

Theriot Interview

Interviewer: Paula Ouder, Roy Kron

Daughter 1: ...for our spelling. It is Billiot. It's like Theriot – you don't pronounce the T.

(inaudible)

Eugene Theriot: You don't pronounce the H.

Tootsie Theriot: Billiot sounds better.

Daughter 2: No – Theriot.

Eugene Theriot: You don't pronounce the H.

Daughter 2: No, you don't say, yeah. You don't say – well Daddy never could say an "H". He would – he'd get up and he'd read at church and he'd get up and say "Dis is da word of da Lord."

Daughter 1: Ha ha.

D2: Dis is da word of da Lord, and you know, and...

D1: He always wanted to be able to pronounce that H. He tried.

D2: He told me if - my dad finished at um, at LSU in agriculture education. Um, that's what he went for, and they would not give him a teaching certificate until he got speech "terapy".

D1: Ha ha.

D2: Because he was from down here, and he would not say the T-H.

T: The T-H's were hard to say.

E: I'd have never made...(inaudible)

D2: And they said that he was unintelligible, and he couldn't go in the classroom, until he had speech "terapy", and so once he did that, he gave him his teaching certificate, and off he went.

(inaudible)

D2: He was good to go. So that's – that's a true story. At least he told me that it's true. I don't know. he used to tell stories. So um...

E: What ya'll after?

D2: What are we after? You want to tell them what you're after?

Carl Brasseaux: Don and I have been for years, just trying to collect stories about how things were a long time ago over here. The Bon Good Temps. So - things have changed so much.

E: Ya'll – ya'll know about – exactly about five years late.

C: Well that's kind of the story about our lives, I'm afraid.

E: Because I – all the people who knew everything about everything around here – they're all gone. I had a brother-in-law, could've kept ya'll going for a week. In fact, I come to find out he made um, some recordings with this lady in Houma out there, and come of find out he was a (inaudible). She showed the recordings to other people and he never got them. Uncle Herman. Boy he was a storyteller. He had...

T: Yeah, he like to talk.

D2: Yeah. I ran across Herman's picture in the um, John Folse's cookbook. Do ya'll know he's in there? They also have – that's Anne's house. I was at Anne's a week or so ago...

D1: After the hurricane.

D2: And we were looking through it and I went, "I know him!" And then I read it and it said, Herman – what's his last name?

E: Um, LeBlanc.

D2: LeBlanc, and there he was.

D1: We visited with him often down there.

D2: Yeah. And he said, you're Truman's daughter! And I said, yes sir. And he started to tell me all this history.

E: Don't ya'll miss out to question this man right here. He done did an oyster bed, he done been on platforms, he's been shrimping– he's a Cajun.

C: Well that's what we're hoping to get.

E: You've got one sitting right there. Much more than I am.

D2: Okay.

T: Gene was a man of a...(inaudible)

E: I was brought up in a fenced in yard.

D1: A fenced in yard.

E: So I didn't get to go hunting. I didn't get to go fishing. This and that, but my brother in law did, and he talked French and English. He don't speak Spanish.

B: No. Ha ha

T: French and English.

D2: Won't be long. Okay. So let's – let's go to um, let's go to the shrimp factory - think back. You want to go and think about the shrimp factory?

E: I don't have to think far.

D1: You don't have to think to far – good. Well I told you that I'd go on a topic that you felt that you were comfortable, that you could work on pretty easily. Um, Drewus told us it looked like the shrimp factory, and the St. Martins came over in 1912. But that's before you were born.

E: That was before.

D2: That's before you were born. When were you born?

T: 1927.

E: 1927.

D2: 1927. Okay.

E: He was born in 1940.

D2: What's your full name? Is it Gene or Eugene?

T: Eugene.

E: Antoine.

D2: Antoine what? I learned something new everyday. What?

T: Eugene. That's how you spell that.

D2: Eugene?

E: Eugene Antoine Theriot.

E: Eugene Antoine Theriot. Alright. I learn something new – Antoine.

D1: I thought you spell Eugene with an E.

T: Yeah, but they misspelled it with a U. I remember seeing ...

E: Eugene is...(inaudible)

(Brasseaux and Theriot speaking French)

D2: Okay. Let's go to...

(speaking French)

E: The shrimp factory was started in 1923. And then from there, it went on to other things. They had oyster, they had steamed oysters that they used to work. They had an ice plant. And they had a drying platform - right in front of the house they had a platform. And then they had a dryer – a dryer, which would uh, dry the shells of the shrimp that the people would peel. And then they'd sack that up and they'd sell that at the – at the – they sold that to the chicken feed.

T: The chicken feed? The dryer – they didn't have dryer. They didn't dry the shrimp in dryers way back.

E: No. They'd dry - they'd dry the hull.

D2: No, he said it was the peeling.

E: The peelings – they'd dry the peelings.

T: Because I remember...(inaudible)

E: No. and then uh...

T: They made the – we used to go and uh, take trips to the islands with Daddy, and they had the uh, platforms where they'd dry the shrimp in there, and they had a camp somewhere..

E: Yeah, but they had one...

T: ...and we'd stop along the way, and we'd play on the platforms, and they had those big tarpaulins that they'd put, something going above the shrimp, and then they'd roll them up during the day, and then later in the evening, they'd go back and cover the shrimp up so that they wouldn't get –

C: Now the platforms weren't flat. They...

T: No, it kind of had a little slant to there. The platforms – you remember?

E: The platforms – they had a, they had a beak.

T: Yeah. And then they had like a wooden fence in the middle. And then they'd put that tarpaulin or whatever things, and cover them up at night.

(inaudible)

T: And then the other two men I forgot already.

C: Hi. I'm Carl, and that's Don.

Ch: Hi.

D1: This is their son.

T: And this is Chase.

D1: Savoie. Right here.

T: And this is my son in law. The band instructor. He's very good.

D1: My husband.

D2: Nice to meet you.

(inaudible)

E: So anyhow.

T: Anybody wants coffee?

E: I do.

D1: I was going to say – he knows where the pot is.

E: What you want?

B: They used to work a lot of shrimp. Now I've seen as much as three hundred barrels a day. That's – they'd come in – it'd come in, and uh, they peel them all in a day. They canned them.

C: Well who would do the peeling?

B: What's that?

C: Who would do the peeling and uh, and uh, and (inaudible)

B: Colored people and uh, housewives.

C: Well how would they get the word out when it was time to come in to work? They'd come in every day?

(inaudible)

T: And they were passing people up.

E: They had a whistle. They would all work with the whistle. The refinery whistle?

C: Yes sir.

E: And uh, they'd blow that at one o'clock in the morning, and then they used to work at six o'clock and then later on they got off and knocked off at four o'clock.

C: So the boats would generally come in at night?

T: Oh, yes sir.

E: The boats? The way the boats worked – that would uh -they worked with a uh -like we call a company.

(background noise)

T: Yeah, right.

E: They had a group of boats would get together...

T: Never made much money.

E: They went down there along the coast. And they'd group us together – they'd put all the shrimpers in one boat – the freight boat. A freight boat or an ice boat. Whatever you want.

T: Why it's too noisy? You can press the button and it'll uh – the call button. We can't keep this high school at all in the summertime. And it's noisy.

D1: I think it might be getting some background noise. We need to take turns talking, and you know, maybe say, I want to say something about that. Let him talk. And then we'll go around the room – maybe Ed too. Because I think when there's too many – too much noise, it's gonna, it's gonna kind of down out, because his voice is not really strong.

T: Yeah. We're gonna drown each other.

D1: Yeah. gonna drown each other out, then we don't get too much.

E: I made a tape from when I was younger, and I don't know - I lost it. I don't know where it went to.

C: Well we'd like to hear more about the ice boats there, because that's something that nobody really talks much about, and it was very important.

E: Well instead of all the boats, coming in and sell the catch to the factories, they'd send one boat – that's two boats. Huh Bobby?

B: What now?

E: He don't hear too good.

D1: One or two boats would go out to collect all the shrimp?

E: Ice boats – the freight boats to the factories. So he's from Grand Caillou. He's from Dulac. They work things a little different from over here. Well ...

B: We had the – Gene, we had the iceboats.

E: You had the ice boats. And instead of – instead of getting all these boats, each boat would work individual, they would all group up at – on the coast, and load it all up in one boat. If they had more than one boat, well they'd use two boats, but they usually had ice – enough for one boat. And they'd come in

at – come in at night, late in the evening they'd come in they'd take them out and all – six hours I guess to get here. And um, they'd come on the front porch out there – (inaudible). That was my daddy. And um, I have so many barrels. And then uh, but eleven o'clock the other fellow would come in. (inaudible) - that's why my maw maw – I don't know what she did to get so many kids because...

Ha ha.

E: She didn't get to sleep with Papa that much.

D1: Too much interruption.

Ha ha.

T: I could probably tell him if he doesn't know.

Ha ha

E: And uh, but that's the way they did it, and the shrimp down on the coast – and if – they'd have too much for the ice boat, they'd go sell it to the platform. So my mama and daddy always had a house there, and then they also would uh, how you say that. They allowed them so much. They allowed every boat so much shrimp.

D1: A quota.

E: Yeah, a quota.

D1: A quota of some sort.

E: Every boat would have its quota. But that – that way there you wouldn't overload the factory. The factory would – when their - that ice boat would go back down the bayou the next morning, he'd bring the quota from the factory. The factory sent him how much they could use. If they had a little bit left from the day before, they had to cut back on the rest. But it's...

D1: Where did the ice come from? Who made the ice?

