

Transcript of OH-00098

Harry Thomas Stine

Interviewed by
John Wearmouth

on
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Typographic Note

- [Inaudible] is used when a word cannot be understood.
- Brackets are used when the transcriber is not sure about a word or part of a word, to add a note indicating a non-verbal sound and to add clarifying information.
- Em Dash — is used to indicate an interruption or false start.
- Ellipses ... is used to indicate a natural extended pause in speech

Subjects

Oystering
Depressions
World War, 1939-1945
Fishing boats
American oyster fisheries
Pollution
Environmental protection
Cobb Island (Md.)
Potomac River
Transportation
Genealogy
Civil service

Tags

Watermen
Depression, 1929
Rock Point (Md.)
Wicomico River (Charles County, Md.)
Cobb Neck (Md.)
The Oyster Wars
D-Day, 1944 (Normandy invasion)

Transcript

John Wearmouth [J]: This is John Wearmouth interviewing Mr. Harry T. Stine at his home on the Wicomico River about three miles from Rock Point. The date is November 19, 1989. This interview is part of the Charles County Community College Oral History Program and it will be one of the series of tape recorded interviews that will be done in the next several weeks with watermen from the Cobb Neck area of Charles County. Captain Stine and the people who have known him for many years especially around here still call him Captain Stine. And his father before him was sometimes called Captain Stine as well. He's a lifelong waterman and has been working in construction work for some years now. But he started out learning a living—if they can call it a living—as a waterman. Primarily I would say on the Wicomico and the Potomac down in the fifth district area. You were born Harry for this interview do you mind if I call you Harry?

Harry Thomas Stine [H]: Yeah sure.

J: And if you want me to stop this at any time just hold up your hand and we'll turn this on pause and we will. So you were born about how far from where we are right now?

H: About three miles.

J: And was the house right on the Wicomico?

H: Right on the Wicomico yeah.

J: Okay. There's not much there today. Do you recall about how many families lived along the Wicomico when you were growing up? Who were some of them?

H: Well there wasn't too many different families. There was the Norris's, Simms's, Stine's, Hill's, Llyod's, Farrell's, and that's about it.

J: A handful of houses?

H: Handful of houses yes but most everyone worked in the water except the Hill's and Norris's. They were had the local packing plant and the general merchandise store. And the Lancaster's of course. They owned most of the land.

J: And I guess they still do—

H: They still do own a bit in the family yes.

J: Okay. How many children were there in your immediate family? Brothers and sisters?

H: 10.

J: 10.

H: Seven boys and three girls.

J: And it took a little bit of doing to keep food on the table then?

H: Everybody had to work. When it was real scarce you know there wasn't any.

J: What brought the Stine family to this part of Maryland?

H: I really don't know. My mother's born and raised in St. Mary's County. Her people the Farrell's they came from Ireland to St. Mary's. My father's people came from Germany to Baltimore. There was seven brothers in that—in his family and all of them migrated down here. I don't know why.

J: For goodness sake's. I should put on the tape the fact that your father's family spelled the name S-T-E-I-N-E.

H: S-T-I-N-E is right.

J: Okay. And you have been spelling it S-T-I-N-E?

H: All my life.

J: All of your life. Okay. What's the—do you remember roughly what your first job was? When did the family decide that young Harry was ready to go to work to help keep things moving?

H: Well I guess from the time we was able to walk we had to do something. About everybody had to work. You know oysters were plentiful but you couldn't sell many of them you know when I was a youngster. And many one that I caught and sold for 20 cents a bushel. And crabs was plentiful. We used to sell those to the Hill and Lloyd plant for a \$1.25 a barrel, which is

about three bushels. So you know they—and then they'd weight them and had the net 125 pounds. So we really weren't—we didn't get much.

J: So you were born in 1916 just before World War I. So we're talking about when you're early teens would be during the Depression years.

H: Absolutely no question.

J: Do you recall whether or not the Depression years were any tougher on people down here than the years before the Depression?

H: Well I don't know that it was really because nobody had anything but we still had plenty to eat. We had plenty to fish. Plenty of oysters and crabs and raised hogs and chickens and this sort of thing. And gardening and so on. But nobody had cars, no telephones, didn't even have electricity.

J: Nobody starved but that was about—

H: That was about the size of it I guess. Some of the people in the uplands had farms. The Lancaster's had a big farm. And we as kids worked over there you know just to give us 50 cents a day. [It fed us so on].

J: Big money while there wasn't no other opportunity for you.

H: Right.

J: You couldn't even make it to Newburg.

H: That's exactly right. It was a long way to walk.

J: About what time did your father get his hands on an automobile?

H: My father never owned an automobile in his life.

J: Never learned how to drive?

H: Never did.

J: For goodness sakes.

H: He had a boat but he never owned a car.

J: So as far back as you can go your father supported the family primarily from the water, from the river?

H: I suppose.

J: What was the best time of the year? When was the cash flow at its very best?

H: I guess the summer time and fall. That's when the crab was good and then the fall in the middle of September the oysters and so on. I guess that was about those times.

J: Was there ever a period when he was able to just stay around the house and?

H: Well not unless the weather was bad and he couldn't get in the river any place. You know, they had the long haul when there's deep snow and heavy ice. And then they had to stay around there then.

J: So in the coldest weather he went out as long as there was no ice?

H: Right. We've even had to cut holes in the ice and walk out and tong oysters through the holes in the ice. Somedays.

J: Seems like I can remember not too long ago the watermen here being rather bitter about the fact that Neal's Sound was frozen and nobody was helping them open it up. And I guess this would be what the coast guard or the State of Maryland that would help in such cases?

H: Well we were able to get the Department of Natural Resources to send an ice breaker in. Had to come out—I think he'd come out of the Norfolk area in here and broke us out one time.

J: This was in the past 10 or 15 years really?

H: Yes, yes. They came into Neal's Sound and opened it up. Of course I was involved in that because I guess I was probably President of the Watermen's Association at that time.

J: Okay. About how old were the Stine boys when they began to go out on the boat with Benjamin Stine?

H: Well my father's brother had a sail boat back years ago when you used to dredge oysters out of the Potomac River. And I was out there course as a kid. Couldn't do much but I was there. They used to take me along. Especially on the weekends, Fridays and Saturdays. Or whenever we could get on there. [And it was six that had been on that boat to dredge, dredge sails]. I never did really work on it. I just went along as a kid. I wasn't big enough to do any work on it.

J: Is dredging legal now?

H: No sir not here.

J: When was it declared illegal? Do you remember roughly?

H: I guess they outlawed dredging about 50 years ago here in the Potomac River. [8:11]

H: I guess they outlawed dredging about 50 years ago here in the Potomac River.

J: I remember the late Bruce Shymansky telling me one day about being out on the river and apprehending some St. Mary's County oysterers who were dredging illegally.

H: They were dredging with piles then. That's I guess when he was sheriff I guess or deputy sheriff.

J: It must have been.

H: He might have been sheriff then. They were up here in the Wicomico with seven boats of them. He went out there and two or three others and caught them. I don't know what ever happened to them but I know they got their boats back.

J: What sort of equipment were they using for dredging?

H: They used [power boat]—

J: Power boat?

H: Mhm.

J: And they were dredging the bottom?

H: Dredging the bottom.

J: With what?

H: With the dredges. It's an object you know built like a rake. I guess it was about three or four feet across the back tapered and had a chain bag into it and teeth that dragged the bottom. They could clean the river up with them. They still use them a lot in difference places. Course it's illegal.

J: Then that load would be winched up?

H: They would pull in by hand. A couple of men would pull in by hand.

J: You're talking about a lot of weight.

H: Yes.

J: A lot of weight. Anyway so tongs are the only legal thing today?

H: Right tongs yes but now they dive for them not too much here we don't have too many engaged in that industry here. There's some in St. Mary's. Easter Shore has a lot of them.

J: About what percentage of families in the Cobb Neck area depended in one degree or another on river income?

H: Back years ago?

J: Yeah.

H: I'd say 95 percent.

J: Either full time or part time?

H: Right mostly all of them full time. Of courses kids and everybody had to go. It was cold hard work.

J: It still is. It must've been great out there this morning.

H: Yes.

J: When your father was supporting the family from his river work do you have any feel for what the average annual income was for the Stine family between let's say 1920 and 1935?

H: Oh gosh it was very, very, very low. You know like I said oysters 20 cents a bushel. First part of the season oysters come in [inaudible]. In September you could only sell maybe two days catch per week. And then we would stake open an area in the water and plant them and pick them up around Thanksgiving or Christmas and maybe get [45, 50] cents for them. So income was practically nothing. Of course we rented a house from the Lancaster's. I think rent was about eight dollars a month or something like that. So I don't know, practically nothing.

J: I suppose there were weeks when your Dad was lucky to sell eight dollars' worth of oysters.

H: That's right. That's right and that was—

J: That was a lot of money.

H: And you take [inaudible] people sit down to the table that was a whole lot of biscuits. But my poor mother had to bake three times a day because there's no such thing as loaf of bread then. Because all the supplies came to the—no trucks then they came on steamboat.

J: What were the names of some of the steamboats that stopped at Rock Point?

H: The old *Northumberland*, the *Dorchester*, and they used to run out of Washington, Baltimore, and stop along the way in here and St. Mary's, and up the Bay up and up the Potomac.

J: So when they delivered merchandise they were serving primarily the merchants in the Cobb Neck area?

H: That's right. But once they stopped in here and St. Mary's and they used to go across to Chaptico and haul over and stuff. I think they stopped at Morgantown and Pope's Creek. All over the places.

