Susan Greene: Tape is the property of Tales of Cape Cod, Incorporated, and may not be reproduced without written permission from Tales of Cape Cod. Today is July 11, 1978. Could you tell me your name, please?

Theodore Young: My name is Theodore Allen Young.

SG: When were you born?

TY: I was born in Chatham [on] November 17, 1900.

SG: When did you move up to Orleans?

TY: We moved to Orleans when I was around three years old. My father took a job over here for the Snow Brothers, who were in the horse business, selling and buying horses, and they bought horses in the middle west and – or out West and brought them on and broke them here, and they also had a place in Boston, a place of business in Boston. But on the Cape, where the old Masonic Hall was, was their showplace and place of business.

SG: What did your father do for them?

TY: My father, I suppose he done stable work and handled horses and so forth like that, having been brought up by my grandfather, who was a horseman but had a stable. In fact, I've seen as high as thirty horses in his stable at one time.

SG: Wow. Good [inaudible]. You had some famous ancestors.

TY: Yeah. Queen Emma of the Sandwich Islands – her daughter, Princess – I forget now what her name was – but we do have it. My uncle had it in his history of the family, but she was the Princess of the Sandwich Islands, and one of my ancestors married her and brought her home to Chatham.

SG: How long ago was that? Do you know?

TY: I don't know. It was probably in the late 1700s, somewhere in there. So we have royalty in our family. [laughter]

SG: Tell me about your great-grandfather Nickerson.

TY: My great-grandfather Nickerson was seafaring. He went to sea on these clipper ships, and on one of his trips to South America, he brought home a set of dishes to his wife from Brazil, and we have – because I have one of the plates out of that dinner set, which is to go be given to my nephew to carry on through his sons and so forth and so on.

SG: Yeah. I can see it.

TY: Yeah. You see?

SG: It's kind of brown and white with leaves on it. It's real pretty.

TY: Yeah. And it has a – I suppose that is some kind of a plant. I don't know if it's tobacco or what that were raised in Brazil at the time.

SG: So your grandfather had a job over in Barnstable.

TY: Yeah. My grandfather Nickerson, for years, was a deputy sheriff of Barnstable County, and one of the men from Orleans, Jim (Bolan?), was appointed – he was appointed the keeper, jailkeeper. He asked my grandfather to go with him up there to be assistant, and they lived in the jail, in the living quarters of the jail. I used to go up there as a boy and stay for a week at a time sometimes.

SG: Tell me what the jail looked like.

TY: Well, of course, it was the old jail, and they tore it down now, and it was a brick building and was right behind the courthouse. Well, the courthouse is there now, but they did build a new one. He used to, of course, have to attend court also, and he's there for quite a number of years. His son Allen Nickerson, Jr. ran the hotel, the old Barnstable Inn, right opposite the old jail and courthouse.

SG: Well, was there bars on the windows?

TY: Oh, sure. There was bars. There was a part where they kept the inmates. Every meal, he'd have to go down there and stay with them while they ate and like that. He was a big man and very powerful man. They say he was one of the most powerful men that they'd ever known on Cape Cod, and he also was a sea captain at one time himself.

SG: How many prisoners would be there at one time?

TY: Oh, I would say probably they'd had ten to twelve prisoners at a time.

SG: Did they keep them there permanently, or was that just a holding place?

TY: They'd keep them there if it wasn't a violent crime or something, just serving a year or two years or six months or something like that. They stayed right at the Barnstable jail. Yeah. And they worked. They had a farm there, and they farmed. They had cattle, and they had hens, and they raised the – most of the stuff that they ate. They had hogs and cattle, and they also furnished the Pocasset Hospital – county hospital in Pocasset. They furnished that with some milk and cream and eggs and vegetables in season and so forth and so on.

SG: The prisoners did the work?

TY: The prisoners did all the farming. Yeah. Under the supervision of – they had other men there over the prisoners too. I think perhaps there was two other sheriffs or deputy sheriffs that worked there with the prisoners and like that.

SG: So what was your grandfather's job then?

TY: He had charge of all the prisoners, and he'd also take them to go clamming and like that. He'd take them and load them in the wagon – some of them, the ones he could trust – he'd load them in the wagon. They'd go down to Barnstable Harbor and dig the clams and so forth and so on. You'd see him going by with three or four of the prisoners in the wagon with him, and he'd drive down to the harbor and they'd dig clams for –

SG: Do you remember him carrying a gun or a rifle with him around when he worked?

TY: Oh, he had one in his pocket, but usually, he didn't need it. He could handle practically any man that was – he could just handle him with his hand. He died at the jail. He dropped dead, bang, like that. We were sitting in the vestibule when the undertaker came down from laying him out, and he said to us – my uncles were there and my father and myself – and he said, "I never realized that Mr. Nickerson was such a powerful man." He says, "I think he's the most powerful-built man that I ever laid out." He was awful quick, and they said he couldn't wait for anybody. The crew were – they were pursing in a seine with fish in it. He would take and push them aside and get down there, and he'd pull, and they said he would pull more than two or three men would. So that was one of the reasons. He wasn't scared of any man at all.

SG: When was it when he was sheriff or assistant?

TY: Deputy, yeah. Well, he died in 1921. It was previous to that. Yeah. In the teens, along in the teens to 1920. '21, I think he died.

SG: What were the living quarters like down in the jail?

TY: Well, it was just like any home.

SG: Really?

TY: Just like any ordinary home. Yeah, and then they had a big door that was barred and locked that went down into the prisoners' quarters from the living quarters, and of course, that was always kept doubly locked and everything, but the prisoners always respected him. He had the respect of the prisoners. He was good to them, but he was firm with them.

SG: What was the Masonic Hall like?

TY: The what?

SG: Masonic Hall.

TY: Oh, well, that was a real big house. It was like almost a mansion. I don't know how many rooms it had in it, but it had quite a few. Afterward, it was – after the Snow Brothers sold it – it was run as an inn, and it had a great L on it and then a big barn on the end of that. They tore the L off and the barn away and just left the hall. Then they took all the rooms, separated them, made one big hall upstairs. I remember when they done it. I've been a Mason for forty-eight years myself, and I remember when the Masons took it over. Previous to that, they used to hold the meetings in the Odd Fellows Hall down there where the Odd Fellows – I've been an Odd Fellow fifty-four years.

SG: Well, tell me what it means to be a Mason.

TY: Well, all lodges practically, like Masonic Lodge and the Odd Fellows Lodge, is founded on religion. See, there's a G in there. That represents God.

SG: Oh.

TY: And you take your oath, and you have to have a good reputation, or you don't get in. It takes one blackball to hold you out. That's all in the Masons. There's three in the Odd Fellows, but it's only one, and they look you up from the time way back just as far as they can go for your reputation, but you take the obligations. You kneel at the altar and place your hands on the Bible, and you take these oaths that – well, I can't –

SG: What do you do then?

TY: Then you're supposed to – well, the other members are your brothers, and if they're in want, you're supposed to help them. You're supposed to – if they come to you and want help, if you're able to do it, you give them help, and you administer to the sick and like that. Of course, they claim that the Masonic Order is the oldest order in the world and King Solomon was the first Grand Master of Masons.

SG: Is that right?

TY: They built a temple to the most high God, and he was the first Grand Master.

SG: I didn't know that.

TY: Yeah.

SG: Do you remember when you were very young, and you first moved up near the Masonic Lodge in Orleans? What kind of things went on?

TY: Yeah. Well, I can remember back to when I was four years old, and we lived there a while. Then we moved – lived in several houses. Father never ever bought a house until he was about fifty years old, I guess before he bought a home, and that was down on Great Oak Road. [Recording paused.] You mean when the Snow Brothers ran it? Well, there were regular lawn parties; they'd have ice cream and cake and play games and so forth and so on in the summertime

mostly, through the summer months. I suppose it was more or less of a business venture because all these people that went to it were people that bought horses like that in those days or owned horses or would trade horses. It's like the automobile business is today. You keep a car just so long, and then you trade it in, although I've got one out here that's eleven years old. [laughter]

SG: You lived near the herring brook for a long time. Has that always been popular?

