

Robert Livingstone: Today is November 26th, Monday, 1990. Another day for the Woods Hole Historical Collections to have a conversation at the Candle House in Woods Hole. The speaker is going to be Captain Louis Doucette who played a major role in the two chapters in the book, *Woods Hole Reflections*, the chapter on, "From Fertilizer to Flounders: The History of the Woods Hole Fishing Industry," and the chapter on, "Spirits of the Deep," which had to do with some of the commercial fishermen that were involved in rumrunning mostly during the Depression and whatnot. But today, Captain Doucette has come over here from Fairhaven. He is going to tell us about his experiences as a fisherman out of New Bedford and also fishing for the well-known Sam Cahoon Fish Market in Woods Hole. My name is Robert Livingstone. I am in charge of Oral History for the Woods Hole Historical Collections. We are going to play this back. I just replaced the batteries. Before, it would not record at all. Now, it is recording on the built-in microphone. We have reached frame thirty. We will play this back. That has got to be on. There you are. The test, that is fine. It has got it.

Male Speaker: – in the Historical Society Collection that have to do with Sam Cahoon. So, if anybody is researching Sam Cahoon and his many contributions to the village of Woods Hole, it is there. But this is going to be something that we want to expand on. John Mallard, I would like to have you participating. I did not contact you by mail because I knew I would see you today, and I hope you will. I understand that Liz Chase is doing an article on Sam Cahoon for the *Spritsail*. Helen Wilson passed that onto me. So, I am hoping Liz will participate too. So, hopefully, we could set that up for January. I have got four or five people lined up that will almost come any month I want them to. But we would like to get the Sam Cahoon thing going because the little pack that has been prepared is going to be dedicated, I believe, in April, where the fishing store and facility was here in Woods Hole. I am also planning, as I mentioned last month, a conversation on the Trysail Chorus. I talked to Bobby Coburn today. She said she was willing to participate. This is a group of people who performed Gilbert and Sullivan here in the early [19]50s. There are still enough of them around that will do a conversation and hopefully, might even do a couple of numbers for us. So, those are the two kinds of specialties in addition to four or five conversations that I have lined up. So, I think that is about it. Without any further ado, I will introduce Bob Livingstone who of course, knows Captain Doucette from a long time. Bob?

RL: Thank you, Charlie. I have never seen such a crowd for a conversation. It is glorious. In 1983, the Woods Hole Historical Collections produced their first book, *Woods Hole Reflections*. There were two chapters in this book, one, "From Fertilizer to Flounders," which was done by Marty, Lorna, and myself. Then she did another chapter called, "The Spirits of the Deep." Both these chapters have much to do with the commercial fishing industry in Woods Hole, and centering around the wonderful life of the Woods Hole Fish Market and Sam Cahoon. I interviewed a number of fishermen for the book. The one family that I was more drawn to than any of the others was the Doucette family, and going over to Fairhaven a number of times to interview Louis and meet his wife Irene who was always in the background. I got to know a commercial fisherman that had had the struggle in his life, hardships, and faith in God, and had the most wonderful relationship with his father. He started fishing when he was out of school at a very early age. He would go out with his father, and he learned about fishing this way. Then he became a commercial fisherman and was a dragger, a longliner, has fished swordfish, and mackerel, groundfish, and flounders. Many times, unloaded in Woods Hole at Sam Cahoon's. It

is a real privilege to welcome Louis Doucette and also his sister Loretta who is here today in the audience and who is going to tell us about his experiences fishing according to Captain Louis Doucette. Thank you.

[applause]

Louis Doucette: I have to tell you that I'm not really a speaker, I'm a fisherman. So, if I talk that way, don't be surprised. [laughter] Why I didn't want to have anybody interrupt as I'm talking, a lady in New Bedford, in Channel 2 on cable did me. Her name is Jean Kaya Bancroft. We did a little article. I was talking about the Eldridge family, which were Cape Coders originally. What wonderful people. They were in the fish business. This is before I came to Woods Hole. She interrupted me. All I told about was Mrs. Eldridge came down with a paper bag. This is in the twenty-nines. This is when people were hungry. There was no money around. But Mrs. Eldridge used to come down with that paper bag. Everybody knew what was in that paper bag, but nobody ever robbed her. This is the kind of people there were in that time. People were very hungry. But we all knew what she had in that paper bag. Anyway, I thought I would tell why I didn't want to be interrupted. Jean did a wonderful cable on me. They have it in New Bedford. This was after the [19]38 hurricane that I was in. So, it went along with the time they gave me, in the Bay Haven School. Mr. Allen presented me with a book, which this was his first job for the *Standard Times* when he didn't know what he was going to write about. The next morning, we had the hurricane there. So, he found plenty to write about that. But first, I'm going to start about my father. Now, oh, yes, I loved him very much. Lots of times, even now, I think of him, and I miss him. He taught me about everything that I should know about fishing. When I quit school in 1929 and came down to his boat and told him I wanted to go fishing, he was very disappointed. But he said, "We'll do it this way. You are asking to come fishing? Louis," he said, "you are going to do it. You are going to do it yourself. You are going to do it better than anybody aboard the boat, or else you're not going to stay aboard here." So, he never gave me any hand to do anything. But he told me what I had to do. After I got sobered, I could do a few things. I really was so happy that he did that. That's the way he did it. Never gave me any breaks of any kind. I had to do the thing. In nineteen, they came from Boston. First, he went on sailing ships and sailed around the world. He sailed many places, and he told me a lot of stories. I couldn't begin to tell you because we'd have to be here for the rest of the day. But they were wonderful stories of foreign ports he went into. He ran away when he was 12 years old, from home in Nova Scotia. They lived in Nova Scotia. His father was lost at sea. Then his mother married again. Him and his next father didn't hit it off too good. So, when he was 12, he left home. But anyway, after sailing around the world many times, he came to Boston years later. Then he went dory fishing in Boston and Gloucester. Now, when I tell about dory fishing, exactly what I'm saying. The big vessels carried twenty men. Once they got on the fishing grounds, the dories were set up individually, two men to a dory. Some vessels took one. They stretched them out for 5 or 6 or 7 miles. When a snowstorm would come up at a minute's notice, they didn't have the things we got today. Some men went adrift. Some were never found. I don't know if many of you ever read about Blackburn when he arrived in Newfoundland. One man was frozen to death in the stern of the dory. They had to amputate his hands and his feet. But he lived. Many men were lost in that business. Anyway, my dad went at that, and he was at that for a number of years. Then he got married. Somehow, somebody told him about Martha's Vineyard, which is not hard to find out now. Everybody seems to want to go over there.