J: How much water did those boats need under their keel to get in?

H: Well my guess, those pretty big old boats I guess at Rock Point went down under water about 10 feet probably about. Of course they most of them when they first started out those old paddle wheels they didn't have too much draft you know—

J: Were these side wheels or stern wheelers?

H: Side Wheelers.

J: Okay so they could get by with six to eight feet of water.

H: Right.

J: What kind of tons are we talking about? Let's say the *Dorchester* do you have any feel?

H: I guess—god it was so long ago—but I guess—

J: 2,000?

H: I guess so because those boats I guess were a 100 feet long. 80, 100 feet long I guess. And they used to carry passengers too you know they were a couple of decks with two or three stories.

J: Was this kind of a fun time for kids when they came in?

H: Well every Sunday families [mull around] come down to the dock to watch steamboat come in and they had people on them that would bring the supplies off on the trucks and take it back the same way. And during the harvest of tobacco in the summer time all the tobacco was shipped out of here on those boats [inaudible].

J: So they really were important to the economy of the Cobb Neck area?

H: Yes they were absolutely.

J: The railroad didn't do you much good down here?

H: The railroad didn't come any further than Pope's Creek.

J: Right so as far as you were concerned it could've been—

H: [Well yeah right.]

J: Anyway—

H: Take you a day to get up there.

J: In a family like the Stine family you weren't farming; maybe a garden plot?

H: Yes that's about it.

J: What were your mother's responsibilities in the home? Who called the shots in the Stine family home with respect to big decisions? Who really ran things?

H: I really guess my mother did in my family.

J: Okay. Often as not that was true.

H: Yes.

J: There was some women's liberty even back then.

H: That's right. She sees you got up in the morning and got to school. She sees you were fed and sees you washed your clothes and done the cooking and work the garden and done a little bit of everything.

J: What did she do outdoors? Was there a yard to be kept up? A kitchen garden?

H: Well she worked in the garden of course. Well the yard I guess [inaudible phrase] there was a bunch of little kids around there all the time had to keep them out the river.

J: Okay. So how many of your brothers and sisters stayed at home? How many followed the kind of life you did?

H: All of them.

J: All of them? And what were—let's start from the oldest and go right on down to the youngest with the names. First born was?

H: Was Minnie.

J: Minnie.

H: And she was well she's still living. She's 86. And she married a Farrell. So she got married. She lived on a farm probably with his father I suppose.

J: And what is her married name?

H: Farrell.

J: Farrell okay.

H: And then I guess the next oldest one was a boy. His name was Ernest and of course he didn't get married till later years. Of course he stayed home till he got married. He didn't get married [inaudible]. He was 30, 40 years old I guess before he got married.

J: He wanted to be sure of himself.

H: And then the next one was a boy and he stayed home till he got married. I guess he got married some time I guess 40's I guess. 30's or 40's and both of them are dead. And then the next one in the family was Mrs. Norris Florence.

J: I knew her.

H: You know her.

J: I know her.

H: She married and left home [inaudible]. He people owned the grocery store down there that she still has at Rock Point. And then the next one was a boy named Harvey. And he lived just before you get to Cobb Island and just before he get to Captain John's right there. He's always lived here.

J: On the right as you head towards the island?

H: On the right little brick bramble right on the water right there on the creek. And then the next one I guess would be me. And I lived here all my life except when I was in the service. And then the next one was a girl named May and she married a Simms from Rock Point. And she's still here and still living there. Then the next one was named Elmer and he lived at Cobb Island. Still lives here. And then the next one was named Eddy and he got drowned when he was about eight.

J: In the river?

H: In the river. Right across the river over here. He was on a fishing boat a haul seine boat with my father and he was asleep and they went out to haul the net and looked in there and he had a habit of walking in his sleep so I suppose nobody ever noticed that he got up and walked right over board. And then the youngest was named Lester and he lives in White Stone, Virginia. He's the only one that ever left this part of the—that's left Charles County.

J: Way down the mouth of the Rappahannock?

H: Right.

J: Okay.

H: He lived down there and comes back here. You know comes around to see us two or three times a year. So I guess that's—that was the sum.

J: Yes darn good size count. Do you know when your father arrived here in Charles County roughly?

H: No. No I don't. He came—

J: He came as a single man?

H: Yeah the whole family did. There was seven of them. Seven boys in that family so I'm told. And one, the oldest one left here and none of them ever heard from him. His name was Fred Stine and he left here and none of his family ever seen or heard of him. [I don't] remember any of my grandfather and grandmother on my father's side. And I didn't remember my grandmother on my mother's side. I remember my grandfather. He and I were pretty good buddies. He died when I was real young but I remember.

J: This was your father's father?

H: This was my mother's—

J: Your mother's.

H: Mother's father.

J: Mr. Farrell.

H: Mr. Farrell.

J: Did the family stop in Baltimore? Did they ever live in Baltimore as far as you know?

H: I think my father's people did. I think they moved from Baltimore to St. Mary's—to down here Charles County. I guess Charles County because all of them was here and lived here all their life and died here. All of them.

J: Do you recall what sort of boat your father had in the first when you were very young maybe going out with him? Can you describe the kind of watercraft that he had?

H: When I was little he had a 32 foot what's called a dory boat. And the old fellow was a boat builder by the name of Joseph Price. And it had a round stern and [break good] beam and it had a five horse power engine in it. Mr. Price built that boat. My father had that I guess up until a couple years before he died. Until it just had had it all those years and had it rebuilt and repaired many, many times.

J: That was a heck of a big [dory] wasn't it?

H: Yeah that was a nice boat.

J: What sort of a beam did she have?

H: I guess she had maybe eight, nine foot in width, 32 foot in length.

J: And where did Price build his boats?

H: He right at Rock Point. Right in well when you're going in to [inaudible] like you're going to Mrs. Norris's store the place called Furbush Road. You turn right and go right back in there right to a little creek back in there. John Neal's Sound [with a little] [inaudible]. He lived right on the water there.

J: That's where Mrs. Furbush lived and Frank—

H: That's right just before you get there.

J: I know that place.

H: But you make the turn going around the right hand turn—

J: Right yeah.

H: That old house right in those trees and [inaudible]—

J: Almost dead ahead.

H: Dead ahead.

J: Yeah okay.

H: He built them right up on that hill, pushed them down the bank when they were finished. When I was a youngster I guess 90 percent of the boats in this area that little man built.

J: Is that so? How did he compare with Hayden for quality?

H: Well I guess Mr. Price he built those things back long before Hayden did that I remember. Maybe [inaudible] [Hayden's] grandfather might have built some. But 90 percent of the boats that's here Mr. Price built them.

J: Do you have any idea what a boat like that would sell for about 1925?

H: I don't know maybe three or four hundred dollars maybe. Because my brother had one built after he was grown. Of course Mr. Price didn't build that. He had it built down on the Eastern Shore. And I guess that was a 36 boat. An Eastern Shore type of boat. I don't believe that cost over eight hundred dollars.

J: Good lord. What kind of weight are we talking about for a 34 foot dory with say an eight or nine foot beam?

H: Oh I'd guess I don't know I guess they'd weigh a couple tons I guess. Because they were built out of heavy lumber then. You know two inch stuff, oak and pine.

J: If a man wanted to really go first class in a dory would he have any say in the kind of timbers that went into it? The man who was going to buy the boat, could he tell the boat builder?

H: I guess he probably could have but back in those days they used pine for the sides and the bottom and they used white oak for the timbers and a lot of them they used pine keels in them.

J: Could everything be found right here locally?

H: Yeah they did back then.

J: Okay. What was the first power plant in your father's boat?

H: I guess the first one that I can remember was a five horse power [inaudible phrase] make and break.

J: For heaven's sake.

H: You had a great big old fly wheel about two inches thick you had crank it over to start.

J: Took a man to do that.

H: No speed to it my god. Back then we used to go if the oyster season opened—

J: How many cylinders?

H: One.

J: One.

H: The old putt putt.

J: Old putt putt.

H: And we use to go to Morgantown to oyster. The season came in the 15th of September and the boat was so slow that we had to stay on the boat up there. We couldn't come back and forth every day. It'd take too long to do it.

J: Just to Morgantown back here.

H: Morgantown back here and we stayed on the boat.

J: How long would it have taken you?

H: God it'd take a half a day.

J: That's incredible. It's hard to believe.

H: You take a 32 foot boat with a five horse power engine by God you'd run as fast as you could walk. Now you can go up there in four or five minutes with some of these crafts.

J: One of those big boats with an engine like that would be lucky to make three knots wouldn't it?

H: You're right yes.

J: I suppose there was never—was there ever any need for refrigeration on those boats?

H: No.

J: Is there today?

H: Well we didn't even have refrigeration at home. An ice box and we do that on the boats now. You know some of the boats got refrigeration now. Not too many of the oyster boats. But most people have gone or are getting away from all these big wooden boats. There are not many of them left around here. Most of them going to glass now.

J: So Mr. Price's first names was?

H: Luther.

J: Luther?

H: Luther Price.

J: Price. Okay.

H: I'll never forget that old man.

J: Who were some of the other boat builders from the fifth district that you can remember?

H: Well there wasn't many boat builders in the fifth district. Now you said you talked to Mr. Hayden. I think his father back in the later years started building boats?

J: This would be Luther's grandfather first?

H: Well Luther Price he came from Virginia I believe over in the Dahlgren area I understand. He was the first one that I knew that built boats here and I guess then [inaudible] a guy by the name of [inaudible] Oliver. He's dead now and he built a few boats you know in later years. But Price was the first one that I knew of.