TY: There's a herring brook here, but I used to come over here when I was a boy. This land here belonged to this house next door, the Chase. Alonzo Chase, his name was, and he built boats. He built these, what they called the Pleasant Bay Sharpies, and they were about sixteen feet long, and they had a centerboard in them. You could sail them, or you could row them, and that's what they used to rake quahogs up in Pleasant Bay. He had a shed that went out towards the water, past the house, and that's where he built all of the – we must've had about forty of those when I was a boy. The men around town made a business of going and raking quahogs off those boats, and they had a deck on the stern, how you raked over the stern, and you dumped your quahogs, and then you culled them out. Then, if the wind was right – well, they had a centerboard – they'd sail home up the river from Pleasant Bay. Of course, some lived near Pleasant Bay and used it there, but a lot of them were up the river here, and when I was a boy, there was at least forty of those sailing Sharpies. I don't know if he built them all, but he built a good part of them, this man that lived next door here, Alonzo Chase, and this was part of [inaudible] sixty sailor vessels of all kinds, fishing vessels, and coasters, schooners I've seen – the *Lawson*, I think was six-masted – only six-masted vessel was, and I've seen that going by here. Of course, they couldn't go through the canal at that time. You had to go around the Cape, sailing vessels. They couldn't –

SG: When was it you saw the *Lawson*? How old do you think you were then?

TY: Oh, probably around fourteen.

SG: So they still had some of those big sailing vessels?

TY: Yeah. The *Thomas Lawson* and that – she was named – he was a big financier in Boston, lived in – I think Scituate, he lived in. He had a big showplace in Scituate, monstrous place, and this vessel he had built, I think, was named the *Thomas Lawson* and was the only six-masted vessel that was ever built. There was fives, and there was fours, and there was threes, but that was the only six-masted one. It was a monstrous thing.

SG: Was it just a pleasure boat to him?

TY: No. It was a freighter. It carted freight from – well, a lot of the lumber and everything was produced in Maine and Nova Scotia in those areas, and they'd run – I don't know how far south they'd go, but maybe to South America they would go some time.

SG: You said that your grandfather was a sea captain at one time.

TY: Yeah. Yes. He was skipper of one of those pogie boats. Of course, they used to go mackerel seining also, but they used to get these pogies, and they're oily, and they used them for fertilizer, and they got the oil out of them also.

SG: Pogies are fairly good-sized?

TY: That's menhaden. The size of a herring, and they look a lot like a herring, but they have little spots on them, little black spots, and they're real oily. They're not edible at all, but there's a lot of oil in them, and they use them – I don't know what kind of oil they got out of them, but they used it for something, and then the carcasses they used ground up for fertilizer.

SG: Did he sell a fish whole, or did he take the oil out?

TY: No. They'd get the fish and bring them into these factories, and they would process them.

SG: Were there factories on the Cape for that?

TY: No. They were – I don't know of any processing plant on the Cape. It was a place near – where he went out of; it was near Newport. Right close to Newport, there was a place.

SG: You have a relationship to Christopher Ryder also [inaudible], don't you?

TY: Yeah. Christopher Ryder's daughter was my father's grandmother. Of course, Christopher Ryder was his great-grandfather, my great-great-grandfather.

SG: What do you know about him?

TY: Well, I don't know too much about him. All I know is there was a ship's channel, and he supplied the vessels with equipment and supplies and all that sort of thing, I suppose. He had all kinds of supplies and everything, my father told me, but I don't even know if my father remembered him very much, but of course, he remembered his grandmother very much.

SG: Did he say anything about her or what kind of woman she was?

TY: Christopher Ryder's wife was a Nickerson, a Chatham Nickerson, and I don't know – Christopher Ryder – of course, there's Ryders in Chatham now, and I suppose they're distant related and probably related to me distantly. Cousins in Chatham – that lived in Chatham, but my grandfather Nickerson was in Eastham. He was born in Eastham, and his father before him and like that. They were – where they migrated from, I don't know. England, originally, I understand. The Nickerson family – we have a Nickerson family association, which meets once a year. Last year, we met up at the inn up here in [inaudible] Inn. We had dinner up there [inaudible]. My brother has been president – was president of it for two years – [Recording paused.]

SG: In Orleans, you said people used to pick up wood from the beach quite often.

TY: Yeah. Sure.

SG: What would they do with that wood?

TY: Well, they'd either sell it, or they'd use it in building a barn or building – go to build a house or something, and they'd stack it up until they'd got enough to frame a house or board in a house or so forth and just keep it and stack it up.

SG: How was the Episcopal Church made?

TY: Well, the Episcopal Church – I don't think – the only thing original in that as far as the beach was concerned was the deck house off of a ship, off of a vessel that came ashore here. Somehow or other, this – the old guy that lived there, he got it and got it up there. From that, he built onto it. Whether it's incorporated in the church now – I think it is. I'm pretty sure it is, but they've got a lot of different sections to that church now.

SG: Can you remember in the early days what it was like when they moved these houses with horses?

TY: Yeah.

SG: How did they do that?

TY: They'd jack it up. They'd jack the house up with jacks, and then they'd put these combing – they'd put pieces across like that and like that, what they call combing it up. Then they'd put planks underneath, and then they'd put rollers. On these planks, both on the bottom, up under the – they'd put big (sills?), big timbers up under the house, and then they'd roll them down the street. Of course, there wasn't many wires in those days to interfere. There was no electric lights or anything. There were just telephone wires, but they didn't interfere much. There weren't so many houses. There weren't so many cross wires going across the street and like that, same as there is today.

SG: How many horses would they use?

TY: A couple horses or so.

SG: And when they got to the site where they wanted to put it down, what would they do?

TY: Well, they'd have already the foundation already put to the size that it had to be, and they'd get it up, and somehow they'd roll it onto the foundation and get it squared away the way it wanted to be. World War II, when the submarine off here sunk the barges, I was down standing on the bluff with about three hundred other people watching them. They came up and sunk them with the deck guns. This aviation camp over here to Chatham – they didn't have any ammunition at all. They must've known it because the planes flew out over top of them, and they never even submerged, but then when the planes came out of Boston or somewhere near Boston, they had ammunition. They dove down and went out of sight. But this skipper of this U-boat that sunk

these barges – I had a book, and I know I loaned it to somebody, and I haven't got it back. I've got an account of all the ships sunk by German subs in American waters, and that was the name of it. It came from Abercrombie & Fitch in New York. This fellow that used to go hunting with me gave it to me as a present, and it's quite interesting. I loaned it to somebody here three or four years ago, and I've asked several people, and no, they didn't have it. [Recording paused.] – see it in the sun because the sun would shine on it and some of the shells landed over here in the river, and the sub would roll on the sea. There was a swell on that day. They might shoot at those barges, and the boat might go up, and the shell went up in the air. They say there was two or three landed over here in the river out here, and those were the only shells that ever landed on American soil in any war.

SG: Where exactly was that?

TY: Right here.

SG: Right here?

TY: Right out in the river. Just you go out of this pond – that's a little river – runs out and goes around those trees and winds around out into the big river that goes up to Pleasant Bay. Somebody was out down there and see them splash – see the splashes of the shells when they landed in the water over there. There we were, about three or four hundred, and they could've turned the guns on us if they wanted to, but they didn't want to. The thing of it was, they didn't care. Those barges were only loaded with paving stone, and it was a hazy morning, and there was a big troop carrier going down south. They missed that troop carrier, and it made them mad, I guess, so he sunk – those barges were coming around, so he sunk the barges – came up and sunk them with the deck guns.

SG: How old were you then when that happened?

TY: Oh, I was seventeen, eighteen.

SG: Yeah. 1918.

TY: Seventeen or eighteen. I was just under – I was just out of the – I wanted to go – of course, I wanted to go to sea. I wanted to be a sailor because I was always on the water. My mother says, "There'll be time enough for you to go when you get to the draft age. Then I won't complain at all if you go and you wait." Well, armistice was signed on the 11th, and I would've been eighteen on the 17th. So I just missed it, but I did serve as a reserve in World War II in the Coast Guard.

SG: How did World War I affect Cape Cod?

TY: Well, business went on as usual. There was plenty – nobody was loafing. There was plenty of work in those days. If anybody wanted to work, it was easy enough. A lot of fellows went to work. We worked in the factories making munitions like that. Of course, there was the big demand for fish like that in those days.

SG: Were there any munition plants on the Cape?

