

Albert Cutler August 1, 1992 © 1991 by Marguerite Holloway

Tape One, Side One

ALBERT CUTLER: I'd say in the late 1800s and early 1920s, I used to see the fishermen go up and down this road, going down to their boats. There would probably be 12, 15 boats along the river here, and 1,000 or 1,500 feet. And there were so many fishermen that nobody really did too well because there were so many nets in the water and the run of shad, it lasts about five to six weeks.

Now if you'd like to hear the preliminaries to shad fishing, there was sturgeon fishing. And that was before shad, in cold water, when the water was fresh and they did not get much uptide. That was what they wanted for sturgeon fishing. And they had to fish on the bottom to be sure to get down to where the sturgeon are because they are bottom feeders and they winter in deep pools. And they used to catch sea sturgeon here. I've seen them, oh, eight, nine, 10-feet long, that big around. Six-, seven-, eight-, nine-, 10-hundred pounds. Huge things. They called them Albany beef and they used to load them on a night boats to take them to Albany. Today if you have caught one fish like that and smoked it, you could live one whole year on the proceeds. Providing it was a big female with a lot of caviar in it.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:02:16.5: WHAT ABOUT BACK THEN?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:02:20.8: I started fishing sturgeon in the early 1950s and I learned myself by asking old fishermen how to do it. I had a weight, a sounding weight, and I had a cord in fathom, six-foot increments, so that I could tell just exactly how deep the water was. So I'd throw the net out and then when I got to a certain spot, I'd lengthen the buoy cords by taking hitches off, and you drop the net down to the water, or to the bottom, and that would straighten up. I made a drift with my younger son in 1955, 1954 or 1955—let's see, I've got a picture of it—and we caught 76 and I smoked them all, shipped the caviar. And that started me putting my oldest son through college and I practically paid for his college with fishing money. We started with linen nets which were pretty old, 'cause during the war they had lots and lots of fish up here and there weren't many fishing. The linen nets were not made any more because of the war and they used cotton nets which lasted about one year. And after the war they came out with nylon. And I had over a 1,000 feet of nylon net and I could drift any amount I wanted to because I had them in different length pieces...I'll explain later. Then I fished with another old fisherman for two or three years. He lost his wife and he didn't have anything to do.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:04:27.4: WHAT WAS HIS NAME?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:04:28.6: Harold Terpening and he has a brother still living up here. He's dead. He married a second time and went to Florida, and he died down there. But he didn't know as much about sturgeon fishing as I did, but he was a good shad fishermen. And the last year I fished was 1957. We caught I don't know how many sturgeon. I remember I shipped 85 pounds of caviar and I only got \$2.50 a pound for it. And they processed it and probably got 12 or 15.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:05:12.7: DID YOU EVER PROCESS IT YOURSELF?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:05:20.1: No, I just salted it to preserve it while I, 'til I gathered enough. And you put it on a screen and keep it very cool so it doesn't spoil. So most of the moisture

drains off and you put it in, oh anything you can get. I used to get big tins from the butcher shop, they got liver in it and different things, different meat parts, and you washed it out and I sent it to the commission merchant and he would send a check for it. Well, the shad used to be picked up by an outfit from Ellenville. Now, how did you know Lester?

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:06:05.5: LESTER? I HAD FOUND HIS NAME AMONG THE PEOPLE WHO HAD SHAD LICENSES IN 1987. AND SO I WROTE TO HIM AND THEN HE TOLD ME ABOUT YOU.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:06:19.0: 1987? I don't think they fished up to 1987. But anyway, they did fish. Well, Lester. We had two boats going. We would drift from 3:00 in the morning 'til 10:00 at night and we brought in 800 and some shad. And they all had to be packed in boxes. The roes in one box and the bucks in another. So Lester used to get in the truck when it came and load the boxes on. I didn't have to be there. Well, I knew how many boxes we had of roes and how many boxes of bucks. So the check came and we are two boxes short in the roes. That meant 20 fish, they paid 50 [cents] and 25 cents. Early in the season \$1 and 50, then it went down to 25. Anyway, it was two boxes short. So we had a slip with our name on it in each box. So he switched names and stuck two boxes they had from the weekend that were spoiled. So I told the driver when he came up that time, I said we were two boxes short. Well, there's two boxes spoiled. We had no fish left over, not a fish, sorry. I said either correct it or don't come up again. So they never came up again, so Oster's went out of business. He couldn't sell them. So we sold roes or fish, mostly roes, 100 pair this place, 50 pair that place. We did very well. We took in over \$2,000 the last year.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:08:22.2: IN ONE SEASON?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:08:25.3: In one season, five weeks. I took my vacation. I had 26 days vacation and I took it all at once.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:08:34.0: DID YOU USUALLY DO THAT, EVERY SEASON?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:08:37.5: As long as I fished.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:08:40.4: WHAT WAS THE LAST YEAR YOU FISHED FOR SHAD?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:08:42.1: The last year? 1957.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:08:43.8: WHY DID YOU STOP IN 1957?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:08:49.8: I didn't feel good. I started with something I didn't know what it was. In 1958 two fellows came and wanted to buy my outfit, so I said to myself I am not going to have use for it. So I sold them 1,000 feet of net. It had been used, it needed some mending. And the boat, motor, platforms, racks, everything I had...for \$75. [laughs] But I miss it. I did make a few drifts with a couple of fellows down here, one fellow he had two sons, and he used to fish, but he was in bad shape. I went with them on a couple of drifts and that ended my fishing.

