

Frank Rudd: This tape is a property of Tales of Cape Cod Incorporated and cannot be reproduced without their written permission. Today's date is June 6th, 1978. We are at the home of Mr. John G. Lewis of 38 Blossom Avenue in Osterville. Mr. Lewis was born July 29th, 1907. Lewis, are you native to the Cape?

John Lewis: Yes.

FR: When were you born?

JL: I was born July 29th, 1907.

FR: In the village of Osterville.

JL: In the village of Osterville.

FR: What did your father do for a living?

JL: My father was more or less a laborer. I remember him first, he was an iceman of the village of Osterville. In the wintertime, he worked oystering at Johnny Crosby's. In the summertime when there was no ice to deliver, he was a shellfisherman. He used to go coal hogging.

FR: Did he actually deliver the ice?

JL: He delivered the ice door-to-door.

FR: Did he cut it in the winter?

JL: [laughter] I was going to say the whole work of old village of Osterville harvest the ice at a pond, an icehouse that boarded our land.

FR: Where was that?

JL: That was in Osterville in Joshua's Pond.

FR: What did your mother do?

JL: My mother was at one time about the only paper hanger we had in Osterville.

FR: Is that so?

JL: [laughter] Yes. All the village people used to call our mother to hang paper in their houses.

FR: Is that so?

JL: Yes. She did do house cleaning in the spring.

FR: Well, what would she get for a roll when she hung paper?

JL: I really don't know. But I think more or less some of it was done for groceries or favors or something like that. [laughter] Yes. She did get to collect little money more on the house cleaning. She used to get paid for that. But how much, I really don't know.

FR: How many children were in your family?

JL: There were four of us. Three boys and a girl.

FR: You went to the local school?

JL: Yes. I graduated from Hyannis High and I went to Wentworth Institute to take up plumbing. But I was there about three or four months when my father was taken ill with gallstones. At that time, we had a pretty good-sized farm. My two older brothers were working in Boston and my sister got married. So, I was about the only one left. So, I gave up the school and came home and took care of the home.

FR: What was the school in Osterville like?

JL: Just a typical grammar school. We had nine grades here when I went. Then we had four years of high school in Hyannis. Funny thing, when I went to Hyannis High School, we had a school bus with hard rubber tires, which dates back a few years. [laughter] That must've been around 1915. No, I was in the early [19]20s. I graduated in 1925.

FR: The school in Osterville, how many rooms in the school?

JL: My first year in school in Osterville, we had just completed I think the year before, a schoolhouse built by a local contractor. Two-story school. We must have had four or five rooms. I'd only been in there a short while when the schoolhouse caught fire and burnt down. So, we were transferred to what was always known as the Dry Swamp Academy, which is now the community center building in Osterville. So, my first year of grammar school was spent at this Dry Swamp Academy. [laughter] Later on, they built the present school, which is there now. Well, at that time I think we had four, possibly five rooms.

FR: Do you remember the fire?

JL: Oh, yes. I lived over near Joshua's Pond, which was exactly a mile from the school. Now, from the center of town. It happened at night and we could look out our upstairs windows, which were our bedrooms, and we could see the flames and the burning cinders coming from the building. It set off several small fires between the village and our house in the woods that had to be taken care of.

FR: Well, how did they fight the fires in those days?

JL: It was simply [laughter] by sticks and shovels. But if an area got going pretty good, why

they would dig ditches by shovels and take pieces of brush and everything just to beat the fire up. It was quite a project.

FR: Yes. Did they have the bucket brigade or?

JL: Not really because there was nowhere to get the water. [laughter]

FR: I see. So, really it is just they had to let it go.

JL: Yes. We used a lot of backfires. It would help out considerable. Quite a project.

FR: You said you walked to school?

JL: Yes. We had to walk to school. It was exactly a mile from our home to the school. The only time they allowed us to bring a lunch was when it was raining. If it was raining in the morning, we could bring a lunch and eat in the school. Otherwise, we had to go home. They gave us about an hour and a half at noon to get back to our home, get our lunch, and get back to school again.