E: They made their own ice.

D1: Ya'll made the ice right there.

E: That's one thing about Boudreaux Canal.

D1: Yeah.

E: Right there in – they had everything going.

D1: Okay – that's what you said. It started off with just the factory, but then it expanded the...

E: They started out with the factory – after they had the factory going, they built an ice plant. And that ice plant was run out of the – with steam. Wood and steam – wood burning boiler – with steam, and then they went to coal, and later on they went to diesel, then they went to electricity.

C: When they were - I'm sorry. When they were offshore, I know that more along Bayou Lafourche they used flags...

E: Yeah.

C: ...on the shrimp boats to tell the ice boat which boat to go to.

E: Every company – every company had a flag. Different color flags with different companies. The ones that uh, the major ones on Boudreaux Canal were some uh, Lapyrouse. And they had two brothers - had their – each their company. They were the major supplier of the, the Indian Ridge.

C: You remember what the flag looked like?

E: No, I sure don't.

C: Okay. Did they use the flags out of Dulac too?

E: Yeah.

B: Yeah. They had their flags, them.

Don Davis: Do you know anybody that might have an original flag?

B: No.

D: They just throw them away, right?

E: They threw them away.

D2: They had a lot of hurricanes.

B: Hurricanes – that.

E: What you said right there has a lot to do with what uh, how you say that? Not too near, but antique stuff down here. We didn't have no such thing. I had a shop – all my tools are new. Every year I'd get washed out, so and uh, and the houses were the same thing. The storms would hit them and uh, we'd lose everything – lose everything.

C: Well Don's a collector, and he saw, um, you remember the old oyster and shrimp cans?

E: Yeah.

C: From the canneries out here?

E: Yeah I do.

C: Those – you don't see many anymore, and the last one we saw sold for at auction for – was it twenty seven hundred dollars?

D: Two thousand two hundred and twenty five dollars.

E: Oh man. I gotta see if we have any out there.

D2: We might have one. Ha. That might be worth looking for.

E: We gotta look.

D2: I remember Pearl Shrimp.

D: Pearl Shrimp. That's right.

D2: That was our brand.

D1: I remember them planting tomatoes in it.

D2: Yeah. There might be some in um, Michael's yard over there left over from Grandpa.

T: And you see in the back of there.

E: I doubt it.

D2: No, I'm sure...

E: You do know that he storm washed all that out.

D2: Oh yeah.

When you were working on a platform, alright? You boiled shrimp. How did the water get hot? Did you use wood? Diesel? Kerosene? Gas? What did you use to boil the shrimp as a fuel?

E: That's Bobby's question. You hear that Bobby?

B: Yeah.

E: What did ya'll use to..

B: Yeah. We'd boil with diesel.

D2: Diesel.

E: That was later. But earlier...

B: Yeah. But I don't remember the - the wood one. Oh, we had diesel.

E: Yeah, but before him, I know I remember they used to haul wood down there.

D: Now would they...

(inaudible)

Yeah, I remember them hauling the wood at one time, yeah. They'd come deliver the wood every other day.

E: At Boudreaux – at Boudreaux, the St. Martin boilers were running with uh – they were running with uh...

B: By wood?

E: It went by wood and then later on it went by diesel. But I remember when they went to diesel.

D: Well where'd the wood come from?

T: See you later.

E: I don't know! I really don't know.

T: Bye.

C: Well would they take it down in a barge?

E: Yeah. They had barge and freight boats, and regular boats. They'd the wood up on boats. Two, three boats would bring um...

C: A load?

E: Would bring a load.

D: Well talk for a moment about the freight boats. What is a freight boat?

E: Freight boat is anything that would carry –

C: Was it a special kind of boat? Or just any boat they could find?

E: It all depends which one they want. There's the freight boat, um, the oil companies used one kind – and the shrimp people – the platform people – they'd call that a freight boat to bring their supplies on the platform. Because the platform – they had to have bread and stuff like that, you know. And uh, a lot of the boats had their own supplies, but most of – I know that the, the platforms had to – had to supply so much stuff. And that's what you call the freight boat. And then they – we had another freight boat again that was run to Houma. Before the days they had roads – before they had a road.

C: So it was like a grocery boat? Would it deliver to people along the – along the ...

E: No. Not this – the freight boat that I'm talking about was Boudreaux Canal Store. They'd run the freight from Houma to Boudreaux Canal, and um, to Grand Pass. They had a – St. Martin had a store at Grand Pass. That...

D1: I have a picture.

E: And you got *Madame Toussaint's Wedding*, there?

D1: No, I have the drawing that Uncle Charlie did of Grand Pass. It has a platform.

T: We used to have one.

D2: Yeah. I have that.

E: Yeah, we had that too. I don't know what happened to it.

D: Well how many people lived at the platform? How many people lived at the platform?

B: How many? Say, four or five.

D: Alright.

B: Yeah.

D: And how many boats would deliver to a platform?

B: Huh. Fifteen, twenty, thirty sometimes.

D: Alright.

B: Depending, uh, on how many people would come and sell to that platform.

D: Now did they ever tie their boats up there and stay all night?

B: Yeah. In fact, they'd come up in the back part in the morning, they'd come in, they'd unload – go back the next day.

C: Now, they would sleep on the platform or on their boats?

B: No. They'd sleep on their...

E: Sleep on their boats.

C: Now I've seen pictures from the late 1800s and places like Manila Village that's – sometimes many different structures out there. Um, I assume that the people who went out there stayed out there for a while. They were living in a little house.

E: Yeah, well that wasn't until later that they have that.

C: Right, but the kind of - that you were familiar with.

B: Stayed at the camp – but they had their wife and they had the family. But the shrimpers would stay on the boat.

C: Okay. Well what kind of buildings were there associated with the platform? I mean it was – there was a platform obviously.

E: For shrimp drying, yeah.

C: Right, but there was – there was like a uh, I'm guessing a barracks or a house for each family?

B: They'd call it camps – on wooden pilings.

E: Just a single camp – no barracks.

C: Okay.

E: But everybody had to - I mean, as I can tell you, they slept on the boat.

C: Okay. Well how was...

E: They lived on the boat. They did everything on the boat.

C: How was the camp connected to the platform? Was there a walkway? It was right on the edge of the...

E: On the...

C: It was on the platform.

E: On the platform - all connected there. He knows more about it. I'm not sure.

B: The camps was built on the side of the platform, and they had a walkway from the platform to the camp.

E: There you go.

D1: There's your answer.

D: How high was the camp off the marsh?

B: Oh, ten, probably, ten feet.

D: Okay. And that gave air circulation.

B: Oh yeah.

D: So you could dry shrimp top and bottom.

B: The air and the water.

D: Okay.

E: Not only that – protection from the *onde maree*. You know what an *onde maree* is? It's a tidal

D1: A tidal surge.

E: Tidal surge – sometimes the platform would go under.

?: Mr. Bobby, if you wouldn't mind, could you tell us on the microphone – your full name, what's your last name, and where you were born?

B: Yeah.

E: Bend the mic.

B: I was born in Houma.

?: Okay. And what's your last name, Mr. Bobby?

B: Robert Liner.

D: Okay. Now is Liner's Canal named after your family?

B: Yeah.

C: Now that was uh...

B: That's the Liner's from Bayou Du Large.

D: That's right – from Bayou Du Large. Um, not too far from Theriot.

B: Right.

D: And that was dug as a *trenasse*? A pirogue trail?

B: They opened that up as a *trenasse*. Right.

D: So did your family ever trap?

B: My family?

D: Yes.

B: Yeah.

D: Now...

B: We're not supposed to be related with um, Liners from bayou du Large.

D: Okay. But your family trapped. Did you ever trap?

B: Yeah.

D: Muskrat?

B: Muskrat.

D: Alright.

B: Mink, otter...

D: Alligator?

B: No, not no alligator, no.

D1: Nobody wants to alligator.

B: We don't fool with that.

D: Now when you went to trap, did you go out in the marsh and live for a long time?

B: Sometimes all day.

C: Right, but I mean, did you...

B: I'd stay out in the marsh sometimes all day.

C: Alright. But you went home at the end of the day?

B: Oh yeah. I'd leave from the camp, run the traps, and then come in at night.

E: You had a – you had a camp on the – on the...

B: Oh, the camp. We lived there. The summer and winter. That's it. – That's the home.

D2: That's where you lived.

D: Now describe your house for me – the camp. How big was it?

B: How big was it? Let's see – about thirty, thirty five feet – something like that.

D: Alright.

B: And maybe twenty feet wide.

D: One room?

B: Two rooms.

C: Okay. But what were those two rooms?

B: Bedroom and kitchen.

?: Alright. And how many kids?

B: Four.

D: Was the roof – was the roof tin, wood, or palmetto?

B: Wood.

D: Wood. Alright. So your daddy had to haul all that wood to wherever he was gonna build his camp, and then build his house.

B: Yeah.

D: Now did he – did you remember when they had putt putts?

B: Yeah.

D: Alright – was he using a putt-putt? Or did he have something like with a Model A or Model T engine in his boat?

B: In that time, they had some uh, some two-cylinder engines. He used to call them (inaudible). And then they come out with a diesel engine they called Fairbank.

D: Alright.

B: And then they come out with the Chrysler Marine engine.

D: Alright.

B: And then they come out with the GM.

D: But you were living out in the camp before World War II?

B: Oh yeah. A long time ago – World War II.

D: Now did you go to school?

B: Some. No school boat.

D: No school boat.

B: They came to the end of the highway – you had to go by boat.

D: Okay.