But I really loved it. It is hard work. You take a net, say, 700-feet long and you have roe shad coming up four or five, six, seven in a bunch to lift out of the water onto the platform, bunch after bunch, maybe you pick up 150, 175, maybe you pick up 50 or 75 or 100, you don't know what you are going to get. But I have come in with so many shad that I could not put them all in the rear end. See my boat was built with a well. The motor was back. And I put the platform to pull the net up on and to throw out the net on the back of the motor. I'd have to take the net and swing it up to the bow and bring the rest of the net in or I would sink the boat.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:10:45.3: DID YOU BUILD YOUR BOAT WITH THE WELL IN THE CENTER?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:10:52.3: No, an old fisherman, down on Esopus creek, I was very friendly with.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:10:57.0: WHAT WAS HIS NAME?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:10:59.8: Harry Myers. And he was an old, old fisherman. He used to fish for sturgeon through the ice. I never tried that. And he came down with cancer of the lung. He'd lost his wife and he'd lost his son. And he was only 63 years old. And I used to go down there and do things for him, and I hung out down there for two or three years with my nets. And then I moved back up here again.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:11:25.4: WHAT WAS HE LIKE?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:11:32.0: He was a drinker. Good fellow. He would do anything for you. But he gave me the boat. And he said I don't have any use for it because I am not going to last that long. So he did die in 1954, the same year that my mother died. He was from a big family. I knew his brothers and sisters I delivered mail to his sister in Saugerties, who had been married.

And, uh, I really loved the water. From the time I could kick my feet, I lived in the water. We thought nothing of swimming across the river to the middle ground. And running around to have mud fights and swim back again. We wait for the tide to change and we would swim back again. We would swim out on one tide and swim back on the other.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:12:34.7: SO YOU GREW UP RIGHT AROUND HERE?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:12:35.4: Sure, we had run of the whole dock. From right down here up to here, I don't know, it is 700 or 800 feet. I could have bought the whole waterfront for \$3,500 during the Depression. I didn't have 35 cents. He, this real-estate insurance man, hell, he said, give me \$10 a month. Well I had a wife and two kids way back then in the late 1930s. I couldn't do it. Today it is worth probably \$500 a foot, a running foot on that water. I could have made money, but I am satisfied, I am doing very well, pensioned off. I am in my 33rd year of retirement.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:13:34.7: WHAT DID YOU DO?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:13:37.4: Mail carrier in Saugerties. I knew everybody in Saugerties. I knew everybody on the rural routes. I don't know anybody any more. I hardly know people here. I've made new friends, but nothing like my close friends. In the last year, I lost a nephew, it's a

husband of one of my cousins, a niece that's here, he was a nephew by marriage, he dropped dead at 70. The doctor who lives over here, that used to be a big boarding house, 28, 29 rooms. It belonged to my grandmother. And it was built by a Maxwell, way, way back. My grandmother died in 1884. I never knew her, of course, it has been sold five or six times since then. And he tore it down and built the house over here. And he owns a piece on the river, 50 feet.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:14:51.1: But for god's sakes, I can look back to all the fishermen that was here. They are all gone, of course. Now there's none, young people don't care about that anymore. There is not that much money. But I did go down just this side of the Kingston Bridge, and there are two brothers down there, the name is Turck, I wanted to get some shad roe, and I didn't care what it cost. So I called them up and they said get down there tomorrow by 11:00. So I went down and I got three pair of shad roe, \$4 a piece. Well they weren't too big, so he gave them to me for \$3. And they were good. My wife doesn't care for them, but I love it. Now, their net is much different than ours. The top line is nothing but a straight line with a lot buoys with a hole through the middle, plastic buoys. Strung on the top line. Whether they are using them for a set net I don't know. But the old timers down the river always had set nets and they had to drive great big long hickory poles down in the mud to hold the nets and they put them out one tide, go out and collect them, drop another net in, anywhere they wanted to. And the all-night boats with the paddle wheels they used to come along here and hit those stakes, and break the paddle wheels off.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:16:20.8: HOW FAR UP THE RIVER DID THEY DO STAKE NETTING?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:16:26.1: Uh, they did it all through Haverstraw Bay, I'd say up to probably to Poughkeepsie. Depending on the channels and where you would get their nets in, it would be fairly safe. So they wouldn't be ruined. And we had to watch for ships up here. The time I fished, there were big ships coming all the time, all the time, two or three or four at once you just had to get out and you had to take a chance in throwing your net back in again. And it worked pretty good that way. But this net down there, it is no more thread, it's a monofilament. The top line is just a plain top line, the bottom line is a lead line. A pliable lead line. Much easier to handle. They had about a 22-foot outboard with a great big motor on, so whether they stake it or not, I saw buoys out in the river. Now there is a middle ground down there too, same as there is here of course, it is situated a little differently. But they probably had 150, or 160 shad. And the thing about this year, I said how are the shad running this year? Very few bucks, he says. Practically all roes, that is where the money is. But...

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:17:48.3: HOW WAS YOUR FISHING DIFFERENT? HOW DID YOU DO IT DIFFERENTLY?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:17:55.2: We drifted, I'll show you here. [draws] This is 20 feet, that is the distance between buoys and rings. Now, we buy the slack. We order so many pounds, it depends on what size you want. Now nylon, size 46 is little bit fine and 69 is little coarser. We buy a stretch of mesh of five and five-eighths inches or five and three-quarter, and 45 mesh deep—and that would be just about the right depth here, with the strings we used, we used mostly a 16-foot string here, on this channel. Then we had to sim it up on the top line, which they call a 30. It is 30, 10 threads wound in one, wound in three and then wound together to make a 30 size, sim line we call it. The bottom line they always used to have a heavy bottom line, and it would catch fast,

