village had called them. If they didn't have a call, they wouldn't bother getting it this way.

FR: What happened to the seven cases?

WL: Well, I got almost inside of the cut, and then this *boom*, and this big splash, and that one-pounder hit that bow of that boat – didn't hit the boat, but it splashed up there. I just started in. I tossed every – seven cases right off that boat just as fast as I could. And then they caught up with me [and] wanted to know what I was

doing. I said I was fishing. They said, "I don't see any hooks or lines." I says, "Well, there it is, right there." That was that dragging [inaudible]. "That's how you catch them out there?" "Sure," I said, "I didn't catch any today." They kept me tied up to that dock. [inaudible] Avenue. And it was cold. The bay was freezing over at that time. I used to say, "How am I going to get in here?" Get up the bay to the mooring [inaudible] bay freezes over. "Oh," he says, "You get in there." I said, "You'll have to tow me in, then." "Oh, no. You'll stay right here." Well, I don't know. They found out I didn't have anything aboard.

FR: Did they stop any other boats?

WL: Oh, they stopped every boat that went out there that day. Most of them all went all directions, so they only had one or two they could chase, and I was one of them.

FR: Did you go back and pick up the seven cases later?

WL: Couldn't find it. Somebody else found it before I could.

FR: This was all free liquor that the bootleggers had lost.

WL: Yeah. Dumped overboard.

FR: When you were a youngster, what kind of pets did you have?

WL: I had a little bit of a black [inaudible] dog, and that dog was the cutest thing you ever saw. He'd go out – I'd take the golf ball and see it in the pond. See a

golf ball, take a rock, throw out there, he'd swim out to where that ripple was and dive. Actually, dive down in the six, eight, ten foot of water and get that golf ball and bring it into me.

FR: You must have been selling golf balls all over the Cape.

WL: I was. Especially the [inaudible]. [inaudible] come in this house. Oh, was he so mad. He's some mad. He said, "That dog's got a nest of them somewhere." [laughter] I says, "I don't know where," and he did.

FR: What else did you have for pets?

WL: Well, when I was down South, I bought an alligator, shipped him up.

FR: How big was he?

WL: It was, oh, two feet and a half long and had a big mouth, and I had him out in the backyard, penned in – good shape. Went out there this morning – gone. I walked down to the pond, and there he was, sitting on the edge of the pond.

FR: How did he get out?

WL: Don't ask me, but he got out. Dug out or pushed out or somehow. I don't know how, but he got out. Well, anyway, the next-door neighbors – their children were down swimming, and the alligator joined them. So that's how I happened to have to get rid of him. Well, I kept going down to the pond where it should be, right on our bank, because that was on the sunny side of the pond. And eventually,

I saw him. So I started down. I was going to chase him up. He chased me up the hill. Don't tell me an alligator can't run because they can. I run just as fast as I could up that hill, and he was *bang, bang, bang* with those jaws of his right back on my heels. I had to come in and get a shotgun and had to do away with him.

FR: Would a shotgun take care of him?

WL: Yeah. We got close enough. I wasn't two feet from him, and I had to – because he was still coming.

FR: I imagine your neighbors were a little concerned.

WL: Oh, definitely. Definitely. I had telephone calls. [inaudible] the time I raised a turkey. I raised turkeys.

FR: Tell us about it.

WL: Well, they always said that turkeys were hard to raise. So I raised these turkeys. Bought a dozen poles, and I rigged them up for the – so they'd be – the wire next to the shed and kept track of everything I spent. I raised twenty-five thirty-pound turkeys. Eventually, they got out on me, and they went to the next-door neighbor. The fellow [inaudible], "Mr. Lewis, your fine feathered friends are over here." I says, "Okay, I'll be over [to] drive them home." [inaudible] so many times; [it's a] wonder he didn't kill them.

FR: What did you do with the turkeys?

WL: Oh, ate them.

FR: Thanksgiving or –?

WL: I hate turkey meat now. Killing them and picking them. A thirty-five-pound turkey is a lot of meat. They're savage and mean. They're a mean bird.

FR: What about holidays? How did you celebrate?

WL: Well, I would take – we'd start in for the winter, first. That's Christmas. We'd [inaudible] up to the Union Hall. The Union Hall belonged to everybody in the village. My grandfather and father worked on it for shares. And so they had the – we were in –

FR: They all had a financial interest?

WL: Yeah. They all had. And they'd have a big Christmas tree there. And we'd lug all our presents up there for the family and put them on the tree. And then, some old goat would be the Santa Claus, and they'd pass out the presents to everybody in the village, and that would be that. But I do remember one Christmas. We had – I don't know – a foot or two of snow, and it was slushy and mean and miserable. I couldn't go because I didn't have any winter boots to wear. So I don't know. I know very well my father went up to a local store and bought a pair of boots. I didn't know he'd gone up the street to buy them or anything. So I just figured, well, I just couldn't go. So I come out. He said, "Oh, go in the living room. Look what come down the chimney." There was a pair of boots sticking out of the chimney flue.

FR: Saved the Christmas for you.

WL: Yes, sir. And I had both boots on so I could go. Yeah, I remember that.

FR: How was the Christmas tree decorated? What would be on it?

WL: Cards and might be a sled hanging on one of the limbs or – most anything. There was [inaudible] drums.

FR: Do you recall Thanksgiving?