[laughter] So, he landed in Martha's Vineyard. He picked out Edgartown because at that time, Edgartown was the place to go fishing out of. They had a lot of small boats there. They were fishing on the backside of Edgartown, cod fishing. It was in a smaller boat, but it was the same thing he'd been doing. So, he went with Captain Levi Jackson out of Edgartown. A year or so, the *Mertie B. Crowley*, a big, six-masted, went ashore on the backside of Martha's Vineyard in the wintertime. They went up on the shoals there in this island steamer they used to go into Edgartown. While they were laying there, he saw from the pilothouse, that big ship on the backside of the island. Within a short period of time, somebody said, "Get Levi." People went to the house. My dad was always down and around the boat early in the morning to get the fire going in a little boat called the *Priscilla*. In the meantime, people went up to Levi's house because they knew he was the man that could go out and rescue these people. They battled. Two boats came out of Edgartown that morning, and one was bigger than the *Priscilla*. She drew too much water to go up into the shoal water to get to this big six-masted. The people who were in the rigging, all tied in the rigging, lashed in the rigging. It was freezing weather. Some of them was half frozen to death. The skipper's wife was aboard, fourteen people. The *Priscilla* worked her way out of Edgartown. There's a big story with that, that I have to make it short because we wouldn't have time to go through that. But anyway, they got down. Two men stayed aboard the boat, Captain Jackson and a man by the name of Eugene Benefit. Now, they had to have two men aboard as the dories were coming back from the ship bringing these people half frozen to death, to administrate hot drinks to them and take care of them as they come aboard. My father, which had been in dories for quite a few years, an Irishman, Henry Kelly, and Patrick Kelly, three men. Henry Kelly, Patrick Kelly, and my father were the three men that had to go in the dories. Now, as the wave would bring the dory up, the man in the dory was fighting to keep the dory away from the big ship. They wouldn't smash her up when a wave comes and snatch her against and smash everything up. So, he was pretty busy keeping that. The bottom of the dory is about that wide. The mate stood and called out each time somebody had to jump. When the dory came to a certain way, he'd sing and jump. Now, of course, the wife came first. She landed in the bottom of the dory, and they took her in. Anyway, they got the fourteen people. Henry Kelly made four trips to the wreck. Pat made five. My dad made seven. Sometimes when I say, "Doucette, he was something. He was really something," people would tell me, as I went along some things I would do, "You are just like your father." But I have to cut them short, "No, I would never be like he was." Now, after the wreck, of course, he received \$2,000 and a Carnegie medal for helping to save these people. They brought them into Edgartown. They had big stories. I got the book at home. Tell us all about it. But it was the greatest rescue we ever did on Martha's Vineyard. Then with the money he got from rescuing these people, he bought a little boat. She was called the *Gypsy May*. He bought her in Wareham in 1911. The Carnegie thing was 1910. After we got her home, I had a sister, my second sister, the second oldest is Mary. So, they named her the *Mary D*. We had her. She used to go to Chincoteague, Virginia, up, and follow the mackerel up to Atlantic City. They had mackerel nets, gillnets, follow them down to Gay Head. When the mackerel got to Gay Head, that was the end of that fishing. Then they rigged up for swordfishing. Now, this is a 32-foot-open-cockpit catboat. This is what she was. She went from Martha's Vineyard to Chincoteague, Virginia. I've been down to Chincoteague, Virginia. So, I know what I'm saying. [laughter] But anyway, people were hungry. People in those days were hungry. They did a lot of things. I told a story just a short time back about the American boy don't see the gold in our streets, but the people coming from a foreign land find it. I was born in this country. I could have done a lot better. I know I could

have. But the man that came from Norway, came from Sweden, came from Nova Scotia, came from Newfoundland, came from all these other countries, they do come hungry. We've got them in New Bedford. They came from the Baltics. They came from every country across. I've been shipmates with all kinds of people. I'm French and English and American. I don't want anybody to get disappointed at what I say. But I've been with all groups of people. The French, they get excited. The Italians really get excited. The Portuguese is next. But the Norwegians, I've been with the Norwegians. I think if I was to go to sea tomorrow and I wanted to go with a class of people, I would have to pick them as number one. They're a little slow. I used to say I can go around that time three times and at least turn. But they're good people. They're quiet. They don't get excited. In my book, they're number one. The other class of people like the Newfoundland people, they're wonderful fishermen. They're good fishermen. Nothing against them. They're good men, Nova Scotia and all the other nationalities. I even been with an Eskimo. He was a good fellow. But the Norwegian, in my book, is – you take it that way. It is better if nobody's hollering and screeching when something happens. Now, with his little catboat after he went down mackerel seining, then they changed over to swordfishing. They used to go, at this time, off of Norman's. There were all kinds of swordfish. Believe me, these little boats didn't have much power. They were mostly sail. To go onto a swordfish with sail, they had to be like that because I'd been on them many times. [laughter] You would never get them today. But they used to go to the backside of Martha's Vineyard. Then they'd go to the lightship. Now, the furthest was Southwest Park. This is quite a trip for a little catboat down to the Southwest Park. They had a centerboard in her. They had a big jib on her, two jibs. They had a big mainsail on her. They had a centerboard. So, when they were coming over the shoals like around Nantucket, they left that centerboard and jumped right over top of the shoal water, cut there where they wouldn't have to go all the way around. So, there was an advantage. Well, he had this boat, and he did very well. We had it for a number of years. Well, I'm getting ahead of myself. In the summertime when the fish would be well offshore, then he used to go on the bigger boat. They'd tie their little boats up, all these men that had small boats, and they'd go with Bob Jackson. He was submarined in 1918, I believe it was, in the *Progress*. German submarine came. There were eight boats swordfishing. The *Progress*, she had almost a full trip ready to go to market when the submarine appeared. First thing they looked up, and they heard a boom. They were having their dinner. The skipper said, "I wonder what that is." Next thing, they heard another boom. They're going, "Somebody better go up and take a look." She sunk eight boats that day. Put them in their dories. They gave them oranges. They gave them a few things to take along and pointed to the west end. No compass, no nothing. Some of the men were out quite a long time before they were picked up. But they were all picked up. When they got to Edgartown, Bob Jackson, he came down with a slip from the town hall in Edgartown and said, "Fill this out, whatever you lost, your clothes, and whatever it was, that someday the German government probably will pay this back." Well, nobody believed they would. They waited twelve years. A lot of the men didn't make out the thing. My father did. Twelve years later, they got paid back. They got paid back with interest of every year that they had to wait, the twelve years of waiting. The German government had said they would not sink any boats that were not doing anything like carrying guns or ammunitions or stuff towards the war. Though, they were getting food. But they came in and violated that rule. After it was over, they took care of it. I don't think they'd do that today, or any of the countries we're up against today. Well, anyway, after swordfishing, then a year or so later, they came out with a little net. They had one winch head and rope towlines on the one winch head. This is when I was seven years old that I