FR: What was a typical day like? For example, what did you have for breakfast?

JL: Well, we always had hot cereal for breakfast, except on Sunday mornings, which we had pancakes. Mother would make pancakes. Because I lived on a farm, we had plenty of milk and cream. So, it was hot cereal, oh, practically all the time during summer and winter.

FR: Did you have chores to do before you went to school?

JL: You bet we had chores. Yes. We all had our chores to do.

FR: What would they be?

JL: Well, we had pigs. We'd feed the pigs. Then the animals, our horses and the cow. We only really just had one horse. We'd feed the horse and the cows. We had sometimes two cows. Of course, then yes, we also had to get wood into the house. At our farm, we burned nothing but wood. We had a wood kitchen stove, and a pile of stove, and stove in our dining room. So, we had to make sure that the wood was in for the day. At night after supper, we had to make sure we had wood for the night. Of course, there was no water in the houses. We all worked. In fact, in the summertime, all the kids from town about my age or some were older and younger, they would come over to go swimming. On that farm, of course, we had the barn, and then we had what we called the corn barns where we kept the feed. So, the girls used to use the feed barn. Excuse me. Girls would use that building to undress in. The boys would use the barn. Then we'd run down by the house down the hill to the pond, to the old swimming hole. So, in the spring and summer, we just the boys, the kids used to come over and stay practically all day. But we weren't allowed to go swimming until so many rows of corn was hoed or so many rows of beans, or something like that. So, the kids would come over and want to go swimming. So, we always had, oh, four or five or six hoes around. So, we'd say, "Okay, grab a hoe." We'd all go

out and do our hoeing and then all go swimming.

FR: That is good.

JL: Yes. They enjoyed it, the kids.

FR: When would you have your big meal?

JL: At noontime. Mostly at noontime. Yes.

FR: What would that consist of?

JL: Well, of course, we had all our own vegetables. I think more or less like we eat now, I think. Because we raised pigs, of course, we had regular hams that were smoked.

FR: Would you smoke your own hams?

JL: Oh, yes. Yes.

FR: How would you do that?

JL: Well, dad used to go out in the woods back of the house and get ash, I think it was what he used. Excuse me. We had a little building that they had the fire going. It would smoke the bacon and the hams and all that stuff.

FR: Where did you buy your clothes? Or did you buy them?

JL: Yes. [laughter] I think it was the old [unintelligible] in [laughter] *Montgomery Ward* magazines that we got most of our clothes off.

FR: Mail order?

JL: Yes, it was mail order stuff. Occasionally, [laughter] which it was occasionally, we'd hitch up the horse and drive over to Hyannis and do shopping over there. I remember the store. There was a big clothing store. Dry goods store, I guess they called it in the days, run by (Bill Lovell?). When we did go buy locally, we'd go over there.

FR: Would the girls get their clothes that way too, or?

JL: Oh, yes. Yes.

FR: Do you remember any of the vendors coming around as traveling salesmen?

JL: Yes, there was one old gentleman, Issac Cohen. I'm quite sure that was his name. That came out of the horse and came and had some small stuff though. I suppose it was accessibilities and stockings and stuff like that. Small stuff that he used to come, and when he came, my

mother would always invite him for a meal and so forth. He was a very friendly, old fellow.

FR: Did you sell your milk or did sell your goods in the farm?

JL: No. Only in the summertime we'd have more vegetables than we could use. Mother preserved everything. We had what they call a Cape Cod cellar, which was, oh, I suppose ten-, twelve-foot round dirt bottom. They had shelves built all around the cellar. In the summer, my mother would can every kind of a vegetable that could be done. Beets and tomatoes and string beans and corn and everything. We never had to buy vegetables. We lived off of them all the time.

FR: Your father did have to earn money somewhere.