TY: No. There was one in Providence that was making munitions, and of course, in Boston and outlying districts, but I was firing on the railroad when the World War – the armistice was signed in World War I. My uncle was conductor on the freight that ran from Provincetown to Boston. I lied about my age; I was only just under seventeen, and I went as a fireman on freight on one of those big old steam engines, and we were coming in from Connecticut, and we had empty cars. We had a hundred and ten freight cars we were bringing in. We got into Dover Street Engine Yard. Now, mind you, there was no communications on the trains in those days. We pulled into Dover Street Engine Yard – that's just outside of South Station – and there was whistles blowing. The steamer ships were blowing in the harbor, and they were ringing bells on the engines in the yard. The whistles were blowing. The engineer leaned out of the window, and he says to the switchman there that was switching us onto a different [inaudible] – he says, "What's going on?" He said, "Why didn't you hear?" He says, "Armistice has been signed." So the engineer reached up and pulled the whistle lever and started ringing the bell, and that was the first – it was in the morning after the 11th. So, for me, being a boy, that was quite a thing to hear in the ships. All the ships had their whistles blowing and the big engines, locomotives, had the engine – had their whistles blowing and their bells ringing, and it was quite a time. [Recording paused.] Charlie and Kenneth and Lester. Lester was the youngest, and he died about eight years ago. He had open-heart surgery, and he lived – [Recording paused.]

SG: Must've been a good deal of work for your mother to take care of a [inaudible] like that.

TY: Four boys. Yeah. The teacher used to say when we went to school – she told my mother – she said, "Mrs. Young, I don't know how you keep those boys so clean and dressed so nice." She was a worker, my mother was. She really was.

SG: How did she do the washing?

TY: Scrubbed two tubs, one to rinse in, and had a wringer that went on the tub, and she had a scrub board, and that's the way she done the washing. That's the only way she done it. There was no laundries in those days. You [inaudible] your own laundry.

SG: How'd you get hot water?

TY: Well, she heated it on the stove. They had a big boiler, big copper boiler, and you'd fill that boiler with water, and you put it over the two covers, black iron – one of those Glenwood ranges. You'd heat that water, and then she had a big dipper, and she'd dip it out into a tub. There was a stand that the tub sat on and a regular washstand, they called it, and it folded up, as I remember. The legs folded up on it for when you put it away, but then you open the legs up, and two tubs would sit on it, two big, galvanized tubs, and you washed your clothes in one, and then you rinsed them in the other and put them through the wringer. In the other, you had cold water. I think probably it was cold water in the other one. Then went through a hand wringer, and then all hung out on the line. Quite a lot of clothes she had to wash with four boys and my father and herself.

SG: What was that stove like?

TY: Well, we burned coal or wood, and it was black – a cast iron stove with four covers, two back covers, and two front covers over the [inaudible].

SG: Was there a baking part too?

TY: Oven. Some had the indicator on them. Some didn't. I know the one we had had an indicator on it.

SG: Indicator for what?

TY: For the heat. Temperature.

SG: Oh. Did she bake her own bread?

TY: Sure. She made her own cakes, bread, and everything. There were no bakeries then. Oh, there was bakeries, but they were – there was one right up the – [inaudible] right across the street was Smith's Bakery, and then there was one uptown next to (Ellis?) Market. That was (Noel's?) Bakery. And they had bakery carts, a horse with a baker cart with drawers in it with cookies and bread in one section and cake and whatever they had – donuts and so forth – and they'd go around from house to house. But never bought [from] a bakery. Mother made everything – donuts and bread and cakes and pies. She made everything like that.

SG: What kind of equipment did she have to work with?

TY: You mean –?

SG: For cooking.

TY: For cooking? Well, of course, they weren't glass. Pie plates – you never had Pyrex pie plates in those days. They were tin, metal.

SG: What was that kettle like that she had?

TY: Well, it was about that big around and down the bottom, it was smaller, and it had three little legs on it underneath that, and then there was six, so you took one cover – one part of the cover off the stove, and it would set down in, see?

SG: About a foot around at the top, but it was only a few inches.

TY: It was bigger around at the top than it was at the bottom.

SG: A few inches at the bottom.

TY: Yeah. There was a small – so it would just fit down in there, and that was used – two-thirds of your cooking was done in that.

SG: So you'd put that in the hole in your stove?

TY: Yeah. In the hole in the stove cover. Yeah.

SG: Did that have a name?

TY: Well, I don't know what the name of it [Recording paused.] – grate that went down inside that sat around the small part so that you wouldn't burn anything on the bottom. Then when you made your gravy for a stew, you'd take that out and add water to whatever you had – chicken gravy or meat gravy or whatever, where you would thicken it, and then you'd make your gravy right in it. Also, she'd cook what you called apple duff or blueberry duff in that, put it in a can, and then put it in and steam it – steam it in that kettle. Huh?

SG: What is duff?

TY: Well, it was like a dumpling, only it was made in one big piece, see? She used to have a can. It was like a can. It was about that big around and about that tall, and she'd mix up this dough, and then she'd put her berries or sliced apples or whatever she wanted for fruit in it and put it in there and then add – put water in the kettle – not up very high, just so it would steam and then she'd steam it for just so long a time and then when it was done, she'd take it out. She'd either have an egg sauce – make an egg sauce – or she'd have a lemon sauce.

SG: Sounds delicious.

TY: It was, and then she'd make an apple pandowdy. You probably have had that.

SG: What was that like?

TY: Well, it was like a cake made in a cake pan, and then you take pieces of apple, and you put in it, and you baked it in the oven, and then when it was done, of course, you'd take it out and then you'd make a sauce. She used to make a lemon sauce and sometimes an egg sauce for it, but most of the time, a lemon sauce went with that better than anything else.

SG: What would you have for breakfast?

TY: Oh, eggs and bacon and sometimes ham and sometimes a piece of apple pie for breakfast. Father used to like apple pie for breakfast and cereal, oatmeal, or cream of wheat or something like that.

SG: What about your lunch when you were going to school?

TY: Oh, we carried our lunches. Yeah. We carried our – we had a little lunch pail, and we carried our lunches back in those days, although I was going to school when the janitor in

Orleans here opened the first lunches we had at school, but most of them was soups, like Campbell's soups and so forth and cocoa.

SG: Canned soup?

TY: Canned soups. Yeah. He'd just heat them up. He had a three-burner oil stove, and he'd heat them up, heat the soup up, either vegetable or chicken soup of some kind, and it was ten cents a day for our lunch. That's what we – in those days – a lot of them still carried their lunch.

SG: How old were you when they started to make the lunches?

TY: About fourteen. Yeah.

SG: When you carried your lunch, what would you bring?

TY: Well, Mother would make some kind of a sandwich, and then we'd have cookies or a piece of cake with it – perhaps an orange or banana, something like that.

SG: What kind of dinner were you used to having with a big family like that?

TY: At night? Well, Mother had a day – she'd have – like a Thursday would be corned beef. Corned beef was fourteen cents a pound in those days, and the butcher would come around, and he had a box underneath of the back of the wagon, and he'd corn his own corned beef, and you've got good, corned beef for the [inaudible]. It was nice and even a nice steak – she would plan that steak, but mostly we'd have meat, like stew meat or something like that. She'd plan every day, and one day was fish, and then she'd have – well, salt fish was reasonable in those days, and we'd have salt fish and potatoes with pork scraps for dinner. Then for supper, she'd buy enough so she'd make a hash, and we'd have a fish and potatoes, and then she'd put onion in it, little pieces of onion, and that would be for supper at night. In those days, if you were home, you had a full meal at noontime, same – but now, people like myself – I just have a light lunch at noontime and have my dinner at night.

SG: How did you get your milk?

TY: Well, we used to – before we had a cow ourselves, we used to buy it from one of the neighbors who had a cow, but then Father bought a calf, a Jersey calf, and we raised it up to a cow. It gave good milk, and we had that up until the time my father died in 1927. He died. I wasn't living at home then. I was married because I was married in 1922, but I was down there a lot. We were down there a lot, like families do. They get together on weekends. But I did take my milk. My father, at the time he died, was working for Nickerson Lumber Company driving a truck, and he'd come around to my house and bring my milk and pick me up, and we'd go to work together because, at that time, I was working for Nickerson Lumber Company from 1922 to 1929 before I went fishing. Then I left Nickerson's and went fishing. I couldn't see how I was going to get anywhere outside of being a truck driver. So I left, and they opened up the bay to dragging quahogs, so I bought a boat, and I went dredging quahogs in Cape Cod Bay. That

was 1929. From then on, I went into bigger boats. The last boat I had, I was a sea scalloper. I went sea scalloping out of Provincetown.

SG: What was the first boat like?

TY: Well, the first boat was a little Crosby Cat, twenty-four-foot, twelve-foot beam. I rigged it into a dragger and put a winch on it, and we pulled by rope in those days, but I had what they call a niggerhead on there, running from the engine, and that's what we'd pull the dredge in with before we went to cable. Of course, in later years, we went to cable, and I had two – on the last boat I had, I had two dredgers and used to tow one on each side – two six-foot dredgers, and sometimes we'd pull up twenty-four to twenty-six bushel of sea scallop at a time.

SG: What were those dredgers like?