B: Or a pirogue or a skiff – anything that could float.

D: Alright. And how many traps would you run?

B: About a hundred and fifty.

D: Ah. Did you have a drying shed? Or did you dry outside?

B: We'd dry outside, and uh, when they had bad weather, you'd hang your, your trapping furs in the inside of a – like a barn with a heater in there.

C: Yes.

B: And the heater would run by – fire – the heater with wood.

C: Now what was your job as a child out there in the trapping operation?

B: My job was to run them traps. Ha ha.

E: He was the trapper.

D: Who did you sell your fur to?

B: Most of the time, it was to Mr. Theriot. What was his name? Elroy Theriot.

E: Nonk Elroy?

B: Yeah.

C: That was your grandpa. No – that was your...

(inaudible)

E: No, no. Don't get the Elroy's mixed up, no.

T: It depends how old he was.

E: Mr. Elroy – he wasn't a Junior, but he was my daddy's brother.

B: Your daddy's brother, right.

E: And he was a uh, a descendant from the other Elroy. The other Elroy was like his grandpa.

D1: Okay. So maybe two generations in between.

E: Yeah.

D1: Yeah.

E: Not the same Elroy. This Elroy was – he was a wise old man. He'd buy a horse for five dollars and he'd sell it for twenty.

D: Ha ha.

D1: A business man.

D: Now when you were living at the camp, what did you use as fuel for your stove? Wood? So you brought the wood or did somebody – like did Mr. Theriot, when he came to buy the fur, he brought you the wood?

B: Oh no. We had to get our own wood. We'd – when we'd go out there, we'd get a (inaudible – cart of?) wood. Okay?

D: Okay.

B: Put that on the boat, bring it to the camp, unload it. That's what we did. And later on in life, we had diesel. We had a drum of diesel on the outside the camp with a line coming in to the heater. That's how we'd warm up.

D: Mmhmm. And you had a cistern?

B: Yeah.

D: Alright. Was it a cypress cistern?

B: It was made out of wood.

D: Bought in Houma?

B: I don't know where it was bought. The cistern was there when we were there.

D: Okay. Alright. Alright.

C: Did they have grocery boats go out?

B: No.

C: So you had a...

B: You had to get your groceries by boat.

C: Okay.

E: That's why they called it a freight boat.

C: Right.

D: How off...

B: It'd come down maybe three times out the month. Deliver groceries.

C: Well that's what I was getting at.

D1: There is – there was a grocery boat.

B: It was like a supply boat.

D1: Like a supply boat.

D1: JD used to run one. Did Gene run one of the supply boats? No?

E: Not that I know of.

B: This one here – this one here was Mr. Trosclair from Houma.

C: Now in those days, would people barter? Would they trade pelts for groceries, or different things?

B: Oh no, they had to pay for them.

C: They had to pay for them.

D: And did – when you got sick, did you go see a *traiteur*, or go to the doctor?

B: Go to the doctor.

D: And getting to the doctor was easy?

B: No, sir. You had to come to the – where the road ended, get in a car or a bus or a truck, and go to – come to Houma.

D: Now where did you go to church?

B: Go to church. At um, we went to Elroy church in Bayou du Large and one on Grand Bayou.

D: Alright. And getting to church wasn't easy either.

B: No, sir. None of it was easy. Ha ha.

D2: Nothing was easy.

E: (inaudible)

D: Now when you were a shrimper, were you ever an oysterman?

B: Yeah.

D: Did you live at your oyster lease?

B: No, no. We lived up the bayou in a house, and we'd go all the way to Southwest Pass by boat. That's over there by Intracoastal City in the gulf five miles out.

D: Alright.

B: We'd load the boat, and bring it in.

D: So where your lease – your lease was in Southwest Pass?

B: Yeah. Well not my lease – the lease was for the state. The thing belonged to the state.

D: On Marsh Island?

B: To catch wild oysters.

D: At Marsh Island?

B: It's past Marsh Island.

D: Alright.

B: By the Southwest Pass.

C: That's a pretty good business.

D: Yep. Yep. And you were using a dredge or hand tonging?

B: Dredge.

D: Alright. And where did you sell your oysters?

B: We'd bring them in and sell some. Some of it – Rivere. We'd catch them out there, bring them in by boat to Grand Isle – Grand Lake – spread them out on the (inaudible).

(inaudible)

D2: You were moving. Closer. Where you keep going.

D: Do you ever remember the Bay Juno oil, um...

B: Yes.

D: Did you ever work for them?

B: If I worked in the Bay?

D: In Bay Juno.

B: Yeah, well I worked there. Yeah. We hauled oysters out of there.

E: It was in the (inaudible)

B: The sister lake – Bay Jean. By Southwest Pass.

T: Yeah. (inaudible)

B: Uh, Lake Pilto. Wherever they had oyster beds.

D: That's where you worked.

B: That's it.

D: Alright. Do you ever remember people hand tonging?

B: Who?

D: Using hand tongs?

B: Oh yeah.

T: That's something my daddy did.

B: They'd use – the last pair that they used about five – four, five years ago. Yeah.

T: Bobby.

B: Yeah, I used them.

T: Bobby, didn't y'all get in the water sometimes to get oysters?

B: Sometimes, yeah.

T: That's what I thought. Behind that – (inaudible)

E: Yeah, I did that one time. My mama and daddy all did that to eat.

B: But when I'd do that, I wouldn't sell it – that was to bring home.

T: But my daddy would bring his oysters to Houma. I don't' know...

B: But the sail – I used the tong and the drift.

T: Yeah. Because uh, I remember Papa bringing his to Houma to sell. It would take him all day and all night.

B: Well..

E: You'd used dredge after the – after the engines come out. You need an engine to pull that dredge.

B: Oh yeah. yeah – you had to use a ...

E: Before that, you'd have to dredge an oyster tong. Before that, you would dredge an oyster tong.

B: Oyster tong, yeah. Skiff and oyster tong.

T: It's a hard thing to...

D: Now. When you were fishing oysters with a dredge, were you the only one on the boat, or were there more than one?

B: Oh no, they had three. Three men.

D: Alright.

C: You had one on each end and one in the middle? How did you work that?

B: The one in the middle would steer the boat and picked up the oyster dredge. And one on each side would dump it. And shovel them back – shovel the oysters back onto the boats until it was loaded.

D: Now this was before your time, but you ever remember sailing vessels used in the oyster industry?

B: Nope.

(inaudible)

D: Now your oyster boat – did you make the oyster boat, or did you have somebody make it?

B: It was made by wood. It was made by man.

D: Right. On the bayou?

B: On the bayou.

D: Bayou Du Large.

B: I don't know about Bayou Du Large, but they was making them on Grand Caillou.

D: On Grand –

B: And over here.

D: On Petit Bayou.

E: They were making them on Little Caillou too.

D1: Little Caillou and Grand Caillou.

E: You call that an oyster skiff.

C: Most of the oyster boats were made locally?

E: Yeah. The ones that I know.

D: Always in cypress?

E: Always cypress.

B: I'm pretty sure it's been cypress – this is good wood.

D: And how many tons?

E: Uh, oh my. The Cajuns don't go by tons.

Ha ha.

D2: You don't go by tons. They go by feet.

B: The boat was in the forty, fifty, sixty foot, something like that.

D: Alright. That's good enough.

D2: Sixty feet.

D: So where was your principal market for your oysters? When you tonged, or when you filled your boat up, where did you take them?

B: You bring them into the shop.

D: And where was the shop? Where was the shop?

B: Grand Caillou.

D: On Grand Caillou.

E: Dulac.

T: What was the name of the one in Houma? You remember?

B: Uh, Du...

D: Okay.

B: AJ Duckett.

T: That's what Papa....

B: But they were from Grand Caillou but they built the factory over here in Houma.

T: Yeah.

B: By the bridge.

E: You had your –

D: Explain the difference between a factory, a cannery, and a shop.

B: A shop – usually they shuck oysters.

D: Okay.

B: Grow. They grow – shuck them. And at the factory they steam them.

D: Alright. Alright.

T: I didn't know that

E: You didn't know that they steam them?

T: well yeah.

B: That's the way they called it over here anyway.

T: I never thought of it, actually.

C: Now the shop, they just sold them locally? Or was that...

B: No, they'd sell it – up a truck and they'd sell it in New Orleans or..

E: They'd ship it to New Orleans. They'd uh...

B: Just like they do shrimp now. They still do it the same way.

E: Boudreaux Canal would ship theirs to – to the freight in uh, you had to go and put them on the train in New Orleans, and then they'd pass out there by the ice plant was at uh, Hammond. Ponchatoula or Hammond – was where the freight train. And they'd ice them up there.

C: Take them to Chicago?

E: Head them to Chicago. And a lot of the stuff went to Virginia because uh Indian Ridge had a – broker or – and they had an outlet in Virginia.

D: Now these were oysters in a can?

E: No, the cans are – the cans um, that was steamed. They'd steam oysters, and then they'd can them. And then the same canning plant that they'd can the shrimp.

D: I gotcha. So the railroad became really important in moving oysters from -

E: Oh yeah.

D: They went north to Chicago, East to Virginia for sure.

E: Yeah.

C: They must've gone also by rail from Houma to New Orleans too.

E: Yeah. The New Orleans Shrimp would mostly come from the docks in uh, below the river.

B: Most of the oysters for them come from the east side of the river.

D: Now did you ever get seed oysters from this side of the river? Like from California Bay?

B: I've been to California Bay, yeah.

D: Alright.

B: Got the oysters from them were planted somewhere else.