JL: He did. But in those days, there was a store that's in town. Now, it's the Swift Store. That we used to borrow run by Walter Fuller. In the wintertime, of course, as I say, it was hard to make money. [laughter] I remember one little chore I never cared well was dad would go down clamming. He'd take one or two of us kids and he'd just dig the holes, hit the clams up, and we'd have to come after him and pick them out. It was a cold job. But that was for our clam chowder, or steamed clams, and just helped to fill them. But this Mr. Fuller used to give dad credit all along. Dad would pay it up in the spring when he got back to working. Dad used to buy sugar by the barrel, flour by the barrel, and beans barrels. I remember those because I never liked them. Then there was another old farmer that lived over in Marstons Mill and Mystic Lake territory that dad used to buy potatoes. We never could seem to raise potatoes on our farm. He would buy, I don't know, probably a bag, probably eight- or ten-bushel bags of potatoes and always three barrels of apples. I remember one particular barrel of apples would be what they called the russets. You could keep them apples all the way along with no trouble at all. I don't know. I don't just remember the names of the others. But those were for eating up soon after we bought them, for cooking and stuff like that.

FR: What did you have for refrigeration?

JL: We didn't have one. Yes, well, of course, in the summertime, the icehouse was right down below our house. We lived south up on a hill. Down next to the pond was the icehouse. Well, when they would get the ice ready to deliver, they would be more or less broken pieces that they would throw outside the door. So, we would we'd use that. We had a refrigerator. That's how I learned to drive a car. Your first Model T that my father bought, he'd allow me to drive down to the icehouse, oh, which was probably five hundred yards, and pick up whatever pieces of ice that were left during the day. I'd throw them in refrigerator [laughter] and store that for later.

FR: Basically, you used your basement, the cellar, to keep...

JL: Yes. The Cape Cod cellar is what we called it. That's where we...

FR: How would you keep your me your milk fresh when it was not using the ice?

JL: Well, we threw away quantities of milk. We had what they called milk pans. One chore I

never had to do, and I don't think any of us kids would have, we never milked the cows. If dad wasn't around to do it, he would ask our neighbor to come in and do it. But if we got more milk than what we used or could keep any at the time, we put it in what they used to call the milk pans and let it set until the cream came to the top. Then we would skim the cream up and feed the milk to the chickens and the pigs, and we would take it. [laughter] We never had much trouble keeping milk because everybody loved it. We had it fresh twice a day.

FR: What would you do on weekends?

JL: Well, not really too much. The kids from the village used to come over and we'd go out through the woods. We lived right on the edge of all the woods. We'd play fox and geese and we, say, five or six guys would take off and we'd give them about a fifteen- or twenty-minutes start. Then every so often they'd have to put arrows down on the road to show where they were going. After they went for two or four miles, well, then they'd all hide in the woods and we would have to find them. That was one of the biggest games we played.

FR: What was Sunday? What would you do Sunday?

JL: Well, Sunday we all went to church. That was one thing. [laughter] They insisted on church. Then I would say after church, we were on vacation days. Of course, the kids used to [inaudible] and go swimming. I remember for years we never went saltwater swimming at all. It was just mainly in the ponds.

FR: Freshwater.

JL: Freshwater swimming. Freshwater.

FR: Did you do any boating?

JL: No. We had a little boat. But once a while, when the kids would come over, we all had fish lines. We go out and fish and catch these little, small perch. [laughter] There wouldn't be much of them. But anyway, what we got, we'd clean up and take them up the house and mama would cook them for us and the kids who came over. Yes.

FR: What kind of toys would you have as a youngster?