TY: Well, they were a bar dredge. They were long, and you had a net [inaudible] made of a braided rope. You made them, and – you had to make it yourself. The bottom was made of three-inch rings linked together to form a big – like a blanket almost, it was, and that was on the bottom so it wouldn't wear out. A net would wear out quick with scallops. So that made a chain of round rings linked together with links. You pounded them together, and you made the bag that way, and then you had a purse string in the back, and you hoisted it up, and you pulled the purse strings, and the load would come out on deck. Then you'd cull them out and pick them up and open them. You opened them right out on the water. I had three men with me in my crew.

SG: What did that culling out consist of?

TY: Well, you'd pick up starfish and all kinds of different bottom animals that live on the bottom, crabs, and stuff. Sometimes you'd get pretty near clear scallops. There wouldn't be any –

SG: What would you do with the other things you didn't want?

TY: Just shove them back overboard. There'd be coal shovels that we'd shovel the – clear the deck up with.

SG: You said you opened them right on the deck?

TY: Yeah. You opened them right – you had opening boxes, and you'd pour the scallops in there. Then the guys would stand there and open while we were dragging the next load.

SG: Where would they put the scallop – the inside – once they had it?

TY: We had bags, white bags that handled around thirty pounds, thirty to thirty-two pounds, and we'd fill in and wire them up, just this little [inaudible] on top. Then down in the hole, we had crushed ice and [inaudible], and we'd bury them in the ice to keep them.

SG: They would keep fresh on [inaudible].

TY: Yeah. We wouldn't stay out more than two days – about two days at a time.

SG: When you came back in, what would you do with those?

TY: Well, we'd put up alongside the dock, and we'd hoist them out. They had a hoist that went up into the wholesale place that bought them from us. Then I'd send one of the men up to keep tally on the weight, and I'd stay down below and see they were taken out of the hole and hoisted up. Then, of course, we'd get paid whatever the market price was. Wasn't very high in those days. Today, they're getting two, three dollars a pound, and we were getting thirty, forty, or forty-five cents a pound, unless we happened to strike a time when the market was low, then we did get as high as seventy cents one time. We thought that was great.

SG: That was in the '20s?

TY: No, that was in the '40s.

SG: In the '40s?

TY: Early '40s. Yeah. Well, in fact, it was later than that. It was right after World War II was over when I was fishing out of Provincetown on Stellwagen Bank. It's about eight or ten miles north, northeast of Provincetown.

SG: What kind of chores did you have to do around the house when you were a boy?

TY: Well, we had to get the kindling in; we had coal [inaudible], of course. If we were burning coal at that particular time, I'd have to get the coal [inaudible] coal in. I was the oldest, and I'd have to get that in. And at that time, we were buying our milk off Charles (Dallen?), and I used to have to go over across the field and get a quart of milk for us. That's all we could afford. Ten cents a quart it was in those days, and then I'd get a quart of milk for this maiden lady that lived across the river, on the other side of the river, who had been a schoolteacher, and her name was Lucy Snow. I'd get a quart of milk for her, and – by the way, she had about 20 cats. I'd go down the river, take my boat, and row across the river and carry her her quart of milk for two cents a day. Then on Saturdays, I'd cut kindling for her. She had a lot of locust trees around there, and I'd cut kindling for her, and I got ten cents an hour. That's what I got for wages, ten cents an hour.

SG: Where did you get your own wood for your stove from?

TY: Well, we'd go cut it. In the winter, we'd cut it, or else Father would buy it if he felt [inaudible].

SG: Was there a lot of trees around?

TY: Oh, yeah, up in the woods. Everybody had a woodlot in those days. We've got woodlots up there now, but I wouldn't know where they were. Everybody in town – in the fall of the year,

all the old people that lived down – the old fellows that lived down [inaudible], they would start in the fall of the year and go up on the woodlot and cut a load of wood with a horse and chuck wagon, load that and bring it home. That they would saw up by bucksaw and split it, and keep it until the next fall. They always had a year's supply on hand that was dried out, and the green wood, they wouldn't burn until the following winter or the following year, but they'd always go and get enough to stack up, and of course, they'd leave it outside until it dried, then they always had to what they call a woodshed, and they'd store that wood that they were going to burn this year in that woodshed and kept dry and everything and that they would use up and leave the green wood outside to season, to dry out so they could use it the next year.

SG: So an individual family had another lot somewhere that belonged to them [inaudible]?

TY: Most every individual family – we had one. My grandfather had one, and we had one, and you would go and cut your own wood, and you'd only have an ax to cut it with, too. Now they have electric saws to cut it, but you'd cut – they figured a cord of wood a day was a good day's work for a man, and if you put up a cord of wood –

SG: With an ax?

TY: With an ax. Just an ax. Yeah.

SG: What other chores did you have to do around the house?

TY: Well, that was about all we had to do was getting the wood. Of course, if we had a horse or we'd have to keep it cleaned out – the barn cleaned out and so forth.

SG: Did your father have a horse and wagon?

TY: Well, we didn't have one all the time, but some of the time we had one, but my grandfather, of course, had so many horses that we could have one any time we – my father wanted a horse, he'd just go and say, "Dad, I want a horse for the afternoon," or whatever.

SG: What kind of buggy would you have?

TY: Well, my grandfather had these barges. Well, he did have surreys, what they call a surrey, that he rented out. Now there was a lot of summer – in those days, summer people came and brought their trunks and came on the train. My grandfather – the boys – he had a big family. There was thirteen in the family – seven boys and six girls. The boys, before they were married, all drove team. They would meet the trains, and of course, they would write on ahead: "I'm coming at such and such date. Meet me at the depot and take me to my summer home." In those days, practically everybody that came owned their own home, and they used to commute from New York and from Boston. There was a sleeper that came out of New York Friday nights and landed in Hyannis Sunday morning, and then they'd take the train down from there. There was a train – made connections and pick them up down here, and they'd go back Sunday night – take the sleeper back Sunday night for New York. But of course, you could count almost – there was [nowhere] near the number of people them days as it was after automobiles came in.

SG: What was the wagon like that your grandfather picked people [inaudible]?

TY: Well, it had a rack on it on top, and it had a rack in back, and it would carry, I guess, six – he had two of them, and it would carry six or eight passengers with their trunks and suitcases and so forth. He had them made special just for the livery business, for taking passengers.

SG: Was there a name to that?

TY: Barge is all I remember ever calling them.

SG: How many horses?

TY: One horse would pull it.

SG: One horse?

TY: Yeah. As I say, they had two, and then if they had special – they'd have a surrey or a buggy. For one person, they'd just have a buggy or something.

SG: What was the grammar school like in Orleans?

TY: Well, when I went to school, we had the whole twelve grades in one schoolhouse, and that was right opposite the Orleans Town Hall, where the Legion Hall is now. That was where our schoolhouse was. Previous to that, they had one in South Orleans. The Odd Fellows Hall was the west school, they called that, and then they had one in South Orleans and one down off Brick Hill Road. There was another school there, so in different sections, and everybody walked to school in those days, I guess.

SG: How many grades did one teacher have to take care of?

TY: Two. High school had nine, ten, eleven, and twelve, and I think there was two teachers, as I remember, two teachers, but every other grade – or every other teacher had two grades, like first and second, third and fourth, and so forth like that.

SG: Were your teachers very strict?

TY: Yes, they were quite strict, but I don't think that – they never had the problems that they have today. If you didn’t do what you [were] supposed to do, you got a tanning. I had a rubber hose, piece of rubber hose put across my hand a good many times if I didn’t do what was right. I probably was a little more full of the devil than perhaps some of them were or who had never done anything really wrong, like putting a mouse in the teacher’s drawer, and she opened the drawer to get the Bible out in the morning, and the mouse would jump out and about scare her out of her wits. Or some little prank or something like that.

SG: Do you think they were very effective teachers?

TY: Yes, they were. Some different than today (sp?). You had to get your multiplication tables, and you had to have them down, or you didn't – if you didn't – if you messed up on – got a D in any subject, you didn't pass unless you went to summer school or had a tutor tutor you in the summer to make up for it. You just had to get your lessons and get a passing mark, or you didn't go to the next grade the same as they are today. I hear that they just shove them right on.

SG: What did you learn in school?

TY: Well, history and geography and English and arithmetic. I didn't go only far as the eighth grade. I quit then.

SG: Was there any music or art?

TY: We had music, and we had art, and we had manual training. When I was in the seventh and eighth grade, we had manual training, and our janitor was the teacher.

SG: What did he teach you?