D: Yeah. yes.

B: They'd take them on the east side of the river and bring them on the west side of the river. They'd come from over here in Terrebonne Parish.

D: Alright.

B: They'd put some in – Lake Pelto. Bay John. The old sister lake.

D: Alright.

B: And um, Pelican Lake.

D: Okay.

B: They'd plant them all over (inaudible) where we had a bedding ground.

D: Now -

E: Who you were working for at that time?

B: I was working with my – my uncle most of the time. He had his own boat.

D: Now do you remember when the sulfur mine came into Lake Pelto?

E: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

D: How did that affect the oyster production? Or did it?

B: I don't – I don't believe it did.

D: Okay.

B: I don't believe it did.

E: My – Drew had an oyster bed out there right on the side of St. Ann lane. And uh, it didn't affect it.

D: Now did the local –

B: We hauled some oysters out of the pass, but they didn't hurt the oysters.

D: Now did local people go to work for the sulfur mine?

E: Oh yeah. Had plenty people working. It cost me a lot of helpers.

D: Ha ha.

E: Young fellows working for me, and then some went get in with the – with the sulfur company, and that was it.

C: Well about when did people start leaving the fisheries – the fishing industry and going to the oil industry and the sulfur mines? About when is all of this taking place?

E: Mostly after the war I think. Because people came back, they had to uh, get a job anywhere they could.

D: Do ya'll, remember when there was a platform at Seabreeze?

E: Oh yeah.

B: Yep.

D: Was it a big platform?

B: I remember that.

E: Yeah.

D: Now how big is a big platform?

D2: I might remember that one.

B: Yeah, you can remember.

D2: I think I remember that.

E: They had a – they had a – bunch the platforms. They had uh...

B: They had some in Seabreeze. They had some in over here.

E: They had some in –they had one across the Bayou Du Large, Oyster Bayou, Bayou Hero – all over.

E: Somebody told me they had sixteen of them on uh, west of Grand Caillou.

B: That far? How many?

E: Sixteen.

B: Oh yeah. Maybe ...

E: Sixteen platforms were at the – west of uh, west of Grand Caillou.

B: Yeah, they had six right there down Bayou Du Large. They had two at Grand Pass. They had some at Bayou Hero. They had some at Oyster Bayou.

E: I know they had three in Bayou Hero – belonged to Robert Maillet.

B: Robert Maillet.

E: What else.

B: Oh, they had a – they had sixteen or over. Oh yeah.

D: Do you ever remember one called Chinamen?

B: Oh yes. I remember that one. I slept many a nights there. That was along Grand Caillou Bayou – and they also had one at Grand Lake.

E: Everybody remembers.

D: Now were these run by Chinese?

B: Yes.

D: And ya'll – they were just like every other platform, or did they require different shrimp size, or...

B: They – they'd go shrimping, and they'd bring them – would bring them there, they'd boil them and dry them on the, on the platform. Yeah. All the platforms – they'd do it – they were doing the same work.

D: Okay.

C: When did these platforms start shutting down?

E: Oh, they had started shutting down maybe before that, but I don't want to cut Bobby.

B: I don't remember what year.

E: I don't know what year it was, but uh, the government uh, shut them down because of the – birds.

C: The health regulations?

E: The birds - the health regulations.

B: It's been around forty something years, huh?

E: No, not – I don't think that long because they had uh, the old one at the end of the road belonged to ..

B: Oh, that was one of the last ones. That was right there on the gulf.

E: They shut down the (inaudible) before that. Yeah, the government shut them down.

D: Well the Price family had one on uh, Grand Caillou up until about 1974 or 5 or 6.

E: Norris.

D: Norris, that's right.

E: Norris Price?

D: Yes.

E: How you know that?

D: I visited it. Got a picture of his son when he was young, and took it to him about eight weeks ago.

E: Yeah, I think that boy died of cancer.

D: Yeah. Yes. But then they were very...

E: How you know about Norris Price?

D: I – I've been running the bayous a long time.

D2: This is to know.

C: He first came here – I guess about forty years ago.

D: Yeah, about that. I taught at Nicholls for seventeen years.

E: Oh. Okay. I got that.

D2: All his kids went to Nicholls.

D: Or as they say, T-Nich.

E: No.

D: Well, if you had to summarize the changes you've seen, what would – what would be the thing that upsets you most about what you've seen?

E: Help me Bobby.

B: (speaking French) They got so many...

T: Outdoor toilets. Outdoor toilets.

B: One of the first ones that changed it.

E: Indoor refrigerator.

T: Yeah, that too. Washer and dryer, TV – but uh...

D: So you remember when electricity came on the bayou.

T: Yes sir. I did my home work with the oil lamp.

D: Now, kerosene or oil?

T: Kerosene.

D: Kerosene, yeah.

T: I was terrified of – my mom was scared to death of fire. At night, she'd leave it on and she'd put it in a can of water so that uh, just so it wouldn't create a fire. She was so scared of fire. But yep – I remember, and the electric bill was a dollar and a half when they first put it in.

C: Do you remember the year when they first put it in?

T: No, but I was pretty young. Um, I was going to school – I know that. I might've been...

E: I don't remember.

T: Maybe seven, eight, or nine years old. Something like that.

E: I don't know – remember.

T: I'm not sure. I can't be positive about that.

D: And your mom's stove – anybody. Your mother's stove. How did – was it...

T: Kerosene at one time, but also I think that they used a wood uh, heater, you know. The kind that you use for the wood burning stove.

E: Wood burning and the kerosene.

T: I remember when I was young it was a kerosene stove. Yeah. Her fear was always that it would catch on fire. She had something about fire, and uh, that's what she used. I also remember ironing – used uh, cast iron irons – you had to heat them on the stove, and then you had a gasoline iron, and you had to put gas in the little tank thing back of it, and you had to pump it for pressure or something.

E: A coal one?

D: Yes. Yes.

T: I remember using that. So a lot of things have changed from when I was a little girl till now, you know. But uh, we didn't have any conveniences at all. We washed clothes on a washboard. I did it till I got married and I had my second child actually. It's much easier now in a way. Everything is more hectic now. I mean, you know, life was a little bit more simple and not quite as hectic. I see them going here

and there, and children going this way and one going that way – mama’s got to go here and there, and daddy’s got to go and bring us somewhere else. I find that’s hectic. I mean I listen to my kids with their schedules, and I’ll tell you the truth. I don’t know if I could survive that.

D: Now did you have a garden?

T: Yeah. People had gardens in those days. I think we would’ve starved if we didn’t have any.

C: Where did you go? Where did you go – what did your family grow in the garden?

T: I don’t know. That was in – I was, but I remember that we ate on what we had around us.

E: Yeah, her grandpa had a garden.

T: Yeah, my grandpa had – that’s true. He had uh...

E: Your mama had a garden.

T: Yeah, mama had her own garden. Because you see, my mother – my daddy died when I was fifteen. And um, like I said, I don’t know how I made it, because we made it okay with four - and we all living. All my uh, my two sisters and my brother are all over eighty.

D: And are they – are they all living on the bayou?

T: Yeah. yeah – they all – one living up front.

E: That’s three of them right there, that’s two of them right there. One next door there, and one in the front.

T: My sister – yeah. I have a sister living in Cocodrie. Um, Herman’s wife. The one ya’ll were talking about – that’s my sister. And...

E: You didn’t know Herman?

T: My sister lives in...

E: And you’ve been down here that long?

D: No.

E: What’d you do to miss him?

D: I missed him, but I got Mr. Foret.

T: Yeah.

E: You’d have got Herman.

T: Yeah he’s a good –

E: He had some stories.

T: He's a good – talk your head off.

C: Well you said all of your – you and your sisters and your brother all stayed here?

T: Yeah, my sister...

C: Well the next generation – did they stay too, or did they start to leave?

T: Um, the children were – yeah.

E: Most of them.

T: Once they married, they moved uh, away. I have uh, one living - the one that came over – the one that came over a while ago. After my daughter – they live right across the bayou. They live down here, and then I have another daughter, lives um, I'd say about three blocks – three or four blocks.

E: On the other side of the school house.

T: Yeah, on the other side of the school house.

E: Quarter of a mile.

T: Yeah, a quarter to a half mile. Okay, I have a daughter living there, and uh..

E: We got a son –

T: I got a son – my youngest son lives a couple of houses – He will soon go to Houma because he's getting married. This is why - I tell you this story if you want to hear it. His wife left him with the children, and eventually - they divorced next week legally. And he has a – somebody he's gonna marry, and he's gonna move to Houma, and I'm taking care of his pretty little girl – where is she. This one here.

C: Oh, yes. She is pretty.

T: I have her in the morning and in the evening usually. And yesterday was the last day of school. Today she went somewhere with her aunt, but uh, she'll be going to her mother's - and I'm gonna be really really lost without her. Even though I'm old and it's hard to take care of little, young people, but she's a beautiful little girl, and she's really smart. All her medals and everything – she got yesterday – she put them there. She wanted to put them on the sill, but that's the way it goes. We have three living down here. And I have um, one, two, three living in Houma, and I have one in Minnesota and one in Lafayette.

C: Okay. Well when we spoke with Mr. Foret, he was telling us – Mr. Houston Foret – he was telling us how people, how people have had – how people grow up in Cocodrie because of the hurricanes and the erosion. The land loss – it had to start moving back.

E: Yeah.

C: Now your children, since many of them are staying here, you think they'll be able to stay here another generation?

T: I think so. I think eventually that they'll probably have to move away.

E: So far...

T: So far we have one, two three, I don't see...