and then they would have to cut the net and lose half the net. So I said I am going to put a 12 on, that is a little bit of thing. And the net did not handle quite as good, but if you got hooked and it was a ring, maybe you tear up in the net, you could mend the net back in or set a piece back in and you are ready to go. It worked. It worked great. Now the average, the nets ran for 500 or 700 feet, depending on how you used it. I've drifted 1,000 feet of net at once, you couldn't see the end of it when you finished throwing the buoys out. [laughs] But then we did most of our shad fishing here and over in what we call the little channel, we used 500 foot of net over there, and here we used any net that we had to use. Now we would have sighting spots, where we would throw the net out, on a tide, we would sight down below by a corner of the dock, just above a fast, used to be an old canal boat that we used to get fast on. And we would drift up oh maybe to West Camp, Cementon, a mile and a half, two miles. But mostly in the mornings, 3:30, 4:00, we'd try to get a down tide, a fast down tide. That is when you catch the most roes. And we'd throw in up above here, and then we'd sight from here down to an old chimney on an old ice house. And when you could see that coming from in back of the trees we would start throwing the net out, say, we'd throw out here. And we'd curl the net around this way 'cause the tide was usually faster here and then we would come back here and grab a tow line, very heavy, a 60-thread line to keep this sort of bagged, the whole thing curved. Now once in a while this would set back, but we wouldn't put any tension to that, sometimes you would get down below here, it would straighten out again. But that is about all there is to it. In that respect. But now I can go back, I don't remember it, but the old timers tell me there was a man from Germantown, by the name, they called him Bub Saulpaugh, his name was Saulpaugh, Bub was a nickname I guess, and he had seines 1,000-foot seines and just above here there was a brickyard and on the other side of the river, on the other side of the channel, the channel ran close to the brick yard, there was a shoal probably oh ran from 20 feet, 25 feet up to nothing on the flats. Well, they used to throw that seine out, they'd come in with 150 or 200 shad and thousands and thousands of herring. And whatever else was in the net, that I don't remember but the old timers told me about it.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:22:30.5: But the sturgeon is what I loved. The big sturgeon. I had, I don't know how many in my net, of course, I had a small, small mesh net. Sometimes you would go out and you would know that they were there because they would draw everything down except the end buoys. All the buoys would go, and I knew I wasn't fast because I knew where I was and what I was drifting. We would go out and poke the oars down and try to make a noise down to get them thrashing, to get them wound in the net. And then I always carried a hawser, A steel hawser, cased steel pliable cable, with a loop on it, lasso like, so if you got them up to the top of the water you put this around under one fin and in front of the other, around their head, and tow them ashore. But I never caught one. The biggest one I ever caught was that long. Now there are different sturgeon...

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:23:34.3: SO JUST ABOUT A FOOT LONG?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:23:38.2 A little one about that big around. It got caught in the shad net, I brought it up on the platform, that's sharp-nose, they have a sharp nose. Where the river sturgeon, you are not supposed to take those anymore, you can't eat any of the fish in the river except shad because they are all polluted with PCBs. Well, I fished up to 1957, I didn't hear anything about PCBs until the 1970s. And General Electric was dumping in the river for 20 years before that, so how many people did I poison? Maybe I poisoned myself, I don't know.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:24:12.5: MANY OF THE FISHERMEN DON'T THINK THE PCBs CAUSE ANY HEALTH PROBLEMS. WHAT IS YOUR FEELING ABOUT THE PCBs?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:24:19.7: I don't know. I don't know. You know I read the New York Times science section every week. And there is so much stuff in there, you read an article, two or three weeks later they will come out—well, there is always a lot of ifs, ands, and buts in it—maybe they will come out and write something just the opposite. But, I don't know. The older I get the more I wonder, what is going to happen to this old globe. I don't like the looks of things. You have so many people on relief, people that can work. Some people want to work, some people don't want to work. Well, practically I'm on relief. But I got mine under a contract when I went to work, then I build up Social Security when I had the gun shop. So we don't get much, we get \$4,000 a year Social Security. My wife never worked much to build up anything. So right now, we have income about \$21,000, \$22,000 a year, which is not bad for our situation.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:25:51.6: Our daughter, she was just 39 last month. She is a CPA in California, her husband, well, he's her third husband, I don't know why, and he is in software. She is not working now, and he is. But she is going to try to pick up something; she's got allergies of some kind, I don't know what it is. And my second son, he married a Swedish girl, and they divorced, had two children. And his ex-wife is just like one of the family. She comes over here with her grandchildren, we have a great grandchild, and we think as much of her as we do own children. And he married a Japanese girl, 15 or 16 years older than he is. And they are worth three-quarters of a million dollars. They live in Vegas, they lived in Hawaii. They sold the house that they lived in for a quarter of a million, they own two or three condos, and they have mortgages on them so their interest rates went so low, they took their money and paid off their mortgages. So, his wife said, they will get a sure thing. Funny as hell. Robert thinks we've got a big income—see we've only got \$60,000 a year coming in. But our daughter is making \$60 an hour. She works with Bank of America. She worked with Alexander Grant, an auditing outfit. Then she worked for a mutual fund, a money market fund. And I don't know if they went broke, or if they sold out, she just left, she didn't like it anyway.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:28:00.1: DID EITHER YOUR DAUGHTER OR YOUR SON EVER FISH WITH YOU?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:28:06.0: Oh no, no. My daughter was born in 1953. And my youngest son was born in 1938. Our first son was born in 1932. So he's a chemical engineer out at RPI.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: DID HE FISH SHAD WITH YOU?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:28:24.8: No, he's not that kind of a boy. Nope, he did not want anything to do with it. Bob, he used to like it. But I'd want to get him up at 4:00 in the morning, and he says nothing doing.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:28:38.6: WHAT DID YOU LIKE ABOUT FISHING SO MUCH?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:28:47.5: The change. After walking 15 or 16 miles a day for so many years, you get five weeks off, boy what a time you would have. We would take a couple of bottles of beer along with us, something to eat. Didn't care whether we got back or not.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:29:06.3: AND WHY DID YOU LIKE THE STURGEON ESPECIALLY? WHY DID YOU LIKE THEM SO MUCH?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:29:12.6: That's where the money was. I sold hundred and hundreds of pounds of sturgeon for \$1.50 a pound. I had a man from Catskill come down every year. His name was Moon, he was in the oil business. He came for 25 pounds every year, every year as long as I fished. I guess he is gone too. Then the last few years that I fished, the wife delivered.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:29:37.9: REALLY?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:29:45.4: Oh, sure. She took our daughter and dumped her in the back seat and delivered fish all over the place. Of course she was a native here, and knew everybody in Saugerties, and she loved it. But we are pretty fortunate. I worked 28 years and 10 months, and I took a disability.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:30:04.9: WHAT...WAS THE RIVER VERY HEAVILY FISHED DURING THE DEPRESSION? WERE THERE A LOT OF FISHERMEN ON THE RIVER?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:30:14.5: Yes, yes, yes. Some of the old timers during the Depression were left. But then they started dying and drifting off, they got so old they had to quit. And then some of the younger ones took over, but...I would like to do it yet if I could. I'd really like to really get out and do it. Even to have a piece of net four or 500 feet long, go out and throw it in two or three times and freeze myself a lot of roe. I love the river. But right now, you know I could care less about it. People pay all kinds of money to live on the river, it doesn't mean anything to me anymore. I used to love to go out in a boat, take a little ride, take a little row, no more.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:31:11.7: YOU REMEMBER, YOU DESCRIBED BEFORE SEEING ALL THE FISHERMEN WALKING BY HERE AND GOING DOWN TO THE RIVER?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:31:19.4: Yep, going down, going down to take care of their nets.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:31:25.3: DO YOU REMEMBER ANY OF THE STORIES THEY USED TO TELL?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:31:26.9: No, but I heard a lot of the fighting they used to do. Who was going to get into the water first.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:31:28.4: TELL ME ABOUT THAT.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:31:33.0: Oh gosh. They would be out on the river, cursing and swearing, and you could hear them hollering way over on the dock. Of course, they wouldn't speak to each other for two or three days and then it was all over.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:31:47.4: DID THINGS EVER GET MESSY?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:31:54.2: No, no. But we used to go down and help the old guys rack up. When I was about 12 or 14, we used to go down and the fishermen used to come in all alone, no one would help them rack up. So, two of us would go down. One would go down each side of the racks, we used to put up poles, they used to use pine poles, all cleaned off, nice and smooth, and the width of the net less about four feet, and it would hang down about two feet on each side. And you would rack it all up in a bunch and after he got finished you would put the poles up to the same level and then you spread the net to dry. And you'd help them do that, and pick out the fish and sometimes they'd pick the fish out in the river, picking the net up, sometimes they'd bring them in.