said in the paper, "I was with my dad, and we got eighteen barrels of codfish that day." That was down in Tuckernuck Shoal. Well, after this, he bought a boat called the *Gleaner*. He went through Gloucester, sold the *Mary D.* to Atlantic City, and he bought the *Gleaner*, which I have a picture of here after the summer of youth was up. There's the little *Mary D* I speak about, and this was the *Gleaner*. Now, she was one of the first big boats in New Bedford. There were about five of them at this time that I'm speaking about. She was built in 1917, and we bought her in 1920. He had a partner in New Bedford, A.E. Wardell, that had a farming tool store down near the waterfront. The way Allen worked was when the farmers would buy seeds from him, and they had a good season, they would come in and pay Allen for the different things. They got fertilizer and the tractors and the things they got. When they had a bad season, then it worked the other way. He had to wait for his money. But anyway, him and my father were partners for up to the last year that we had the boat. Then my dad bought him out. But he had had two or three years of the farmers had bad times. So, he told my dad in the end, they needed a new engine. He said, "I can't afford to buy an engine." So, that's when my dad went on his own, and we bought her. When he first came with this boat, she had a big bow spread. She had two jibs, a jumbo, a fossil, and a big mainsail. No pilothouse. They went dory fishing. They had seven dories on the port side and seven dories on the southern side. They were single dory fishing. That was one man to a dory. I was a little boy. I was aboard there with him. I saw them chopping their bait on the hatch where the engine room – well, they had a little gas engine. I think it was a 42-horse gas Lathrop engine in this boat. She was 80-some feet. On top of the hatch, over the house, they had oak boards around where they used to chop up their bait when they were baiting their trawls. The trawls had to be baited and ready for the slack water, whatever time that came. That's where the meals came differently because they had to wait until the men were out. Then they came in. If you could see what I saw when I was a little fellow, of those dories full of fish. They had them checkered off, haddock and codfish. Them coming under sale with a half a gale of wind, unbelievable how they would come up. They had to pitch the fish aboard themselves. Then they had to bring the dory. The dory came aboard. The first dory in would be the last one out the next morning. Anyway, they sat right inside of one another. They'd have to pitch their fish aboard. Then they'd have to dress them fish, each man. Then they'd have to down the hole. They didn't have cracked ice then. They had to chisel their ice. They were great, big cakes of ice. It was terrific. Another thing they had in a gale of wind – I've seen this many times when I was little. They had these big round torches with a big wick like you used to see in the streets here. They'd have them set because they had no electric lights. The cook had to take care of the running lights and the side lights and all over the boat, down below, the barnacle. These torches would be set on deck. Now, the boat is up to wind it. The wind is blowing down. The man is dressing their fish. Here's this smoke piling down on top of you, freezing weather. It was a terrible business. If that was today, there'd be nobody in the fishing business. [laughter] They used to haul their tow with a little – oh, gee, I can't think what we called it now. I got them home in my – nippers. There were no cotton gloves those times. There were no rubber gloves, any of that stuff. The big woolen mittens that the wives knitted for their hands and for their stockings, they were too heavy once they got wet. So, they had these knitted nippers that came over. So, when the trawl line would go through, they were hauling. But their hands were bare. How they ever stood freezing weather, hauling this trawl in is unbelievable. I saw men at that time when I was a little fellow, that their hands were so thick, they'd take a knife and cut into their hands before blood came. Like my hand, you just scratch it, and blood will come. In other words, they were made for that business. Those people were made for that

business at that time. They were a tough bunch of people. I got some notes here because I [laughter] never remember. Well, after a few years of trawling, dragging was becoming quite a thing. Captain Danny Mullins in New Bedford that I went skipper of his boats in 1937. Captain Mullins had been in the Navy. He'd come out of the Navy. He was a pretty smart guy. He was an Irishman. Well, that helped him too [laughter] getting around. But Danny was interested. He had a boat built, and he was interested in this new thing that we're talking about, dragging. Now, I want everybody to know what they got out of this dragging business. The beam trawlers out of New London, Connecticut, steam trawlers, Boston and New London. New London was a big fishing port, a lot of steel trawlers there. But what the boats down below, like in New Bedford and these small places, they got everything from them being trawlers. We often wondered how the Newfoundlander knew so much because he was trawling like the Nova Scotia men. Where did he get all this knowledge about dragging? Well, these guys, after trawling, gave up. The guys said they all went back home. No, they didn't. Most of them men went in those steel trawlers in Boston. They were owned by big cooperations like General Foods, A&P, and those big outfits before that fishing concerns. They were big. They were 125- or 30-foot long steel boats, beautiful boats with all the things that we'd come in. We first had our boats. They had no whalebacks on them. We were an open boat. But John Merley, Danny Mullins had new boats built with whalebacks. We found out that was great. You could store stuff under there. The men were behind a whaleback. You got a little shelter from that when you're dressing fish. Everything was copied from the beam trawler. After a while, we finally said, "Hey, wait a minute. You were talking about the Newfoundlanders? This is where they got their knowledge when they went aboard those beam trawlers." That's where they got their knowledge of dragging. It all comes down from that. At the time, the little boat was cutting his nets. My father and me cut nets in my tenement house where I lived on the second floor. We cut two nets. I got the twine from Sam. I was in Sam's boat then. When I first went in there, we used to go fluking in the wintertime. We took the twine in a big bundle. It was 42-thread Todd twine. Went to New Bedford, brought it home. I had been sick. So, we took it up to the house. We cut the twine in my kitchen to probably forty meshes. The wings were all tapered a certain way. When I'm telling somebody about it, I'm telling them about somebody that – like a wife who makes a coat or a sweater or something. The way a wing is wide on one end, narrowed on the other, and has to be tapered down. The nets are that way. But anyway, they started dragging. My dad changed the *Gleaner* over to dragging. Now, he cut the mast right off, forget that. Those two jibs, take that off. He installed 100-horse Wolverine engine that was made in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Then he had the whole boat rigged over. They had to put [inaudible]. They had to put ballers. They had to put a winch. Now, when they first started off, they had the winches sideways. So, they run off that way. Where now today, you've got them straight across, going up. Of course, the new stern trawlers are something different. But that was all learned too by visitors from Europe. All our knowledge of fishing, when you go right down to it, comes from across the river. They were at the business long before any of us were. But the thing is that we all copied the beam trawlers because the beam trawlers had everything up to date. They had the money to spend to buy these different things. I was arguing about this net. I didn't think it was any good. I was only a young man. Sometimes when you're young, you think you know it all. You don't know half of what you think you know. [laughter] I'm telling about, "Danny, this God darn net isn't no good." Danny Mullins, I can see him now. He always was a nice dresser. He wore a nice bowtie with a little short, three-quarter coat. He was always dressed. If you saw him, you'd think he was a banker. You'd never think he was owner of a few fishing boats. Very