E: One of them's gonna move, but it's not because of the storms.

T: No, you're right. But uh, I mean once – I have a son living in Minnesota right now. My oldest son. He loves it down here. He can't come often enough. But he'd love to come back and live down here. But he said someday he's gonna at least come halfway down, because it's always cold in Minnesota. It snows at – I mean as often as we have hot weather, they have cold weather for them.

D: Now what took him to Minnesota?

T: Oh, the woman he married. Ha ha.

D: Why should I ask?

?: Let me ask a question. How did you two meet, Uncle Gene?

E: Who, us?

T: Oh Lord.

E: I don't know. Ha ha. She saw me yah yah – ing at a wake on my mother's knees.

T: I despised him. Ha ha.

E: I was standing up by my mama crying.

T: I'll never forget. At my grandpa's wake.

E: That's why – she saw me hurt.

T: Yeah. That's true.

?: She felt sorry for you , huh?

E: You know the damn thing about that is that we second cousins, and uh..

T: Third cousins once removed or something like that.

E: Second cousins once removed.

T: Yeah, okay. My sister makes four – marrying his brother. And my mama did the same thing. My mother and her sister married two brothers. I don't know why they did that, but anyway – that's true. I saw him at my grandpa's wake and he was whining to go home, and I said, I thought he was so uh, you know, for his age, he was acting like a baby, and I despised him. I thought he was terrible. Later on I – I started going out with him. I don't know why –

C: So that refers to depression.

T: Ha ha.

D: Do ya'll remember when they had dances on the bayou?

T: Yeah, yeah.

E: Oh boy.

T: By the bridge.

D: Well tell us about the dances.

C: Well first of all, how often were these dances?

E: I'd come - she was a dancer.

T: Every Saturday. Yeah, she danced a lot.

E: Rita was a dancer.

T: She was a great dancer. She was like (inaudible). It was fun.

E: Very fun.

T: There was a dance every Saturday - it was right – right on the little bridge right there, and uh...

E: The hall is still there. They redid the hall.

T: Okay. During Lent, they made a skating rink out of it. We learned how to skate there, and that was our fun. Was skating. But otherwise, it was dancing.

C: Who would play – was local bands?

T: They had bands that would come in from New Orleans. Gene, you remember the names of the bands. They had some pretty good bands.

E: Black Bevel. The Comeaux's. and uh,

T: The ones in Houma? What were their names?

E: Dremaux's.

T: Yeah. Dremaux's. But then during the war – who?

E: People that didn't have their own car walked – but during the war we had Nellie Champagne and the Raceland (Rammers?) Oh, that was...

T: And she didn't even know how to sing. We used to laugh – we were terrible. We used to –

E: And that was worse than what we had -

T: Oh, she was horrible. Ha ha. I could've sang better, and I don't know how to sing.

C: Back in where I grew up, the dance halls were pretty rough. Was it the same thing over here, or were they? Yeah, if there was a dance Saturday night, there'd be at least one fight Saturday Night.

E: Oh yeah.

Rita: (inaudible)

T: That's why we had the sheriff – the sheriff. You know, who the sheriff was? Was Herman's uh, Grandpa, huh Gene?

E: Yeah Herman's grandpa was uh, the sheriff. He was a big fat man.

T: I remember he was – he looked like Santa Claus. Big muscle man.

E: He made us jump that bayou – he crossed the bayou – they'd swim across the bayou, (inaudible).

D1: Either way.

T: Yeah, we were terrified of him. He had his um, he didn't have no nice (inaudible).

E: He couldn't get nothing but (inaudible).

T: I remember that. We only had boats.

E: We crossed the abyou – I guarantee you -

T: But they had a slew right next door, you see, so that contributed to that.

D: Now did – did they send a bus up and down the bayou to pick you up, or did you just go -

T: Well I walked. That was right in walking distance.

E: Later on...

T: Some came in cars.

E: When the price uh, when they first had them, the halls – they didn't have no buses.

T: I went to church in a boat when I was going to – when I was young and my dad was still living, he had his oyster boat.

E: People would come...

T: People used to come to my house so they could get up in the morning so they could go to church with us on our boat. It was a big boat, but that's the way we'd go to church.

E: Later on, uh, I don't remember the bus.

T: The buses later came, and uh, they...

E: Not to the dance. I don't remember going to dances in the bus.

T: No, not to the dance. We'd go to Grand Caillou in the buses.

E: Ya'll would walk, huh Rita?

T: I don't remember – how you got to the dance hall? You lived in further away.

R: I don't remember.

T: I just walked because I was right there.

R: Yeah.

E: Everybody walked.

T: And we used to have a theater. I sold tickets. I used to walk too - just uh, about halfway – just a little bit closer than Sevin's store.

E: Like the theater had a school bus that would run. The theater had a school bus that would run. It would run to the theater.

T: Yeah. People were horrible to sell tickets to. They'd crowd – they wouldn't line up. You could see five or six hands that wanted tickets. You didn't know which one to give the change to. I was in the little collecting room, and they were nuts.

C: Well movies were every night, or just on the weekends?

T: Um, most every night, yeah.

E: In the theatre, they'd run pretty often.

T: I sold tickets for a while, and um, I had to quit. I um, I got married and I had to quit after that.

C: Well seeing the radio up there, I wondered when did ya'll get your first radio?

T: Um, my daddy had a radio when I was a little girl. That's the only thing I remember about my daddy doing something for himself. He had a little radio about this big, and he'd plug it in, and we'd play some um, some kind of music. I don't remember the music. And he'd work on his trawls at night. Sometimes four o'clock in the morning.

E: He'd catch uh...

Papa was working on his trawls, and um, his nets, and uh, listening to the radio.

C: Did ya'll listen to baseball games or Amos 'n' Andy or things like that one it?

E: Yeah. We did.

T: I did.

E: The reason why we did – we had a radio. I asked my cousin – I said why you didn't – why ya'll didn't listen to that? She looked at me, she said we didn't have no radio. Ha ha. But that was pretty good.

D1: That's a good reason.

E: Well we had a – at Boudreaux Canal we had one.

C: Which stations could you get over here?

T: I don't' remember.

E: Our favorite station I can't remember...

T: What was that Texas station.

E: In Del Rio Texas.

T: Yeah. That's the one.

E: Del Rio Texas.

D: Um, yeah. Telbia...

E: T-E-C-K-Y, or...

D: Something like that, yes.

E: Del Rio, Texas. Oh, when that would come on, man, everybody quit.

D: Wolfman Jack.

T: He knows more about it than me.

E: What was his name?

D: They had a fellow called Wolfman Jack.

E: Yeah.

D: WOLFman Jack. (howls) from WW something Del Rio, Texas!

T: I remember a Stella Dallas – that I remember.

E: We had a -

T: We used to listen to...(inaudible)

E: They had a radio – they had a copper wire running all the length of the house from one room to the other.

T: And what was the squeaking door? They had a ...

E: There was a..the squeaking door?

T: What – yeah, but there was another name for it. I can't remember. He made the door squeak – the door would squeak on the...

R: (inaudible) That was my first cousin.

T: Who's that?

R: The Bright Star.

T: Oh yeah, Robert was the owner of the Bright Star Dance Hall right – right next to the bridge there.

R: (inaudible)

T: And then one night it caught on fire, and I watched it burn down. It was horrible. I had never seen a fire before – but they rebuilt it.

C: But the dance hall – how far would the people travel to the dance hall?

E: As far as they could walk.

T: As far as they could walk, I guess.

E: Ha ha.

E: They had no other – either by boat, or -They didn't have too many people go by boat.

T: There were no cars back then.

E: People had a hard time.

T: Very few people had cars.

C: I have one more question and then I'm gonna turn it over to the others here. Did you – I know prohibition was before your time, but did ya'll hear any stories about people?

E: My daddy was a drunk.

T: Ha ha. Gene, he was...

C: I mean people bringing liquor from offshore...

E: Yeah.

T: That was

C: Shrimpers did that? Who was involved in all of that?

E: No, they'd get caught.

T: You and your daddy...(inaudible) Didn't he go to New Orleans to get his uh...

E: Yeah, he had to go to T-Rob to get his...

T: His uh, bottle of gin. I think this would be...

E: He had a place he'd hide it - right behind the toilet. When he started, they had a hole. I couldn't figure out why Paw Paw would go to T-Rob's and come back home.

R: My brother used to go buy plows when he had his horse. Oh, and he used to go to Daddy.

T: Yeah.

E: Yeah.

E: Yeah, but I'm talking about this was a long, long time ago.

T: This was a long, long time ago.

E: My daddy used to go to New Orleans often – very, very often. What was your question again?

C: Well basically, I know on Bayou Lafourche, the shrimp boats used to meet boats offshore. They'd get the liquor, they'd bring it in, and put it on a truck and send it –

E: Yeah.

C: To Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

E: That was Batou Cheramie.

B: Yeah, they'd bootleg whiskey.

E: Yeah, they were bootlegging. But down here, the shrimp boat would bring some in. Some of them wouldn't, but the best story that I got on there, I had a colored friend from here, I'm trying to think of his name. I can't think of it. And uh, when they'd come in with their load of liquor, they'd come up Grand Caillou Bayou, and each stand up on the bows and he was black as you could – he says them goddamn carpetbaggers – they didn't touch us. Passed right on through the – pass right through the – what you call that. If they'd stop you...

D: Inspection.

T: A checkpoint.

E: A checkpoint.

T: A checkpoint.

E: They'd pass right through the checkpoint and no problem – not with the big black man standing in the front. We never had no trouble.