JL: [laughter] Most of anything we had, were made. One thing that stands out in my mind is the bow and arrows we used to make. There were always bushes and trees around, so we'd make our bow out of that and wheel out our arrows. [laughter] I remember one incident very well was we used to take a finish nail and drive it into the end of the arrow and bind it in there and then go shoot and I was trying to hit birds or anything like that. I remember one day we were out playing cowboys and Indians, and I had a bow and arrow. I had to take potshots at each one of us. But I had to shoot it anyway. The arrow hit my oldest brother right in the cheek and it hung there. He went crying to my mother [laughter] to have taken care of. Then later on, we had BB guns too. We used to climb trees and use them, but [laughter] nobody got hurt. It's a wonder we didn't. I wouldn't allow my kids to do it. Not today, that's for sure. [laughter]

FR: Did you caddie at all?

JL: I caddied. I sure did.

FR: Where did you caddie?

JL: Well, my first caddying was over at the Seapuit Golf Links, which was bought up by Mr. E. K. Davis. It's a nine-hole course. [laughter] I remember I went over there the first time and every new kid that came over to caddie had to be initiated. So, there was another fella, (Francis Wyman?), he's deceased now. He was a great kid. He and I went over one day to start caddying. First thing we had to do was to have a fight. Well, it was a wrestling match.

FR: That was your initiation.

JL: That was the initiation. [laughter] Incidentally, I had a brother, he's dead now too. He was quite stubborn. This Mr. Parsons owned the golf course. He was kind of a tight one. He had a nice inn hotel over there. We were getting twenty-five cents for nine holes of caddying. We all decided that we should get thirty-five cents. So, we notified this Mr. Parsons who owned the course, the inn and so forth. He said, "No." Twenty-five cents was all we were going to get. But my brother, who's three years older than I, he got a job caddying one day with a party that Mr. Parsons was in. So, after going the eighteen holes, the man he caddied for handed him the fifty cents. My brother says, "No." He said, "You owe me seventy cents because it's thirty-five cents for a nine-hole." Then Mr. Parsons says, "No, it's fifty cents." Well, they argued a little bit. But my brother grabbed a club out of the bag and ran. [laughter]

FR: [laughter]

JL: He said, "I want seventy cents, or I'm taking this club."

FR: [laughter]

JL: So, he finally settled for thirty-five cents for nine holes instead of twenty-five.

FR: What did you do for entertainment?

JL: Nothing much. They build a movie down here. I don't remember just when it was, but matinees were only ten cents, five or ten cents, ten cents probably. [inaudible] were a nickel. During the summer we'd go there. Otherwise, we stayed at home more or less. I remember one day, dad brought home, it was just before Christmas, he brought home a vitro. That was the greatest thing. It was more of like what you call a console TV [laughter] now set on the table. I think he paid \$80 for it. My mother why nearly chewed him out. [laughter] But we kept it. So, we got records and we used to listen to that for quite a bit. It was quite a thrill.

FR: Did you go to dances?

JL: Yes. Later on, I went to dances, but I was a damn poor dancer. But I went more to take out the girls and we'd dance. Yes.

FR: What else did you do? For example, did they have local parties? Did they have local shows or theater or anything like that?

JL: We used to have occasional birthday parties and I know in May we used to hang May baskets and things like that. But not too many.

FR: What were the holidays like?

JL: Just a day out of school. [laughter] That's all it was.

FR: How was Christmas celebrated?

JL: Christmas was quite a day. They had the village Christmas tree down at what's now the veterans. Of course, I suppose dad would go up a day or two early and bring all the presents. Then we had a local man here that would play Santa Claus. At night, we'd all troop over through. As I said, we had to go something in the village and we lived over in the woods. So, we would all walk over to the Christmas tree. Then they had a band here in Osterville that used to play music. Then after the music, then they'd have the Christmas tree. Then in those days too, they had the medicine shows.

FR: Oh, did they?

JL: [laughter] Yes.

FR: Tell us about them.

JL: That was quite a show. These people would come in town selling this medicine for a dollar a bottle. [laughter] I don't know whether it did anybody any good or not. But they'd put on a good show and they'd have candy and stuff to sell. It was quite a thrill when the medicine show came to town. Yes.