WL: No more than having a Thanksgiving turkey here. Then my grandmother and grandfather would come down, and sometimes my aunt and uncle.

FR: A family day.

WL: Yeah.

FR: What about the Fourth of July?

WL: Well, the Fourth of July, if I wasn't playing golf, and after that, in the evening, we'd go up here to the Wianno club, and they'd put on fireworks – good big ones. The last time that they put them on, I was the one that had to set them off. The American Fireworks Company. And the local carpenter – he had to put up our – had to brace the [inaudible] and stuff that the things went off in. And they got drunk. And they couldn't – none of them had the – so this old guy goes,

"We'll touch a match to all of them." I knew better than to touch a match to all of them, see, but they were all set up. So I had to go out there, and I'd touch them off. Different ones. I even touched off the American flag. The one that was supposed to be put up last. But I got them all off, anyway.

FR: You were talking about storage of food. How did you refrigerate your food?

WL: Well, I tell you. Our piece of property goes out into the pond in a V, and there was three ice houses on our lake, and they were owned by – the two on this side of the lake were owned by summer people. They'd cut the ice and store it in those ice houses. But there wouldn't be ice enough to fill their ice house unless they come over on our ice. My father says, "Here, you can have my ice if I can have ice out of your ice house for the summer." So, lo and behold, between the two of them, we had all the ice we wanted out of those two ice houses. The other side of the pond was another big ice house owned by the Osterville Ice Company. And that's how we made our money in the winter, during the vacation. They'd mark out the ice, horse and team, knock it out, and then we'd have to saw it by hand.

FR: What kind of a saw?

WL: Ice saw. That's all I can tell you. Great big teeth with a –

FR: It was a one-man saw?

WL: One-man saw with the handles on both sides of the saw and then sawed away.

FR: I imagine you slept well at night after that day.

WL: No question about sleeping. And my job was to lead the horse that hauled that ice up the chutes into the ice house. Pa and the other kids would pull the ice into the chutes, and there'd be two or four of them in, shove it up the chute far enough to hook on with the hook. The horse would pull it into the ice house.

FR: How would they store the ice?

WL: Well, they'd store it. You pack it in there, tier on tier, and they'd put hay in between the tiers so the ice, if melted, wouldn't stick together.

FR: Do you recall the first mechanical refrigeration you saw?

WL: No, I can't. All I do know [is] that we had one come in the house and [inaudible]. Well, my brother-in-law and I bought the company ice house over across the other side of the pond to tear it down for the lumber in it. Well, we did. We had enough lumber to build every house on Cape Cod, I guess. But it was good seasoned.

FR: What did you do with the lumber?

WL: Well, I built a porch on my house with mine. My brother-in-law sold his to somebody, and it was hemlock. Most of it all hemlock. Some of those boards were four, five-foot-wide, and it would be fifteen, sixteen-foot long. The rafters were hard pine rafters, two by twelves. And we took them down, we [inaudible].

They never took them off of the [inaudible]. We left them – they cleared [inaudible] on each one on the joist and left the two end ones. We both got on the – when I walked into the ice house – the ice house, I guess, must have been forty, forty-five-foot long. He is on one end of the ice house, and I'm on the other end, and we're going to pry the end rafters off and let everything go. Well, he pried off just a little bit before I did, and everything went his way. The rafters flying like snowflakes everywhere. A wonder we weren't killed.

FR: You were very fortunate.

WL: Yes, we were. But we got a good price for those floor joists.

FR: I'll bet.

WL: Gee willikers. This one guy got a bunch of them and made a table out of them. I don't know what he did with it, but he must have sold it anyway because it was all seasoned hard pine. He could probably –

FR: Good price for it.

WL: Sure.

FR: Recall any shipwrecks in the area?

WL: Yes. Right outside the cut, there was a coal barge come ashore – wrecked there one day.

FR: What year was that?

WL: Oh, Lord.

FR: How old were you then?

WL: About fourteen. Twelve to fourteen – in that neighborhood.

FR: 1920?

WL: Yes. My father had an oyster boat with a make-and-break engine there.

FR: What's a make-and-break engine?

WL: Single cylinder. That's all I can tell you. And you need a safety pin to keep it going. That's all.

FR: What would you use a safety pin for?

WL: To make the spark go up and down. That's all I can tell you. Anyway, he had one, and we used to have to go out there with a [inaudible] like they use for [inaudible] and break up the coal that was on the flat.

FR: Was there a lot of it?

WL: Oh, I don't know. We supplied ourselves three, four winters with it.

FR: Really? What happened to the hulk of the ship?

WL: Broke up. And then there's another one. I don't recall the ship at all, but I do know that off Cotuit on the east side of Sampsons Island, that's where the wreck is. The only things left there is the keel, and I bumped my boat, my dory, over it [inaudible] over several times. It's a great big wide keel. That was called the (Scudder wreck?). Now what it was – I don't know any more about it, but [inaudible] that was a (Scudder wreck?). Look out, you don't hit it going across the shoal. Living on the Cape, you can't beat it. It's the best place in the country to raise a family. Far as crime is concerned, you make it yourself. [laughter] But it is a good – really nice, healthy place.

FR: Thank you, Mr. Lewis, for the time you've given us. We certainly appreciate it.

WL: Well, I'm glad to give it to you.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Molly Graham 10/4/2022