D: Well Batou Cheramie – he went to jail.

E: Yeah, you didn't wear blue by him.

D: No, no blue.

E: No blue. I sure wish – we sold him a car – I had to go home and go change. Batou didn't want to see no blue around the Chevy.

D: Because at Angola, you wore blue.

D2: He never wanted to see that.

D: Now on Bayou Lafourche there used to be a um, grocery truck. But with Boudreaux's store here, you had all your groceries for you – was your family associated with Boudreaux Store?

E: On Boudreaux Canal?

D: Yeah.

T: Oh yeah.

E: My daddy ran that damn thing.

D: And your mama?

E: Mama is...

T: She was too busy having children.

E: Mama had her children and uh, we lived right next door to the store. Right up against the store. But uh, they had uh, they had grocery buses, uh, Savoie -

T: Yeah, they had Savoie's.

E: Marcello.

T: Marcello – that's another one. That's true.

E: And uh, I don't know. I can't remember the others.

T: And the ice cream wagon.

E: They'd run up and down the road uh...

T: What was the name of the ice cream man?

E: I'm trying to – and then they had uh, back in the – the baggage man – the one with the sack on the back.

B: Oh, Willy.

E: Big Willy.

B: Big Willy.

T: We used to ...(inaudible)

E: Big Willy would come to the house with his – He'd open that bag right there, he had a one kind of thread, they had another kind of thread...

T: They still have a big clock that has a – my birds are getting meaner and meaner.

?: Uncle Gene, let me ask you – you talk about Desiree. Tell us a little more about Desiree. I never got to meet him. Ya'll probably knew him up until about ya'll were fifteen...

E: Well Desiree was something else. I hate to brag, but boy, first thing – let's get one thing straight. He drank when he got – right before the war, he drank and all that, but then when I was in business later on, I quit blaming him for drinking because I could tell you – the guy would come in at ten o'clock and sit there. And all sit there, and all day long, he would run – he as running the store, with all the, the drummers and all would come back, he'd have to take care of that, take care of the factory, take care of the canning plant, take care of the ice plant, take care of the cows across the bayou – they had all that all on his back, besides having the only telephone in the neighborhood and one of two cars in the neighborhood. Anybody gets sick or somebody had to bring them to Houma. And uh, Papa had to drive us from the pasture. We didn't have any – even our – even I went - and then bring people to the dock.

?: How did – how did he get involved with the same (inaudible). In other words, what was his uh, his qualifications for doing all of that? Why did they pick him out of all the other gentlemen?

E: Well, he started out – the first thing he did was St. Martin wanted to hire him. My grandpa took him to Houma and they got him emancipated at the – he was – I think he was sixteen years old.

B: Yeah, I looked that up not long ago.

E: And uh, he was gonna go work at Grand Pass down below Du Large.

B: Yeah.

E: And uh, my daddy didn't trust St. Martin because if the son would've done something wrong, they'd have come back on his daddy, so they got him emancipated. It took the pressure off of the dad. So he went to work, and he worked uh, he worked three months. And in the three months, some kind of way he got lonesome, and they started – took off and uh, through the marsh, he walked all the way back to his daddy's place – he found by looking at him. When he got home out there, the horse had died. Everybody was crying. And that was the only thing they had. Guess how much he made in them days. Twenty dollars.

C: In those three months?

E: In three months he made twenty dollars.

?: What was he doing in – in he marsh?

E: He had his truck – they had a store.

?: Okay.

E: She's got a picture of the store.

?: At Grand Bay.

E: At Grand Pass.

?: Grand Pass, yeah.

E: And uh, Papa went to work at Grand Pass, and Grand Pass – they bought out – the St. Martins bought out Boudreaux Canal. How they made money, I don't know. All they had was the saloon in Boudreaux Canal. And Papa was drinking. And they put him in charge. That – they didn't know.

(inaudible)

D1: Only one way that story can go.

E: They lasted a long time though. They lasted – lasted a long time. Then after that, from the Boudreaux Canal they had a – they called this the old – that's not the old store. That's the new store that they had right there. And uh, he comes there, and he – he ran the whole thing. If he had – in those days, if the drummer didn't come see you and you wanted something you had to go directly to the uh, to the

factory - to the factory out there. And he had to go to New Orleans for that. And he'd go – sometimes he'd go twice a week. He was the only one with a half ass car running down the River Road. Half drunk.

?: Any idea how he would've learned to speak English if he would've been from the Du Large area at sixteen? There probably wasn't a whole lot of English-speaking people around. Any ideas?

E: Well he went to school to the – to the eighth grade. They dumped the schoolhouse in the ditch. That was the end of that.

T: That wasn't very nice, huh.

?: That would be in Du Large?

E: Yeah, that was in Du Large.

?: So he probably learned English – just enough English to get by, you think?

E: I don't know how he learned English. He knew just a little bit.

T: None of us spoke English. I was brought up to speak French.

E: But uh, he got along with it pretty good. But my grandma didn't speak no English at all.

?: And how did he meet – how did he meet your mom?

E: At Boudreaux Canal.

?: Because she – wasn't her family somewhat tied in with the uh – the company right there? Or they were just residents of Boudreaux Canal?

E: No, just residents. They were residents of Boudreaux Canal – where the boat launch is - that's the last place my mama lived down there. She had been born in that – what's that name – (inaudible) she was born in Cocodrie.

D: What was your mama's last name before she got married?

T: Come on in!

E: Authement.

D: Authement.

T: That's my baby.

D: Now the Authement's – they had a shrimp drying platform as well, right?

E: In Dulac

D: In Dulac.

E: They were – they were cousins, but not that close. Most of the Authement's come from Little Caillou. Almost everybody down here's got some Authement in them. We got some Authement in us. He's got some Authement in him. I've got some Authement in me.

?: Is the um – I was at Nicholls yesterday, Uncle Gene. I was looking at some old records from the St. Martin Company from the twenties and thirties. And some of the stockholders – one is a Miss Eleanor Theriot, widow of so-and-so St. Martin. Who is Eleanor Theriot? Does that name ring a bell?

E: Yes.

?: Who was that?

E: Eleanor – didn't she write a book, or she wrote a history or she wrote uh, she got the family tree together or...

D2: Genaeology.

E: Genaeology.

D2: Wasn't she related? Theriot. She wasn't one of our Theriot...

E: Yeah. She's from Du Large, but she's one of us.

D2: If you a Theriot from Du Large – you belong to us.

E: Either a Theriot a Champagne and a Falgoust – you're one of us.

D2: Champagne?

E: Champagne.

?: So that might've been Desiree's aunt? Or...

E: It was was his – his daddy's – probably daddy's sister.

?: Okay. So

E: He pulled the plow, so hardly

?: Aunt who was connected with the family, his wife or fiancé living on Boudreaux Canal. He probably had enough connection to get the job that he had.

E: Who, my daddy?

?: Yes.

E: He had enough connections to keep the job that he had.

(inaudible)

E: The girls – the girls that was on the St. Martin board – they the ones that liked Papa.

?: Why is that?

E: Because he was making money for them. They wasn't stupid. Doctor Hue and all that – which was the president of the company – him and Papa was kind of shaken. He confided in Papa a long time. But the girls – when they went to the board, the girls kept Papa in there because they knew that he – that he could talk French and he could take care of business. Papa was busy. He had to run that tractor and he had to take care of all the – the shrimp boats and take care of the ice plant, and all the rest of that stuff.

?: So you said he could speak French – he could speak to the local people and he could get the shrimp and the oysters and all the supplies in?

E: Oh, local people – that was in his hand. I mean they – he was the boss. Whatever they wanted, they had. The only thing that he wouldn't do alone is the grocery.

?: He had everything else, huh?

E: He had everything else. They had to go to the doctor, anything else that you needed money.

?: Did he ever talk to you about growing up in Du Large and maybe what life was like for his family?

E: Not hardly. I've got most of that from my Uncle Elroy. To me, he was my favorite uncle.

D: Now when they were canning oysters, where did the cans come from?

E: American Canning.

D: In New Orleans, or...

E: In New Orleans.

D: Huh. And they were..

E: The old American Canning building?

D: I don't know where that is.

E: You don't know where that is?

D: No.

E: What's the matter with you?

D: I don't know. ha ha. I'm not old enough.

E: The building's still there. I think they made an apartment with it. By City Park out there.

D: By City Park.

E: Yeah. American Canning was on the – later on the canning – the canning machine and all that, that was all leased out to the plant, and they funded the cans. They had different sizes of cans – this can and everything else.

D1: Okay, like tuna fish.

E: Later on, later on, they went out to the big cannery. Later on in life.

?: And they had a – they had a pepper flavored shrimp, right? Where'd the peppers come from?

E: Alright. That was my daddy's – that was Papa's, how you call it – when you get a..

D2: A franchise?

D1: A pension.

?: His idea?

E: My daddy's – that was his idea, but he got it to..

D: Patent it?

E: He got it patented. But they didn't last very long because they couldn't get the peppers. Enough pepper to keep it going.

?: Any idea where he was getting this – the first batch of peppers from? Houma?

E: It wouldn't be from Houma. It would've been from the..

D1: Avery Island?

E: No, no. Point au Chene.

D1: Point au Chene.

?: Ah.

E: That's where. That's what I think it was from. And that's the only place that they really have – the farms down here – they didn't plant that. That's why he couldn't – he couldn't keep it up.

?: Now was Desiree forced into retirement? Or did he gladly...