J: So how long did your father have this one boat?

H: Probably must have had that boat 40 years I guess. Course it had been rebuilt a couple of times. You know new deck and new sides and parts of the sides of the boat.

J: Was he able to do that?

H: No he always had Mr. Price or some over carpenter do it.

J: How many power plants did he run through in that boat?

H: I don't know. That old [make and break] lasted for years and years and years and then—

J: Why did they call it a make and break?

H: Well I guess because it had—it didn't have a spark plug in the thing and it had a coil on it you could, would buzz you know and it was only one cylinder. You didn't even have to have a cover over it. It'd just sit out in the rain.

J: Good lord.

H: Nothing to get wet stuff [from running had a]—

J: Magneto, magneto start?

H: Magneto start. Some of them had—

J: No battery? No battery need.

H: That come along a little bit later.

J: And it was definitely hand crank?

H: Oh definitely.

J: Did you ever start it yourself?

H: Oh yes.

J: Cold weather?

H: Yes with cold weather.

J: [Slugged in inaudible]?

H: Really didn't make much difference in cold weather but just didn't go along anyway.

J: Okay. Did you as a boy enjoy being out on the river with this one?

H: Well I guess I did. I grew up in it and done it for so long. And I even go out there now. Not go out there to catch any oysters or crabs to sell but catch them for my own use and give them to my friends. I went out two or three times this year first part of the season.

J: So it's in your blood?

H: I guess so. I still know how it's done and still am able to do it, which I'm very thankful for.

J: Harry what's the difference between the kind of equipment your dad would have taken out on his boat and that that's being taken out today? Are there any big differences at all in the equipment needed to oyster? Any improvements at all?

H: Well the equipment is almost the same. I've got some of it right here. Some of the oyster tongs that we used years and years ago I guess I got 10, 15 pair of them. Course I try to keep them in good condition. But the tongs are the same. Just down right down like it was many years ago.

J: Any difference in the dimensions at all and specifications? Length of handles?

H: The handles are [inaudible]. We call them shafts. And the heads all the same. Now they've gone with electric winders to wind up the tongs, which was unheard of then, for the sort of longer tongs. Everybody pulled them by hand. A few of them still do.

J: What's the length of most of the tongs today?

H: Well most of the tongs that they catch oysters with today 16 to 22 foot in this area. You know you've done a day's work—

J: Again it takes a lot of man.

H: If you go out there and pull in 22's all day.

J: What kind of weight are we talking about if you get a real nice heavy bite and you pull up a god mess?

H: Well I guess with those tongs and now they've got what they call the [eel pot] heads and they're much larger and will hold twice as much. I guess you could bring up a heck of better stuff into it.

J: And with the mud and all the water?

H: Well a good oyster tonger don't bring much mud. He can almost fill those things and the bottoms without bringing up too much mud. So the tongs are hung so that [their mouths] and the weight doesn't really make that much difference. And you know you can take pull them up over hand like this and when you get ready to bring them out of the water you catch them down by the [rivets] it depends on them how full they are and you know when you see them. They'll almost balance themselves and swing them right over but it's still hard work.

J: What would a peck of oysters weigh right out of the water you know no washed off?

H: Well most of the oystermen would bring them up almost as clean as they would. If you'd take them away there'd be a lot of shells and stuff into it. So I don't know I'd guess 25 to 30 pounds maybe.

J: Okay. I ask because when I went out we were bringing up a lot of mud.

H: Yeah okay.

J: I think Herman Penn probably wasn't as skilled as you.

H: Okay well a good oystermen he don't bring up too much mud.

J: It was my job to clean them so I remember the mud.

H: Some of the youngsters would probably do it. But take a good oyster tonger he would tong that stuff fairly clean and if there was any mud to into it he would rinse them in the water like this you know and then dump them up. There wouldn't be much mud into them. Not a good oystermen.

J: Was it a—what kind of experience was it for you as a youngster watching the buy boat come in and dickering with the buy boat Captain?

H: Well we didn't do much dickering. They'd come in and had a set price.

J: They told you?

H: They pretty well told you. And they pretty well controlled it.

J: And there was not too much?

H: In the later years now it's a little different.

J: To the advantage today of the oystermen would you say?

H: I would say so.

J: Okay. Where did most of those by boats come from in this area?

H: Most of them I'd say 75 percent of them came from [Chris Field].

J: Way across there.

H: Way across yes on the Eastern Shore.

J: Were there a lot—there were canneries in Chris Field?

H: There was a lot of packing plants in there and they're almost all gone now. I guess Virginia has the reputation of—now like the seafood capital of Maryland now they've got it in Virginia.

J: Down in the northern neck?

H: Yes.

J: So you weren't selling a lot of oysters to the restaurants in Washington?

H: Very few, very few there was a few buy boats would come in and they would buy some stuff and they would run them to Washington tie up at the docks—

[Tape Interruption]

J: Who was one of your favorite all time people down here at Rock Point when you were growing up?

H: Well I guess, I guess the Lancaster family was. We as kids went over there and we worked on the farm and they rode the horses and had games and so on. Everybody who came to visit the Lancaster family knew the Lancaster was one of the finest [ladies] in the world.

J: Where were they living at the time? In the old brick house?

H: In the old brick house that's abandoned since she died.

J: Is that the one they call Rock Hall?

H: That's Rock Hall.

J: And was [Spearman] one of her older children?

H: I guess he was. I guess [Spearman] was one of the older ones. There was a whole bunch of them. You know there was three or four—

J: I Knew Charles.

H: Well there was [Spearman], Charles, John, and there was another one. He died pretty early. And there was four or five girls. So I guess [Spearman] was one of the older ones I would say.

J: So would you say that in the Rock Point area they were the first family so to speak?

H: Yes right.

J: As far as economic well-being is concerned. And of the period of time they lived here I guess nobody could remember when they didn't live here.

H: That's right.

J: The Lancaster's. There's still a few of them.

H: Course the old man, he was a nice old man, course he was a gentleman. He rode around on a white horse all the time.

J: Was one of them a state senator at one time way, way, way back?

H: He might have been. I know he was a police captain in a police boat one time I'm told. That was before my time. But we kids around there we seen him coming down the lane on that white horse we would fight one another to open the gate for him.

J: Oh think of that.

H: Because he'd give us a quarter.

J: And that was a lot of money?

H: God yeah. You know we would get a bunch of cake and [inaudible] [and we gonna eat it.]

J: When you were growing up out on the river starting to learn the business with your father what were some of the stories that the older oystermen told about the oyster wars? Did they have a few once in a while?

H: Well the oyster wars didn't really start back in those early days. They started a little later and I come along when the oyster war was going on.

J: I see.

H: I was a young man at that time.

J: How serious were they?

H: They were damn terrible. Most of those people were was out of Virginia that came across and dredged up those oysters in fast boats. See they had awful boats and the police boats couldn't keep up with them. They could run away from them and then you got into a shooting war with some of them.

J: What years are we talking about?

H: Well I guess this was back, back before the war I guess. Back in the 30's, the late 30's.

J: Was the local sheriff at that time empowered to get out on the water and enforce the law.

H: I think they were. I think they could've but they didn't do it too much because they had marine police and the state had boats and so on. Of course they finally had to get speed boats to catch them. Of course they caught a lot of them and confiscated the boats and so on.

J: So they actually dared fire on law enforcement authorities?

H: Yes they did absolutely.

J: So the economics involved were such that they figured a load of oysters was worth taking that chance?

H: Yeah they did and I think finally I think one man got killed from Virginia. I think the Maryland police shot and killed him. But he was here I don't guess he was shooting at them. He

was probably shooting at the boat to disable that and hit it. And then after that then they really brought airplanes and everything else in here and finally broke it up. I don't think it's too much of it going on now.

J: Was there any cross the river boot legging going on that you know of during the prohibition days?

H: Well I didn't know any of it. I knew it was going on. I know boat used to run out of Maryland and haul whiskey across to Virginia and so on. There was all kinds of stills and things around back during the bootlegging days during prohibition and I know some of them that was involved in it.

J: Even down here in the fifth district?

H: Well there was a guy living right up here. [Bennett Newburg] he was involved in it. Of course he's dead now. And I guess he got caught a couple of times. I think he lost a—I think he lost. He had an old car and he lost that one day and he went home and got his father's truck and lost that and then he got his father's car and lost that too all in the matter of one day.

J: Crime didn't really pay for him.

H: And I guess that put him out of business.

J: Good lord. When the Depression years came along did you find more people trying to work the river to get a little additional income?

H: Yes, yes of course there were. Because everybody was—

J: People who were absolutely green at it?

H: Absolutely. Course even the farmers would even be out there trying to make an extra buck.

J: What was the attitude of the professional watermen toward that?

H: Well I don't think they resented that too much.

J: Some of them were your friends and neighbors?

H: That's right. You know they're trying to do [that they had to have it] and needed. There's a little more resentment about it now than there was back then.

J: So back to the equipment it isn't really changed a great deal in 50 or 60 years?

H: Not a bit. Not a bit. I've got some stuff right now to catch oysters with that and I know some of them 50, 60 years old.

J: What's the average length again of the shafts?

H: Well they'll go—they average between 16 and 22 foot.

J: Okay. Is that a matter of personal choice?

H: I would say so. Well of course part of the season you can catch oysters with the shorter tongs and the latter part like now they got to go to the deeper waters. A lot of these—a lot of them don't use these long tongs but the ones that do will make a better day's work today with the long ones than they will with the short ones.