FR: Yes. How did the people make a living? What did they have as industry in the village?

JL: It was more or less what it is now. It was just the summer people that really kept us going. Well, like my father would, well, mow. It didn't make my father so much. Although, I used to sell the manure and stuff like that to the rich people. They all had farms. But it was mostly work done around their places. You know, during the winter they would have work fixing up the house, remodeling, and stuff like that. But there was really nothing other than the oystering.

FR: He had the boat yard.

JL: Had the boat yard. I don't know. But that's just about all there was here.



FR: Shellfishing, I suppose.

JL: Shellfishing, yes, of course. The bay got boats all over it and put a squash to that.

FR: Yes. Tell me, speaking of holidays, did you celebrate the 4th of July?

JL: Yes. Yes, we did. Here at Wianno we had a dock. They had a dock and every 4th of July they'd put on fireworks. They had a good display in those days. Everybody in town would come up in and watch the fireworks. Yes.

FR: What was Thanksgiving like?

JL: Thanksgiving, there was a cousin of a family that lived on Pond Street right now. We would alternate. Every other year that family, which was the Crocker family, would come over to our house one year. The next year we'd all go to their house. We all did. For years and years, that was our Thanksgiving.

FR: As family and friends then.

JL: Right. Yes.

FR: Do you remember Prohibition?

JL: Very well.

FR: Can you tell us something about it?

JL: [laughter] I could tell you a lot. [laughter]

FR: [laughter]

JL: Well, it was exciting times around here.

FR: Can you give us a couple of stories without mentioning names?

JL: [laughter] Well, yes. I could tell you a couple. I'm going to tell you the real serious one because I lost a son-in-law.

FR: Oh, did you?

JL: Yes. I was involved in the deal too. But yes, they were landing a lot of booze around here. We had a fellow, he's still living in town here. He's in his eighties. He used to do trucking for them mostly out of Popponesset. They would land booze up there. This man had a couple of trucks and he had got it to Boston or the city, something like that. But he always seemed to have booze himself to sell. What he would do if he hadn't gotten a load of booze to take the Boston to Brockton or wherever he delivered, on the way out which were all dirt roads in those days, he

would drop a case or two off on the side in the bushes and then go back later and pick it up. Well, I got pretty well acquainted. He was my neighbor for years over when, yes, Josh was born. Yes. So, anyway there was a local barber in town that he liked his liquor pretty well. It was good liquor and he knew I could get it from this particular guy. So, he would get me to get it. [laughter] So, I'd make myself a few bucks. I'd go over to see Joe over there. Sell Joe's and get what I wanted and take it to him. Then there's another thing. He was my son-in-law, Frankie. His father was caretaker for (Ben Shreve?) up at [inaudible] Boston, and live in Detroit. Frankie asked me one day if I knew where he could get a case of champagne. I said, "I think so. Give me a little time."

FR: [laughter]

JL: So, he said, "Well, I need one. My father wants me to get him one." So, I said, "Okay." So, I got ahold of Joe and Joe says, "Yes, I guess a couple of days I'll have it for you." So, I said, "How much?" He says, "Fifty bucks." I said, "Okay." So, I told him blah, blah, blah. He said, "Good, I'll tell his father." So, he said, "Okay." So, when the day came, two days later that Joe had the champagne, he called me. So, I got ahold of my brother-in-law, I said, "I need fifty bucks." So, I gave him fifty bucks. I get the case, I gave it to my son-in-law, and my son-in-law sold it to his father for sixty bucks. His father sold it to Mr. Tree for seventy bucks. [laughter] So, everybody made ten bucks on the deal. [laughter]

FR: Everybody got a cut in the process.

JL: Yes. Then later on Joe gave me a couple of bottles for [laughter] selling the case.

FR: That is interesting. Well, they tell me that they used to drop the liquor off in the water.