E: That's a good question. It was time for him to retire, and I don't know. He went – when he uh, when he showed up, he went to – what do you call that? A (inaudible) he went to Mandeville or somewhere around there. And he took the treatment. And then the man had a bottle of whiskey sitting right there. When his friends would come in, he had that whiskey, and he never drank another drink.

?: And then your brother – your brother got involved, didn't he?

E: Yeah. Well JD had been with him. Uncle JD had been with him since he wanted to kill the school bus driver.

?: What happened with the school bus driver?

E: Well mama found him on the back steps sharpening his knife. And asked him what he was gonna do with it, and he said, kill the goddamn driver.

Ha ha.

?: Why he wanted to kill him?

E: He didn't want to go to school.

T: He told us that himself.

E: He sure did.

?: So – so JD ran with...

E: JD was worked with Papa for years and years. JD and her brother. Uh...

T: Her who? Which her?

D2: Louis's one. Blanche's sister.

E: Yeah.

D2: What, T-Lynn?

T: Oh, T-Ture. I thought so.

E: T-Ture, Arthur Junioe.

D2: So that's Blanche's brother, or..

E: Blanche's brother. It was all – it was all ...

D2: Yeah, was JD already married to Blanche then?

E: Oh yeah.

D2: Okay. So him and his brother-in-law worked at the plant together.

E: Yeah.

T: And it's not long that that man retired.

E: And how long – retired.

T: He stayed here till he was older.

E: He retired about a year ago, and then he died.

T: He died not long after.

D2: Gotta keep working.

T: That's the truth. That's the truth.

?: And Uncle Gene, you were a mechanic most of your life. Right? You worked on boats, fixed boats, built engines...

E: I got...I gotta tell you something.

T: I think I know what it is.

E: It concerns you.

D2: Me?

E: Yeah.

T: I know what it is.

E: Your daddy told me that you were gonna marry somebody and that uh, you were – he was a mechanic. And he said, he looked at me, and he said you know how mechanics are. I said yeah. I said stupid.

D2: Ha ha.

E: He said yeah. he said that's it. A stupid mechanic. Same thing. I'm better known as a stupid mechanic.

D2: Ha ha. I think – I think my daddy learned to accept my husband and not think he was too stupid.

E: You saw that, huh.

D2: It took a long time.

E: Yeah, it took a while.

T: It's really true. He did say that.

D2: I won't tell my husband.

T: Don't tell him that.

E: If ya'll tell him that – he'd get red in the face.

D2: Ha ha.

E: I couldn't have said that.

T: You'd have to edit that tape.

D2: Tommy is my favorite brother-in-law. He's my favorite uncle and he's my favorite brother-in-law. And he is not stupid.

T: No. he's not.

D2: He's not stupid, no. shame on Daddy for saying that.

T: Ha ha. He wasn't too pleased at the time I think.

E: He was happy that you were marrying that guy – I'll tell you that.

D1: Was he happier with my guy?

D2: Oh yeah, well yours had a college degree. That was a long....

D1: He liked to check pedigree on that.

E: He – he wasn't stupid mechanic.

D1: Guess who has more money. Ha ha. The stupid mechanic.

E: You're right.

D2: That's right.

T: I think it was nothing stupid...

E: Wasn't –

D1: Nice guys. Nice guys.

E: What happened to the dog?

D1: Coco? We have Libby – my little sister is taking care of Coco. Coco Trois. Yeah.

T: Coco – Trois.

?: I picked him up – I picked him up in uh, Houston.

D2: Jason got the dog from uh, a dog abuse center of some sort.

E: Yeah.

?: A dog – I picked him up – that dog was thin like that. I felt so sorry for that dog. Two months at Maw Maw's house – thirty pounds.

C: A warm ice cream in the microwave.

D1: He don't like it cold.

E: Ha ha.

D2: I want to ask a question. It's about the factory. It's about the cans. It's about him, and it's about a hurricane. And I just would just like to hear if you recall this story. I'm sure that you will. Daddy, I think told this. So everybody had to go uh, and evacuate or rather the only safe – the only safe place it might be in a hurricane was the shrimp factory because uh, by – it wasn't going to float away. And so the community would go there when the water would – the hurricane was coming. There was no um, obviously no hurricane warning or anything. Um, Desiree Theriot had a barometer. He told me.

E: Yeah...

D2: And he could tell that pressure would drop and he – of course, you know, bad weather.

E: He believed in that barometer.

D2: He believed in the barometer, and he said he let the signal out, and everybody could know it was coming, but by the time that was happening– it was right there. The water was coming up. So the story went that everybody was in the shrimp factory with the wind and so forth. Okay. And daddy told me that the water came in, and the boxes of empty shrimp cans waiting to be filled, cases of them, cardboard boxes I suppose– they piled tem on top of each other and people had to stand on them 'cause the water rose. And then they put – you know, they'd compact them, and the people would have to squeeze together more, people put kids on their shoulders and that they got water up to the neck, and that their next – their next step was to break open the roof and get out on the roof, Katrina styler I suppose, um..

E: That was in the – I know that in that part of the story.

D2: They were praying the rosary, and when they got this high, the only place left to go was the roof. That's when the water stopped the rising and it began to go down.

E: That was in the (Coal Storage?).

D2: Okay. And I don't know – what I want you to say.

E: It was in the ice plant. The coal storage – and uh, what happened when they got up against the roof – they had some uh, ice picks – kind of something to break the ice with. Well they bust a hole through the roof, and they come out through the roof.

D2: So they did come out through the roof.

E: And mama was pregnant.

D2: And mama was pregnant. Probably with you.

?: That was the '26 storm?

E: Yeah.

D2: And you were born in '27, '28?

E: '27.

D2: Yeah. 1926 was the bad storm.

E: I had found out how it - around. 2-7-27.

D2: 2-7-27.

E: It was my birthday. I never realized that 2-7 - February the seventh, '27.

D2: And my birth –

E: Every time I go somewhere, 2-7-27.

D2: Yeah, and my birthday and your mama's birthday are the 27th.

E: Yeah.

D2: Of September. Of September. And my daughter's also the 27th. So we got two birthdays on the same day.

E: Yeah, coming back to your grandpa, that man had some power.

D2: He was the leader.

E: He was a leader with Dudley LeBlanc, and um, the governor.

D1: Who was the governor?

E: Huey Long.

D1: Huey?

E: Huey Long comes to Boudreaux Canal – all them uh, he had uh, -they had – he had a lot of power. The people wanted something, they'd go see Papa. That's all I have to say.

D1: How many employees do you think between the store and the factory and the ice house and the – how many people did, did – were on the payroll?

E: We tried to figure that out....

D1: Uh huh. Don't know?

E: Don't know. In the factory when the factory was working, we tried to figure out how much they had – and we figured about a hundred fifty people - that would've worked at the factory.

T: They had a lot of...(inaudible)

D1: That's just the factory?

E: Because the factory – and then they had the ice plant and the dryer...

T: Because in those days they had a lot of people coming down to work in both factories.

E: The platforms, and then with the – with the oysters, they'd steam the oysters. The steamed oysters come in when the shrimp season closed.

D1: It goes from shrimp to oysters.

E: It goes from shrimp – yeah. Paw Paw tried all kinds of things to keep the plant going.

D1: Right.

E: He tried canning beans and tried everything. All kinds of things, but he couldn't get supply.

?: Was he involved in trapping as well?

E: Yeah. He used to – he was in cahoots with his brother. They used to buy the skin. Oh, and the back of that store at Boudreaux Canal – they had piles of skins there. Shee! Talk about smell.

?: Now what's – what did your grandparents do? Do you have any idea what they would've done? They live off the land as well? Were they srhimpers?

E: My grandparents?

?: Yeah you daddy's dad. Ludwig.

E: No, he lived in Bayou du Large over there. He was a farmer.

?: Okay.

E: He was the one with the horse that died.

?: So for – for Desiree, one of the questions that we've kind of, um, been asking ourselves is how did Desiree come to acquire so much comforting out here for a poor boy who grew up and walked out a marsh after three months and ran a factory?

E: He didn't acquire much property.

?: How did he come to – to be so important and have so much?

E: Just because just by being Desiree Theriot, and big boss of Boudreaux Canal. And he didn't have nobody else.

T: Well he was a good businessman.

E: The only other boss that they had that had any power was the – was the sheriff. The – the deputy – Herman's grandpa and him and Papa were – I mean naturally, they were buddy buddy.

?: Um, your brother told me that he had a uh, Desiree had a cigar boat. You remember that cigar boat? Those high-speed cigar boats?

E: Speed boat? I know he had one. I never did know much about the speed boat. I know he had one. Because the boat was uh, was stored uh, they stored that in the – in the um....(inaudible). We call that the (inaudible).

D2: That was a (nee kirie?)

E: Where the cows and where the horses were and everything else.

T: A stable – yeah.

?: Was used as an emergency for people.

(inaudible)

D: When did you go from putting shrimp in cans to quick freezing them and putting them in boxes?

E: Oh, that comes in uh, much later.

D1: (inaudible)

T: World War II? After the war?

E: Yeah, it was after the war. They kind of started I think in the war.

T: I don't know – I worked...

E: Because uh, they had to – they didn't have no freezers. They had to get a freezer.

T: I don't remember what Chauvin did

E: No, Chauvin didn't – Chauvin didn't have no freezer.

T: No, but they shipped their shrimp some kind of way.

E: They shipped their – yeah. But they didn't have no frozen shrimp. They...

T: That's what I mean. I don't know how got them cold.