J: Are you oystering today? Are the watermen oystering today on the same bars that were active 50 years ago?

H: Most of them.

J: That's incredible. Were these bars given names? How were they identified? Well I don't know I guess back the bars that's there now were back there years ago and they named them. Of course the bars wasn't charted then. They were just oyster bars I suppose. And the one right off of Rock Point is called Lancaster bar. So I guess it was named after the Lancaster family.

J: Is that that long crescent shaped thing?

H: Right.

J: Like a big finger sticking out.

H: That's right and that's Lancaster bar. So I guess—and it's charted as that. Now this here right on this place this is called Windmill Point. And there's a bar that goes from the corner right by the [dug line] right down on the shore and goes to the buoy out there. This is Windmill bar.

J: So if you want to oyster you're practically in your back yard?

H: Yes, yes. And I've got a little 22 foot boat. Glass boat that I've put to water here and I've got it out there now in the shed covered up. I've got several tongs in it and got a [inaudible] on it. Next week I'm gonna put it over water and get a friend of mine out of Waldorf wants to go out and see how oysters are caught and I'm gonna take him out and catch them. Show him how it's done and catch a mess of oysters for he and I.

J: My son and I both would like to go out. We'll talk about this later. I've been out once but he wants to go. Okay to what extent today is oystering attracting the younger people? Are the kids

that normally would be turning into watermen are they leaving? Are they staying here? The economics of the thing are changing a little bit.

H: Well not too many of the youngsters are really going into it. A few of them but not too many. You take strangers who come here and it's fascinating to these youngsters and two or three of those will stay in here doing it. But they—the oysters are real—the quality and the quantity is terrible this year. We've got prospect for a good year the next two or three years if the police will keep that young oysters there and stop them from stealing. But not too many youngsters are really going into it anymore.

J: Too many other attractions.

H: Right, right.

J: And in your day you had to stay. You were locked into this community.

H: I had no place to go. That's right. Of course you know when they started building Potomac River Bridge back in 1938, 39 and then that was a union job and the pay was fairly good. I went to work on that bridge.

J: Earning quite bit more than you—

H: My God yeah you know and then I hadn't been there for too long I done guess and then well this was a really story. They were putting the decking on that bridge. Pouring concrete and everything come by boat, barge, and trucks. [Rail road wasn't there]. Well anyway the system superintendent of that job he had a barge come in loaded with bags of cement and he needed a piece of rope spliced so he could put down and load it, pick it up in the crate. Take it from the barge to the cement mixer. And he had a crew in there I don't know where they were from. I didn't know them they came with the rig. And he came up on the deck and I was working up there as a laborer and I knew him. And he was bustling and cussing and his first name was Jack and I don't remember his last name. And I said, "What's the matter Jack?" He said, "Of all them people here not a soul know how to splice a rope." I said, "You didn't talk to the right man." He said, "Can you splice?" and I said, "Yeah." He said, "There's plenty rope down there. Go down and make me up two 20—about two pair of 20 foot slings." I went down there and spliced them together, measured and spliced it. Come back on the deck and of course he didn't see me. He said, "I thought you were gonna splice the rope?" I said, "How long does it take to splice a piece of rope Jack? They all made." He went down there and he come back and he said, "I want you to take [captain] of that rig." I said, "No I can't do that because Jack, because them people don't know how to tie a rope. I need a different crew." "And where you gonna get them?" Of course we had a lot of youngsters from here that was working there as laborers.

J: Who were some of them? Do you remember?

H: Oh yeah. Andy Shymansky and Rolland Simms and all the youngsters around here.

J: Black and white?

H: Yes well most of them was white. So he said, "Go out there and pick yourself out a man of six people and take down to that barge. While I go down there and fire them." The guy sent them back to Pennsylvania. He did and gave me that job there. Paid me 150 dollars a week.

J: That was big money.

H: My God yeah. I thought I was the richest man in Southern Maryland.

J: What did your family—what did your dad think of this?

H: Well I was a young man then. I was up in my 20's then see.

J: And he was still out on the river?

H: Yeah and my God I. Well first thing I did was bought a car of course.

J: What kind was it and where did you buy it?

H: I bought it from Harry [Marvin] and bought a [Plymouth].

J: Okay from Waldorf?

H: From Waldorf. You know you could buy new [Plymouth] then for about 800 dollars.

J: That's right. Yeah.

H: Yeah and I'm making 150 dollars a week.

J: This is a six cylinder flat [inaudible].

H: Six cylinder.

J: Comfortable car this was a what a 39?

H: A 39 [inaudible].

J: Okay.

H: I still had it when I went to war. Still had it when I got back.

J: At what point in your life did you feel that you maybe didn't want to work the river the rest of your life?

H: Well after that of course. Of course then I was drafted about that time and headed to—

J: Big money corrupted you huh?

H: Well I suppose so and then I was mad at everybody in the world then because when I was drafted for that one year they only paid 21 dollars a month. And here I'm making a hundred and a half a week. So anyway after the war was over well like I said I went in the army and I was stationed at Fort Monroe Virginia and then when the war broke out they transferred us out to different organizations. You know one was [class A]. So I went to an amphibious school in Charleston South Carolina and I guess I was a corporal when I went there and I came out of that school that amphib school as a staff's officer.

J: What month and year did you go into the service?

H: I went in January. January 15, 1941.

J: Before Pearl Harbor?

H: Yeah, yeah before the war. I was in there—I only had 20 some 25 days to go when the war broke out. But then I was in the for the duration of the war. I stayed another five years.

J: In the service what theater were you in most of the time?

H: The European.

J: Okay.

H: I was in the invasion of Normandy.

J: Oh yeah did you meet any Charles County people?

H: Yes I had a cousin he was with the 29th division. And I was stationed in Bath, England. And we were on maneuvers and we went into I guess into [Plymouth] I guess. And we went into that station. They had a big army base there. And I went in to gas up our equipment and as we pulled in there I seen this guy standing he was a cousin of mine. His name was Joe Stine. And then another guy I met there was [Perry Wilmer]. He lived right here at Tompkinsville. So I ran into those two that I knew. And then on maneuvers we were on the LST and I ran into a guy by the name of Ralph Mattingly. But he lived here in Tompkinsville too. He's dead now I guess. Well I know he is. But I ran into him so I ran into three or four in Europe that were from here.

J: Somebody told me a story recently about you fishing somebody out of the water the invasion day. Somebody that you knew?

H: No. I didn't fish nobody out. I was in the amphibious—in these amphibious [ducks] going in—

J: Right okay

H: And got—got sunk on the way in and they got picked up and put on the LST. And as I was going over the, up the rope ladder, somebody caught me by the shoulder and pulled, helped me over the top of the deck. And I looked up and by George it was a guy from up in La Plata. Fred [Racing]. And he never could say Harry. He always called me Hurry. He said, "God damn Hurry what you doing down there?" And he pulled over—helped me over the rail.

J: He's still alive isn't he?

H: He's in the hospital. he's very bad off right now I understand.

J: He had it pretty rough I understand.

H: Yeah. And he—of course I smoked cigarettes then. So he said—I asked him for a cigarette as soon as I got on deck. So he said, "Come on down below," he said, "I just got some from home." And back then they had these flat fifties tins so he gave me one of those.

J: Yeah, yeah, Lucky Strike?

H: Well I'm not too sure they weren't Camel.

J: Or Camel, or Camel yeah. Both came in those—and Chesterfield. That's right. Well that's great. So that's the story anyway. I forget who told me. Maybe [inaudible]. So you didn't have any more serious trouble than that during the war?

H: No I don't believe so. Things moved along alright. We had a long hard haul in there. Went ashore in Normandy at the war's end. I was in Linz, Austria.

J: Oh yeah. L-I-N-Z yeah.

H: And we were to make a river crossing the next morning and the war ended. We got the message about four o'clock that afternoon. And that was some happy times.

J: I'll bet. What was your highest rank?

H: I was staff sergeant. I was a platoon sergeant.

J: Did any of your brothers get in the service?

H: Elmer was in. But then I don't know why he got out. Some medical problem and he didn't go overseas. He wasn't in too long. And I guess the politicians kept the rest of them out after the war broke out because they needed the oysters and fish. Some of them went to work at Indian Head and so on. My brother Wade was in. He was in—he was in the draft before the war broke out and then they were letting people over 28 out and he was in that category. So they let him out but he wasn't out long before the war broke out and then they automatically called him back. He was in Europe too but I—I was close to him but I never did see him over there. He didn't get wounded and he came back too but he's dead now also. That's three children in our family dead. Two brothers older than I. Two of my older brothers and one of the younger ones who got drowned. All the rest of them still living.

J: When you were in the service did you give much serious thought to what you wanted to do?

H: When I got out? Well—

J: What were you looking forward too?

H: Well really I was looking forward to getting out and coming back and going back into working for the same company that I was working for which I did. Went to work for them.

J: What was the name of this company?

H: Mary Chapman and Scott. They were out of New York.

J: Did you know Nicholas [Dipple]?

H: Mhm. They—well when we finished the Potomac River Bridge that company moved to Philadelphia to build some dry docks in the Philadelphia Navy Yard. And I went with them. And I worked up there long before I got notice from my Uncle that I'd been selected for the selective service. So I come back from Philadelphia and came back home because it was just a little while before I went.

J: How long did you work for them down here on the [this] Bridge?

H: Well I went to work for them in 1939 and then in 19[40]. Finished early I guess in 40 and then from there we moved to—the company moved to Philadelphia and we went—I went up there. And then of course I got notice about the draft and I went in the Army January 15, 1941.

J: So that cost you some money didn't it?