0:32:48.7 Oh and another time, I remember. I was fishing out of Saugerties, I don't know what year this was, in the early fifties, I had a young kid with me, about 16 years old. I was fishing this fellow that lived on the creek that died with cancer. We went down below what they call Cougers island to throw out, beautiful day, we got to the end of the island and we were towing on the inside end and we are passing a black buoy. Black buoys are to keep to the left, red buoys keep to the right, leaving port. Of course, it is just the opposite coming into port. I look at the end of the net and I said 'we can't do anything with that the end of the net, something is going on and I don't know what it is.' I said 'I haven't had that trouble before.'

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:33:56.8 His name was Kelly. So he to take up. So we are about a mile from the lighthouse where we turn into the creek. Then we pick the net up and I said 'well let's go' and turn the motor up and we came up to the creek and pulled into the creek and the wind started to blow a gale, the waves are four or five, six feet high. And I said we hit that lucky. The limbs were coming down in the creek, the leaves were rolling off the trees and of course we were in the shelter. Well we lost I don't know how many nets. I know one was found over in little channel about two weeks after the storm by a fellow from Germantown. Another went on the mud down here, they went and found that and he had a short nosed sturgeon about that long, first one I had seen in years. and of course the old boats used to burn soft coal and picked up a lot of clinkers, and clam shells and sticks and everything else in your nets and that had to all be picked out. That's the only time I ever ran across A storm like that. It just came up like that, a south wind. And I had just bought brand new nylon nets. They cost probably, those days, \$125, \$130—besides a lot of work.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:35:39.0 There was another story about fykes. These are a circular net, usually about four feet, and you used to get saplings and bend them in hoops and bind them together. And they sat all winter knitting their nets, oh about an inch and a quarter bar, and that is done with a stick, bevel stick, that is just the size of one mesh. And they knit and keep dropping them off, and they make them in sections and then they sew sections together. And then there's wings that go out oh 25-, 30-foot wings; then they are stretched out and staked, this is in fairly shallow water. And then the fyke is set to the north so that the opening is to the south the wings, then there is a big throat, about that big, in the front, and then in the back there is a small throat, and that is where the fish get. And then when they raise it, you have to pull a stake on—they call it the cod stake—on the end where the fish are and then you row towards the wings and bring the three or four hoops up then, and open the sure string and dump the fish in the boat and then close it up again and pull your fyke back and re-set it. Well they used to catch all kinds of fish in it, bass, perch, eels, of course, herring in season, bullheads, catfish, once in a while a striped bass and they are quite plentiful now, pickerel. Oh god, everything. And I used to peddle it...an old fishermen



used to clean them up, and I'd peddle yellow perch. They are nice in cold weather. Whole string, 10 cents a string. [Laughs] I'd peddle all over town and he would give me a dime.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:38:15.6 And then in the ice they'd set the fykes with stakes driven down, so you couldn't see them. They'd just have stakes sticking up so they knew where the fyke was. And they had to feel around with a long pole, with a piece of pipe with a groove and a notch to put over a spike that was through the cod stake, they'd put it over to pull it. They'd just put it over, give it a turn and pull it out through the ice.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:38:56.3 WILL YOU DESCRIBE THAT AGAIN, I DIDN'T GET THAT? THERE WAS A STAKE ON THE END OF THE POLE?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:39:04.9 At the end of the fyke. There was a piece of pipe that would just go over the top of the stake that had a spike through it, or a bolt and then the notch cut up in the end of the pipe and a notch over this way, so they would put it down over it and turn it so they could life that stake. Now to do that. First they would cut a triangle, they'd cut a triangle up where the hoops, the face of the fyke was, where the wings go out. They'd cut a diamond big enough to pull the rings through. And they would cut a four- or five-, six-inch swatch down to the cod stake and pull it up and dump all the fish out on the ice. They'd have a big sleigh with a box on it, dump out the fish, tie your cod stake and stick it back on this pipe again, stretch it out, drive it in again.

