

Michael Kline: Could you start off by saying "my name is," and tell us your name, please?

Charles J. Harney: Yes. I said my name is Charles J. Harney. I came here to the Northern Neck just about fifteen years ago and was transplanted from the Hudson Valley to the Chesapeake Bay region. Amazed that I could move back probably fifty or sixty years in just a moving van's trip from Cornwall, New York to Mary Point, Virginia, and a realization that this isolation that had been here had produced a really enjoyable society. People who had, although they knew there was a Depression, never really experienced the depression of the soul that hit other places. It was an entirely different reaction to these independent groups, whether it'd be the watermen, the woodlot owner, the sawmill owner, the various people who had one foot in the river and the oystering season, and the other foot in the woodlot and other areas, and the farmers, and of course, just shortly before we arrived here, early on, there was the truck farming. Very few today, you just can't find a big tomato field today or a tomato cannery today. Of course, that went big. The chap over on the Eastern Shore, what's his name? Purdue, he changed the whole thing around when you went from truck farming, and you went to grain farming to sell to the people who produced chicken feed and so forth. So, the changes were significant in what brought money back here to the Northern Neck. But it was the people primarily. I, as a boy in New England and in New York state, had been a trapper as a young person, muskrat, skunk, things like that. We didn't have any otter. We had some mink. But I got down here in Mary Point. I heard that this gentleman who lived up the street and owned several farms, Dickie Bean, that Dickie had made his initial money that allowed him to buy his first tractor and to become a large farmer. He had made it out in the swamps of the Corrotoman River.

MK: We are going to come right back to Dickie Bean. Hit pause.

Carrie Kline: My husband is going to try and make it a little bit homey in here.

CJH: What's that?

CK: A little lamplight.

MK: So, this room is so sterile looking. You are such a fine-looking man. We just want to do you justice by it.

Female Speaker: It is either this or?

CK: This is great. It is part of our tool kit now.

CJH: With hair half grown in, don't tell me it's in any sense...

FS: We have two different sizes of windows. Which one do you want? The seventy-five and there is a forty, the soft white.

MK: Yes. Well, let us try. So, we were talking about this...

CJH: Dickie Bean.

MK: Dickie Bean.

CJH: Who has since deceased.

MK: He was who now, again?

CJH: I forget the exact acreage that he owned at one time or actually farmed at one time, but if you go out to Lancaster Courthouse and turn left, the first big farm on the left was his. As I say, he had earned his early money as a young man trapping in the marshes along the Corrotoman River. Very interesting in that, he was the watchdog for the lumber company up in West Point. They allowed him to trap there because he would report to them anybody who was hijacking any of his lumber. Luther White, who was a Black man, trapped the swamps up around the rolling mill, which is on Route 3 to this day. So, it was very productive, fur-bearing animals were in great supply there. In fact, they're eating my marsh up right now. But anyway, this first tape people were interested in, I was interested in myself. People were referred – told me to go see so-and-so and so-and-so and so-and-so. I realized very quickly that you couldn't just do this by doing what I'm doing right now, just talking. So, I called the gentleman who was then regarded as the number one authority on oystering in the Rappahannock Valley, Ryland Gaskins.

MK: What was his name?

CJH: Ryland Gaskins. Ryland still is the man that knows more about what has happened and is going to happen with the oyster production of this area. He was kind enough to take me out on his boat. I could join him in the morning out there at Deep Creek. The Pittman Oyster House was still functioning at the time. We'd go out and spend the day on land that he had expended a great deal of effort and investments to put seed oysters out in the Rappahannock. He wasn't just taking it. He was putting it as well. He gambled a good bit on the salinity of the water and the various things that influenced it. I would sit on top of the cabin on his deadrise oyster boat, work boat, and just let the camera run for the whole day so that I got every fraction of what was happening there on the water. Came back and the Pittman Oyster House at that time had three generations working there. W. R. Pittman, Ed Pittman, and Ed's two sons, actually, who were growing up there, and Avalon Pittman, W. R. Pittman's wife, was actually managing the oyster house. So, the Lee family were doing most of the shucking there at the Deep Creek Oyster House. It was a really functioning organization. You'd get a picture of the whole thing.

MK: What do you mean by that exactly?

CJH: Today, if you go to find somebody to shuck oysters, or you go to picture the oyster aspect here, you've got Galveston Bay oysters, Louisiana oysters, maybe some from the Potomac and then you've got Guatemalans, El Salvadorans, and Mexicans shucking the oysters. So, there's a whole different picture of the culture that existed at that point in time. Well, they used to say that most of them walked to the Oyster House.

MK: You are blocking the light with that paper. Could you put it down close to where you...