JL: Yes, they did. I remember one time, I was working down at the oyster shandy with a lot about this just booze that's just coming in. Well, apparently, they came in one night and they came to, it's funny, he's a retired minister. They live on St. Mary's Island, anyway. He had a load of booze coming in for his old self-personal use. They got in almost to where they were going to land it. Hijackers were quite thick around at the time, and he started seeing these lights going out back and forth. This was all night. So, they got scared and they turned around and they went out to the bay and dumping booze out overboard on the way out. So, I wasn't too smart, I guess, about getting the booze. Well, I wasn't too much interested, anyway. But then a lot of people got quite a few cases of booze. The cases would be in cargo boxes, but also wrapped in (berlan?). So, I remember one night after work, I was working in oystering at the time. I decided to go out and see if I could find a case of booze because they were picking them up. So, I borrowed the boss's boat and a pair of tongs, and I went out. Sure enough, for a while I hauled up a case of UDL. It was a Canadian booze, United Deliveries Limited. That's what it was. So, I came in and I sold it to my boss for [laughter] fifty bucks afterwards.

FR: Well, that is what they said. They said it was, I guess what you picked up, it was during depression and the money was quite good.

JL: [laughter] Oh, it was. Yes, man. Right. Yes.

FR: Well, that is interesting. Most of the landing, where is it in Osterville? Or was it more in other areas?

JL: Well, they landed it right on the Oyster Harbor Bridge, a lot of it. They bridge on one side, I think it still does have a stairway. We would go through Crosby at the time harvesting oysters. He had a grant up near the entrance to the Bay. Generally, most every day we'd go up. He'd tow this raft up on the grant and we'd break oyster to get a good jag to bring down to the shandy to sell out. Well, this particular day we had a deaf and dumb fella. He was a character. Oldest crock, his name was. We were raking. All of a sudden, he raked in a wicker bottle of rum. He was some excited. So, we brought it down to shandy and we each had some of that. But the story was that there were a couple of local guys, I think one store in Osterville. Anyway, they had a rum-running boat. But anyway, he used to keep it right out in the bay. They used to go out through the cut out just a while. But they'd meet these rum boats that had come from the south with rum and bring in loads of rum. Scotty, yes. That was the guy's name. Anyway, we talked to him later on and he said, "Oh yes." He says they came in one day and they were going to land at the bridge. But there was too much going on and they got scared. So, they went out on Johnny's oyster grant and dumped the whole load off there. Then later on they went back and said, "We got every bottle, but one." [laughter] That was the one.

FR: They would do that just to hide it.

JL: Yes. But when these rummers used to bring in the cases of stuff from the big boats and they dumped them over. They had no hopes of ever getting them. But these boys knew the bay and knew the grants. So, they just piled it up in one pile. So, they came in and made sure that it was clear.

FR: What did you get for pay when you worked for the Oyster Company?

JL: Well, the regular laborer's pay at that time when I first started was \$4 a day.

FR: What year would that be?

JL: That would probably be 1920, along in there. But later on, all the farmers working for Johnny Crosby were married, but myself. So, I remember one time he gave them a raise of fifty cents an hour raise.

FR: That was substantial.

JL: Yes. It wasn't fifty cents an hour. It was fifty cents a day raise. They got four and a half a day. But he told me that he could only pay me \$4 because I wasn't married. I always remember [laughter] that I could've spoiled a wife on [laughter] extra fifty cents. They would be something.

FR: Do you remember the Depression?

JL: Oh, yes.

FR: Tell us about it.

JL: Because we got knocked down to \$3 a day during the Depression.

FR: But you worked steady?

JL: Oh, we worked. Yes. Oyster was about the only job that was going on in the winter round here.

FR: For how many months would you work?

JL: I'd start in September and we'd work until, well, the end of April. In April, the boats would bring the oysters in from Greenport, Long Island. They'd unload the boats onto these rafts and then we'd have to go out. They'd tow the rafts out to the oyster grants and we'd throw the oysters off.

FR: These are seedlings, were they?