H: Yes.

J: Were you married at the time?

H: No I didn't get married until after the war. I guess I got married in 1948 I guess.

J: So most of your life on the river took place before World War II?

H: Right.

J: How have you been involved working with and for the watermen's cause since then?

H: Well I—after I came back from the service and then I went back in the river. I worked in the when the season opened in October, September and October and I worked till October and November [with a dredge] you know and a big fast boat. And then when the weather got bad and cold I went back to construction.

J: To what point? Were you in construction work here?

H: No most of it then was in Washington—

J: I see.

H: I used to commute back and forth to Washington until after I got married. Then I didn't work back there anymore. I didn't go back to the [world] of construction.

J: Did you live in Washington for a while?

H: No I just—I mostly—I lived there for a while not too long because I didn't particularly like that. I liked the country. I drove back and forth.

J: Did you pick up driving Plymouth when you got home?

H: Yes.

J: Still waiting for you?

H: Yes I let my brother use it while I was gone and I picked it up when I come back. Of course it needed replacements. So I guess—

J: And a few more miles on it?

H: Yeah so I tried to buy a new car. Of course you couldn't buy them then you know. And old [Mr. Hiram Lionel] that opened up the cars and [freights?] were right there where [Healey?] Chevrolet is. And of course I was trying to buy a Plymouth or a Ford because [the Kaiser and?] [inaudible] I didn't know about. But anyway I walked in the showroom and the [sad little thing Mr. Birch] I was in there looking at this car and I didn't know him and he said, "if you're interested in that you can take it home with you this afternoon." I said, "Back it out."

J: Now what were you looking at? A Kaiser?

H: Kaiser.

J: Kaiser okay and you say Hiram [Inaudible] was involved there?

H: Uh-huh.

J: Okay I know him.

H: Did you know him?

J: Yeah. Who were some of the big business men in the Rock Point area before World War II?

H: Well—

J: And what sort of businesses were there down there during your life time?

H: There was very little business down there. The Mr. Hill and Lloyd they were partners— business partners. They had the general merchandise store and they ran the Hill and Lloyd oyster crab packing plant. They didn't own buildings. I think the land and the buildings belonged to the Lancaster's.

J: I see.

H: And I guess it didn't...down where my sister's at [that was] Norris's store. That place I think belonged to her husband's father years and years ago and he died and then his mother remarried again by the name of Shorter. They still ran the store there for all those years. And then he died and then finally she died and then...Florence's husband he bought out the rest of them and he ran it until he died and she's still there. Of course she's about ready to close up now I think.

J: There—I've seen a picture of the hotel down there too? How many families ran that? Was that managed by more than one?

H: Well that belonged to the Lancaster's too the old one back there years ago when I was a youngster. Very few cars and people ran that [by the name of] [Stonestreet]. And they ran it year round. In the summer a lot of people by God I've seen hundreds of people there. Busloads of people come out there. Had a line of [bath houses] from the old hotel down to the Lancaster [barn]. Had the [inaudible phrase] fenced off to keep the sea nettles out. And they had an old pavilion dance often they had dance pavilion was closed in up at the top. They had—used to put on movies down there twice a week for people. They'd have silent movies. My brother operated the movie machine.

J: Who owned that operation? The silent movies. Part of the hotel?

H: Well the—that was part of the hotel.

J: I see.

H: And then we had boats, you know, I had fishing parties. And then in the winter they had ducking parties come out there and duck [inaudible]. And that was about all the business there was down there. There was nothing at Cobb Island at that point.

J: When did things begin to close down at Rock Point and what caused the change?

H: Well I guess—I guess time. After steamboats stopped coming and the old hotel burned down in the seven years before they built a new one. And then my uncle Thomas died and he ran that. And then that faded away and then Cobb Island started opening up and Chapel Point [full bloom] and that slowed down later. But was really nothing really down there then. Finally they put a restaurant over there on [mall] point where the Shymansky's is now. [And Captain John] he came along later. And then Cobb Island marina was built and so I guess everything moved to that area. The Lancaster's—the old Thomas died and store burnt down, the oyster house burnt down so they never did rebuild either of them back. So I guess it just faded away.

J: It's really the death of an entire community.

H: Absolutely.

J: Not many families but—

H: And then you know you've often heard the expression that you can't take it with you.

J: Yeah.

H: But I'm not too sure about that. Yeah I think so...so see when the old man S. S. Lancaster died he left in that will that none of that property would be sold for 20 years after his death. And some of them would like to have sold it and some of them thought it was worth a mint. It probably was but at that time it wasn't.

J: What year are we talking about now?

H: Well I guess this was 35, 40 years ago now.

J: Oh boy.

H: And it never has been sold. Everything's tied up so bad so like I said—

J: A pretty large piece of property?

H: Well it was all of Rock Point and all of that farm. The Rock Hall farm [inaudible phrase]. They own most of the houses up there. At that time they rented them.

J: About how many full time watermen still operate out of the Cobb Neck area? Do you have any feel for it at all?

H: Well it's not too many of them. Not full time watermen. I don't guess it's over 25 to 30 full time watermen down there anymore.

J: And where are they bringing their oysters in now?

H: There's no buy boats [visiting] here this year. That's almost a thing of the past. Most of the stuff is bought right at Cobb Island and trucked out. There are three buyers there.

J: Either Shymansky's Wharf?

H: Shymnasky's, Captain John's, and ours. That's about the size of it. No buy boats in there. No competition.

J: What caused these changes? Why no buy boats?

H: Well I guess they're more expensive to run and the trucks are so much faster you know.

J: There you go.

H: They can buy them today's oysters. [Can't take] Captain John's [inaudible]. The season now they're trying to preserve some of it so you can work. You can oyster here from sun up till 12 noon. You have to quit at 12:00 and they go down there by 1:00, 1:30. Whatever boat's in there he's already put them on the truck and he can get them to that packing plant the same day.

J: Even the ones in Virginia?

H: Yeah that's where [they have] to go. There's no packing plants here. They all gone.

J: Was there ever a packing plant at Rock Point before the oyster packing began? Was there at one time a vegetable canning operation?

H: I don't think it was here. I think there was a vegetable canning factory right across the river in St. Mary's county in Bushwood. 'Cause I used to have my mother talk about it. And I think that that's where a lot of them—my father did come from Baltimore to work in the canning factory I believe.

J: Across the Wicomico, not here.

H: Across the Wicomico right at Bushwood.

J: I see.

H: Because everybody had the boats you know. Back before there was motors they sailed. Before the road.

J: What's the—what are the oystermen getting today for a bushel right now?

H: The oystermen right now right here they getting 27 dollars a bushel from the boat.

J: Is that considered good? Everything considered?

H: Well when I was a boy we got 20 cents so I would say that's pretty damn good. And I say over in Virginia I understand they're about 31 over there.

J: Is there much difference in the size and quality of the oysters that are being caught today? Compared to the ones that you started catching as a youngster?

H: Well they still got about the same cull law that an oyster has to be—can't be any smaller than three inches. Can be anything over that but not lower than three inches.

J: Keepers have to be over three inches?

H: Have to be three inches. And it's been like that for years and years. Of course that's a nice size oyster.

J: Sure. No change in the flavor of the oyster?

H: I wouldn't think so.

J: Despite the fact that we've had some water pollution in the past 30 or 40 years.

H: Right, well you know they in the areas that they have that's polluted they close that up and try to get to the source to keep it clean.

J: In the 20's and 30's were there any problems at all of diseased oysters?

H: No. No never heard of it.

J: What do you think has brought this about?

H: Well I guess the biggest thing that's the most detrimental to the [sea critters] today is the farmers. It's hard for me to believe that all this chemical that they use on this land today—you know when farmers planted corn and tobacco and whatever they had to go and cultivate it and

this and that. They don't do that anymore. They put this chemical in there that kills all that vegetation on that land is gonna still kill it in the water. And it's gotta go to the water sooner or later.

J: Yeah. Is the effort to clean up the Potomac worked at all in the past?

H: I don't see where they've done anything. Really I don't. [But] taking my business, I'm in the marine contracting business. Peers and sea walls, whatever you need built in the river I do.

[End Tape 1]

J: In what way your opinion have federal government and state government regulations hurt the oyster and crabbing operations down here?

H: Well I don't know that they've hurt it a whole lot. They haven't too much regulations on it. I don't think they've put anymore that's necessary.

J: That's interesting.

H: I used to—I used to work at the packing plant years ago and I know how it operates. Of course they have health inspectors to come out and I think that's necessary for the health and welfare of the people. So I don't think that they've really hurt it.

J: Is this the attitude of the majority of the watermen?

H: I would think so. I would think so. There might be a few fanatics that say well you know they won't let us oyster in this place because it's polluted. Take Neal's Sound for instance. Neal's Sound has been closed for pollution for the past 23 years for shellfish. Now they haven't done a thing to clean it up and I don't suppose there was a whole lot they could do unless they kicked everybody out.

J: What's caused the pollution at Neal's Sound?

H: Well I would say all those septic systems on Cobb Island.

J: Okay the increasing residential occupancy.

H: That's exactly right. See Cobb Island is built like a [saucer] and anybody, any dwelling there has more than two people and has [an automatic] washing machine has got a problem. So that's why the sewage is coming. Of course it's a long time coming but I guess better late than never. You take two [the two restaurants [inaudible] and Captain John's,] I'm sure they've been flowing in there for years. And in the last few years the health department had made them put in holding tanks and get a tank truck to haul it away now. But they can't do that to all those houses over there now I don't suppose.

