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William Grozier: He used to do teaming.

BR: Can you explain that to me?

WG: Well, the teaming, as I understood it, at that time was they would pick up a [inaudible] that they would be hired to go and pack the cargo and stuff off the boat that were wrecked during the storms. And then they were brought in, shipped – yes, I remember her. Yes. We used to go to the house together, and she would have cookies and we would eat them. And then my mother would come in, she would say, “Hey, you are not going to have these at home, (Pete?).” Kids still do it today, too. They go to grandma’s. They will eat anything, but at home they will not eat it.

BR: Do you remember anything else about your grandmother?

WG: No, I do not, because I was still just a young lad then, and she passed away. He was road man and at the town of Truro for thirty-two years. And things could have been changed all the way around, because he hit it as a young man, went to Boston and driving, which would be a trucking business today, but in those days it was teaming with the oxes and dray. And he would...

BR: Oxes and what?

WG: Oxes and dray.

BR: What’s a dray?

WG: Well, it is a flat-body wagon, and they used to carry wool and all that on them.

BR: Weirs?

WG: They be from the weirs.

BR: Okay. Can you explain the weirs to me?

WG: Well, the weirs were...

BR: How they were constructed?

WG: They take [inaudible] of the year. They would take the weir whole down and drag them down in the water in the shape of a hat. They would be [inaudible] and were round, and then there would be the (hats?) that would come out from it. And then they would be the leader with a path in between so that all the fish, when they came, they would strike the leader and follow it

up and then go into the trap. And then they get circling around the hat, and when they did, they would come around the hat, and then they would have to go up and go right into the hole. And that is where they would...

BR: Are there any stories that your father passed down to you?

WG: No, they did not do many stories, except that they used to have gypsies and [inaudible] come through and used to stay in some of the valleys in North Truro. And some of them there would trade oxes with them, and they would either get a good ox or they would get a bad one and vice versa, and they were usually trying to get rid of one that was not any good. And her husband was doing to raise ducks in that, and he found out that he could not raise ducks down there, that in the swamp (neck?).

BR: Any stories that your aunt may have told you about [inaudible]?

WG: No. No, I do not remember much of any stories and that, because one of the sisters was married to a man by the name of (Yishma?) and they lived in...

BR: [inaudible] brothers and sister.

WG: Did I have any? Oh, I had twelve of them. And I am the only one left now.

BR: Tell me about being one of twelve in a family.

WG: Well, you took what you could get. They would (crack you a?) favor if you wanted to get what they were, so kind of hard in that. Everybody got hand-me-down. They (ocean?) one, soon as they grew out of it, the other one had to pick it up and wear it.

BR: What sort of house did you live in?

WG: We lived in regular old Cape Cod house. Some of the kids had to sleep in the attic upstairs, and they had no running water and electricity and everything like they have today. By the times at night, you would have a soapstone or a flat iron that put in the oven to get it hot and wrap a towel around it and put it in the foot of the bed when you wanted to sleep. And in the morning, you would get up out of bed, and you would grab your coat and run down to get near the fire to get fresh. And if you had to go to the bathroom, in that day, you would have to go out and walk about fifty feet from the house and – well, in those days, they (threw it?) one of twelve children, some of them got up and they had gone away, so you worked at something else.

BR: – some of the way you work.

WG: Well, if the older one had gone away, the younger ones were there, and the folk would have a – but other than that, you have to go get the wood in the winter. And all those kids that were home, boys had to saw the wood and split it, and then we would lug it in at the end of summer into the shed for the winter. And that is where it was every winter, and if it (gets so we?) would not saw the wood and that there were so many sticks laid out every day, and you had

to saw that many sticks every day. If not, well, you did not get any supper until it was sawed.

BR: What other chores did you have besides cutting wood?

WG: Well, the folks always the house, and a couple of house used to have pigs that they would – and then you would always – you would have to milk the cows. When we get old enough, well, we would have to milk the cows and feed the pigs and that. And then in the fall, they would kill off the pigs to have for the winter for the meat, and they would usually raise a young heifer or steer in the fall, and then they would kill that to have the meat in the winter. They always had chickens so that would have your own eggs and have chickens to eat during the winter. And that would be quite a routine every Sunday would be a chicken to [inaudible]. If you did not have it on a Sunday, you had it during the week and you would have pork or beef or that for the – and then there used to be a meat wagon that used to come through, and he would have meats of different kinds and eggs and cheese and all that you could buy from. And they had their own garden, and also, they used to take and send to Boston and get these big wooden boxes of crackers. And they could buy them [inaudible], and they (once?) whole crackers in that there were boxes that were filled with some would be whole, some would be half crackers, and some would be small pieces. And, of course, now and then, the cookies would come through. That was fine, because everybody had a good feed of cookies and that, and everybody would buy all this stuff in the summer. In the early fall, (chose to go more?) winter, they would buy the sugar and the flour and that to go all winter. A lot of them did not work in the winter, they just worked from early spring to late fall. And then when the weather get bad, if they could find something, there was any wrecks, well, they could get work alright. The day (heifer?) was (stabbed to death?), something happened that they could not get any work in the winter in that. Well, fishing like it is today, you would have sandwiches and cookies and that, and then you would have the regular meal at night that your father always had to carry a lunch (cloth?). So the main meal was at night when he got home from work. And the biggest part of the meals were around 5:00 p.m. They had it between 5:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. They would always sit down at the table to eat and that, and tiddlywinks and all those different kind of games, and the older folks used to sit at the table and play flinch. And now and then, some of the older folks used to get together and play (wish?), maybe at somebody's house or the hall or something.