neat. He said to me, "Now, look at here, young fellow. This net has been tested by them in Grimsby, England. They've spent thousands of dollars to test this net and shape it and get it. I'm not going to be here to have you come in and tell me this net is no good." Because they've spent millions to get the best net they could find with a certain so square and so long. So, that was the end of that. I tell them now when they come to me and complain when we make a net, because I work off and on for the New Bedford Ship Supply as a twine man. I make up a lot of nets. I've made Gourock nets. I've made all kinds of nets. Icelandic nets, cut line for that. Somebody, once in a while, would come in and say, "Hey, I don't like —" every man has his own idea. I agree with this. You can have a net made by somebody. You might take it aboard your boat and say, "Hey, I think this should be changed to a little shorter or a little longer or whatever. Add a few meshes here and there." It might work out better. That is what we all have. But rightly, I'll still stick with the plans of them guys that spend all the money on their net. It should fish pretty darn good. Usually, they do if it's made right. But let me see. Now what else can I tell you about? We used to go to Fulton Fish Market when I was with my dad. See, we were catching lemon sole and flounders. Haddock and cod, not so much. We'd have some, but not as much. It was usually lemon sole and flounders. We went into the Fulton Fish Market. That was a twenty-four-hour steam. Now, our boats at that time did 7 or 8 miles an hour. They didn't do 12 or whatever they do now. So, it took you twenty-four hours to go and come. 1929 was the worst time that could be in the fishing industry. I came into it then as a fisherman. Before that, I was with my dad. Anyway, we used to go to New York Fulton Fish Market. Their offices were all upstairs, fifteen or twenty of them right across. One of the greatest markets in the world was at that time. Underneath were all the big, stainless-steel platforms where they have fishing. That market was full of fish. Any fish that swam in any river or any stream or any ocean in the United States was there, and Canada, and shellfish of all kinds. I saw fish and shellfish there that I never even thought you'd ever see in a place like that. The market opened 6:00 a.m. At 1:00 p.m., they were washing it down. There wasn't a fish left in that market. Everything was gone, and everything was cleaned up, spic and span. Beautiful. They had problems there. They had — the racketeers were coming in and making every little fish house pay. They even came down to the boats and demanded that the boats would have to pay so much for taking out a trip of fish. It wasn't that much, but I think it was around \$20. A few of the men refused to do it. But they found out after, they better go along with it because there's nothing you could do. Knickerbocker Ice Company that was right near the Brooklyn Bridge. It was just on the other side of the Brooklyn Bridge, the Fulton Fish Market. Knickerbocker fish spent a lot of money to fight the racketeer. He finally, after I don't know how many years he fought them, that he finally took it over. That they got quite a few of them down the pier there. They got rid of them for a while. But I'm hearing a lot of them have come back. But after he lost the *Gleaner* that I'm speaking about, we lost her in 1928, going into Boston Harbor with a trip of fish. My dad had just bought her the year before, put a new engine, which was \$8,700. Now, when you talk about that, you probably say, "Gee, you can't buy a car for that now, a good car." [laughter] But this is back in 1929. He had the boat all changed over. We had \$15,000 insurance on him. He bought out his partner. He made three trips. We lost her in Boston Harbor with a trip of fish. This was a very sad day for the Doucettes, which we've never got over. You see, if this accident hadn't have happened, I was coming right behind my father. It's very nice when you can step into something that your dad's left for you and probably all paid for. Then you can go on from there. I'm going to say this good and loud so everybody hears it. When you start off with nothing, you either got to be a very lucky man, or you got to have somebody, a buyer or somebody to come out and say,

"I want to buy a boat and give this man a chance to take her for me." Now, the younger you are, the worse it was. In New Bedford, when I first went skipper, I went skipper in 1937. Now, I tell you, I came down the pier in [19]29. You're probably saying, "Where the devil did this guy get all his knowledge in that short of time?" Don't forget, I was with my dad when – 7 years old.

RL: Twelve years old.

LD: When we'd be making the backside of the Cape, coming from offshore, and he would see the lights at night, he would call me up. I was still a young boy. He would say, "Louis, what's that light flashing there?" I would time the light, how many flashes, and how many seconds in between the flashes, and the flash – they were flashing. This was done all the time to get me to know how to handle a vessel when I got old enough. But as far as money was concerned, there was none. Our money was gone. We had a beautiful home in New Bedford that we lost for \$2,800. We were eight in the family, eight children. I have to say, I never ever saw my father when he didn't have a smile on his face. I never ever heard him kick about fish, the prices, which I've done many times. [laughter] They were much better in my time than it was in his. But he always smiled. He had something about him that that's the way he went through life. When he ended up with my sister, Loretta, in Falmouth, in the Falmouth Heights, that he was living at her house, everybody around there thought he was the greatest. He was somebody who could meet somebody and talk with them that he'd never met before. Within five or ten minutes, they'd walk away laughing. That's the way he was. He had something there that I don't think the rest of us got that. After we lost the *Gleaner*, we went into a boat called the *Robert E.* Now, in the paper, which is mistakes I've made, they said that the *Gleaner* was 110 feet. I think where they got that one, the *Robert E.*, was an old subchaser. She was owned by the Edward brothers up in Long Island. She was a 110-foot subchaser. They had changed over quite a few of them. The Italian boys had a lot of them mackerel seining. That's what this boat was. They said the *Gleaner* was only 80-some feet. So, it was a little mix-up there. I wanted to straighten that up. Anyway, we went in this *Robert E.* My father took this *Robert E.* That was the first boat I went on in 1929. I went on her, scalloping. I left school and went on her. We were only there a short time. Then we were into a boat called the *Addie Mae*. Then we went into the *Isabel Q* in 1932. I took this boat myself in 1934, while my father was sick. When I got through with my dad, it seemed that I was getting to the point where I thought I knew a little more than he did. [laughter] This happens. One day, we were fishing in such a place. It wasn't good fishing. I said, "Pop, what the heck are you fishing here for? There's nothing here." He took this for a while. He just smiled. One day, I came up to him and wanted him to change his fishing grounds. He said to me, "You know, Louis, you've done this quite a few times now. I think the best thing for you to do is when this boat gets in New Bedford, you better go ashore and look for a boat of your own because there's nothing here. I can tell you that you don't know. You seem to know it all. You know where the fish are. You know where everything is." In the winter months, we used to go to the southern. We fished as far south as Cape Hatteras. We fished to the southern of Cape Hatteras. We fished out of Portsmouth, Virginia. We fished out of Cape May on the Jersey. We fished out of Point Pleasant. I'd been all through those places. I was just narrating we were down to New Jersey. Now, I tell you, money is tight. We're not doing good. We're not getting fish. We had an oil engine in the boat, and she was broken down. The kids today, you take them down to Jersey, I don't care. You take a crowd down to Jersey tomorrow, you make one trip. You don't get that kind of a trip. There's going to be half of the boys flying home. Not thumbing