TY: Well, we learned to make different things, like racks to put knives in and different things and also – well, how to build little house – little birdhouses and so forth and so on – different things that would be helpful to us in later years.

SG: Did the girls learn that, or just boys?

TY: Girls had sewing and that sort of thing.

SG: Yeah. Homemaking.

TY: Yeah. Homemaking. Yeah. And it was very good. I liked that very much, that manual training. We used tools to work with. We had a shop down in one part of the basement. It was [inaudible] off, and we went in there and done our work. Our janitor happened to be a very sufficient man. He was a blacksmith. He could work with iron. He could make eel spears. He could make rakes, all kinds of things, and he had a shop home. In the summer, when school was out, he'd work in that shop and do repair work on wagons. Perhaps a tire would be coming off of a wagon, and he'd fix that so it would stay on the wagon. A lot of times, those steel hoops would – the wood would shrink, and the tires would get loose on it – the steel tires. He done all sorts of work like that. I don't think he – he never shoed horses. There was a blacksmith shop in town that done that. In fact, two blacksmith shops in town that done horseshoeing.

SG: When you were in elementary school, what would you wear to school?

TY: Well, of course, we wore short breeches, or we didn't have long – my last year in – I don't think they started – I remember the first pair of long pants. I had met a couple of girls that were in my class uptown at the grocery store, and they said, "Oh, look at him. He's got long pants

on." Well, I felt like a – they were the first long pair of pants I had when I was probably about fourteen years old.

SG: But before that, pants came down about to your knees?

TY: Yeah. Mother, when we was younger, made all our blouses and trousers. People would give her a suit of clothes, and she'd cut them down and make us – she'd even make our jackets for us and short pants.

SG: You wore a jacket when you were young?

TY: Yeah, sure.

SG: Did you wear a tie?

TY: Sure.

SG: You did?

TY: Sure.

SG: You wore a tie and jacket?

TY: [inaudible] tie and a little jacket, we had. But Mother could never make pants pockets, so when we were younger, we didn't have any pockets.

SG: No pockets?

TY: That was one thing that I don't think she ever mastered was making pockets, but when we got older, of course, we bought our clothes. We worked and bought our clothes. I did, anyway. We'd go cranberrying in the fall of the year, and they paid us so much – well, eight-quart measure, you'd have, and they'd keep run of the measures that you'd got, and you got ten cents a measure or whatever it was. End of the day, they'd tally up how many quarts of cranberries you had picked, and you'd get paid for that. That would be in the fall of the year.

SG: Did you pick by hand?

TY: Yeah. Picked by hand.

SG: Must be a little cold and wet.

TY: Oh, yeah. Later, we picked with scoops. [Recording paused.] All through my wife's family –

SG: [inaudible] –

TY: – from her grandfather down to her. My wife used this as a girl, picking with it, and she would send me [inaudible] when she died, but all that went through – her grandfather was a cranberry grower, one of the first cranberry growers on Cape Cod, and that was the scoop used by the family, one of them. This is a later type scoop that we used in later years. (Tipper?) they called it, see? You'd grab it like that, and you put it into the vine, and you pulled it through, and you tip it up like that, and the cranberries come inside, and the vines went out, see? That's what you call a (tipper?). It went like that. Put it in, you tipped it up like that, and the berries went in here. When it got full, you dumped it into a box. That is old, too. I put that on there so it would stand up, but that was my wife's father's. He had cranberry farms, too, but that one there is real old.

SG: It's about two feet tall.

TY: Yeah.

SG: About twelve prongs on the –?

TY: Yeah. Twelve teeth. Teeth, they call them.

SG: Teeth, they call them?

TY: Yeah.

SG: And a handle.

TY: Yeah. A handle. Yeah. You used this this way, but that is a later model, and it's a more advanced model. It would pick the cranberries better. It wouldn't drop so many. But just like this, you had to shove in like that and then tip her. See? Like that. It wasn't so efficient.

SG: The vines would get into this one? [inaudible]

TY: Yeah. My wife was a (Lee?), and you know where (Lorena's?) is – [Recording paused] – started by my father-in-law, and he ran a roadside restaurant for thirty-five years. He was one of the pioneers in the roadside restaurant business.

SG: When was that started?

TY: They started that before I was married, about 1920. I was married in 1922, and my wife worked for him for quite a few years. She waited on tables. She got to be quite big, and her feet bothered her, so then she went short-order cooking for him. But they were very successful in the roadside restaurant business. Of course, it wasn't all year round. In the winter, they wouldn't run it. It was about a five-month out-of-the-year job, but they always had a big clientele. People from California even. I remember one time I was up there, and these people came in, and they said they remembered this twelve years before; they had stopped there and had eaten, and they waited until they got there. They remembered that they had such a nice meal. It was like home-cooked food. Her mother was the cook, and she was a wonderful cook. These people said they

remembered they had such a nice meal, and they had waited a little late to get there to have their dinner there at night.

SG: In the ’20s, what kind of dinner would they serve at (Lorena’s?)?

TY: Well, they served all seafood and steaks and all that sort of thing. My mother-in-law made her own pies. In the summer, she'd make probably eighteen to twenty pies, and she had help. They had a regular hotel stove and everything, but she had women helping her. They had two women helping her in the kitchen, and they’d peel the apples. She didn't even use canned apples. She used fresh apples. They'd peel the apples. Of course, blueberries in season – she made loads of blueberry pies a day, made a wonderful blueberry pie.

SG: Did people want lobster?

TY: My father-in-law went and got his own clams, and they served a shore dinner for a dollar and a quarter with lobster, fish, and everything that went into a shore dinner. But then, he was only paying fourteen – [Recording paused.]

SG: This is the second of two tapes on Theodore Allen Young, 37 Herring Brook Way in Orleans. He was born [on]November 17, 1900. This is Susan Greene recording, July 11th, 1978. Tape is the property of Tales of Cape Cod, Incorporated, and may not be reproduced without permission from Tales of Cape Cod.

TY: Brewster was one of the last towns on the Cape to go wet. So when Brewster went wet –

SG: What do you mean by that?

TY: License for liquor. I mean, Orleans had voted – you know, you voted at a town meeting whether the town would let people have liquor licenses. So this was right in the ’40s, right during World War II, that the town of Brewster went wet, and then he got a liquor license and had a cocktail lounge, and my wife and I – I went up there, and he wanted me to come up there. We took care of the liquor business, and they did the food end of it. [Recording paused.] [inaudible] I remember her and all the famous actresses that were in Hollywood would be –

SG: The ones that were playing in Dennis?

TY: – the ones that were playing in Dennis would come down there and eat and drink and have cocktails.

SG: What was Prohibition like around here?

TY: Oh, there was a lot of rum running going on in those days. In fact, I used to pick up a lot myself that the Coast Guard would chase the rumrunners, and we made a great big, long bar with these hooks hanging on by chain on the end of them. We'd drag them along the bottom, and we'd hook onto these burlap bags. It was in sacks, twelve bottles in a sack, and we’d pull them up.

We made quite a lot of money dragging up the stuff that these rum runners had thrown overboard.

SG: Why were they throwing it overboard?

TY: Because the Coast Guard were catching them, and they didn't want to get caught because the Coast Guard would take the boat or sometimes, they'd come in, and the tide was going out in Cape Cod Bay, and they'd get aground, and they'd have to throw some of it overboard in order to get the boat off again. I've seen a stack of it piled up out there in Cape Cod Bay on the flat as big as this room. We went out [inaudible] dory one night and saw it full of [inaudible].

SG: How'd you know where it was?

TY: You'd see it.

SG: Oh, in the tide?

TY: Yeah. When the tide went down.

SG: When the tide went down?

TY: Yeah. And down Eastham was a great place. They used to unload it down there, down all along where the summer cottages went down to the shore, out-of-the-way places. Oh, that was quite a thing.

SG: Did you ever go out to the big boats to get it?

TY: No. I never did. No. The only thing I ever did was get some that somebody else had thrown overboard or something like that.

SG: What would you do if you got a whole lot of it?

TY: We'd sell it. Of course, there was –

SG: Just to local people or –?

TY: Well, we had one – I know one lot that I got – Roger Smith and I – we had two good customers, the judge and the clerk of courts. [laughter]

SG: Pretty good customers. [laughter]

TY: Yeah. From Provincetown, Judge Welsh – Judge Robert Welsh, the father of the one that's Judge Welsh now and his clerk. They would stop every so often. We got fifty dollars a case for it. Of course, my father-in-law was real friendly with them anyway. He always done his law work for him and everything. They stopped in there to eat, and he'd done his income taxes and like that for him.

SG: Was it good liquor that was coming in?