BR: What kind of lights did you have in those days?

WG: Big kerosene lamps. There was one chore the mistress had to every day was clean those lamps, and it would usually get blackened. And we had those up until about '31, and then when the electricity came in from Provincetown, because I had just got married. I was living in the house. Just was they come over, they opened Provincetown. That was the first house in Truro that had electricity.

BR: Excuse me. Tell me about the first job you had.

WG: Well, the first job I had, I went to work for a [inaudible] day in a (hostel?). I had an (old boss?), and I [inaudible]. And then I went to work for the Highland House for a dollar a day, and you had got your room and board a dollar a day. And you would get up about 4:00 a.m., 4:30 a.m., in your house, and then you would have to – after the chores were done, you would go eat

breakfast, and then you would take a team of horses and you would either do the – they ran a coal business, and you would deliver coal anywhere from Provincetown line to the Wellfleet line. And then you would have to – we did teaming at the beach, had fishing to the coal storage. We would drive the team out in a wagon with tubs, and the fishermen would fill the tubs up. And then you drove the horses up to the coal storage, and then they would hike them up by winch to the upper floor, and then the fish were packed and put down below and froze. And, well, before that, when I was a young lad and we lived in (Long Hook?), I used to go to the Whitman House in the spring on weekends and do different chores for the (good lad?) who owned the Whitman House of cleaning up around the yards and doing odd jobs. And then in the summer, I would work for him in the kitchen, washing pans and cleaning fish. And then after two or three years of working in the summer, well, then I would go – he had a ox and wagon, and I used to have to go to North Truro to the railroad station and get the freight and the express. When people came for, they had to spend their vacation at the Whitman House. Their trunks came down, and they would come down stay two weeks or three weeks, whatever it was, and you would have to pick up the baggage and bring it over to the Whitman House and put it in their rooms and mow the grass and clean up around.

BR: [inaudible]?

WG: Where was it?

BR: Yes.

WG: It was originally in the Whitman House. They used to take roomers for the summer. People would come down on the vacation like they do now, and now they go to motels and that. And then they went from their room and board. They would get three meals a day and a place to sleep, and then when the (thad?) came into the cabins. And then they start tearing down the old building and building cabins that you would spend your vacation in, and you would still get your three meals a day for said amount. And at that time, you could go there and eat if you wanted to, and you could get a fish dinner for a dollar. And then they changed from cabins and went to small cottages so that you could have a cottage for the summer. You could bring your family. You would get your own meals and that. But the Whitman House is still running now, and they still hire a cottage. And you can get your meals there at...

BR: What did you do later on as a livelihood?

WG: Well, later on, I went to Boston to work in the garage, where my brother worked. I stayed there one week, and then I told him I was going home. He said, "You cannot go home. You get back, go to work Monday morning." And I said, "Well, I am going home, but I am not coming back Monday morning. So when you come back with your car, you bring my clothes down." I said, "I have had enough of this," because you would get ready in the morning and you would go out and eat. Then you would go to the garage and you would change your clothes. You would get into work all day, and then at noontime you would change your clothes. You would clean up a little bit, go out and have lunch, and then you would come back and work again. And then you would go home at night and clean up again, and then had to go out and eat again and that. And I said, "I have had enough of it," so then I came home and I worked around city at different places

doing odd jobs and...

BR: How long did you do odd jobs?

WG: Well, when you get through there, we would get a job here and there.

BR: Like what? What do you call odd jobs?

WG: Well, I used to work over on this (childish no?) in Truro. Sometimes would be road work, and then in the winter we would cut wood and different things. And there are a lot of times in the winter we did not know what we – I did a little odd job for a carpenter and that, and then I went to work for the town of Truro as a road man on the road with a horse and wagon. And I had to take care of all the dirt roads and that. Now and then, I would have to go on the other roads and work with the rest of the crew that worked on the highways for the spring, summer, and fall. But then in the winter, I was on my own cutting bushes alongside the highway, and if there was any bad storms and any what we call washouts, well, then I would have to fill up the holes again and...