but flying home because it's a different area. We got money today. I don't know how much longer we'll have it, but we have. We got money. They didn't have money in those days. There was no money. I heard an old man talking about 1929. I said, "Fellow, you are saying it right. I always say it this way." There was a song that came out, *Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?* Believe me, people were really hungry. When we were in the *Addie Mae*, we used to come into New Bedford. There were a lot of fish on Norman's, yellowtails. We'd go off of Norman's. We'd bring into New Bedford, into Eldridge's, four trips. Now, these trips, we'd get 18,000 or 20,000 in a day's time, a day and a night. We'd run into Eldridges and sell them. Fish was 2, 3 cents a pound, sometimes less. We'd make three or four trips into New Bedford. The next trip, we'd get a big one and run through the Fulton Fish Market. We're all young fellows. We want to get home to our wife. We don't want to see any more fish. But we had to stop for another load of fish and go to New Bedford. After we got it taken out, then they'd settle up four trips to New Bedford, one off of Norman's coming home, and then we'd settle up. At the time, I was living with my parents. In 1929, things were pretty bad. I used to say to my father, "Keep the money, Dad." I never ever went to my dad when things were right when he had his *Gleaner*, whether we were in New York or wherever we'd be, if he was taking me to the Polo Grounds to the ball game, which he did many times. I never asked him whatever it was that he wouldn't give me much more than I asked for. So, when we were up against it, my mother had to feed us. There were eight of us. I was out working with him. When he'd come with the money, I'd say, "You keep that, Pa, to help run the house." We did this for a year and a half or two years before I finally went out on my own. So, that's the kind of parents that I had. My mother could make a big meal out of hardly nothing, and good. So, my dad was going south. We had been down there the year before and made no money. Every time I got in, my wife, there would be probably a letter for every day. We'd be gone ten days or so, and there was a letter for every day. The guys in the fish house used to kid me, but I was only young. Then I'd come in and a stack of letters. There were very lonesome times especially when you're young. Anyway, the next year, my dad told me he was going south. I said, "I don't think I'll be going, Dad. I can't afford to go to Cape May, spend three months down there, being away from my wife and family. I can't do it." So, he said, "You go ahead and do what you want to do." So, I shipped out on a boat from Gloucester called the *Mary D'Eon*. He was a good moneymaker. They were scalloping. We went scalloping. I went mate with them. We'd done wonderful that winter. My dad came back with the same old thing. They hadn't done much down south. But that's what happened. Some winters you'd go down there, you'd do really well. Another winter, you wouldn't. That's fishing. Anyway, when I left the *Mary D'Eon*, there were a lot of Norwegian fellows there that were three times my age. They said to me, "Young fellow, you ought to have a boat of your own. What the hell are you doing going mating with this Frenchman?" [laughter] I said, "I don't know if I can do it or not." He said, "Of course you can do it." So, they said Danny Mullins has a boat over there that he's looking for a skipper. He's fixing her up. I said, "Yes, but what chance have I got?" Now, I want to tell you this, there was a lot of Newfoundland fishermen around at this time. We had a big fleet out in New Bedford because we were getting a big fleet. These are men that been fishing from the time they were that high. They'd been around boats. They were good men. I'm only a 19- or 20-year-old guy. No, I'm wrong, 23 years old, out of vocational school. I said, "What chance have I got to get a boat with all these guys?" Now, there weren't many boats around. You had to take whatever you could get. This little boat I was in was called the *Native*. She was built in Nantucket, Mass. They build her good. She's the same boat I was in the [19]38 hurricane in. The Norwegian fellows that had her before I took her,

called her a little lightship. She was 55-foot long. She had a 45 CO engine in her. This is the boat that was in the 1938 hurricane that we were broke down almost every trip. But she didn't break down that one because she had, I wouldn't be there. She brought us home. But we broke the crankshaft the very next trip coming down from Boston after selling my trip to John Nagel in Boston. We broke the crankshaft. If that had happened the trip before, like I say, it would have been another story. Anyway, I went in her. She was built, like I said, for the Nantucket Shoals. This boat was built to go fishing in Nantucket Shoals. Jimmy Pittman that was in Danny's great, big *Mary and Julia* – she was 80-some feet long. Jimmy Pittman came home. He said to Dan, "Who's that young fellow you got in that little boat of yours that shaking the head?" He said, "Well, he's a young fellow. He's all right, I guess." Well, Jimmy said, "He's crazy. [laughter] The guy's crazy. Do you know, Dan, where I saw him?" This is in February. "I saw him east of the northeast rip with two boys out. He must have been doing good fishing." But he said right after that was a living gale of wind. When that storm was over, we were out on Browns on this little boat. I had put the wheel hard over, which I had learned from my father and the old-timers, and bringing it back three spokes. [laughter] I had a fellow, I'm trying to think of his name now, that was mate with me out of Boston. He was a damn good man in. I came back and the wheel was spinning back and forth. The boat is running before the sea. That's where we ended up on Browns. I said to some of the gang, "Who took that wheel out of the bucket?" Tom Smith looked at me. I can see him now smiling. He said, "I did, Louis." He said, "You don't do that with this kind of a boat." He said, [laughter] "Just let her run before the sea. You're better run off." She had a big, wide steering on her. The boat was built for the Nantucket Shoals. I fished Georges with that boat all the time. Now, I have a brother and a brother-in-law that were lost in a big scallop out of New Bedford. I was out in my boat. I was talking with them, and they were in the South Channel. When my brother-in-law talked to me, he told me that he was deciding to go to the east. This is in the winter months. We called him Spud Murphy. I said, "Spud, do you have to go that far?" The trip before, they hove down. I have to speak about this. When you are hooved down in a boat, which I call hove down, when she goes over, she practically lays dead in the water before she comes back – in other words, you got to keep going, or she's going to come back. Our stove were only coals. They had coal fires then. I know a boy that got burned bad through that. The batteries in the engine room were all smashed to pieces. You got a real bad situation. We didn't have no telephones. When we left home in those boats, in those days, we left home. Our families never knew when we were coming back until some other boats came in to tell us. Now, this wasn't with Sam Cahoon's boat I'm talking about. When I got with Sam, anything that you could buy, we had it. That was the kind of a man he was. He wanted you to have the best. But this was before I got there in some of these old slabs, I was in. I came out of the Gay Head. I was skipper of the Gay Head. I came out of the Gay Head. Six months later, some of my best friends fishing was lost all hands in the Gay Head. But with my brother and my brother-in-law, they were lost in the boat. If you went to the Whaling Museum in New Bedford and read the names that they got chopped up there, you would see how many men have been lost out of New Bedford since fishing began. It's terrific. Even with the Coast Guard, which the Coast Guard was one of the greatest things ever happened for us fellows. They do wonderful work. I can't stand here and praise them enough. Now, they go down with a helicopter in a living gale of wind and take you off. I had a man, just before I retired from fishing, got caught in the wire and took his ankle. His foot was just hanging by a few threads. It was northwest wind blowing 35 or 40 or better, very rough. They came down and took that man off in the winter months and got him to the hospital. Today, if you saw him, you wouldn't think anything was