J: I wonder how many year round residents there are now on Cobb Island?

H: I guess it's three or four hundred I guess. So that's a lot.

J: It's become one of the larger towns in Charles County.

H: Right. Most everybody on there is a permanent resident there. Back years ago I can remember when there wasn't more than two families who lived there.

J: Can you remember when there were no bridges to the island?

H: Well when I first remember they had one at the extreme north end.

J: Right I've heard about it.

H: There was an old bridge back up there back in the 30's that bridge was there. I remember going over it as a youngster. I don't know that I remember when it was put there.

J: A framework wood bridge?

H: Yeah all wood. It was built out of just green lumber right out of the woods.

J: Crain's Bridge I guess. Did you ever meet Bob Crain?

H: Yes. Yes I knew him. I was young. Of course I remember him coming down to Rock Point in his big old [carriage] with four big black horses. Footmen on the back and all that stuff.

J: Really, really lived the role.

H: Yes and he did. He was a gentleman.

J: Isn't that something.

H: Did he play a major role in developing Cobb Island?

J: Not really no. Cobb Island I guess when he died Cobb Island was nothing but woods. There was only about one house there. His son did, Bennett Crain.

J: I see oh yes.

H: Who died two or three, four or five, years ago whatever it was. And then I guess he formed a real estate company called—what in the world was the name of it? I knew it well but no longer. Well anyway then they subdivided and sold it off and then they started development. And this is when the old wooden bridge was up there.

J: I see, I see. What has the development of Cobb Island meant to the fifth district? Anything at all? How important has it been?

H: Well I don't know that's so important to it not really.

J: Most of the people are not from here?

H: Most of the people I'd say, I'd say 75 percent of the people there are from someplace else.

J: And it really hasn't brought in much new business that I can see.

H: No not really. Not really.

J: One small grocery store and the restaurants that cater mostly to—well I don't know the restaurants down there do cater to local people don't they?

H: Well I guess they do now. Course there wasn't enough people back there then to even have one and they didn't. Of course they had—they sold beer and one had a little like a little grocery store into it and sold beer and made a sandwich or something. But really the rest of the town was never open down there until about 1945.

J: Who opened the first restaurant?

H: Well first restaurant I guess that was really open down there was where Shymansky's is now. And at that time it belonged to the Hill family. And after the war the youngest Hill boy named Carl and my brother opened that place up Shymansky's and put a bar room and a restaurant on that. Where—have you been in Shymansky's?

J: Oh yeah.

H: Where the bar is?

J: Yes. Yes. Yeah.

H: Okay well they put that new room on there and that was the dining room for the restaurant. Back in the old part the center part is where the—that was an old open air dance hall and they closed it in and made a ball room out of it. Dance hall and built that new room back there for a restaurant.

J: Yeah there was a period there when Captain John seemed about to overtake the [booze] type operation but they made a comeback. Sort of a 50-50 I would say now. But we can remember when Captain John's opened. What are some of the folk stories about life in the Rock Point area and this little corner where your sister Florence has her little grocery store? What did that used to be called? It had a peculiar name.

H: That was called Bloody Point.

J: Was there a reason for that?

H: Well I don't know I guess back years ago.

J: Not in your day.

H: Not in my day. Back years ago that I'm told the sail boats used to come in. They used to dredge oysters there and came from Baltimore and the Eastern Shore and everywhere. And these guys would come ashore and get drunk and raise heck. And I guess some of them got killed. And I guess that's where it got its name Bloody Point.

J: Oh for heaven's sake. So the Wicomico's been a good oystering river for quite a while?

H: One of the best. [Inaudible].

J: About what distance from the Potomac? About what distance up the Wicomico from Neal's Sound is oystering possible?

H: What on the Wicomico?

J: Yeah.

H: All the way up here or way up the head. Almost to head—almost to the Newport.

J: So what distance are we talking about?

H: I guess 10 miles. 10, 12 miles.

J: So it's a good bit of river.

H: It's nice oyster ground all through here. And let me tell you I was involved and I guess when they first started the oyster propagation program I was one of the people, one of the first. Well I wasn't the—

J: Who started it? The state?

H: The state.

J: Okay.

H: And I was on that oyster committee and I'm still on it after all these years. And I'll tell you I've always felt that conservation was one thing they had to have. If I see someone out there stealing that little stuff, haul it away, I put the police on them. I'd get my brother. I got criticized

for it from a whole lot of people, but a whole lot of people appreciate it. And I still feel that way about it. And you know, we were a head and shoulder—this is the words from one of the directors of the Department of Natural Resources—and the oyster propagation program in Charles County we were a head and shoulder above any other county in this state.

J: In the conservation effort?

H: In the conservation and the oyster propagation and conservation [measurement]—

J: When did it begin Harry? When did you first become excited about this and involved?

H: Well right after I came back from the war.

J: Okay.

H: And then we had a lot of oysters here. We had a heck of a set and they caught bushels. Hundreds of bushels of oysters and they hauled them away from here and they sold them for plants and [tonged] them in and done everything. I was very critical of that. You know had I been here I can assure you I don't believe that would've happened. Because I attended all these meetings. I belonged to all these organizations. I still do and I still go to them on behalf of the watermen.

J: What was the attitude of the old timers like your dad toward this sloppy management? Toward this attitude of get it all today and forget tomorrow?

H: Well they really didn't have problem.

J: Did they understand what was going on?

H: Yeah they didn't have a problem today then like they have now. You know back in the 40's, 45, 48 and so on. So they just skipped this river. They had bundles of oysters. [You got them catching] 150 bushels. And by the time I got back here, first year I was here you could out there and catch 40 or 50 but they just stripped it right out and sold for little to nothing. Just to take.

J: Were these—was this being done by local people?

H: By local people. And they let them do it. Nobody hollered so nobody even cared I guess.

J: How long has it been since the Virginia oystermen were troublesome over here?

H: Well they—we never had problems with them in this river.

J: Okay not in the Wicomico.

H: They were never allowed in here. But we had trouble with them see the Potomac River apparently belong to the State of Maryland. And the Virginia men have the equal of fishing rights there. And of course they abused it to no extent with the dredging and everything. And then they entered into a compact in 1958 I guess and now the Potomac River is controlled by a bi-state commission from the State of Maryland and State of Virginia. They've got it—they have three member commission from each state. And this controls it and they make their own—they call them regulations. So that's the way that's operated today.

J: The first problem of that type arose even before the Revolutionary War. A lot of Charles County people don't know. They wanted their own. Thomas Stone of Port Tobacco was one of the early signatories to the Potomac River compact. 1785. So it was serious even then.

H: It was. Well see they had problems back there then. Virginia owned the lower capes and they were stopping the shipping from coming through the lower capes to the Potomac. So they entered in a compact in 17—1878 was it?

J: 85.

H: 18—well 18 something. And they entered into a compact that if they would allow the shipping to come through without paying toll they would give them equal fishing rights to the Potomac. And that was when this compact went into effect. And then of course you know I think the federal government take it over after that so they would've done it anyway. Then the State of Maryland and State of Virginia entered in this compact in 1948, 58. The Potomac River now is controlled by a bi-state commission. Made up of three from the State of Maryland, three from the State of Virginia.

J: That makes more sense.

H: And they were supposed to rotate—the office was always in Virginia. They were supposed to rotate it from Virginia to Maryland every other year but Colonial Beach being a little town like it is I guess where would they put one? Cobb Island wouldn't be the proper place. St. Mary's would be [inaudible], Calvert County would be [inaudible] and so on. So I guess they put it in Colonial Beach and it stayed there and they finally bought a piece of land and built an office and so on. So it's been there ever since. Since the beginning.

J: Do you remember the names of some of the more active watermen during the 20's and 30's? People that were neighbors and friends of the Stine's? Who were some of these folk?

H: Well like I said back out here there wasn't too many families out here. You know there was the Shymansky's, the Farrell's, the Stine's, Simms's. And the Hill's, Lloyd's but they were never—they had the general stores and so on. And the Norris's. And that's about all that was out here back you know when I was a youngster. And of course there was a lot of colored people but

they never were involved in this. They oystered you know and worked with some people and so on but they never had a thing to say or do with it.

J: Do you remember when you were a very young boy talking to any of the older oystermen had oystering always been important to the economy of Cobb Neck?

H: I would think so. Oysters and farming was the only thing here. Nothing else, nothing, and they couldn't get nowhere to work. They had to either oyster or farm. Of course during the off seasons people would go out and help the farmers plant their tobacco, corn, and so on.

J: Would transportation to market have been a critical thing in the early years of this century? How would oysters have been shipped to Baltimore from here?

H: They—the only way they could've gone back when I was a youngster would be by steamboat. And God I guess Washington then was the big market for the oysters being shipped out of here. Because you know it was closer. And then soon as the trucks came into existence and then they started hauling them. You know back with the Model T Ford they started hauling them out of here because Washington had the big seafood market one time down at 11th Street.

J: Maine Avenue?

H: Maine Avenue there was a big fish market there.

J: Could they haul fresh oysters from Rock Point to Washington without refrigeration?

H: Well yeah in the fall you could yeah. We used to haul them up there in the boats and tie up at the boat I think we maybe paid a couple of dollars a day to tie up there. And people would come out and buy a dozen or a peck or a bushel.

J: Did you ever do that yourself?

H: Yeah.

J: Go to 7th Street there.

H: Uh-huh. We'd go up there sometimes stay there four or five days to sell out and then come back to get some more and then go back. Had a pretty good size boat you could stay on. Had a cabin on it were you could sleep on it, eat on it.

J: Was this your boat or your father's?