BR: These were all sand roads.

WG: Yes. They were all sand roads. And then in the end, it got too many oil roads, and we had to have our own horse and had to maintain him and buy your own tools and everything else. And then it cost so much with the oil roads of having your horse, buying shoes you would get to the point that you would have to have it shod every done every ten days to two weeks. And the pressure would get so it (mention?) the (grain gets high?) that they had to give up. So I finally gave up the road job and that, and I would go out and dig snow. And there would be three or four, half a dozen with me, and we would take sand roads and dig them out. And when my father was road man and I was a young lad, we used to go out and we used to have to go from North Truro Square the first – we had to go over to the railroad station, and that is where the mail and [inaudible]. And then we would go through to the lay house and the coast guard station. In case of an emergency, the coast guard would get in and out and they could get to the coast guard. Then we would come back and we would go towards as far as (Woodlandville?) digging snow. And then another crew came the Truro way. Then we would go back, and if another crew had not already got through one of the other roads, you would go through to the Provincetown line. And we used to walk those. We used to walk the seven miles to Provincetown digging snow out of wherever you had to dig the drifts. Then when you get done, you walk back again to the square. Then the last part of it was then there was somebody that came by with a car, and they would be going along with you. After they got dug out, they would come and go with the car as far as they could, then they got stuck. Well, then they would dig until they got to the end and they would dig them out. Then the fellow with the car would try to get through a little further, and that is the way the roads were cleared. And now everything is done with a plow, and then as you get an inch of snow on the road way, a couple inches, they are out plowing, and so the roads are practically open all the time. And in the spring, we would go off the edge of the – in the spring, all the young folks tried to get a job if they could with the men from Wellfleet [inaudible] used to tie the nets and that.

BR: Pardon?

WG: They used to tie the nets. They would have a big vat in a building, and they would heat the tar. And then they would dip the nets. When the tar got hot, they would dip the nets in it, and then they would be carried out into the field and spread out so they dry until the tar hardened. And then after they get the weirs done, well, then they would take out weirs. A lot of time, that was the first work the younger folks got in the spring.

BR: Oh, that was the fishing nets.

WG: Yes.

BR: Yes. Why did they tar them?

WG: Why did they tar them?

BR: Yes.

WG: Well, I think they used to tar them because it would keep the stuff in the water from sticking to them and that. And I suppose the algae and that in the water was [inaudible] that. But the strong ones that we used to have then, lot of times, their frame comes out. They could not get through a lot of these big cuts down here on account of they would be filled right up with snow. Then they would go down there and they send out a river crew, and they would be there digging. They would hire local help, and they would have to shovel that snow out four different layers up. One would stand here and be shoveling up to there, and somebody is standing further up there, and somebody else is carried on and that. But now they do not get that snow like they used to.

BR: I understand you also used to be a grave digger.

WG: Yes, I opened graves in the five cemeteries in the town of Truro for, oh, about fifteen, eighteen years.

BR: How old were you when you started that?

WG: Oh, when I started that, oh, I was married in the – it must have been in the late [19]20s, early [19]30s. And we used to then get paid about \$10 to open a grave and fill it in again and clean up, and now they get \$100.

BR: Do they still do that now?

WG: Oh, yes. The locals that are here do it by hand, but in other newer cemeteries and that, they do it by the digger and that, because the cemetery is laid out so they can do it. Well, at one time, I was sealer of weights and measures for the town of Truro. I was dog officer for the town of Truro, inspector of animals and that. Inspector of animals, the [inaudible] from state came down to test the cows, look for [inaudible]. I used to have to go around with the state doctor to

show him where all the cattle were and that. At that time (Harvard's?) farm had twenty-five or thirty cows, and others would have two cows or three cows, five cows. (Carp's?) farm had ten cows. And then the (kindly?) hit it out and last end. There were very few (street?) cows, and the doctor would go do it himself. And those were jobs that the state [inaudible].

BR: I think that's the Jenny Lind Tower.

WG: Well, the Jenny Lind Tower was brought down from Boston by a freight, and it came down to the big rock where all [inaudible]. Then they took the tower down each one – and then they were unloaded at the North Truro depot, destroyed there, and then they were all guided by ox and wagon. They tried with a truck, but the trucks at those times had rubber tires, and they would break through the ground and [inaudible] that they had to go through. So they tied them up tightly with a horse. The horses and that went one rock at a time and that, and then they would be taken off of the crane up there. They get them off, and then the crew came down from Boston to build the tower. And they had the crane. You would put all the rock back and shift it all back so then they would get where they went. Then it was all relined with brick inside, and stairs were put in it, but they had gutted the – now the stairs are pretty well rotted, and they had it open to visitors.