TY: Sure. Yeah. Very good. Come from offshore, off of big vessels that laid out there, come in from Canada and from Europe, and they even had Benedictine and everything like that, cordials and scotch and rye and bourbon, but it was all sacked up in gunnysacks like [inaudible] bottle was cardboard, like the [inaudible]. They have them – well, beer used to come in bottles, and they'd have this cardboard, corrugated cardboard, over each bottle so they wouldn't break against each other. But the sacks used to be pretty heavy when they got sand in them and waterlogged. They were quite heavy, and we had a sixteen-foot dory one night, and we loaded it solid full, but then we didn't have so [inaudible] many cases. What we should've done – took the bottles out and just loaded the dory with bottles. [inaudible] I guess the excitement of the thing, trying to fool the Coast Guard. We'd come in with it – we used to come in a marsh, a creek that went up into a marsh, and load it into our cars up there. We'd have to lug it quite a ways, but we never got caught.

SG: Did you ever see the Coast Guard?

TY: Oh, sure.

SG: Yeah?

TY: Yeah.

SG: They see you? [laughter]

TY: A lot of them didn't care so much. They didn't try to enforce it too much unless it was a big load or something like that – catch somebody with a big load – catch the boats mostly coming in.

SG: What do you know about the hijackers that were around?

TY: Well, I had a friend that was in Hyannis – well, he wasn't a particular friend of mine. His brother was. He was a schoolteacher, (Ozzie Durst?). His brother was a hijacker, and he got shot by a rum runner – killed, shot him with a shotgun. They tried to hijack a truck after it had unloaded, and this was in Hyannis or Hyannis Port. He and these other guys were stopping the guys, and they were going to hijack a load and shot him. Never ever found out who shot him.

SG: What would the Coast Guard do if they caught somebody coming in a local, for instance?

TY: Well, they'd escort the boat to a dock, wherever they wanted to take them, then they'd take the liquor and take it to the station or wherever and store it up. Wherever it went, they destroyed it somewhere. I think a lot of it was sold by some of the higher-ups.

SG: What kind of punishment would the rumrunner get?

TY: I don't think it was so awful harsh. They might lose the boat that they would take. But as far as getting a jail sentence, I think they'd just get fined most of the time. It was a hard thing. They couldn't control it. They just gave up after a while. It’s just like marijuana now. You see, they're getting a lot, but for one load that's caught, there's ten that get by. It’s just the way it was with the rumrunners.

SG: Were there any speakeasies or places to buy liquor on the Cape?

TY: Sure. Up in Sagamore, where the Keith Car Works was, there was three or four – they had these three blocks, and the Italian people that worked for Keith Car Company – they used to build freight cars in Sagamore. There was a factory there that built freight cars, and they had these big, long blocks with apartments, and there was several of those apartments that made moonshine and made beer and wine. Wine was their big output with the Italians. So there was number three, number twenty-one, and I remember there was one-forty, I think, and oh, there were quite a few of them. You could go there and buy a bottle, or you could go there and drink – sit down and drink.

SG: How about on Cape Cod?

TY: Well, Sagamore was Cape Cod, but there was – down this way, there wasn’t many places. Very few.

SG: As a teenager, when you went to dances and things like that, where would they have a dance?

TY: Town hall. The old town hall. You know where they have the playhouse now here in Orleans? That was where we had our – and then Snow’s block – Snow’s Hall was a big – we used to have a skating rink there, and dances, and shows. And our first movies that I remember was in Snow’s block; that was right next to where the railroad station was, right in the center. You know the building that just burned down across from (Livingston’s?)? Well, that was the biggest block in town. It was three stories, and that’s where my grandfather had his stable, and he had part of the house part and the stable made out in an L, and that’s where his stable was. That’s where we had our first movies, silent movies, and, of course, it was flat floor, and you sat in settees. Women in those days wore these great big hats with a brim. The sign come out on the screen would say, “Ladies, will you please remove your hats,” because you had to stretch this way and that way to – your neck would be about broke, trying to peek so you could see. The fee for going in was ten cents to see the movies, then they – when they first started coming with sound, and they had a – it was like a record player. I guess it was a record, and the thing wasn’t synchronized with the movie, and sometimes the talking part or the singing part would get ahead of the picture, and everybody’d get a great laugh out of that. [laughter] But my aunt, in the silent movie days, was a piano player. She’d play [inaudible]. Of course, they had a lot of westerns in those days, and you'd play the horses galloping and different things. She played by ear, too, and she never read – I don't think she could read a note, but she picked up piano playing, and she played for several years.

SG: She played along with movies?

TY: Oh, played right along with the movies, whatever – but there was – it was funny, and you used to get a great laugh out of when they first were testing out this talking and singing and like that with the movie, and one would get ahead of the other. They weren't synchronized properly, and they'd stop it and start over again sometimes.

SG: [inaudible]?

TY: And then from there, they moved down to the old town hall, and they had the projector up in the gallery. We had a gallery in the old town hall there up on the hill, and that's where the projector was. Of course, there was flat floor though, and you had settees to sit in, so you had to crane here and there and everywhere to look over the – to see it – look by the other person that was – people that were sitting in front of you. The lucky ones were the ones that had the front seats in those days. Everybody would go early to get the front seats if they could.

SG: What did you think when you saw your first movie?

TY: Boy, I thought that was something. I said, "Gee, this is great." Everybody said, "Well, gee, this is the greatest thing that ever come out." Nothing can ever surpass this, but look over the years, we've seen – from that, seen men land on the moon.

SG: Yeah. How old were you when you saw your first movie?

TY: Oh, probably about ten, eleven, along in there. I know I used to bum my uncle for – give me ten cents. Well, ten cents in those days was quite a lot of money because a dollar was worth a buck in those days. I know when we were married in 1922, I went to work for Standard Oil Company driving a truck, and I was getting twenty-two dollars a week. We went to housekeeping in the new little three-room cottage about the size of this on West Road, brand new, and we got our furniture over at East Harwich. Everything to go to housekeeping was stoves, sheets, pillowcases, [inaudible] – you name it. They carried it in this store that supplied – to go to housekeeping. To furnish that house was less than five hundred dollars for the three rooms, and the dishes, sheets, pillowcases, blankets, everything was less than five hundred dollars. We paid ten dollars a month's rent, and I got twenty-two dollars a week driving a truck, but we lived on three to three and a half dollars a week for our meat and groceries. Of course, we had kerosene lights in those days – kerosene lamps. Electricity hadn't come into Orleans, and it didn't come in until '24 and '25. When I was building my first house, I had it wired. They were just coming into town. They never went any further than Orleans for a while, and then they continued it on to Wellfleet and Eastham.

SG: What kind of difference did that make to you to have electricity in your house?

TY: Well, it made a lot of difference. You could sit in an easy chair. Whereas when we had a kerosene lamp, you had a big nickel lamp. I've got one upstairs with a white shade on it, and everybody sat around the dining room table in the evening reading or doing whatever they wanted to do with that lamp. In the kitchen, you probably had a bracket lamp, which was a small lamp set in a bracket fastened to the wall, or else you had one on the dining room table. I know

we had two bracket lamps, and they were just glass bowls and had a chimney on them and no [inaudible] – no shade or anything to throw the light down. Yeah. Everybody sat around the – in the evening, after dinner was over and everything, if you wanted to read a paper or you wanted to read a book – I liked to read. I used to go to the library all the time when I was younger. I liked to – I read a lot, and you just had to sit at the dining room table. You couldn't sit back – [Recording paused.]

SG: Did you have many appliances in the beginning when you first had electricity?

TY: No. I know the first radio we had was Atwater Kent, and we paid three hundred dollars for it, and it was a battery set. It was only – there was a tube, and we bought it on time. We thought that was great. It was wonderful.

SG: Was that right after you married?

TY: No. We'd been married about three, four years – four years, I guess, when we got that, but that was great entertainment in the evening for us.

SG: How did that change?

TY: But my wife did a lot of crocheting. She made that Afghan there, and she made lots of crocheted tablecloths and bedspreads for different people. She'd give them away as presents. We never had one on our bed. But my niece now, I've given her – [Recording paused.] Yeah. I think it gave us a lot of entertainment, and we figured that was the last thing – the last advancement that could be made. Nothing could ever beat that.

SG: The television must've been something else.

TY: Oh, when television came in, oh boy. That was something, too. [Recording paused.] My generation – we've lived through the horse and buggy days right up to mechanized machinery and people going to the moon and landing on the moon and like that. You can't visualize anything that could advance to that, but I suppose it will be. Won't they?