wrong with his leg. I was taken off a number of times myself. I was taken off of a kidney attack in the wintertime in very rough weather. They took the lifeboat right aboard and shoved her in. They were wonderful to me. All those things came in place years later. When we would get in trouble when I first started, you were breaking down with your engine. The wind is drifting you towards shoal water, which you can't live in shoal water. No boat can live in that gale of wind. You're drifting towards the shoal. You had no way to communicate and tell them, "Hey, come and help me. I need help." You were on your own. The only thing, if there were boats near us. We used to take and wrap drags around a knoll or anything and put fuel oil on it, set it on fire to attract attention to the other boats we are in trouble. There are so many things. During the summer, the ocean liners were racing, the *Normandy*, the *Queens*, the *Europa*. They were coming across the bank there where we fellows were fishing. The *Normandy*, I think she did 32 knots, something like that, a little better than that, so many days from England to France to New York. I think that summer was one of the foggiest summers we'd had all summer. When those guys would come by, when they blew their whistle with it, if they were inside of a mile from you, everything shook aboard the boat. They weren't as bad as the freighters. The freighters used to cut it a little bit inside. The wheel, when they were empty, was out of water, you could hear that. Many a time I hear them coming down on us. We did about everything you could do, bang buckets and holler and do everything until they got by you. Even the equipment they got today, you see, they make mistakes. The two radars on them. I was offshore that day that they came together at Nantucket Lightship, the Italian boat and the other – what was it?

MS: [inaudible]

LD: Yes. So, something was wrong there. I'm going to tell you like this, as a fisherman will say it. Because only fishermen don't remember but remember what I'm telling you. The equipment, no matter how much it cost, how much you paid for it, is only as good as the men behind it.

You might have a lot of stripes on your shoulder and stuff on your arm, but it's only how much you are watching that radar that saves you. When I was hit, we had no sounding machines or anything. We used to have a sounding lead when I first started. We used to rig that up. That's the only thing you had. When we left Pollock Rip Lightship, I had a little log over the steering of my boat. A fellow said, "You're out there for ten days going around in circles and fog and all kinds of weather. How did you guys navigate?" Well, said like this, "Dead logging, that's how we navigated." When I would leave and drop my log over and run off 135 miles or 150 miles, wherever I was going, well then from then on, for the rest of the week or ten days we'd be out there, this was how we navigated. We were on the northern part of the bank up by the northeast rip in towards the northeast rip. Of course, when you got to the rip, you'd see that. But there were small rocks. When you got to the southern, you were in clamshells. When you got up too far to the north, you dropped right overboard. So, there was no nothing to bother you there. This is the way. When I first started, I saw myself in the little Sankaty Head and bit thick a fog, I'd lose the ground. Scallops weren't everywhere. Everybody will tell you this, but they weren't everywhere. They were looking for them for lots of times. Boats were looking to find the spot again. Now, we had a little DF on our boat. When you got about 10 miles from the lightship, you could pick it up. But now, when you were down 100 miles or more to the east of the ship and you did get a bearing, the little boat's jumping around. Your compass is spinning back and forth. You're in a small boat. When you try to look at the compass and catch it. Now, for a quarter of a point, you'd be 18 miles out of the way. Now, I heard a skipper one time. We were

talking about we had good fishing. We all got into Danny Mullin's place there, whole gang of us. I was only a beginner. These old-timers were there. This man, Clay Burns, he came from state of Maine. He was a big man. His hands were about twice as big as mine. We all looking at the chart saying where we are, where we think that spot was. Now, all the experts are having their say. Finally, Captain Dan – was always this way. He said, "Let's see what the young fellows say." He called me up. He called another young fellow that was in the crowd. Well, we come up and thought, "Well, we are here." Now, we probably were nowhere near that. [laughter] But when it got all through, everybody given a different idea on that shot where we were, Captain Burns came up with his hand like that and placed it down on the chart. He said, "That's just about where we were." I've covered a lot of isles. Back then when we were catching scallops, we were racing to getting back. Before I forget this, in 1929 in New Bedford, we were coming with the *Addie Mae*, like I say, with yellowtails and selling them for 3 or 4 cents, sometimes 2 cents, a cent, and so forth. People were very hungry. The last tow we made. My dad said, "That goes in the box." A big, 500-pound fish box for the people that show up. Years later, I met him. He would say to me, "Is your dad still alive?" This was when my father had passed away. Oh, he was so great. He helped a lot of people stay alive when things were bad. I found out later, this man spoke seven languages. Harry was down to the pier picking up yellowtails on the seine. These times in New York City near Fulton Fish Market, when the crash came, they had a big vacant lot on Beekman Street. They had fish boxes they got from the fish market, old fish boxes that they made cuts out of that, they were living in like you see these people today, the street people selling apples on the corner. It was terrible. I hope we never see nothing like that again. Now, see, I'm putting a little bit in. I was in the Gay Head. I left the Sankaty Head. I went in the Gay Head for a very short time. Then I left her, and she was lost. Six months later, I came down with Sam in 1942. I had a friend of mine or two friends of mine. One was Captain Sears that was in the *B&E*, and the other was Eli Portia that was in the *Three, One and One*. Now, Eli knew that I was dying to get out of these old slabs I was in. Finally, he had said – Captain Sears had left for some. I don't know what it was all about. It certainly wasn't for Sam. Sam felt very bad about it. But Eli went in the *B&E*. They called me. They were three or four or five guys after the boat. Eli said, "You better come down and go with me, a trip to learn the ins and outs of this boat. Then probably, you'll take the boat the next trip." So, the thing was, he was going to give everybody a chance in the boat. I came down and took the *Three, One and One* in 1942. I went to sea with her. In a short period of time, I was back with 1,500 gallons of scallops, which was our limit. You couldn't get anymore. After things were going along, and they were getting ready to settle this up at Sam's, which they did then, he looked at me. He said, "By God, Bob, that was a pretty good trip." I said, "Well, I did the best I could. Would have liked to have it a little shorter, but this is it." "Well, you did fine," he said, "The boat is yours if you want it." So, I was there to 1951 when they sold the boat to a fellow up in New Bedford. Just before that, a Jewish man in New Bedford was going to buy the *Three, One and One* for my brother Herbie and me. We had put a deposit down with Sam, which another guy would have said, "Hey, this is mine. Now, you left this here." But that wasn't Sam. While we were out fishing, this man had a heart attack. He had owned boats before. One boat was lost at sea with all hands. His wife didn't want him to get into another boat. But my brother, Herbie, got very friendly with him. (Abe Rossovich?) was his name. He said, "I'll buy the boat for you two boys. There'll be a quarter for each one of you when the boat is paid." We took the deal. We went to his home. We took the deal. We knew Sam was getting ready to sell. I went out fishing. When I come back, Abe had a heart attack. We knew this is it. His wife isn't going