BR: You was talking about the drummers. Can you explain to me what that is?

WG: Well, the drummers, as I was told, that they were the same as a salesman is today. They would come down, and they would bring a big, well, we would call it a suitcase. And they had their different weirs and that, samples. And they would show you your samples and they would take an order from you, and then they would go back to the city and mail back. And then it would be shipped down to you by either freight or express or whichever way they would transport them at that time. The fish (finder?), I could not tell you the year that it was built, when it was, but the fish cold storage was built, and then there was caught fire in [inaudible]. Where that cold storage was, just below it, they built a new cold storage. And now that cold storage is still there, but it is pretty well demolished. Well, they used to have five weir buildings down there with five crews, and now there is not any. It kept going and going until they would not even go out and get the fish enough to make a living. So then the traps then all were sold to Provincetown. And in order for them to have a trap in Truro, they would have to have a grant from Truro, and it would be somebody in Truro had to hold that grant. And now I think they all go out of Provincetown now. I think there is only about five weir traps now there. And here, they used to be – they had five crews here at that time, and each one had three traps. There would be two traps in a row, and then there would be a space of, oh, say, 500 feet or one thousand feet. And then there would be another trap, and this one had –

BR: How big an area did weirs cover?

WG: Oh, dear. The whole of the trap and the hat would be about the size of a house. And then the leader would be anywhere from seventy-five to 150 feet long.

BR: How wide was the leader?

WG: It was not wide, it was long. See, the leader was only just fish net. And it was just in one straight piece and just hold the [inaudible] in a straight line, and the leader was tied to the pole.

BR: Do you remember any medicine shows?

WG: Oh, they used to have the medicine shows come down through here in the wintertime, late fall and winter and very early spring. And they used to hold them at the old village hill where the North Truro fire number one fire station is now. And they used to have an upstairs to the building, and they used to have dancers up there, and as the medicine shows would come through and they would hold them upstairs there. And the medicine shows would teach you about all different kind of acts and one thing or other than that, because I can remember being the one where they had the one where they had the tar field where they used to put the nets by the fire, and I was working at the Highland House as a teamster. And so I was called to go and run the teams and plows, because we were going to have two or three of them to run around the tar fields and try to put the fire out. And I was running home to change my clothes, and I went down to get my cousin to take me to Highland, and I ran into a wire clothesline and I broke my upper jaw.

BR: Did you get to the fire?

WG: I got to the fire, and it cost me a \$500 for what was done to my jaw, and I got a dollar for going to a fire.

BR: That was costly. Did you see the medicine show?

WG: Yes. Everybody in town went to the medicine shows, and they would have different ones with different kinds of acts.

BR: What kinds of acts?

WG: Well, some of them would be doing magic tricks. Then there would be these fancy dancing girls who would come out. If you did not like the fancy dancing girls, you would go to the city and see now. And they used to come out, and they would put on an act and then they would try to show medicine, and the medicine was supposed to cure everything. Made no difference what it was, sore (holds?) or pimples, anything, sore throat.

BR: What was the name of the medicine?

WG: Oh, I could not tell you what the name of the medicine was.

BR: Can you tell me about the early eye examinations?

WG: Well, the early eye examinations, they had to have glasses and that right. There used to be a eye doctor from Harwich named Wilbur, and he used to come down through, and he would have a couple of cases with him with frames and glasses and that, and he would test your eyes. And then he would pick out the frames you wanted and that, and then he would go off. In about ten days or so, he would be coming back with glasses for you, and then he came to your house.

It was done in your house. You would have to leave work in some ways, but he would take you in there. At the time I had mine, I was working at the Whitman House, so he just went in the dining room after the dining room was closed. He fitted different ones for their eyes, tested their eyes, and fitted them for glasses and that there.

BR: Tell me about your first pair of...

WG: Well, one of the oldest landmark that had power was the Highland House, where the historical association is now, and that is the only oldest landmark.

BR: Can you tell me about it years ago, when it wasn't...

WG: Yes. Years ago, when the Highland House was down on the corner, the original Highland House. Now it is over in South Truro on the hill. They were not big enough. They had a large piece build onto the back of it.

BR: [inaudible] home now?

WG: Yes, it is a private home. They rent it out year round. And the people bought it, but they do not stay there year round themselves. They rent it out. I think [inaudible].

BR: And the original Highland House was in boarding.

WG: Yes. Yes, you went there and you paid for the – took a vacation, if you was there for a week, two weeks, or a month. If you was there for a whole summer, you paid so much for your room and board.

[end of transcript]