JL: No. They were marketable oysters. The only reason that we brought them here was to fatten them and flavor them. But they were all marketable oysters when we got them and we could sell them out.

FR: How long would they be in the water?

JL: Put them in April, take them out in September. Start shipping them in September.

FR: Do you remember what you used to get for a barrel of oysters?

JL: I'd say between fifteen and \$20 a barrel.

FR: It is the law of supply and demand.

JL: Yes. The coal hogs, I always remember them because see, like in the summertime because the oyster was stopped, we all would go coal hogging. The year that I got married, which was in [19]34, everything was bad. I got married in February. May fills up, so I was out of work for about a month. Then the summer came and let's say I started coal hogging and the market was very bad. Normally we'd get five or \$6 a bushel for them. It dropped down to a dollar a bushel. Then that particular summer, my wife, who was a waitress, got her job back that she used to have. She went back to work and I went coal hogging. But then you couldn't sell? No one would buy them even for a dollar a bushel. They wouldn't buy a little.

FR: Could not afford them?

JL: There was no market for them. Everything had to be shipped away. But I went coal

hogging because I couldn't find no other work. I used to go down to local hotels and pedal them like that in order to get rid of them. Things were really tough.

FR: During that period of time when did the depression hit here?

JL: I would say that it was around [19]32, or [19]32.

FR: [19]29 was the crash of it.

JL: Yes.

FR: You did not feel the effects of it right away.

JL: Not right away, no. No.

FR: What about what were the storekeepers? Were they extending credits?

JL: Oh, yes. Yes, they were. They really took care of the local people.

FR: I suppose that your natural resources, you had the fishing and hunting helped a little.

JL: Yes, it did.

FR: Did they have the WPA?

JL: Yes, they did. They did. I never got on it. I think the only time that I can remember getting any help was only when I was paying rent. I was paying, I think, it was \$20 a month rent. I got behind in my rent. I used to go out in the morning. I'll tell you what happened. Actually in 1936, I'm quite sure, I started plumbing for Riedell. Because I decided at that time that I had to do something besides leaving. I was married. I'd been married a couple years. I had a little plumbing knowledge, so I decided to work for him. But in the wintertime, I would work right up until about a week or two before Christmas, because shutting these waters off these summer houses. So, we kept pretty busy. But then just before Christmas, it seemed like every year there'd be no work. I'd be laid off. Well, then if course, I knew (Phillip Scott?) who had the coal hogging business. I'd go down to see if he needed help. We had another man in town named (Jesse Murray?), well, he used to do trucking and stuff like that. I'd go up to him. I think I'd go to Jesse Murray or I'd just go around to the different people that I knew that might need help. So, sometimes at the end of the week, I'd have two or three places to go around to collect pay. I was going to say, the only time that I really needed help was when I got behind my rent two months. Victor Adams was a selectman. Incidentally, I worked for him for eight years over in this garage in Hyannis Port.

FR: Oh, did you?

JL: Yes. So, I went to him and I told him that I didn't want welfare, I didn't want WPA, but I did need money for the rent. I said, "I'll try to pay you back." He says, "Don't worry." He made

me out a check for the two months' rent. He said, "If you can take care of yourself like you've been doing," he said, "Just forget about paying this back." [laughter]

FR: Is that so?

JL: Yes. He was a great guy. So, I never went on to WPA.

FR: Speaking of the oyster business, why do we no longer have an oyster business here?

JL: Well, mainly because they wanted to eliminate the middleman. [laughter] They shipped their oysters directly. There was at one time, the Cotuit oyster was the oyster. But now, Cotuit oysters can come out of Greenport or Rhode Island or wherever. So, now these companies just send them in directly. They don't bother to go through the middleman.

FR: I see. Do you recall the advent of the telephone?