CJH: Yes. I'll put it here. So, then I was introduced to Russell Wayne Gaskins, who was a pound net fisherman. He was kind enough to let me go out, get right up close, 5:00 a.m., 4:00 a.m., 5:00 a.m. as to fishing one of the pound nets out there. You can't understand this and it's very difficult to put – you can't get pictures of it. But unless you listen and you're there the whole day with the camera running the whole time, then you can really – after you look at it, you can understand what's happening. We'd come in through Carter's Creek, and one of the restaurant suppliers and restaurant owners in Richmond would be there with a station wagon and all of these things. But it all added to a total understanding of what was going on. I didn't just go down there to get a picture of it. I wanted to understand it. It's very difficult to portray this. There was one Tangier man who was in his eighties, who would come out there at 4:00 a.m. and pick up menhaden from Russell Wayne to use for bait in his crab traps. Then kick over his engine and drive away into the dusk. His boots just as white as could be. His denims were just – you might say they were pressed. It was one of those things that you had to see in order to understand what the watermen on the upper Rappahannock there. They all lived on the Urbana side, but they'd come from Tangier. There were Tangier men at one time or another. So, this is what started me. From there on in, I wanted to know a lot more about the Bay and the men who worked the Bay. Today, they're disappearing so rapidly that it's just unbelievable. Steamboat Museum, the man who told me more about steamboats and the coming and going and so forth was Butsy Conrad. I don't know whether you have anything. Butsy was an oiler. He was a wiper. He was a quartermaster. He knew the Anne Arundel, the Potomac, and the Middlesex. He knew them all stem to stern. I have several hours just chatting with Butsy about what it was like and why he ultimately ended up in the seafood business with a very successful business. His son, Milton, runs the Upper Deck Restaurant. I don't know whether you had ever been there or not at the present time. But he knew it. So, then I, in my interest, turned to other things that were, you might say, secondary things that produced extra income for a number of people on the here and one of these was turtling. Now, I don't know what anybody does today with the overabundance of snapping turtles that exist in this area. But at one time, there were a great number of farmers who would actually pay people to come and get turtles out of their pond so they wouldn't duck all their ducks and eat up their ducks. So, the snapping turtle usually ended up in Philadelphia at Bookbinder's old original restaurant with snapper soup. But there were people who made a good part of their income with snapping turtles and there's so many great stories. Roger Gallagher in Westmoreland County probably tells more stories about his grandfather's turtling in the Rappahannock. So, one thing leads to another, and everybody asks you the first time you start talking with anybody, "What are you going to do? Write a book? What are you going to do? Make a film?" I said, "No. I just want to have this on tape so that anybody who wants a reference later on can come and take a look." That's why it was done.

MK: My heart goes out to you. That is fantastic.

CJH: So, one story, Talmage Jett, and I think Talmage is eighty now. I'm not positive, but he's getting up there. I think he had three-pound nets up in the Potomac and in the Bay. We went out with his son and three workers that he had working. Watched them drive the poles, watched them, Talmage himself and one of his more husky fellows that worked for him, hanging the nets, and then fishing the pound nets. I brought the tape. I took the tape and when I went home, I copied it, brought it back so that he would have his copy. When I brought it into the house, Mrs.

Jett was there. I said, "Let's just take a look at this." Talmage wasn't there. She looked and she said, "He told me he was retired. He was just going out there and watching the other guys work." She said, "Look what he's doing here." So, there were wives who had no idea. I'm talking about maybe you don't know because you're coming from – so, the wives had no idea what the hell was going on out in the Bay, and the effort that was being exerted. But anyway, this is what kept me going and then talking – the major thing on any of these people was a sense of humor. If there's no sense of humor and people didn't really enjoy these things that they were doing, they couldn't convey to you the sense of satisfaction that was there. Just impossible to do it. But the first thing, doing what you're doing, you should have a vocabulary that includes all of the things which were unique to this area. Now if I asked you about roost paint, I would doubt, would you have any idea what roost paint was? The other day I talked with somebody who owns one of the major businesses here. She's a lovely woman. I mentioned roost paint, and immediately she said, "Black flag." She knew because she had grown up on a farm here on the Northern Neck. I'll tell you a story that may fit in this or may not. I was talking with Dr. Gravat. Dr. Gravat told me, he said, "I got a call from this woman, farm wife. I went out to the farm and her husband was breathing very shallow and very slowly. He was in respiratory failure." I said, "Well, what happened? What did he do?" She said, "Well, he just came in from the chicken house." He looked at the gentleman that was laying in the couch there. He looked down at him and said, "How'd he get his pants wet?" She said, "When he was coming in, he was spraying roost paint in the chicken house. When he came in here, the jug of roost paint fell over and wet him down his front." What had happened was that he had gotten through the skin the nicotine that was in the roost paint, and so forth. Now, this is we're talking country medicine and things that happen you learn.