H: No this belonged—no I didn't have a boat that big at that time. I had one—after the war I had a 40 foot bay boat that I oystered out of. Of course that time the boat wasn't mine. It belonged to Mr. Simms. He had that boat built. I guess that was about 38, 40 foot boat. 42 maybe.

J: So the dory type?

H: The dory type boat but it had a little pilot house on the back you know so you could be in out of the weather. A cabin on the front where you can sleep. And had a little—had a little cook stove in there. A little wood burning cook stove that you used to cook on. Had a little oven you could bake bread and so on.

J: Sounds like a good life.

H: Yeah we really did like it. It's something different in a different town you know.

J: So that boat was home ported right here?

H: Right, right.

J: It's gone I suppose now?

H: Yeah.

J: Who made it? Was it locally made?

H: It was built down in St. Mary's [by the name of] Gibson built that boat I guess. I know he built—he built the one that I had.

J: When did you buy your first boat?

H: I don't know—

J: Before the war?

H: Yeah I had one before the war. I guess the first power boat that I bought. I [don't] know when I bought that boat but it was a 22 foot boat and had a four cylinder marine engine in it. And then I know I kept that God I don't four or five years. And then I bought a 34 foot and I guess—I guess I must've bought that back in about 1950 that 34 foot boat.

J: What was your power plant in that one?

H: I had 115 horse power six cylinder Chrysler marine engine in it. And then I bought—I bought a 40 foot one. I guess I bought that about 1960 I guess or in the 60's. 60 I guess it was. And that had a 250 [in pearl] Chrysler in it.

J: Did that move it along pretty well?

H: Moved it along real good.

J: This was a V—8 now?

H: This was a big V—8 had three carburetors on that rascal. That thing would move.

J: What was your horse power on that?

H: About 250 total. I think about 300 I guess.

J: About two miles to the gallon?

H: Didn't get much.

J: Or less than that.

H: If you wound that thing up by God it would burn some gas. But it would go.

J: What could you get out of it? 20 knots?

H: At least. That thing would [get it right out of me].

J: What would she weigh?

H: God I don't know I guess she was about five tons.

J: Who made that was it new did you buy it new?

H: No. Gibson built it and he built it for some lawyer out of Washington and he used it. It wasn't used for commercial purposes until I bought it. He used it for sport fishing. And then he had Mr. [Coke] was down there at [Coke's] marina down at St. Mary's to build him a cruiser and he traded this in and I bought it from [Coke].

J: So you were going first class in that boat?

H: Yeah that was a nice boat.

J: There weren't many like them out there.

H: Had all front end controls. You know you could put on a white suit and go down and go out in it.

J: How bad does the weather have to be to keep an oysterman in?

H: It has to be real bad. If he wants to go.

J: Ice will do it?

H: Heavy ice will do it.

J: What kind of wind conditions?

H: Well usually you can get under the shores take the wind from the northwest would come down that and you could get up under those shores and haul that back and that would break the wind. [Inaudible phrase]

J: But you stayed off the Potomac.

H: Yeah the Potomac would be—if you could work in the Potomac you could work in here.

J: Yeah, yeah. Do you recall any serious losses of life? You mentioned that your own brother drowned in the Wicomico.

H: Yeah.

J: Any other big losses? Any losses of boats during your lifetime down here?

H: Well the hurricanes in recent years. I guess they had hurricanes years ago and didn't know what they were. But hurricanes sank several boats on different occasions down through the years. People used to put poles out in front and tie their boats out there you know and then they didn't think this hurricane was going to be very much because they didn't know what a hurricane was and it broke the pole or broke the line and came ashore and busted and sank. Some of them did. Matter of fact, one washed ashore right here. And [my brother in law had one] left out there storming and washed ashore and busted up. And down at Rock Point there was several of them that happened to but not any great loss I'm told. Because you get in the creeks and take care of them by you can pretty well take care of them.

J: Were you ever afraid out there on some occasion you might not get back?

H: Well not really. I guess when you were young like that you didn't have much fear that you figured that these waters here you knew where they were and if it got bad you could go ashore.

J: What sort of lunches did your mother fix for you and your dad and the other boys?

H: Oh she used to fix us ham and eggs and everything else for sandwiches. Though in later years when I had this big boat of course I had a gas stove on it and I used to cook food on that. Make beef stew and bean soup and have eggs and bacon for breakfast or lunch and so on the boat. I had fried oysters and that kind of stuff.

J: Did any of the wives ever go out?

H: I guess a lot of them did years ago. I don't think well my mother had 10 children I don't guess she could go but some of them didn't have any children. So I know Jim Johnson's brother his wife used to go out with him all the time. They didn't have any children so he would tong the oysters and she would cull them. But several of them did that but I don't think you see too much of it anymore.

J: How long do you think Jim Johnson's been a waterman?

H: Well he—I guess he's been a waterman for all his life. Of course he went to work for construction too during the sack seasons and he worked in construction. And up until a couple years ago. But I don't think he's in the best of health today. [He used to be like that] I think he's had a couple of slight strokes and so on. His father was a marine police here for years and years and years.

J: Stationed right here in this area?

H: Stationed right here.

J: And he would be a state employee?

H: He was state employee yes.

J: So that's what brought the Johnson's—

H: No the Johnson's well I forgot to mention them. The Johnson's was here too. That was an old family that was here. His grandfather he had a little packing plant down on Neal's Sound. On an old—had an old [inaudible] there that he built an oyster house on.

J: On the island side or the land side?

H: No on the—going into Furbush Road to go back there today. But no he's definitely an old family here too. I think there was three boys in that family. Let's see [inaudible phrase] and several girls.

J: Do you recall you and your father taking oysters in to the local packing plant at Rock Point?

H: Oh yeah. My dad did. But he almost had to sell them there. No place else. The buy boats would come in but I guess you know they only sold to the country store I guess so they almost had to.

J: What was the process from start to finish bringing the oysters? How did you unload to begin with?

H: Well—

J: All by hand?

H: All by hand yes. They still do it that way. They unloaded them then just like they do now.

J: You winched them up?

H: You winched them up. They had a pole up [with like a block of ball] and you lowered the tub down in the boat and they fill it up and they hoist it up and dump it in the [inaudible]. Then they dumped it in a wheel barrow and rolled it into the oyster house. And now they put it on a conveyor and load it on a truck. But it's the same thing.

J: Do you have any feel for the capacity of that oyster house? What could it turn out in the way of canned oysters? During peak of the season?

H: Well they I guess they had 50 or 60 oyster shuckers in there. And a good oyster shucker I suppose could shuck 12, 15 gallons a day. And of course some of them couldn't have. All of them wasn't good. Some of them were real good. And then they used to pack them into [Styrofoam]. Years ago they used to pack them in gallon cans.

J: And they could actually can right there? They had the machinery?

H: No they didn't can them. They just [inaudible phrase] press top on it. But they weren't actually sealed. Later years back in the 45 to 50's they came out with a canning machine and they used to actually seal them and can them just like you would a can of tomatoes or corn. They had a machine and sealed them, but they put them in pints they didn't do them in gallons. So they do that now of course.

J: Were these gallons glass?

H: No they were cans.

J: Tin.

H: Uh-huh.

J: I suppose today the Health Department would stop that.

H: Well I guess they make them use plastic now and glass.

J: So what actually destroyed the cannery? How did it end?

H: It—the one here at Rock Point burned. And they never replaced it.

J: And that threw a lot of people out of work?

H: Yes, yes. Of course they never did reopen. Course the Lloyd's, the Hill's Lloyd's didn't—they weren't running it at that time. The Norris's was running.

J: Whatever happened to Hill?

H: They're all dead.

J: All dead and Lloyd's.

H: Lloyd's, the Lloyd's had two children. Had a girl and a boy. The girl's dead and the boy I met him at a class reunion last month. That's in La Plata. I hadn't seen him for years and years and years and years. Finally he's a little teeny skinny guy. He walks over and said, "Harry you know who I am?" I said, "Yes indeed I sure do know you. I know you when you was this big." And all the Hill's are dead except one of the girls is still living and the youngest boy's still living. He don't live here. Neither one of them lives here. None of the Lloyd's live here.

J: So you've known the Shymansky's all your life pretty much? Do their roots here go back as far as your family's?

H: I would say so. The Shymansky's mother and my mother were first cousins. She was a Farrell. And I guess he came—the old man Bruce Shymansky's father—came from Baltimore here about the same time my father and those people came here.

J: Maybe for the same reasons.

H: For the same reasons I guess.

J: For the canning work. So the Stine's and the Shymansky's you might see sort of backed in to living on the water.

H: That's right and he worked in the river too. Of course he did a little carpentry work on the side in the slack times, Bruce's father.

J: Okay did the oystermen ever have any special meeting place on Cobb Island or Rock Point? Was there a restaurant you could go to and find them once in a while? Sit down and talk to them?

H: Back years ago there wasn't any restaurants but there used to be the general store. Rock Point store and over round at Bloody Point there was a big store there and one over there. And this is where they all congregated and chewed tobacco and got drunk I guess.

J: That was as close as you could get to a club or union?

H: Right.

J: What was the religious affiliation of some of these people? There was a Catholic Church I think down there?

H: I guess 90 percent of them here when I was a boy was Catholic. Because I think there two Catholic Churches. One at Rock Point one here at Issue and they're still there. So I guess 90 percent of them were Catholics right down in this peninsula.

J: What do you think the future is for the watermen in this neck of the woods?

H: Oh I think it's pretty bleak. I think it's just a matter of time.