I was only, god, 12 or 13 years old and I used to put him in the box, and I had skates on and I would push him across the river. All the fykes were set on the other side of the railroad track and you would come home with a load of stuff. But it was hard work, hard work.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:40:31.0 DID YOU EVER FISH WITH YOUR FATHER?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:40:37.5 Yeah, I had dad out two or three times, but he wasn't much on the oars. He was over 70, because he retired at 46. He was 70 then. He died in 1959. And in the early 1950s I took him out a couple of evenings. Just for a little outing more than anything else. But he enjoyed it.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:40:55.8 Of course at night we'd have to have a lantern on the end of the end. So the boats would either go around, or you'd get cut. I got cut a couple of times by a tug. Once I got, right down here, I got hit by a big ship. I only had 16 foot strings and some of the those ships draw 30, or 32 feet. In fact, that channel is a 34 foot channel. And I said oh-oh. I had somebody with me, I don't remember who. I said oh-oh, I said. Can't do anything about it. Well, the net had a hook in it. And they went right over that hook and they cut off one buoy and then they cut off two buoys, and that was all. So all's I had to do was put new buoy strings and new buoys on. I was lucky. That propeller sometimes would start winding a buoy cord up and they'll take the whole net up.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:41:57.6 WHO TAUGHT YOU HOW TO MEND NETS?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:41:57.6 Well. I am going to draw a picture of needle. They came in all sizes. They used to make them out of wood. No, that should be straighter. I'll start again. That's better. That's better. Towards the last, we used to get them from the net outfits. We used to make them from hickory, or maple was good. All the...the big ones were that thick. [phone rings] TAPE OFF

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:43:06.0 ...MENDING NETS.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:43:09.9 Well, it is done with a needle. If you put a piece in, if you set it in, and you keep going back and forth from one mesh to another 'til you get down to the bottom. Now, the first mesh on the top line, the first mesh is double selvage, that's double, it is just two cords. Sometimes it is colored. And there is three mesh go in one tie, six-inch tie, so you have a mesh like that instead of a square mesh. And so they stick their head in and they're caught.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:43:58.4 WHO TAUGHT YOU HOW TO MEND?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:44:04.4 Ah, I just watched the others and picked it up. It is done in half hitches (?). You see, the needle, they come in all sizes. They use them for all kinds of work. The mending needles are about that long and that wide. Now this is all cut out here. This thing is sticking up here. So. This is cut out enough so you wind the cord. You start by winding around here. Then you go here. Then you go up here on the other side. You keep turning the needle. You do the same thing. You go up and down, up and down, up and down, up and down, up and down. You have to put quite a bunch on. One that lasts a long time. And you'll sit and thread about five or six needles so you won't have to bother to do any more. So the ones we got from the company were all plastic and you could ask them for any size. They are all numbered.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: DID IT TAKE A LONG TIME TO MEND THE NET?

ALBERT CUTLER: Depending on how much it was torn. Sometimes it would be torn so you'd have to cut a piece right out, then you'd have extra net. Pieces. Maybe you lost part of a buoy and you cut the whole thing off and it...put it away to use for pieces.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: SO WOULD YOU MEND THEM EACH TIME YOU BROUGHT THEM IN? IF THERE WAS SOME PROBLEM WITH THE NET YOU WOULD MEND THEM THAT EVENING OR THAT DAY?

ALBERT CUTLER: No. We would never mend them unless it was torn up. Sometimes you would get fast and they would do...they would break a ring and break the bottom line and just go up in the net. So you would start up there and you would just mend it right back down again in no time.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: DID YOU LIKE MENDING?

ALBERT CUTLER: No too much. [Laughs] I'd rather not tear the net, of course your fish...

Albert Cutler August 1, 1992 c 1991 by Marguerite Holloway. Tape One, Side Two

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:44:44.2 ... what's that, double?

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:44:36.0 YES, IT IS TWO-SIDED.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:44:41.8 What they don't have today, eh?

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:44:45.0 DO YOU KNOW ALL THE FISHERMEN FISHING FOR SHAD, OR WHO DID?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:44:49.8 So far as I know there's only one fishing in Saugerties. I knew his father, I knew all the kids, I knew all his sons and his son.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:44:56.1 WHO'S THAT?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:44:56.1 Lawless. Al Lawless. I gave him a lot of stuff after I quit. I had a lot of buoys left, I had rings left. Mending stuff, and sim line, they call it. I gave him everything I had left over. He used to bring me out a couple of shad roe every year. Nice big ones. Have you ever eaten shad roe?

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:45:26.3 YES.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:45:26.9 You like it?

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:45:27.3 YES, VERY MUCH.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:45:29.3 You know I was in the Navy. I was stationed in New York. I tried to get in in 1942, I signed up in the spring. With a caravan. In Saugerties, and I got notice to come to 80 Church Street. So I went down, saw a captain so-and-so, talked. I am going to put you through as second class petty officer. I says fine Sir. So we go over to...now in this caravan I met a kid that used to board in the boarding house over here. Name of Gerard Dooley. And 'For god's sakes, how long have you been in?' Oh, he says, quite a while. He was a farmer's smithy. And he signed me up and I went down and this captain said go over the Broad Street to such and such a floor, and have an exam. So I came down with a fella that drove a mushroom truck down to the market, way downtown. And we got a few drinks that night. It was the next day I had the appointment. So I went over to Broad Street and who do I run across but Gerard Dooley, so he checks my eyes and says 'I can't pass you.' 'Ah, come on, Gerard.' Gerard says, 'You are going to Newport, Rhode Island. They'll send you right back if I send you to Newport.' I says, 'Where is anybody I can talk to.' Go in and see Chief Railey (?). 'I'll never forget his name, Chief Railey. Well I went in to see the chief. 'No,' he says, 'I can't pass you. I can't let you go.' So, 'I says, 'alright.' This was in 1942. So I came home, I says the hell with you. I'll stay home. I've got two kids, I'll probably never have to go. And I got a letter in September 'Come down, we'll take you.' This is why I couldn't sort mail with glasses on. I got a letter: 'come down.' I said nothing doing. I never paid attention to it. So I went from 3A to 2A in spring of 1944. And there was a fella alongside of me. He was carrier number 1, I was carrier number 2. Carrier number 3 was a World War I veteran. So I signed up in the draft board. A girl I went to school with...highs chool, she was taking care of the draft board, for a big section of the county here.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:48:26.1 I got my greetings report May 18th, so I report May 18<sup>th</sup> to a bus and I was nominated as leader. I never knew it, 'til I was looking in the safe at some stuff that I had collected there. I was crew leader, whatever that meant. Well, a lot of us were in tough shape that morning. We went up to Albany, slept overnight, got the examination next day, on the train to Samson that's out on Seneca Lake, just below Geneva. So we get to the place they put you through the ropes, receiving center. And who do I find but a butcher who used to work in the A&P store in Saugerties. His name Mel Dirgotti (?) And he is still alive. He lives in Kingston. He is all crippled up, 83 or 84 years old. And he says 'hey, how many you got?' and I says seven from Saugerties. We go out. 'get 'em all together.' Alright, we got them all together. Went through the ropes, got our uniforms. All had consecutive numbers. We all went in the same company. We got out of there in July. And went to New York. Freight train. I've got a bird, two of them. A pair of them. [Gets up to talk to the birds.]