MK: So, roost paint is?

CJH: Nicotine. Black flag, it's an insecticide. Chicken lice, in other words, they spray the roost so that the chickens don't die scratching themselves to death.

MK: Can you give us some of the steamboat terminology that we ought to know before we talk to people?

CJH: Well, the first thing on steamboat terminology, walking beam. There were some of these steamboats in the Chesapeake that were walking beams. That one thing on the top that goes like this. The drive shafts come up. Quartermaster, quartermaster is the man that's on the wheel. Oiler makes sure that the pistons, which were early on were open and you had to keep them oiled. A wiper who kept the oil from getting around everything on the thing.

CK: Were those full-time jobs?

CJH: Those were full-time jobs, yes.

MK: You had to continuously oil the pistons?

CJH: Yes. Butsy was the one who told me of what his duties were on the Anne Arundel particularly. But the difference in the steamboats was that some of them, as you said, were

paddle wheelers, side wheelers. There were a few, as I understand. I never saw one of them, whatsoever, of stern wheelers. But then, of course, the more efficient screw, propeller-driven steamboats. They were the next that came along. I just brought this along. Unless you could read this, Baltimore, Tappahannock and Fredericksburg route, Fredericksburg, Tappahannock, and Baltimore, and then Potomac River route. Unless you went up to Baltimore and walked down to Light Street, which was the taking off point there in Baltimore. Then go right down, it says here, Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, 2:00 p.m. for Maryton, Hopyard, Haymount, Port Conway, Port Royal, Greenlaws, Wilmont, Saunders, Leedstown, Leighton's, Carter's, Blandfield. These were all active communities that shipped things and shipped people to Baltimore and back. I'm going to leave this with you, Naylor's Hole, which is right over as you go across the bridge into Tappahannock. You look to your right, and you'll see Naylor's Beach and Naylor's Hole.

CK: Turn it around so we can have a look.

MK: Hold it up against your chest, and we will film it.

CJH: But if you just look at this and then visit every one of these places, you'll have an understanding in some places. Since 1933, there's been nothing but some old pilings. But there are some other remnants. I tried to interest several artists in going to each of these towns and getting pictures of the steamboat wharves as they existed years ago. Then to do a whole segment as Ottoman did, Ottoman did originally to just not a book, but a folio of pictures of the various steamboat landings on the Rappahannock River. According to Butsy Conrad, there were thirty-four of them which were active in 1933 when the hurricane in 1933 drove everything right out of the river. But anyway, take this and some of these names you'll recognize very easy. Urbana, Burtons, Burhans, Millenbeck, Irvington, Weems at Irvington at 4 p.m., Weems, White Stone, Millcreek, North End, arriving in Baltimore Wednesday and Friday mornings. Steamboat to Baltimore on Thursday will not stop at Urbana and Bayport. So, this was all part of the life of the Valley and, of course, a steamboat. There was one steamboat that went from – I can't remember the name of the town.

MK: You need to mic it down, will you?

CJH: I can't remember the name of the town, but it's just up at Lottsburg. It was twice a week to Philadelphia. Very few people remember that this boat actually ran. But it's up where the *Sunnybank Ferry* is right now, up in that area. What's the name of the town? Can't remember. But a lot of people went from there and used that as their transport to get up into the Philadelphia, New York area. The Coan River and up in that area the Northumberland Library has a lot on steamboats up there. But I don't know that much about him. But if you want to borrow the tape that I have of Butsy Conrad, he'll give you a basic understanding of what the steamboat meant to him and to his father and his grandfather when they came down here. But as I say, I don't think anybody can understand what the society that's disappeared, that's just gone. Maybe the one you should go out and see is – have you done anything with Bill Crosby?

MK: Yesterday.

CJH: Did you? How's he doing?

MK: Great. He is great.

CK: Why do you mention him?

CJH: [laughter] Did you discuss bootleg moonshining?

CK: A little bit. Tell us what you have heard.

CJH: [laughter]

CK: Just touch on it.

CJH: When Bill was a very young boy, he lived in Ditchley, which is right over here off Route 200. He had a friend. His name was Kelly. I can't think of Kelly's first name. But he and Kelly decided that they might go in to make a – there's a little creek that runs down behind the Food Lion now. Where the Food Lion is now, there's a creek. There were two black men who had a still back in there, and they were doing pretty good. So, Kelly climbed up a tree, and he's up in the tree. He saw how they made the whiskey. So, he came down, he told Bill. Bill was fourteen. Bill Crosby was fourteen years then. So, they went over to Mr. Simmons. Did you put this? Did you talk with him about this? Well, you can ask him about it. [laughter] He went over to Mr. Simmons, and they bought a bushel of rye.