SG: Guess so. If you can go to the moon [inaudible].

TY: There'll be something – there'll be other – oh, yes.

SG: What'd you think about the moon landing?

TY: Gee, I thought it was wonderful. It shows [inaudible] that astronomers had things down pretty pat, even without going there or sending a missile or anything up or anything. They knew pretty well what it was like and everything.

SG: Did you have a telephone when you were growing up?

TY: Say, that was the worst thing we ever did – we didn't buy telephone stock. They were trying to sell it for twenty-five cents a share when I was a young man. A lot of people got rich over buying a hundred shares of telephone stock. Sure. We had a telephone, but you rang the operator. We had operators, and you rang them. You say, "Well, give me so and so," or something like that. Then there'd be three or four or five on a line. Well, all you did was – they had a number, four or five or whatever it was; you'd ring them if you wanted to talk with them, but if you wanted to ring outside of the line you were on, you had to ring the operator, and she'd say, "Number please," and then she'd peg in whoever you were calling. But I can remember the first telephone office in Orleans. It was right near the post office, right across the street from the post office, just this side of the Oracle.

SG: Were you ever inside that?

TY: Oh, Lord, yes. Many times.

SG: What was that like?

TY: Yeah. You knew everybody [inaudible]. You talked with the operators. They weren't so awful busy, but you'd call up – you'd chew the fat with them for a while before you'd say, "Well, give me so and so, would you?" [laughter]

SG: What kind of equipment did they have?

TY: Well, they had the big switchboard, and they had [inaudible] pegged in, the line that you wanted, and then they'd ring it. They had a – well, they had batteries after a while that would charge by generator before we had electricity in town, and that's what they rang with.

SG: Do you remember seeing your first automobile?

TY: Sure. You know how I seen my first automobile? Was in Nantucket. My father was in the lifesaving service on the Orleans station, and he was transferred to Surfside in Nantucket, and we went over there to live. Of course, this was just with horses. There was no automobiles there then. This was in 1904. In about 1910, I guess, the first automobile come on. There was a man that carried the mail from Nantucket out to Siasconset, but they did have a narrow-gauge railroad there at that time. But he had the contract, and he got a Maxwell, who was a local runabout. He carried the mail out to Siasconset, and the horses, I'll tell you – they used to – they were so scared of that automobile that they would stand on their hind legs, and some of them would run away and everything, so they stopped him from coming into town, and he could only run it on the state road. He had to go out of the jurisdiction of the town of Nantucket onto the state road before he could run it. But he got so mad that they wouldn't let him come into town to the post office that he used to hook a horse on the automobile and let the horse tow it into town, and that's a fact. But then, finally, they relented. Of course, it was a big business over there with people going to the island, and they had these old sidewheelers back in those days. They had horses, and there was two big stables over there with horses and surreys and barges and so forth for sightseeing people that came to the island. And then they finally relented, but it was quite late. It was about 1920 that they allowed automobiles on the island, and my brother was selling

automobiles at that time. He was selling the Oakland. They used to call him Old Nickel Nose, and he went over there, and he plastered Nantucket with automobiles, touring cars. They had a nickel radiator cover on them, and they used to call him Old Nickel Nose, but then that was when they really relented and let automobiles into Nantucket in around 1920, that was.

SG: In the earlier days, what was that sidewheeler like?

TY: Oh, they had a paddle wheel run on both sides. They were like paddle wheels. It had an arm that used to go up and down on top like that, and that would make the paddle wheels go. Of course, when it was rough weather, and it rolled, one paddle wheel would – paddle wheel had all blades, a lot of blades on them – and if anything got – like they hit a piece of wreckage or anything could break some of them off, but they seemed to work pretty good, and they ran them for years, of course. One year while we were over there, I remember the boat didn’t – it couldn't – when they got in ice [inaudible] because the ice breaking – the big cakes of ice would hit those paddle wheels and break them all to pieces. So one winter when we were living there, we had a very terrible cold winter, and I remember the seagulls were even alighting in the streets trying to find something to eat. The harbor was all iced over, and they were having sleigh races on the harbor on the ice with horses and sleighs. They were holding races, and there wasn’t a boat come for five weeks before we got any supplies from the mainland. Of course, there was no telephone communications or anything, not in those days. They started killing off the cattle and the chickens and, like that, to have something to eat to feed the people. Finally, they had an icebreaker come from Portland, Maine, and they broke up the harbor [so] the steamers could come in and bring supplies and [things] like that.

SG: How old were you then?

TY: Oh, I was probably about eight or nine years old, probably something like that.

SG: What was the difference –?

TY: Because, see, my two younger brothers were born in Nantucket, and I was born in Chatham, and my other brother was born in Orleans.

SG: What was the difference between Nantucket and [inaudible] like Orleans?

TY: Well, of course, Nantucket – have you ever been over there? It was a quaint town, just about like it is now. I don't think the main part of the town has changed one iota since we lived there, but of course, the outskirts – they built out because we had a fairground there and everything. There was a Nantucket Fair. That was always a big occasion. That was out back – it went out towards Siasconset, out beyond Cottage Hospital, out in that area. Of course, that was all a big thing. Of course, whatever we had for entertainment like that or shows who could come from the mainland or on the boat – would come on the steamer.

SG: What kind of stores were there?

TY: Well, very good stores, but of course, everything had to come in by boat. Even vessels brought grain and coal and all that stuff. I used to go down there and play in the hole. It would be all loose grain. It wouldn't be bagged up at all. It'd be all just loose, and they'd bag it up and take it out right on the island. Of course, your coal. They had a gas works there. We had gas lights in Nantucket then, and they had waterworks. They had water in Nantucket.

SG: Water that ran into your house, you mean?

TY: Yeah. Even back in those days. We used to go down and – well, they used soft coal, of course, to make the gas, and we used to go down on the piles and pick out a coke and had a little wagon. We'd take it home to burn. Some they'd miss. They would separate the coke from the slate and stuff, but they wouldn't get it all, and we'd go down there with a little cart and load the cart up with coke [and] carry it home so Mother could use it in the stove. They were very close-knit people there, and everybody was very friendly toward each other. It was like a world by itself. That's just about how it was, and they used to have parties. Of course, there'd be different groups that would have parties and different groups that were closer than others, but everybody was very friendly and helpful. If anybody was sick, there was always women who would come in and help your mother out; if your children were sick and like that and wouldn't charge you a cent. They were great that way over there. They were really, really nice – nice people, nice down to earth people.

SG: Did you ever go to school over there?

TY: I started school there.

SG: What was that school like?

TY: Well, it was what they call – it was on [inaudible] Street, a little school, the one I went to [in] first and second grade. On the other side, it would – excuse me – they had third and fourth – first and second, third and fourth. And then the rest of the school was the other part of the town, down off of Main Street to the west, and we had a good teacher. I remember my first teacher. In fact, my first teacher came from Orleans here and – Mrs. (Mayo?), her name was. She wasn't married then, and she was Miss (Mayo?), but afterward, she came back and lived in Orleans after we moved back to Orleans. In fact, she tutored me in arithmetic when I was in about the sixth or seventh grade. I got behind, and she tutored me that summer.

SG: Any difference in the school on Nantucket and in Orleans?

TY: Well, I think in the early days, they were around about the same, and they had good attendance, and children behaved themselves well.

SG: How long were you on Nantucket?

TY: Seven years. Then my father was transferred back here, to Orleans.

SG: Tell me what your father did in the lifesaving.

TY: Well, he was number two in charge for one thing. For one thing, of course, they were sailing days, and all these stations were all along the backside of the Cape about five to six, seven miles apart, and while you could [inaudible] the manned light from Old Harbor, the station they just moved. You had a halfway house – what they call a halfway house – and you had checks. From Orleans, you carried the check down there, and you put it in a little safe. The one come up from Old Harbor – he had one with a different number, and you took that to show that you'd been on that patrol. Foggy days, you had to walk the beach. One man went north; the other man went south. That was to see if any ships come ashore. At night, you walked patrol. You was on duty for four hours. One man stayed in the tower, and the other man went north on patrol. When he come back, the other man went south on patrol, and you stayed in the tower while he was gone south. Then if there was a wreck and it was close enough to shore – of course, we had breeches buoy practice every week and lifeboat practices every week, launching a lifeboat off the beach and so forth and so on. So if there was any wrecks, you could go for them. It was pretty confining. You only got one day off. If there was six men on the station, you got one day off in six. If there was eight men, you got one day off in eight, and you were on duty all the time. You were confined there. You slept, ate, and done the work, shined brass, scrubbed floors, done everything that you would do in the home. We had big sleeping rooms upstairs, and they had these single cots, single beds that we slept in. Every morning, the skipper would go up and inspect, and you couldn't have a wrinkle in your bed, or you got called for it and said, "Go up. Your bed is not what it should be."