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:50:25.4 DID THE HUMMINGBIRD COME BACK?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:50:25.4 Oh, god they are there all the time. Got two of them and they fight like the devil.

We went down through Pennsylvania and Jersey, through a tunnel. We had the old soft coal burners at that time. We stopped in the tunnel. We had our blues on, it was July. We had our dress blues. Hotter than blue hell. And soot coming in through the windows, soot laying on the windows. Oh, Jeez, it was awful. We got down there about 6:00 and went to the post office. Go

to find a place to stay. Well, we went up to 34<sup>th</sup> Street, YMCA. Some of us got in, the rest of us didn't. 'Where can we find a place to stay?' Go up to 36<sup>th</sup> Street' or something. We went up there and found rooms. Well, they weren't too hot. A dollar a night. We went back the next day, third or fourth floor, lieutenant come out. 'Anyone know anything about taking fingerprints?' Yeah.' So there is WAVES in the outfit, I don't know where the hell they came from, I don't think they came from Samson, they weren't in the train anyway. So I got by the thing and soaked the wheel or the tin up or whatever they had. Fingerprinted quite a few. He said 'now we need two men for the carpenter shop.' Well, I love carpenter work. I did all this work, built the rooms we live out of the store.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 0:52:12.9 YOU BUILT THIS PORCH OUT HERE?

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:52:15.5 Double-deck, it was a single deck before. So I tore it off and I built this. We had the house in good shape, it is going to pieces now and I don't care because the kids don't want it. Anyway. So the fellow from Troy, we all got Third Class in boot camp. And we went to the carpenter shop. And what a racket. It was about ten or 12 and half of them didn't know a hammer from a nail and they had other maintenance men down there, electricians, and pipe setter. We finally found a bug-infested apartment on 67<sup>th</sup> Street, I think it was. West. But we didn't stay there too long. We went up to 94<sup>th</sup> Street and we stayed there. We got a nice little apartment. We had bed bugs, and I went down to the landlord and said 'You have got to get those bed bugs out of there or we are going to move, I have had enough of those damn things. So we came home one day and there exterminator was up there and he was spraying everything with kerosene. Boy did it stink, but we had no more bed bugs. We had more parties. Our lieutenant was a fella from North Carolina, his name was Bun Bray (?). Hell of a good guy. We had dances. We'd make enough money from ship's services: 35, \$4,000 they'd have a dance. Had to have been there. St. George Hotel in Brooklyn, Roosevelt Hotel in New York. Oh, we would get drunk. Next day I couldn't go to work. My buddy, Giggy, would get up and stagger down. But I wouldn't see Uncle Bun until the next day. I'd say 'Sorry, Uncle Bun, I couldn't make it.' He'd say 'I didn't think you would.' He was with us. He was right with us.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:54:13.3 Well, I was discharged in March of 1946. And we shipped the Atlantic Fleet records to San Francisco. And my lieutenant was going to San Francisco to take charge of maintenance there and he wanted me to go take charge of the carpenter shop, and so I went up in his office and I said 'Uncle Bun,' we always called him Uncle Bun, he was younger than most of us. I said 'I would love to go with you, but if I can't stay here I am only wasting my time, I am ready to go back and get to work.' Well, it was only going to last six months, so I didn't go. And that was the last I heard of him, until last year. A widow of a fellow I worked in the post office with, he lived here at one time, I knew him when he was a kid, he was quite a lot older than I, she belongs to the retired federal employees, she gets a magazine. She brings it out to me, and I was looking at some pictures in it of gatherings here and there. And I spotted this Bun Bray talking to a chapter in Arlington, Virginia. And I says, 'my god, there can't be anyone else names Bun Bray.' So I wrote a letter to the postmaster in Arlington, Virginia, and got a nice letter back from Mr. Collins. He was head of customer relations or so on and so forth. And he says 'I couldn't locate the chapter you were talking about, but I looked up in the Northern Virginia phone book and I found a Bun B. Bray in Falls Church' and he gave me the address and his telephone number. So I wrote him a letter.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:56:35.2 Well, I'll be damned, I got an answer to the letter. I told him I would be 80 years old on the 6<sup>th</sup> of January. I got a letter from him, he says I tried to get you on the phone, I couldn't get you. My father died in 1959 and I never changed the phone over to me 'til after...I was in the process of doing it then. So I kicked out AT&T's phone about (?), and we went on a private line. That is why he couldn't get me. I wasn't listed...under my father's name. So I wrote back and told him I was glad to hear from him. In his first letter, or only letter, he said anytime you get down to Washington drop over. He was in Washington, he was in the bureaucracy. He had something to do with the post-office, advisor of post offices in some subcommittee or something in either the House or the Senate, the house probably. And he worked at the Pentagon. Well I said I had a brother who worked at the Pentagon, different times. He was a Colonel, I said he was probably a captain or a lieutenant colonel when you were a major, when you knew him, if you did know him. I said don't consider this an obligation to keep answering letters, I was just glad to hear from you and hash over some of the old times we had at the fleet post-office and it was really, really good.