MK: From whom?

CJH: Mr. Simmons, who owned a big farm. Chase and Simmons and Dunton owned the property there halfway between White Stone and Kilmarnock.

CK: So, they went and bought some rye.

CJH: They bought a bushel of rye. They carried it all the way from there up to Ditchley. That's quite a little trek, walking. So, then I forget exactly how they did it. But his father, Bill's father, gave them where they could get credit to buy the sugar that they needed and some raisins. So, now they had all the makings of this whiskey. He said, "Well, we got all this, but we got to have a still." I can't remember the name of the gentleman, but it's on the tape that Bill made for me. Went out to him and they said, "How can you make a still?" The plumber was the only plumber in Lancaster County, as far as I know at that time. He said, "Sure. It costs you \$25." So, how do you – fourteen-year-old, Black boy going to get \$25 to make a still? I probably shouldn't be telling you this, but Bill told me. I don't think you can ask him. But anyway, he said, "Well, I'll tell you what. We'll give you the first run of booze, whiskey, the moonshine that we get." He said, "We'll give it to you." The plumber said, "No." He said, "The first run you still got the stuff, the lead from the solder and so forth, and so on. It's not real good. Moonshine, I'll take the second run." So, they got into the business, and they were doing very well. The only thing I remember, he came back from Richmond one day. He still kept his business of bringing seafood and selling seafood in Richmond. He came back one day, and he told me there were fourteen

cars lined up waiting to buy a pint or a quart of booze. He said they realized that if the revenuers couldn't see this line up then – so he said, "We went out of business." But anyway, those were the things that without – I only had the camera on my shoulder. We lost a lot to the sounds on the highway, but I established what I think is a really good friendship. I truly enjoyed any of the time that I spent with Bill Crosby. So, that's why I ask you. I haven't seen him. But his son-in-law, Leonard, works out at Yankee Point or did work with last I knew. But anyway, those are the things that to me were important. Of course, we've got all these cameras. They do a better job and may get more facts. I really don't know, but I believe that you have to get to know what these people do and what they did and see it. Now you take Andrew Simmons was clamming. That's the bloodiest, wettest, nastiest, coldest job in the whole world, and to sit out there all day with this machine, the patented tongs and so forth, with it coming up out of the water, spraying you with water, wearing foul weather gear all day long. Of course, if you hit the right spot and everything, it was a good living, but it was tough. It was truly tough.

CK: Why was it harder than the other...

CJH: Oystering? Well, the wetness of it and all of the men that were involved in it that I saw, this was three years, Andrew no longer – I don't think he goes out anymore. The men from over in Matthews County came up. The boat's moving like this all the time. The tongs get into the bottom, bring it up, there's mud, there's dirt, but the main thing, it's wet all day, just absolutely all day. You're culling out the various sizes of clams. If you have a good day, it's a very, very good business. Of course, I don't know who's clamming out there this last year or so. I'd say it's the most difficult of all of the fisheries out of here. But the other fishery that is going to go is the conch fishery. Very few people even realize that the lower Bay and out off the Virginia Capes, the conch fishery was a big thing.

MK: We are picking up your drum roll, which is – you are on beat, but...

CJH: But what I wanted to say is that anybody that's trying to study this, some of the old timers are still around and you've got to sit down with them. But you've got to be out there yourself. You've got to go out there yourself.

MK: What were some of the other things that people told you about steamboating? About maybe traveling on steamboats or what were the wharves like? You said that everybody was shipping from all these different places.

CJH: We ran a contest. I ran the contest, really. The contest was for the artists in the county to do a painting that said, "The steamboat's a-coming, Mama." Now, what did the steamboat do in order to produce the reaction on the wharves? Number one, the smoke. You could see the smoke curling up from the stack some many miles away from the wharf. Number two, that whistle. Now, if you've got a museum, a steamboat museum, and you aren't got a whistle that you can blow every once in a while, you're missing the real romance of the steamboat. There are one or two movies – I can't tell you what they are right now. But there are one or two movies that have steamboat-type whistles on the Chesapeake. I can't remember the names of them. There are several movies, of course, that have steamboats, Mark Twain-type steamboats on the Mississippi. There are one or two movies that have the steamboat whistles of the steamboats out