JL: Yes, I do. Because I have stated before, we lived so far out of town that we really needed a telephone. I've forgotten now, incidentally, how much it costs to get the telephone into our house over there, like I said, in the woods. But we got it. I know sometime after we had the telephone, we wanted to get electricity. Electricity came on. I remember [inaudible] electricity. Because we didn't have streetlights where we didn't need them in those days because everybody kept their porch lights on. Electricity was cheap. So, we just tried to get electricity over there. But they wanted \$1,500 just to bring the wires over, which was an unheard-of price in those days. [laughter] So, we never got electricity. But we got the telephone. I always remember that our number was two-two ring twenty-two.

FR: Is that so?

JL: Two longs and two shots. It was a crank phone.

FR: Do you remember World War I?

JL: I remember when it was over. When come home from school, we'd pick up the paper at little store that it's now a real estate office. A crippled man ran it by name of Willie O' Crocker. On the way home, we'd always bring the paper. I remember picking the paper that particular day and big headline was just World War I is over. That's about all.

FR: What about indoor plumbing? Did that come along in your...

JL: Well, of course living over there in the woods we didn't have any indoor plumbing. Let me see. When was it? When we built our new house over here. Because that was my first experience of living with indoor plumbing. That's in, yes, about 1929, I think it was when father built this house over here in town. That was my first experience of living with indoor plumbing. But I had started working for plumbing. I worked for two different plumbers in two years. I worked in 1926 and 1927 for two different plumbers. I was installing plumbing at that particular time. We never had it over in the old barn, of course.

FR: Do you remember the first automobile?

JL: No. I do remember, it was a long while ago. Our local doctor, he had the first automobile that I rode in.

FR: What was his name?

JL: Dr. Kenny. He had a son, (Numas?) who was a year older than I. But I used to go over and play with him and his father would take us out.

FR: What did the automobile look like?

JL: Oh, it was just two big wheel tires with just the one seat.

FR: What about the Lincoln Club that you mentioned?

JL: Well, it was in the (mayor's?) block, which is still in Osterville, where the liquor store is. This is the other store, anyway. I went into that Lincoln Club. The second floor had a balcony-like. There was one room up there that belonged to a Lincoln Club, which was Lincoln Club members were, well, people like my father and my uncle, some of the old timers in those days. Of course, the mail was brought over from West Barnstable and assorted in the post office. If the mail was on time, they'd get it over here, probably around 7:00 p.m. It would take about, oh, probably half an hour for Mrs. Charlotte Park was supposed to sort it. Well, while everybody was waiting for the mail to be sorted so she would pass it out, was the old timers used to go up in the Lincoln Club and sit out on this porch and talk to anybody that happened to go buy on the side. It was really like a social club.

FR: Everything evolved around the picking up of the mail.

JL: That's right. Yes. It was quite an event. Every night everybody would go up to pick up the mail.

FR: Something about the golf links?

JL: Yes. They were building that when I was going to grammar school.

FR: That is the Wianno Club?

JL: Yes. The Wianno Golf Club. So, after school nights we used to go up and watch the tractors. It was just quite an event. They were digging up the trees and doing all the big work. So, I remember one night, I was supposed to come home early, but I didn't know it. Anyway, after school, I went up to the golf course to watch the tractors grading and stuff like that. So, when I came home, my mother asked me – oh, she kind of scolded me and wanted to know where I'd been. So, I told her I'd been up to the golf course watching the gypsy moths. [laughter] She says, "What do you mean?" I mean the caterpillars. [laughter]

FR: [laughter]

JL: The tractors were called caterpillars in that day. [laughter] Well, I remember that. I was born and brought up on the Cape here and I love it. The funny part is, my children, each one of them went and left the Cape and went mostly around Boston to work. They wanted to get out the Cape, but they've all drifted back.

FR: Is that so?

JL: It's so. Anyway, Cape Cod is a nice place to be.

FR: Well, thank you. It has been a pleasure talking to you, Mr. Lewis.

JL: Okay, sir.

FR: We will be talking with you again. Thank you.

JL: Yes.

[end of transcript]