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:58:14.6 God, I made a bookcase, a gun cabinet down there and shipped it up. I made that down there and shipped it up, and I don't know how many more I got upstairs. I shipped...I wouldn't ship it up to you, I would cut plywood up and send plywood home. And we cut up more thousands and thousands of feet of pure ponderosa pine, clear ponderosa pine. It was a crime, a crime to do it. We had work to do. The boss came to me, he was half Jew and half German, so he took all the holidays off. Christian and Jewish. [Laughs] And he was an awful good egg. His name was Bernback (?). He says Uncle Bun wants a chute put up to the pier, they are working mail on a pier, and that is where the fellow ended up that worked with me up there, and he damn near froze to death. He says 'Think you can handle that?'

ALBERT CUTLER: 0:59:21.3 'Sure I can handle that.' I will take some boys up and measure it up and see what we have to do. We have to cut a hole in the deck, that thick, the upper deck on the pier. So I figured out how much we'd need, so much flooring, so much pine for the sides, so much four by fours for the standards and lumber to exit. So I took...he says, I think it was Tuesday, 'it's got to be done,' or Wednesday...it's got to be done on Thursday night and I don't want to see any of you 'til Tuesday morning.' So took a truck and went over to the Brooklyn Navy Yard and got everything we wanted except the four by fours, they didn't have them. So they took a stack of four by 16s and put them on a rack and clamped them down and started this saw, a band saw, going across the track and when that hit, it shaved off four by fours like nothing. Big four by 16s, all we wanted. So I took five men with me and all the material we needed, and I did most of it in the shop and I put flooring together in certain lengths and then left...on each one, the opposite spline (?) of 8 eight inches. So you could shove them together and bat them together and as I came down it would shoot off the loading platform. So we got all finished that and built a rack around the hole so somebody wouldn't fall in it.

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:01:15.6 We got all finished around 9:00 at night. And 'god almighty,' I said, 'is it going to work?' So we got some mailbags that were loaded and started throwing them down and they wouldn't go too well. One of the fellas, I give him some money and I say 'Here, you go find a store, I don't care how far you've got to go, and bring back two boxes of corn meal.' So he did, he dumped the corn meal down and poured them down, more corn meal, more bags, pretty soon it is right down off the end of the platform. I still have a commendation for that job. No, I have a commendation for creating all the tubs that we...of all the Atlantic Fleet records,

and I don't know how many, we had three freight cars full, we had a commendation for loading them all on the freight cars and staying them all so they wouldn't rattle all around.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:02:15.3 TELL ME MORE ABOUT THE RIVER AND ABOUT SHAD FISHING.

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:02:25.1 Well, goodness sake, there isn't a whole lot more to it.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:02:32.9 WAS THERE A COMMUNITY OF FISHERMEN? DID EVERYONE HELP EACH OTHER OUT? DID EVERYONE KNOW EVERYONE ELSE?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:02:38.8 Yeah, if they were talking, yeah. Some of them worked together. They'd each have a boat and they'd worked together and help each other do it. They did that quite often.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:02:48.6 HOW DID YOU HOOK UP WITH YOUR DISTRIBUTOR IN ELLENVILLE?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:02:53.3 He was coming up for the other fishermen.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:02:57.7 SO EVERYONE SHARED A DISTRIBUTOR?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:03:00.1 Yeah, you know during the war, they made money hand over fist. And they were going for a big, big price.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:03:07.6 WHAT WERE THEY GOING FOR?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:03:08.7 Oh, gosh. I don't know. Two bucks for a roe. Or a dollar for a buck. And that was big money. We were satisfied with a dollar and fifty, but then the shad would start running heavy and they'd knock the price down.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:03:24.2 SO DID A LOT OF PEOPLE START FISHING THEN TO MAKE MONEY?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:03:28.5 There wasn't any money left. No. This friend of mine up here is 87 or 88 years old now, and he never learned to swim, and he used to go out with his brothers. And his brothers are all dead. He and his sister are the only ones left out of about seven kids, I guess. They made big money. And they are a family that took care of themselves. They came first. I paid him, his brother the third. I paid him, oh, probably \$600 for the four or five weeks that we fished. Well, a family those days could live for \$600 a year. They didn't live too high, but they lived. Existed.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:04:21.0 DID YOUR FAMILY APPROVE OF YOU FISHING? DID THEY MIND?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:04:29.8 Oh my, I was married and on my own. See, we lived in town after I was discharged, folks that owned the bungalow we rented was only a step from the railroad station and they owned a big stone house and they were old and they wanted to sell the stone house and they wanted the bungalow, so I had to get out. So, they couldn't put us out unless they paid us two months rents, I think they had to \$25 a month, or something like that. Well, I

collected 50 bucks and moved out in August and came here. So we stayed upstairs and John says come on, we are going to build rooms in the store. So we started in and ripped the whole show windows all off the front and we went out in the woods and cut pine trees that big for lumber, things were tough to get, we had our priority for sheet rock, and everything else we bought was tough. So we bought....there's a hummer, up on the clothesline, sitting up on the clothesline, see it? Little devils.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:05:40.0 DO YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF HUMMINGBIRD?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:05:46.6 There is only kind of humming bird we have, a ruby throat. Sure! Did you ever see a picture of it? Have you seen the new stamps? That's a ruby throat. But these haven't a ruby throat, these are all females. It is only the male who has a ruby. You know they go over to Central America to winter? Amazing. Where was I? I don't know. I lost my train of thought.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:06:23.0 YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT THE HOUSE AND CUTTING THE LUMBER IN THE WOODS AND THE SHEET ROCK.