of Pittsburgh. Very few people think, when they think of steamboats, think of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, but actually with the Monongahela, the Allegheny, and the Ohio. When my dad used to be working in Pittsburgh at the 7th Avenue Hotel, we used to get up on Saturday morning and go next door to the White Tower hamburger place. Get a big bag of hamburgers and go down to the wharf and we could take our choice. We had two different steamboat lines that we could take right there. Of course, living on the Hudson River in Cornwall, just below Newburgh, New York, where they built the Henry Hudson, which was a 360-foot steamboat. Now, this wasn't like the flat, low draft steamboats on the Chesapeake. This was a full deep-water steamboat. I got to know steamboats there and, of course, my dad taking me back and forth across with the steam tugs. New York Harbor, at one time, was all steam tugs. I think the closest group of steamboats to what was on the Chesapeake overall was between New York Harbor and going over to New Jersey on Raritan Bay just around Sandy Hook there. But I had no great knowledge of steamboats in themselves. I've been down in the engine room and watched and listened, but I really don't have that. Of course, they all turned diesel while I was working in another job. They all turned diesel anyway. The thing that I think is important if you're going to do what you want to do is to talk with these people and don't make it too complicated. I don't know how to say it. But you've got to get into it yourself. You've been out on the Bay?

MK: Yes. What was your date of birth?

CJH: 8/6/ [19]22.

MK: Because we forgot to ask you that.

CJH: Yes, I know. [laughter]

MK: Tell me how you came to conduct these interviews that you...

CJH: I told you, Dickie Bean, when I knew that he made his money trapping, and I had been taping. I'm an ice boater. I belong to the Hudson River Ice Yachting Association. We restored President Roosevelt's ice yachts, the *Ice*, and the *Jack Frost*. We sail them on the Hudson River. In fact, the last we just had on the Navesink River in New Jersey. We had fantastic ice last winter. We sailed the Van Nostrand Cup, which Franklin Roosevelt had gotten a boat ready to sail in one time.

CK: What is an ice boat?

CJH: An ice boat is a runner plank with runners on both ends, big oak runners with steel on them, and a backbone that goes up and down. The *Jack Frost* has 747 square feet of sail. It's capable of sailing. It has sailed at a hundred and twenty miles an hour. When you're sailing, you're just eighteen inches off the ice. The last films that we made of the *Jack Frost* were made by a Canadian television group from Montreal.

CK: What do you mean off the ice? Eighteen inches off the ice?

CJH: In other words, when you're laying down to sail on an ice boat, you're laying eighteen inches off the ice. At the present moment, the Canadians are trying to exceed two hundred miles an hour up in the Hudson Bay region.

MK: They will probably do it.

CJH: They'll probably do it. [laughter] But you can sail very easily five times the speed of the wind. So, it's a great sport. Of course, when I got into it, it was very inexpensive. We could buy an ice boat for \$1,000 or whatever, build one. But right now, the Hudson River Ice Yachting Association, we got whipped very badly by the North Shrewsbury Ice Boating Club in Red Bank, New Jersey. They beat us. We had three great boats down there, but we hadn't had the time to prepare that they had, and they still have the cup. I think Madison, Wisconsin today, Lake Mendota in Madison, Wisconsin is the number one ice boating point in the world.

MK: So, this had something to do with your getting into doing interviews?

CJH: Yes. Well, I bought a camera to record the ice boating. People were moving so fast you didn't get a chance to talk with people. But finally, we did. The history of where these boats came from was what really started me talking with people about it. There's a fellow named Ricky Aldrich. He lives in Barrytown, New York, and he owns 186 acres on the Hudson River. So, you can figure, he's got a rather large estate. It's called Rokeby. His family's owned it. I don't know how many generations. But anyway, Ricky had his barn full of old ice boats. They've been slowly, one after another, been restored. There's about, I guess, thirty of them being sailed now on the Hudson River when there's ice.

MK: Did you document any boat building here in the Chesapeake region with your camera?

CJH: No. There's only one. Only one, and that was, to me, probably the most important one. I walked up, and I asked Tiffany Cockrell if Tiffany would give me a rundown on how he and his dad started building boats. He was working at that time on I think, it was twenty-four, but I'm not going to go into the numbers – skiff, a crab skiff for his grandson. So, he was standing there by this crab skiff and telling me what deadrise meant and some of the other things that I knew not that much, really, of Chesapeake. Right next door, they were working on a fantastically large fiberglass boat. That ultimately I think was over a million dollars. I don't know the exact figure. But anyway, his boats, he had started when he came back from World War II. He and his father were house builders and were building some boats. They had no shed or no barn or anything and they just had a big tree that they could hang the frames from and work from there. Then ultimately with the war over, they got into building more boats because food was needed, and they built more boats. Then Tiffany was called back to the Korean War. They sent him up to Philadelphia, to the Navy Yard in Philadelphia. Fortunately, there was a man there, a master boat builder, an engineer, who was trying to build a search boat, survey boat, I guess you'd call it more likely. We lost so many men at Omaha Beach that we dropped them off in the six or eight feet of water where they thought it might be four feet of water and so forth. So, this chap was trying to build a boat that would be able to go in close to the shore and survey it and tell the landing boats that brought troops ashore where they could drop their troops. Tiffany worked with him, and they developed this batten technique. He came back to Glebe Point, and he started