to let him go through after this. Sam Cahoon gave me the money that would deposit to him to take back to Mr. Rossovich in New Bedford, which I did. So, this was a deal that went sour. I tell you about some others after that. [laughter] We had one right here in Woods Hole that Henry Klimm owned, *Eugene H.* which was lost at sea. I had two men down in the Vineyard that was interested in her. You'll never believe what spoiled that one. I think this is the way things go. But anyway, when I came with Sam, she was a little schooner, 60-odd feet long, 100 horse Wolverine engines. We went scalloping in the summer months. In the wintertime, we went fluking and butter fishing. Now, we changed that gear over to do that kind of fishing. Whatever you wanted for the boat, you got. They were wonderful people. I just can't say enough about him. I hear you talking about you're going to do something down here. I always thought that the kind of man he was, he did an awful lot for people around Woods Hole that nobody knows about. I wasn't ashamed to put in the paper that he helped me buy my home in New Bedford. We had had an agreement that Eli and me would come in on the boats. As years went by, it never happened. So, one day we went to Sam and asked him about it. He said, well, "Bob, don't worry about it. We're going to fix that up." A few trips later, I came in and found out that my partner in the other boat had bought a home in New Bedford. He told me right away, he said, "Eli just bought a home in New Bedford." Now, this was from Sam, payment on that home in New Bedford. He said, "Bob, what do you want to do?" "Well, Sam, I'd like to buy a little boat." There was a boat here in Woods Hole, an old boat. He said to me, "What are you thinking about?" I told him. He said, "You don't want to touch that boat. That boat is too old. It will cost too much money to fix. I've talked with your wife." My wife and him used to talk a lot when I was up there. He said, "She wants a house. I think you better think about that." [laughter] "Whatever you get," he said, "Make sure you get plenty of land." She already had the house picked when I came home. [laughter] Another thing I want to tell you about, going on vacations, he would plan with my wife, that I was working too hard – when I first went with him now – that I was working too hard. I needed a vacation. Him and her would have everything planned. When I got home, we were going down to Maine or New Hampshire or somewhere else, which I was glad to do. We went down on trips many times. When we got back home, I went out on the boat after being gone for two weeks. I'd be out in the boat and come into Woods Hole and settle up. Frannie, she was here, Frances Cahoon. She could tell you because she was always around, knew everything. I got down to the boat one day. I opened up my thing. It was cash money. I'm going through not to count the cash because they never made any mistakes in there. Never. At the bottom, there was a check. I looked at the check. I said, "Wait a minute, somebody's made a bad mistake here." \$250. I went back. I showed it to Frannie. "Frances, your dad made a mistake here, Ms. Adams." "No, no. See, Dad, he's out with Maddie cutting fish." He was out in the fish house. There was the office here. You went right next, there was a fish house. He was out there with Maddie Rogers. Maddie Rogers worked for him for years. Well, I said, "Sam, what's this?" "It's all right, Bob. It's all right. Help you on your vacation." This was pretty nice, right? Giving you things like that.

MS: You may think you are losing your audience. You are not. A lot of these people are on their lunch hour. They got to get back to work because it is 1:20 p.m. now. If anybody wants to leave, we will give you a chance. But if Captain Doucette wants to go on, I am sure that we would like to go on.

LD: One thing before I forget. There was a man in Nantucket, and his name was Gene Perry.

He had a pool room, card tables. The fishermen and the people used to go in there and play cards at night. There was nothing else. Once in a while, they'd have a dance up the Redmond's holler or something. After, they'd give out little washes. When you got through, you cashed them in for money. So, when my dad would win, I was eating candy all night, which you didn't get every day. He would pass me what stuff he was winning. Now, Gene Perry in Nantucket was the same as Sam Cahoon was in Woods Hole. These are some of the things people don't know about him that I'm going to tell you. In Nantucket, they had what they called sloops. They were all 50, 60 feet long sloops. They were fishing in the Nantucket Shoals. When they needed a new engine, when they needed something on their boat and they had a bad year, either Gene Perry in Nantucket would lend them the money to buy this new engine, or they'd come to Sam Cahoon. Those two men supplied Nantucket boats and the boats around with money when they needed it. They were bankers to the fishing boat, where if they went to the bank, they might have a little problem. They never had problems with Eugene Perry and Sam Cahoon, did this for years. This was before I ever got there, but I've heard people tell about it. Now, during the war, I come up to your little town here and register to go into the service. I had three children at the time. My wife was telling me, "The man upstairs was only a young man, and he wasn't gone yet. What the heck are you doing?" Well, I registered in Woods Hole because I was fishing out of here. Now, in Woods Hole, there weren't that many people then. So, you know your number is coming up fast, right? Well, I registered. Within a short period of time, I was found, A1 or whatever it is. [laughter] An insurance man in New Bedford came to my sister's house, Mr. Murphy's house, and wanted my sister to take more insurance on her husband. She said, "Gee, I don't know why you're asking me to do that." Because my brother is married, got three children, and they're after him. So, in the meantime, I got my notice from the fire station in New Bedford that my number had come up and to appear there on a Thursday night, which I did. The doctor I had was (Dr. Pearson?). He was my father's doctor. When I got up in front of Dr. Pearson, I went like that, and my arms cracked. They do that more now, but they cracked as I was doing that. I said, "Dr. Pearson, did you hear that?" He said, "I sure did." I said, "Well, I'm not much of a man to go in the service when things are happening." He said, "You'd make a good soldier, Louis." That's the answer I got from him. But anyway, Mr. Moriarty of the Metropolitan Insurance happened to be there. I told Mr. Moriarty, "I'm not going to go up and say, 'I'm going to shoot one my fingers off or anything like that.' If it wasn't for my wife, I wouldn't have no problem, might sign it right up. But she's against me going. Whatever you can do, maybe you can do something." He says, "I go to speak," he said, "when this meeting is over." So, the meeting went over. I was supposed to go, I think it was on a – I said it was on a Thursday. Now, I was supposed to go to Boston on a Thursday. This was on a Wednesday night. There was a fellow working in Danny Mullin's shop, an Irish fellow. Now, me and him, he said, "I'll see you tomorrow morning." But anyway, Mr. Moriarty got up, and they asked me to stay. Oh, there were fellows there. They were the support for their mother, all the different things that they brought up there to try to stay out of the service. I said to Mr. Moriarty, "There's one thing I want to tell you. You can do what you want, but if I have to go in the service, make it sure that it's either the Navy, the Coast Guard, or the Merchant Marine. This is where I belong." Because I've got a lot of friends, Norwegian fellows that landed way out in the Army, way out west somewhere. They tell me, "This is awful." The hikes and stuff, they weren't used to. These guys were fishermen. These guys should have been on the water. Well, when the thing first started off, there's a few mistakes they made. After, they got wise, and they come around the piers. Most of the men did go in the Navy. I had an uncle that was off of Maine, (Maddie