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:06:29.9 Oh, well. We built this a couple of years later, we could buy stuff in 1948, 1949. Here is another customer. I did my own plumbing, I did my own electric work, I did my own carpenter work, I did my own painting. We had this place painted about five or six years ago, inside here, cost me \$1000. And everything we did here, bathroom, everything else, cost \$1000, these rooms. This cost about \$700 and something, the garage cost around \$250. But I paid Dad I don't what the rent was, about \$25 a month. I borrowed money...I borrowed \$500, no, I borrowed \$1000 to buy a new car in 1948. And I paid him back \$500 and he said that is enough. So I said, alright. He ate with us down here, he ate with us a lot after my mother died. He had an awful time with her. I think she died with Alzheimer's Disease, she didn't know anything for five years. Terrible. But he had a hernia, I took him to the hospital, 2:00 in the afternoon, he never come out of the anesthetic. He was satisfied, he was almost 84 years old.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:07:50.0 WHAT YEAR WERE YOU BORN?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:07:55.7 1912.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:07:59.7 AND WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:08:02.1 Right here. Upstairs. I had a little coal stove, about that big, it was January and colder than blue hell and Pop said I had to keep stoking that little stove. We didn't have any heat in the house until after Pop had the post office, then we had the big furnace put in. I ripped that out in 1968 and put a new hot air system in. I'd heat just our apartment and a couple of rooms upstairs where I put all my flowers. I've got 60 or 70 amaryllis and I have 30 some blooming every year. And you think that is a job, carting them in and out. Putting them out in the spring. I have got to get rid of them, I just can't handle it.



MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:08:46.3 ARE THERE ANY OTHER OF THE OLD TIME FISHERMEN AROUND STILL, TODAY? YOU MENTIONED LAWLESS.

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:08:54.9 Nope, everyone's gone. Except Ed Turpening. He lives up just across from the church.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:09:05.0 AND HOW OLD IS HE?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:09:08.5 86 or 87. I think he is 87, And I got a sister that just turned 89. The 21st of July. She lives with her daughter in New York and she doesn't know which end is up either. She was a nurse and she married a doctor. And my brother he was graduated from Syracuse University college of forestry in, let's see, 1930, I think. He is still alive, 83. I lost a sister, would have been 86 or 87, of TB in 1930. Twenty-four years old. She went from here and she was a whiz at typing and shorthand. She went through high school in three years and she went to work for JP Morgan in New York. She married and came home in 1949 to have the baby and she never went back. And the baby stayed with my mother for four or five months, until her husband took it and he remarried my sister's best girlfriend she met down there. I saw, I saw when I was in Navy I went up to see the old folks his parents lived in the house that they lived in up in the Bronx. That is the last we ever heard of them. And all the family is buried out in the Glasco cemetery, it is an old Dutch cemetery. We are Dutch, French, German, English and what else stuck in there, American Indian. I had two, one great aunt, a sister of my grandfather, she looked just like an Indian. And then I remember a great great aunt that married a Bolton, in fact the wood scraper out in the front of the house has got his name on, to P.E. Bell (?) and she looked just like an Indian. Her name was Huff. Dutch extract. And dad said that when he was young, when they wanted to talk about anything that they didn't want him to understand they would talk in Dutch. My father was born here. My grandfather was born here.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:12:08.2 IN ALL THE TIME THAT YOU HAVE BEEN WATCHING THE RIVER AND LIVING HERE, HOW HAS IT CHANGED?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:12:16.1 Well, years ago, there weren't all these trees. It was mostly clear, brush mostly, down in the places that wasn't used too much. But all those big poplar trees are growing up and a lot of them locusts and these things that my brother sent down from the Adirondacks when he was up there, sophomore year in college. They were about that high, the larch. He sent about a dozen home and we had to get folks to cut them down and get rid of them. And they are nuisance. They drop cones and the needles, it is the only conifer that drops the needles. It is not an ever-green, and it fouls up on the roof, and I had to go up and clean the down spouts off.

MARGUERITE HOLLOWAY: 1:13:06.3 WHAT ABOUT THE RIVER, IN TERMS OF WHETHER IT WAS CLEAN OR DIRTY?

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:13:12.2 Oh, goodness sake, when I first started to fish a linen net, well the thread would be just a small thread, they called it a 32 cord, 33 cord, and you would pull it up and it would look like a piece of clothesline. Toilet paper, condoms, all kinds of crap and junk and the river was so dirty that every summer started to work and you would have huge rafts of frog spawn, green crap. They made every body, they made us, put sewers in. Didn't make us, we voted on it. Cost \$800 a year, just sewers. But it is clean, except for the damn PCBs. And a

lot of people depended on the fish for food. They would come down and sit by the dock and catch themselves some bullhead, perch, eels. No more.

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:14:22.4 I don't know, GE spent an awful lot of money and now there is a debate. They wanted to dredge it out south of Hudson Falls to the Troy Dam, they wanted to dredge it out and put it over in Washington County and bury it. well, people raised hell and I don't blame them. They wouldn't let them go over there.

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:14:52.7 So, oh by the way, I think my great grandfather came from Cossackie. He married, courted my great grandmother...yeah, well anyway. They split up. They had two children, my grandfather and then a great aunt. And then she married a William Miller. And according to, my father always talked about Grandpa Miller. Well god sakes he died about a month after my father was born in 1876. According to the stone out in the cemetery. And she died somewhere around the time I was born 'cause my older sister remembers her. But they are all old timers, the old Dutch, it was settled by Dutch and Germans, some English, mostly Dutch in this section. And the Palatines, that was over in Germantown. My mother, my mother's family, my grandmother owned this house over here, was a Rockefeller. There are a lot of Rockefellers across the river, they are all, they are poor Rockefellers. They were hooked up to the rich Rockefellers. I guess nobody ever knew 'em. But she was born out in Watson Hollow, where the Ashokan Reservoir is now. It is all covered with water. And then they moved down here and that is where they all stayed.

[BREAK IN THE TAPE]

ALBERT CUTLER: 1:16:32.9 ...ran for supervisor, and this was rock-ribbed Republican district. So I got time to, had to be 21 in those days, to vote. I never enrolled in any party. But I always been conservative. And I have been very well satisfied with it. I am not satisfied with the way things are going now, but they blame too damn much on the president. And they don't blame enough on Congress. I still think we would have a better system if we had a system like England that the legislature would always be the same as the Prime Minister. So if he made a mistake they would kick him out, they would bring him to a vote any time, you wouldn't have to wait four years to bring him to a vote. And another thing I believe is recall. If you have some dirty slob in politics that don't belong there, get rid of them. But here they won't pass any recall legislation, nor will they pass any right, people to petition for legislation. Happened in California. Stirred things up in...California is in tough shape. \$12 million in the red. Here we are bad enough.

[END OF THE TAPE]