making boats using this engineering principle. He never had to go to the boat show in New York City. He took the boats up to a place called Brielle, New Jersey, the first ones. Brielle was – it's in Manasquan Inlet, New Jersey. He brought these boats up there, and he sold them all. He ultimately just got ahead that he found it very difficult to even keep it up. Now Tiffany's still available to talk with. He's a lovely, lovely guy. But as I say, having these pictures of him building this crab skiff while next door you could hear the modern crews working on these fiberglass things. Well, I hadn't seen him since I've been sick. But I saw him, I guess it's about a year ago.

MK: What is his age?

CJH: He's about my age, I would guess.

MK: Where is he?

CJH: Glebe Point.

MK: Glebe Point.

CJH: You go across the bridge over the Great Wicomico, you go up, and there's a sign that says Tiffany Yachts. He's built some of the finest boats on the Chesapeake.

MK: But he comes from an old-time tradition of building boats as you said.

CJH: Yes, his dad.

CK: What an incredible resource you have pulled together on the Chesapeake.

MK: It is beyond belief. What sort of steamboat stories can you think of?

CJH: Ammon Dunton and his wife – senior, this is senior, not...

MK: Ammon Dunton?

CJH: Senior, who was the, I guess, had the best sense of humor of anybody in Lancaster County. He was also the most important lawyer in Lancaster County. But anyway, when he and his wife were married – no, I'm sorry. He was telling me the difference between the bridal suites and the regular rooms on the Potomac. He said, " The only difference was that they had two bowls and two pitchers in the bridal suite." You can borrow that tape if you want to. I'm just trying to think of just how he had to go to Baltimore quite frequently for board of directors meetings of the various companies that he represented. He represented a great number of the pound net fishermen. At one time, you couldn't believe it, there were pound nets every three hundred yards, every hundred yards along the coast of the Chesapeake. Of course, there were always legal maneuvers to get one to move in and one to move out and quite a bit of litigation involving pound net rights. Ammon that was a great part of his practice when he first started. But I'll go through it and see how much there is on the – actually, on the steamboats, the ones – Butsy

Conrad was – he did everything. As a young person and so forth, he did everything that could be done along the Rappahannock River.

MK: Now, has he gone to his reward?

CJH: Yes. When's he died about? Three years ago. I don't know. Things happen very fast.

CK: What else do people say?

CJH: What?

CK: What else do people say about steamboating?

CJH: I think the most important thing you could get, of course, they're gone, too. Doctors that went with their patients on the steamboat. Now have you talked with anybody? If somebody had a compound fracture of the leg, and so forth, a very bad one – Butsy's wife, the doctor went right along with him to Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. Dr. Gravat, now I don't know whether Dr. Gravat has actually – well, he's still available to do...

CK: How do you spell his name?

CJH: G-R-A-V-A-T.

CK: He lives where?

CJH: White Stone. He was in practice until two years ago.

CK: He was one such doctor?

CJH: Yes, I think. Now, I'm not positive about Dr. Gravat. But he would know who was. I can't remember whether it was Dr. Oldham or Dr. Pierce that went to Baltimore with Butsy's wife. But this was not uncommon, the use of the steamboat as an ambulance. Because you could take somebody aboard, as this schedule says here, at 4:00 p.m. at Weems. Go to Baltimore and they'd take you off. What is the name of the street they would take you off at?

CK: Light Street.

CJH: Light Street. You got it, girl. [laughter]

MK: You should know that was a trick.

CJH: [laughter] Take you off there and whop you up to Johns Hopkins.

CK: What time would you get up? What time would you arrive at the Light...

CJH: In the morning. These boats would move. They were pretty, pretty, pretty quick. In New York City, you could get on the Mary Powell in the morning. I said when you get on in the morning, I get on in the afternoon, at 4:00 p.m. on the Mary Powell, down just north of the Battery on the North River. You'd be in Albany, New York the next morning. Unbelievable speed up the Hudson River.

CK: How fast is it?

CJH: Twenty-seven knots.

CK: Is that what they were going here as well?