Richards?). He worked for the – he was in the *Atlantis*. He worked for the *Atlantis* [inaudible]. He was there for quite a few years, in the *Atlantis*. He was a chief petty officer with a bunch of young fellows learning them the ropes. Now, our job was offshore. When I was in Sam's boat, we were given pigeons by the Woods Hole here. They placed them aboard our boat. We took them offshore. We had instructions. When you were 100 miles off, let these pigeons go. If we saw anything that didn't look right to us, we put a note in the pigeon and let him go. He came into Woods Hole. They told me one time we were down the bank, 150 miles, how soon that pigeon landed in Woods Hole here, I couldn't believe it. I can't remember the time. But it was unbelievable. If you saw a big sailing ship – because they were doing that kind of thing then. They were using sailing ships to come inside and all that kind of thing. If you've seen so many planes in the air, we had a chart to show us that said different things. We had a bag with lead on the bottom with all our instructions of what to do in case we were boarded, that they wouldn't get these maps we had. I reported to the Navy intelligence every trip in New Bedford, every single trip. Also, around the waterfront – now, don't forget, they got their boy born in Edgarton, Mass, born here. We had a lot of people around the docks that weren't born here. They asked me all kinds of questions. "How is this fellow? How is that fellow? How is that fellow?" I'm very happy to say there was only one or two that I ever said I ever heard them speak anything I didn't think that they should be saying. One or two, that was all. In the end, one fellow was taken and put into the government service. He used to run around with the German book that came out.

MS: [inaudible]

LD: Yes. So, that was the only thing I had seen him. He'd come into the club where we were. He'd rave about it. [laughter] Which, there was nothing really wrong. [laughter] We wondered, "Hey, wait a minute, don't do that." But he did it. But they took him into the service, and he was okay. So, I think when it was over, we got a certificate that we were observers for our country and a little thing signed, which was nice. But I think it was good protection. We were out there offshore, 100 or 150 miles. If we saw anything that didn't look right, we were calling them. I had to report with Navy intelligence quite a few times. My father and my brother-in-law that was lost at sea, picked up a crowd of men in a lifeboat. They had only been in that lifeboat – a tanker was sunk. They'd only been in that lifeboat four or five days. They said the conditions in Virginia were unbelievable. They couldn't believe it. Things were coming into New Bedford. All kinds of stuff were being brought to the state pier. I went down after the *Gleaner*, the *Addie Mae*, I went into a number of boats. They had a boat in Gloucester that I went into. I was in for three years, a brand-new boat. They picked us out, trying to find out who you are and all about you. But I stayed there for three years. But we had that 100 miles to go from New Bedford down to Gloucester. The two men were from New York. The thing was, 2:00 p.m., we took our ice. When you took ice under that chute in Gloucester, you could put it aboard in about ten minutes, 20 tons of ice in about ten minutes. That was sailing time, 2:00 p.m. I had to be aboard that boat at 2:00 p.m., waiting – take her across the river, wait until the ice was thinner. All hands had to be there and ready to go. I was in it for three years. We never had any gang trouble. We made a lot of money. They gave us a dinner at one of the biggest places in Gloucester for the kind of trip we had. We got into Gloucester Harbor many times while I was in the boat. We opened scallops in the harbor. We'd get there Saturday night. We'd open until Sunday night. Then go to the pier. We had the deck loaded when we got in there. That was the time you could do it. But that 100 miles back and forth, we came down there in snowstorms.

When I first got in there, a man that had the fishing house there where we used to go throw away boat supplies, (Jeff Demings?). Jeff, when I first got, they introduced me to some of the old-timer skippers in there. They were red fishermen. They were red fishing. They had boats that would carry 400,000 pounds of redfish coming from the Grand Banks. Now, four days' sail down to the Grand Banks, and when they were coming home with a northwest wind, they were longer than four days. They had to buck all the way home. One boat was in there one time. I tried to put my arms around the mast, a wood boat like that, just like that. 400 or 500 pounds of redfish they were bringing in there. Jeff introduced me. This was a new industry in Gloucester. Scalping was just a little thing. It was nothing. This brand-new boat, they had us in the paper, big write up, and all this kind of thing. After I was there, I'd walk in. Some of the old skippers wouldn't speak to me. I went to Jeff one day and asked him. I said, "What is this?" He said, "Well, if you really want to know, I'll tell you. What kind of an agreement have you got with these owners that no matter what kind of weather, you are leaving here to go fishing, when some of our big boats are tied to the dock? Them guys are telling me you are crazy." I said, "When you see them, to talk to them, tell them they're right." I said, "I'm working for two guys from New York City. The minute this boat leaves the dock, they can go home. They won't see me again for ten or twelve days." So, they're anxious to get home. They've been around this boat for four days, fixing her up until I get there. I used to leave what had to be done. I said, "We've come down this trip. We've come down this snow storms and everything else. I don't think I'd do it today."

RL: For the Captain. [laughter]

[applause]

MS: I guess we could clarify some questions. But I am sure Captain Doucette would be very happy to answer questions. If any of you want to come up front, look at his photo album, and talk to him some more.

RL: Before you go, the interview I did with Louis some years ago is 72 pages long. It is on file at the Woods Hole Historical Collection. It is a wonderful sharing of a life of a commercial fisherman. Thank you very much.

LD: The thing about the [inaudible].

[end of transcript]