J: And what's going to put an end to it? What're the things that?

H: Well I think pollution's really gonna wipe it out. You know, take all these farms out here. Take the big farmer [cranes] up here. You know it's not too far from the water. From the Potomac or the Wicomico. Take all this farm land you see coming in this road. They're bringing that sludge from Blue Plains in here. And I tell you they got a hog farm out there. When they spray that stuff on those fields you can [inaudible] it comes through this house. And that—they've got ditches and drains going to the creek, which empties into Wicomico. Right here called Dolly Boarman's Creek. They got one comes—that's going south to Hatton's Creek. It comes right in, it comes right in this point right here. It's just a matter of time. Just a matter of time in my opinion because they're doing nothing about it.

J: Well it might not be too—

H: Well you see take this farm out here where you seen that corn just when you made the turn to Wicomico Beach Road. And all those fields have been corn and that farm right across there they got they raise hogs. They got a big operation over there. To your right coming in right as you make the turn you see under the [electric lines] there?

J: Yeah.

H: They went there and cleared that off and that's where they dumped all of that damned, that hog slops and manure there. And somebody—some of these people that live here on the beach went to the Health Department and they said well farmers can do more with their animal waste than most people. And it's still there to take your breath away from you. You know you—I've got a new Lincoln and it's a nice tight car. And when they spray that stuff out there it seems like it comes through the windows. You could [face your truck] away from it.

J: Good lord.

H: So that's got to go to the river.

J: Yeah absolutely.

H: Sooner or later.

J: Absolutely. Either through percolation underground or from the surface.

H: Everywhere yes sir it's got to go. And they dump it out there three or four times a week. It's got to happen.

J: What's the average age of the waterman today and how does it compare to the average age when you were a youngster coming up? Any differences there at all?

H: Well there's very few of the young, of the younger people, youngsters going in to the oystering. There's a few more this year than it has been because the price is up pretty good you know. And they don't have to work too long. You can work from sun up to 12 o'clock. So most of them the younger people that work in the way so they take a couple weeks off to go out and get the cream of the crop and then they go back on the job.

J: So a couple of men out there working from sun up till noon a couple of weeks with any luck at all they make what kind of money?

H: Well the oysters here are 27 dollars a bushel. And a couple of good oystermen right now, the oysters, there's plenty of oysters there but they're all so small so they can catch six. Sometimes they can may have a hit a little spot and maybe six to ten bushels a day. That's about what they would catch.

J: So a hundred dollars a day per person.

H: Something like that.

J: With any luck—

[Tape Interruption]

J: Okay Mr. Stine we're approaching the end of this interview and we've covered a lot of ground but I happen to know that you have been involved in several public service activities and organizations during the years I've lived in Charles County. I'd like you to go back to the very first time you became concerned and involved in providing leadership and input into organizations that have to do with promoting the welfare of fishing and the lives of the watermen of Southern Maryland. Now that's a mouthful. What can we do with that?

H: Well I guess I helped to the organize the Maryland State Watermen's Association back in the early 40's. And served as one of the directors of that organization for a number of years. And then I organized the local Watermen of Southern Maryland and served as president of it for 10,

15 consecutive years. And then I was very active in the welfare of the seafood industry. I tried to, to see that it was managed properly and I was real concerned with it. And if I seen someone doing something illegal to destroy this thing I was the first one to put the law on them.

J: So you've been conservation minded?

H: Absolutely. Nobody was more conservation minded than I. I still feel the same way. I also helped to organize the Chesapeake Bay Seafood Industries Association. Served as its president for one term. I'm still on the Board of Directors of that.

J: Where is their headquarters?

H: Their headquarters is in Easton, Maryland in the Eastern Shore and most of the people that's involved in this are from the Eastern Shore. Then I guess I come back to politics in Southern Maryland. I was always involved a little bit and I guess I was elected for three terms to the State Central Committee. Democrats Central Committee of Charles County.

J: That's important we ought to make that clear.

H: And then I served about 18 years on Planning Zoning Commission. 18 consecutive years the Planning Zoning Commission of Charles County.

J: I have appeared before that group and remember you there.

H: Yes sir. And then I guess when several years ago they formed the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission. And the—

J: This was a state program?

H: State and Governor Hughes had his secretary call me and asked me if I would serve on that commission. And I said, "Well God I must be on a hundred different things now but I guess one more won't hurt." So anyway he appointed me to the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission. I think it was 25 members of that commission and we held meetings all over the state. By God I was gone all the time. And then when they really got down about ready to adopt the Critical Area Plan it was getting to where it was a conflict of interest in my business as a marine contractor. So I called the Governor and asked him if he would accept my resignation and I told him why. And he said well, "You know that under the law you supposed to serve until your replacement is in place." And I said, "Governor well you wouldn't want me to sit here and vote on issues that the conflict of interest to me or the state?" He said, "No I guess I wouldn't." So he accepted my resignation about a year ago. And now I guess that commission is now putting its plan in motion. I know they are in this county, most every county. They had a deadline so I guess it's coming in place so I guess it's gonna be another permit that I'm gonna have to get from in a short time.

J: But these controls don't upset you? You think that generally speaking they're called for and they are reasonable.

H: Oh I think they're necessary and I think you have to have them really. You know if they just cut back on a little it'll be alright you see. Takes me six to eight months to get a permit to stop some shore erosion you know. Which I think God you know how you gonna keep your people working. I'm starting now, filing for permits for next year, for next spring. So it takes time and I don't where it's all gonna stop. So I guess that's about.

J: What's—which one of these public service activities has been the most interesting for you, the most challenging?

H: Well I guess—

J: And rewarding.

H: Well I guess the Zoning and Planning I guess. I was on there and had some good friends on the commission down through the years and—

J: Who were some of them that you feel made some real substantial contributions—

H: Well he had—when I first went on the planning commission they had a member there I think he was Vice-Chairman. His name [Opus Robertson]. He was a business man out of Waldorf and former state policeman who came here. He's originally from Carolina and I guess he did a great deal. [Inaudible phrase] [have you] run it I guess. And he was very active in it. And then wasn't long that the Chairman Mr. [Heidi] he was on the Board of Directors I guess of the Southern Maryland Electric Co—operation.

J: William [Heidi]?

H: Oh yeah that' him. A nice man. And I think there's some kind of a conflict when they started giving him some expense money or something for the planning commission that he resigned and then Mr. Robertson moved up as the Chairman. And then he stayed—I don't know he was there a long time. 10 to 12 years I guess.

J: Were you one of the original members of the zoning?

H: No, No I guess, I guess I was one of the second phase of some of the appointments. And then Mr. Robertson I think he resigned and then they there was a man by the name of Mr. Jerry [Boarman] who lives in Port Tobacco. I guess you know him and he was on the commission at that time. And then when Mr. Robertson was done as Chairman then Mr. [Boarman] was appointed Chairman.

J: Jerry [Boarman] yeah.

H: And I guess I was still Vice-Chairman of that. And I was up for the Chairmanship over at...Mr. [Boarman] finally left and I didn't want it because I didn't have the time to really put to it. You know because Chairman takes a lot of time and I lived far away from the courthouse anyway and I was active in my business. I just couldn't take it. But anyway I was there till about three years ago I guess three years ago. And then after 18 years the new county commissioners, the present county commissioners I guess decided that I'd been there too long so they didn't want me no more.

J: And you'd probably had probably had enough right?

H: And I've had enough—

J: You went through some pretty interesting years.

H: That's true. That's true.

J: Probably some—

H: And I still think we have to—they have to control roads. And I think it's necessary and I think they on the right track. Of course there's a whole lot of people that don't agree with them but I think it's a necessity. I think they have to.

J: How are things moving down here in the fifth district? Any concerns that you have right now about—

H: Well things that—

J: Growth, development, that kind of—

H: It hasn't down here it really hasn't developed too much but I'm looking for it to explode within the next few years if they don't put some controls on it. There's a lot of land being bought up in the Newburg area and this lower part of this county and I know that's only for one reason.

J: What's the most significant event of your lifetime in the nature of having an impact on life in the fifth district? What single thing?

H: Well nothing really happened really great down here until the Pepco plant was built here. Just brought a whole lot of tax dollars from this area and put a whole lot of people to work there. I guess that was one of the greatest things and I guess I was involved in that.

J: Right at Morgantown?

H: Right at Morgantown.

J: And what about the bridge? That was a big thing?

H: That old bridge was definitely a big thing. That was a big thing. That was one of the biggest things I guess to me personally because it gave me a chance to make some money which I never made before.

J: Yeah and you were playing a part in history too with that.

H: I guess so. So I was real happy with that. But Pepco really put this in down here really on the map. Course I had a whole lot of reservations about that and what they were doing and attended a lot of meeting all over everywhere and even out in Massachusetts. They set up a model scale of the Potomac River and the Pepco plant in Worcester, Massachusetts. And taking the delegations of all the lot of elected officials, the Planning Commission, and the watermen allotted me as representing the watermen, and I never seen anything it was absolutely perfect scale model of the Potomac River and that plant today.

J: And you saw it up there?

H: I went there. It was absolutely unbelievable. I could hardly believe it.

J: About what year was this?

H: I guess this was I don't remember dates real good but I guess I don't know the year was about 1947 I guess. Wait a minute, 19, no it was 1967, 1967. That year was 1967. Because I guess that was about the year that I went on the Planning Commission.

J: Well does that pretty much wrap up your—

H: I would think so. I would think so.

J: Okay thanks very much Captain Harry.

H: Yes sir it's a pleasure.

J: We'll button this one up.

[End Tape 2]