CJH: I don't know that. I never did sit down and figure it out. But if you'd take that schedule, I'll leave that schedule with you. If you'd take that schedule, you'll get a pretty good idea, and you'd know the river. But I would tell you, if you're going to put this together in any way, go drive up the river. You'll see a sign. You go through Warsaw, go down the hill going out of Warsaw toward Tappahannock. You'll see a sign that says Naylor's, N-A-Y-L-O-R. Just take that and start up. You come out up near Pine Grove. You know where Pine Grove is on Route 3? The big intersection where the winery is? So forth up there? You'll go up there and you'll see Leedstown. Now some of the buildings were there the last time I was in Leedstown. But whether they're still there now, I don't know. You'd really understand what you're trying to put together.

CK: How could they have worked as an ambulance if they were stopping at every wharf to pick up?

CJH: Now, when they left here at White Stone, then they're going out in the Bay, and they're moving right on up. In other words, when the steamboat came down – I don't have the paper. Westland, I think Westland was the first stop out of Baltimore – let me figure it out. Steamers leave Fredericksburg. Steamers leave Baltimore. Got Pier 2 light stroke as follows weather. First one for Westland. Now that's right out there at Windmill Point area, you see. So, they're coming all the way down. But you've got this, and this will tell you...

MK: Then going back up, then they just hit the Bay and go back?

CJH: Hit the Bay and go on back up, yes.

CK: No stopping?

Now, I'm not an authority on that because I never really got digging into it. But I've got two or three other schedules that I've got at home that were the original schedules that were published in the newspapers. All of this was published in the newspapers. We had an artist contest and we printed this to go with it, which was from two of the newspapers.

CK: How often were they published? Are you saying they were published when steamboats were not in operation?

CJH: Yes.

CK: On a regular basis?

CJH: On a regular basis. Because they had people – of course, the steamboats, the connection – Cape Charles. You know where Cape Charles is on the Bay? Cape Charles, they used to have big barges come in there. Then freight trains would come from New York and come down the Delmarva Peninsula, be loaded onto these barges and taken across to Norfolk. This existed until very recently. Now, right now they're talking about having a high-speed ferry that's going to run from Reedville and vicinity across the bay over to Crisfield. Ammon Dutton, who was the representative of the investigation of whether they should do this back years ago was from right here in Lancaster County.

CK: Dunton, spelled?

CJH: D-U-N-T-O-N. His son is in practice in White Stone, Ammon Dunton, Jr. But his dad, I have three hours of tape of his dad. As I say, the major thing was his ability to see things. The family was – he was a very important man in the county, let's put it that way.

CK: What did he say back then about the – what did the investigation show about the ferry?

CJH: They never could capitalize it, except that over at Stingray Point, where I am now. Stingray Point, the Roo Arks and the group that were over there on the Middlesex side of the river, these people did have a ferry. Now, some people tell me that it ran for three years. Some people tell me that it ran for two years. But it was a regular, slow steamboat ferry. But I'll tell you one story, a very, very interesting story. I really shouldn't, but I will. But I'm going to use it some way or another. In 1917 and 1918, the Bay froze over. The Rappahannock River froze over. There were seven young ladies from Lancaster County who were going to school at that time at what was then Fredericksburg Normal School or Fredericksburg Teachers College. It's now Mary Washington College. Annie Dunaway, who was one of the young ladies, I've got the other names, but I can't take them right out. Her father arranged to have the Potomac come into White Stone. The river hadn't quite closed over. They were able to break it out there. The Potomac left White Stone and headed out into the Bay and ultimately, got hung up in the ice. They had passengers who would come down from either from Fredericksburg or from, I can't remember whether it was Fredericksburg or from Baltimore, and they were headed for Norfolk. Now, there was no food, or they were short of food on the Potomac. So, there was another boat. Some people say it was a tramp steamer. Some say it was a whatever. It was about a quarter of a mile away. The first mate of the Potomac at that time was a fellow named Raymond Dobbins. Well, Raymond Dobbins went over to this other boat, and they gave him a side of beef. He threw a line on that side of beef and skidded it across the ice back to the Potomac. Now, his daughter today, Lorena Connor, Lorena, did all the measuring for tax purposes and so forth. She's very active politically and socially in the county. But I think that the story should be told. Finally, the Potomac broke out of the ice and went to Norfolk. By the time it got to Norfolk, none of the commercial docks were open. They were all frozen in. But the Navy had been able to keep its docks open. There was a man named, I think his first name was Francis Sullivan, who

was able to let the Potomac go to the Navy dock. So, they got there, and they took the train to Fredericksburg, these seven girls. They arrived at Fredericksburg, and as you probably know, or maybe you don't know, this was the year of the flu. There were about 270 students at Fredericksburg at that time, in this Mary Washington College. There were only six of them who could walk or function. They had to nurse the whole rest of the student body at Mary Washington College. One of them was a lovely lady who came back here and was a schoolteacher in Kilmarnock for many, many years, Eleanora Haney. She ultimately married – my God, I can't think – the first farm after you go out of Kilmarnock going north toward on Route 200. But she was a very well-known teacher here in Kilmarnock. Annie Dunaway, of course, came back and taught school here in Lancaster County as well. But that's a story that should be told.