SG: You did some substituting down at the lifesaving –

TY: Yeah. I did. When I was fifteen years old. I went down there and substituted. My father was there on the station at that time. Of course, I'd been down around there a lot, and so Old Captain Charles said, "Don't you think Theodore could do it all right?" (Head Harbor) – they couldn't get anybody. So I went down [and] stayed for two weeks down there. Great fun for me, doing that, but the men played me. They played tricks on me.

SG: Because you were so young?

TY: Because I was so young. My father told me – he said, "Now, Theodore, don't have a wrinkle in your bed when you make your bed." So I took particular pain and had everything smooth and nice. One of them went and took hold of my bed, lifted it up like that, and dropped it. Captain Charles come downstairs; I was sitting in the living room. He says, "Theodore, did you make your bed this morning?" I said, "Yes, sir." He says, "Well, you'd better go up and look at it." I went up and looked at it. One of those guys played the trick, and what a mess it was. And another one. He was going on liberty, and of course, we had to burn coal there all the time, and the fire was going all the time; it never went out, but once in a while, they'd rebuild it, get the clinkers and ashes out of it. So we had to cut our kindling. It was no bother because we'd bring it up from the beach. One of the men was going home on liberty, and he had a horse and wagon that he kept down there, and he sent me out. He was in charge at that time because my father was home and the captain was home too, I guess, and he sent me out to cut kindling for the station, he said. But when his liberty day come, he loaded up his wagon with that kindling that I cut and took it home.

SG: Oh. [laughter] At any time you were down there, did you see any ships?

TY: I went to – no, I didn't – oh, ships passed. You had to keep – when you went in the town in the daytime, you kept a log of what time, what direction it was going, what time it passed the station, and if you could get – we had a powerful spyglass. If you could read the name on it, you had to put down the name of the vessel and tows, towboats, and barges, and all that. You had to keep a strict record of every boat, and the time it passed.

SG: Did you go on any rescue missions?

TY: Not while I was substituting, but I went when I was in the Coast Guard afterward.

SG: When were you in the Coast Guard?

TY: Oh, around 1920. I was in there for a year, and I didn’t like it. I wanted to go to sea, and they wouldn't – they put me on a land station, and I wasn’t happy there. So you only signed up for a year then, so I just put a year in then, but we did have two or three wrecks while I was there, and I went to them.

SG: Could you tell me about one of those rescues?

TY: Well, it wasn’t really – the ones that we went to, they got them off afterward. It was low tide, and they hit on the outer bar. At high tide, a tow boat came and got them adrift. So I wasn’t in any – they brought them into shore. We had to bring them into shore in the lifeboat, but I do – I have seen it done, but I never was in one myself.

SG: What did you see during one?

TY: Well, I've seen – I don’t remember the name of the schooner or the boats or anything, but I know I've seen the men – of course, it went all over town when a boat went ashore. Everybody knew it, and everybody flocked to the beach to see what they could get or what the rescue was or [inaudible] was lost and so forth and so on. So they brought – the ones I see, all the men were safe on them except one. That was the last one. What was the name of that boat? There was five or six men lost. That was one – the large schooner. It came ashore almost [inaudible] the station, but the station wasn’t manned then; they only had a temporary crew on there. So it was in the winter in cold weather, and the thing broke in half. There was five men, I think, that was lost. There was only two men saved, and they went back – they was from Nova Scotia. The (*Fairmont*?)?

SG: When was that?

TY: In 1926 or seven, and that was the last one that I ever remember. Well, there’ve been a few fishing boats ashore since then, but this one was loaded with [inaudible].

SG: Was there much difference between the lifesaving service and the Coast Guard?

TY: It was the same routine; only the Coast Guard was under the Treasury Department. But in war times, it was taken over by the Navy right off; just as soon as war was declared, you was under Navy jurisdiction. But in peacetime, you were under the Treasury Department. Of course, back in those days, the pay wasn't very big. I think my father got around forty dollars a month.

SG: What did he have to do on Nantucket?

TY: Well, the same thing as he was –

SG: Did they walk the same way and have halfway houses on Nantucket also?

TY: Walked the beach. Yeah. [inaudible]

SG: Was he ever on the boat, or was he on the shore?

TY: He was on the shore stations. He never was on a boat.

SG: Was the lifesaving also in charge of customs, or did that not start until the Coast Guard?

TY: The lifesaving service was – now, I don't know just what it was under. I know the Coast Guard was under the Treasury Department, but the lifesaving service – maybe it was under [inaudible].

SG: I was just wondering if – well, when you were in the Coast Guard, did you – was it your duty to collect customs and [inaudible] on all the ships?

TY: Yeah. Sure. Well, no. We didn't go from the land station. They done that off of ship, but we had to watch out for people landing, of course, trying to smuggle in and get in and like that, but most of [inaudible] was to warn ships away from the beach. Those sailing ships would tack in, and the beach looked just like water. They couldn't see, and they sailed right on the beach or right into the outer bar. So we had these [inaudible] holders that had a flare you put in the top [that] we carried in a bag over our shoulder, and you put that in, and then it had a plunger on the bottom. If you see a ship too close to shore, you pushed that, and it sent a red flare, and it warned them away that they were too close to shore to get – make [inaudible] and get offshore out of the shore water. And then we carried a telephone with us. We had the telephone line, which wasn't attached to the mainland. Eastham had a connection with the mainland. They were the only station [inaudible]. I think Provincetown did. But if we wanted to call home or anything, we had to call through Eastham, and they would hook us up. They had a hookup, and they'd hook us up with the operator, and we'd get the number we wanted. But we carried telephones with us, a little telephone – well, it was about that long and had it in a bag, a canvas bag. Every so many poles was a drop box, and we had these snaps, and if we see a ship or if a ship ashore or anything alarming, we'd go to that box and snap on our telephone and ring that station and they'd answer. The man on duty would answer, and we'd alarm the station that something was going on – something was wrong.

SG: Oh, I hadn't heard about that. When was that at?

TY: Oh, that was even way back in lifesaving days, before I went into the Coast Guard. Yeah.

SG: When did ship-to-shore radio start?

TY: Oh, gee. I don't remember.

SG: Were you in the Coast Guard?

TY: Ship to shore. Yeah. We had a fellow in the lodge one time, Masonic Lodge, that was with the telephone company, and they were installing aboard the fishing vessels then, ship-to-shore radio. He set up a – one night, he – this Icelander, who had a big steel beam trawler, who fished way up in the North Atlantic. He set up for him to call. He was going to call in at a certain hour, a time at night, and talk with him. He had a loudspeaker set up in the lodge room, so we could hear everything that went on. He told us all about this fishing in this valley, and he was just getting ready to set for the night, make a night set – they drag for three or four hours before they haul it. And they'd pull in as high as eighteen or twenty-ton of fish at a time. This was back in – I would say – let's see – I was quite a young man, and this fellow that was doing had a summer home. He was with the telephone company, but he had a summer home over on the cove, on the back of the cove, and kind of hard to hear what he had to say, but he explained all the fishing to us. He said, "I've just set for the night, and I'm on the bank in such and such an area, and we'll drag for so many hours before we haul back and pull the load aboard." He said, "Probably we'll have fifteen to twenty-ton of fish when we pull it aboard. This man that was with the telephone company – he went on these ships and installed them and see that they were working properly. He told us about the tons and tons of fish that went overboard, a little bit of fish that were squashed. Said the deck would run red with blood when they cut – they had a piece of rope that would pull the purse string, or they'd cut it. It would be so much weight there they couldn't untie it. They just cut it, and when they did, the fish would go up to a man's waist, and all these little fish – and I claim that today is why we don't have any more fish because those little fish got squashed. They couldn't get out, and the weight of that big fish just squashed them all to pieces, and that's one reason – and he said there would be tons. It would be three or four-ton like that at a tow, at a drag, that they'd just throw overboard, and there'd be acres of them for miles. That's all you would see on the water. I claim [inaudible] the Russians, they save everything. The little they make – they have factory ships out there that make fertilizer and everything. They use up everything, whereas our boats, those little bits of fish like that, they just pitched them overboard. They went to waste. Wasteful.

SG: What do you think about these new regulations that they are putting in on the fishermen? Think they're necessary?

TY: Well, I don't think they've got the thing down right yet. They've got to –

--END OF INTERVIEW--

Reviewed by Molly Graham 10/10/2022