MK: Great story.

CK: I am trying to pull off this side of beef. That must have weighed a little something.

CJH: Yes. It skidded along the ice.

MK: So, he walked across the ice to this other boat.

CJH: Yes.

MK: Can you say that again?

CJH: What?

MK: Can you say that again? Explain how he walked across.

CJH: He went right across, walked across on the ice. I don't know whether they had a line on him or not. I don't think they probably did. But ultimately he became one of the real entrepreneurs of Lancaster County. He owned the Manasquan Steamboat Wharf. That was his wharf. He had an oyster bank there. He had a tomato cannery. He had an oyster house, and he was also a petroleum distributorship there at Monaskin. Of course, as I say, Lorena lives there now. You might call her and talk with her, a very lovely person. But it's a great story.

CK: So, then they put a line on the side of beef?

CJH: Just skidded it across the ice.

CK: Then what?

CJH: Then they took it up to the Potomac and the cooks on the Potomac fed the people.

CK: How much does a side of beef weigh?

CJH: You got me, dear, but I would say three hundred, four hundred pounds.

CK: So, who took it from the side of the Potomac? How did they get it up in the boat?

MK: They were hungry.

CJH: Clever people, these Chinese. Nobody realizes the cleverness of the generations of the early twentieth century. What they did with using just the natural mechanical advantages of certain things that they could look at it and lift things that God we'd have to call a seventy-ton crane today. But they could do it. If you listen to a tape that I have with William Fitchett.

CK: William, who?

CJH: Fitchett. He lives out in White Stone. His father and his father's brother had the herring fishery. Now the herring fishery at this point in this county was a great, great, great part of the county's wealth.

CK: At what point?

CJH: At what point? In the [19]20s and [19]30s, even into the forties. But when he describes on the tape how they put these eighty-foot poles in fifty feet of water on the edge of the channel in Chesapeake Bay without any crane or anything else, but they learned how to tip them up and slide them and let them slide down into the mud. Unbelievable. That's why you say, "Well, how do you keep interested in these things?" You talk with one person you realize what they accomplished. But talk with Lorena because she, as I say, is very active still today. She was a very good friend of Butsy Conrad's.

CK: Is Eleanora Haney still active?

CJH: Eleanora Haney. You mention anybody who's over fifty years old in Kilmarnock and they know Eleanora Haney's name.

CK: Who else is living who worked on the steamboats?

CJH: That I don't know.

MK: This might be a good place to take a lunch break I think.

CJH: Yes. I've got to get out. But know anybody that wants to borrow a tape and listen to it and then use it. It's fine with me. We ran a contest. We invested quite a bit of money in putting the contest together. We had eight artists to produce paintings. The theme of the painting was "Steamboats a-coming, Mama", where the kid would run home and call Mama. Then they'd all go down at the dock. Harriet Cowan, who you saw at...

CK: At the gallery.

CJH: – the gallery this morning, Harriet Cowan won the contest. We had a painting, one of the prints, we printed a thousand copies. We framed one of the prints, and they're good. They're of the steamboat dock at Irvington. That's what they are. Harriet, as I say, won the contest. We printed it. I had asked Harriet to come over and Helen Mitchell, who was one of our members of the board of directors and an old-time native of the area. We would give a copy, a framed copy now. This cost us \$250 to the Steamboat Museum. We got there and they were going to take pictures. Of course, we were going to benefit from this, too, if it was in the paper, a picture of us presenting this picture. Lo and behold, they told us that the camera malfunctioned. So, the picture never did appear.

CK: They being who?

CJH: I don't know, the board of directors. They were all so tied up in themselves. [laughter] I don't know who they work with. But anyway, then somebody told me later that they saw this picture, that it actually had come out. That they'd seen the picture. So, this got me a little bit upset.

CK: What a shame.

CJH: We're raffling off those. We're not going to make any money. But these people don't want to pay the artists, either. They weren't going to pay Harriet for what that painting was. We paid her \$1,400 for that painting.

CK: We being?

CJH: Lancaster County Historical Society. We're a nothing, really, an absolute...

MK: Well, we would like to join the Historical Society. Do you have any applications to fill out?

CJH: [laughter] Yes, we do. But we don't have very many meetings. We don't have very much to...

MK: Well, we would like to join. We would like to pay some dues up front. We are sincerely interested in – and we are not employees of the museum. We are contractors.

CK: What I would want to do would be to digitize the tapes.

CJH: That's why...

[end of transcript]