E: Frozen shrimp. They didn't come out with frozen shrimp really till they built that new plant. They didn't have – they didn't have no - they didn't have the facility for freezing – and what they built this new plant over here, they had the freezer and the – they started out with that.

T: Yeah, I wish you would quit that, Gene. So more people could sit on it.

(inaudible)

?: One night – uh, Anne. Anne and uh,

T: I don't know why he does that.

D2: Mama did that sometimes.

T: He took some medication that causes it, but...

E: The medication – but when you talk about some pills.

T: We have a drugstore, but you (inaudible)

D2: Getting old is not for sissies.

C: Uh, how many of ya'll spoke English when you started school?

T: I didn't speak English at all.

E: Ha ha. Oh boy.

T: And let me tell you – we spoke French. But I learned how to speak English. I won't say I'm perfect at it. But today, I prefer speaking English to French because I kind of lost some of it.

E: You lost it with the children.

T: I – I taught my children how to speak English because we were – we felt like we were terribly inferior because we spoke French. That's the way they made us feel. And that stayed with me a long time until I was old enough to realize that knowing how to speak two languages was better than just one. But I lost some of my French, but I think another – a reason why I don't like to speak French anymore is because when I was growing up, my vocabulary – French vocabulary was limited. You understand? All the big words, till I went to high school and took French I realized I really don't know how to speak real good French. But not English either. So we kind of stuck in the middle with that. Now I had an aunt that she had brought up her kids speaking English. They live right next door to us. And I picked up a few words with them but I don't know – but I really didn't learn how to speak it till I started going to school.

E: I had to go to – the teacher – when I'd go to school the teacher wouldn't let me speak French on the grounds. And the teacher would come eat dinner with Mama, and Mama didn't know how to talk English.

Ha ha.

D2: I'll give you a good one.

E: But I'd talk to the teacher in French till I get to the school yard. When we'd get to the school yard...

D2: Stop.

C: There was a teacher from over here? From Houma?

T: Yeah, they had some from uh...

C: Where were they from?

(inaudible)

E: Mostly from up in Little Caillou.

T: Up in Little Caillou mostly. I remember this uh...

E: Most of our teachers come from...

T: Ms. Yvette Pellegrin.

C: So they spoke – all spoke French.

E: They used to call that the potato planter.

D2: They must've been bilingual, yeah. Dad said that one of the teachers that would punish him um, for speaking French was his – some relative. I don't know – an aunt or a cousin or somebody.

E: Yeah, Aunt Anna.

D2: Was it Aunt Anna?

E: Yeah.

D2: Oh, well there it is.

T: Aunt Anna with the red hair.

D2: Yeah. he told me that when he'd get to – have to write five hundred lines, "I will not speak French at school" but grandma didn't have any loose leaf paper, so she would unwrap the French bread, smooth out the paper, and he'd have to fill that, you know.

E: Oh yeah.

D2: Yeah, front and back – both sides. And turn that in to I guess Aunt Anna for not speaking French in school. He told me that, and I remember that story. I tell that one in my classroom. And they'd say, ooh that's bad. Yeah.

E: I got another...

T: If we got caught speaking French – she, the teacher made a ...

D2: A sign?

T: Put a big piece of cardboard on a string and tied it around your neck. I don't remember what it said on the –

D2: It said, it said stupid mechanic, you know, or something.

Ha ha.

D2: But yeah. It said something very derogatory.

T: But being six years old and being - you know, told not to speak it -but you learned from the time you were born.

E: I stayed forty four years at that shop on the bayou side.

(inaudible)

T: All of a sudden...(inaudible)

C: My dad did the same thing.

D2: My husband too. He just didn't talk.

?: Uncle Gene, I was having a drink with Anne and Larry one night, and he – he told us of a story as a child when Larry was little that you used to take him and Paw Paw in your uh, in your boat and go night fishing at the flare.

D1: I went.

?: Can you tell me about what the flare was, and maybe Mr. Bobby – if you want to come in and tell us a little bit about how the oil and gas industry changed – changed this area around?

E: I don't – I don't...

T: You used to go fishing at the flare. (inaudible) used to go with you.

E:Yeah, I fished with (inaudible).

?: The redfish would come out at night, huh?

E: Not redfish...

D2: Trout.

E: Trout.

D2: Trout. Catching them two at a time.

E: White trout and speckled trout.

T: I never did go fishing.

E: We'd wait till all those people from Baton Rouge would surround the pass right there, and when they had to – all surrounding me and Herman would go in the bay - two damn Cajuns.

?: Well where was the flare - was it Lake Barre?

E: They had uh, two three of them down there. Yeah, some of them at uh, and Lake Pelto. They had some Caillou Island - Caillou Island especially. And they had some at uh – three hundred (inaudible) there. That's at the end of Bayou Little Caillou.

T: Yeah, you'd go fishing, and you'd catch fish, but you wouldn't fix them.

E: I wouldn't clean them.

T: Guess who would fix – guess who took twenty years to learn that to tell her daughters to never to learn how to clean a fish.

D1: That's horrible. Ha ha.

T: I told them never went how to clean fish. Make sure you never clean one fish. I opened oysters and I cleaned fish, and I peeled shrimp, and maybe that's why I couldn't eat them after. And crabs from old (inaudible) yeah.

D: Do you ever remember or have heard stories about Chauvin being a center for the sale of bird feathers?

T: Bird feathers.

E: I don't know. I know that Chauvin was a –

T: I worked for him, but I don't know anything about...

E: ..to kill a duck - wholesale ducks. They used to kill um, right there – (inaudible) Roberts used to do that.

T: Do what?

E: Kill some ducks for the market.

(inaudible)

E: That was a little bit before my time.

T: Oh boy.

D1: Ducks.

C: Ladies, if I can get you while it's quiet now, to give your names and your year of birth, and uh, then I need to get all of you to say it's okay for us to put this at the university so people can use it for their studies.

D2: We have to give permission.

E: Well they ain't got nothing to learn.

?: Well we heard a lot today.

D2: Oh yeah. this is valuable.

E: Boy it's a shame that people like ya'll couldn't come five years ago.

D2: Yeah.

E: She – man they had some people with stories.

T: I regret not talking to my grandparents about the old days.

E: Oh.

D: I regret it.

E: Herman was one of them – he had a lot of (inaudible).

T: They died when I was so young, you know. One or two might have lived till we were old enough to – to talk to them about the old days, but not many lived long enough

C: Well that's what we're doing here – is to save this for the generations to come.

T: Well they're living older now. You know, not everybody lives past eighty – they hit seventy and they're dead in the old days.

E: Well let me tell you how we entertained ourselves at Boudreaux Canal. Took a little piece of wood about that long, took our boat – take some can covers, old can covers that they couldn't use, and make some wheels with them, put them on there – that was a little truck.

Ha ha.

D2: Have races?

E: We'd have races and everything was uh, was can covers. Man, we didn't even have real wheels.

Ha ha.

D2: That's good.

C: Ladies, can we have your name?

T: Sure, you can have my name. You want just my Mrs. Name?

C: Well, whatever –

D: Whatever one works.

T: It doesn't matter. They all call me Maw-Maw Tootsie over here because I was born named Elphie, and I never knew my name because they gave me the nickname of Tootsie. And when I started school, I had a new name, and I found out I was called Elphie. You can ask Gene – all my life, everybody knows me – even my aunts didn't know my real name. But anyway, my name was Elphie Lehret. And I was born on Independence Day – July 4, 1927, just like him. And that's it – and Rita, you're next. You remember your birthday? Go ahead and tell them your name.

R: August the second, 1925.

C: And your name?

R: Rita – Rita

T: She's an Authement.

E: Rita Authement.

D2: Oh, you're an Authement.

R: Rita Authement.

D1: Are you – were you related to Grandmaw Theriot?

R: Yes, I'm related.

T: My grandmaw as a – wait. My grandmaw – my grandpa was an Authement.

D1: Your grandpa...

D2: Everybody's an Authement.

D1: Everybody's an Authement – okay.

T: Yeah, my mama was an Authement. Hey I'm losing it too. Yeah, we all have some Authement in us some kind of way. Isn't that crazy?

E: That's why I can't figure out how we all don't have the same last name.

C: I'm from the same kind of community back in St. Landry Parish. I had to ask my mama if it was okay to date girls in high school. So –

T: Ha ha.

E: I blame Mama for her – because my mama never told us.

T: Yeah, we didn't know.

D2: You and your husband are related.

(inaudible)

E: We went and see the priest, that's when we found out we was related.

T: But um, his brother and my sister were married before us, and they were married as third cousins. We were married as second cousins once removed, whatever that means.

D1: Somebody else is recording you. Yeah. Somebody different.

T: Different priests. Different priests.

The lady a while ago (inaudible), married Drewus, which is her brother. My oldest brother married Blanche, which is his sister.

T: His sister. That's his sister.

E: And we went camping one time, and the man tried to figure that out. Just forget it, man.

Ha ha.

T: We're all in-laws one way or another.

E: Have you been to Bayou Lafourche?

D: Yes.

E: Oh, that's interesting.

D: It is.

E: One thing I got to say about Bayou Lafourche – they had a strike one time - a shrimp strike, and the uh, I don't know how it came about, but they had a truckload of men from Little Caillou that went down to Golden Meadow, and the Golden Meadow people – we used to know them as knifers - they'd cut your belly open for nothing. But them people from Little Caillou were brave enough, and they went out there and they drove the strike. Very interesting.

D: Yes.

T: Yes, it is. And about what year was that in?

E: That was before the war.

T: Because I remember Papa going to that.

E: Yeah, your daddy went. And plenty of...

T: I remember that. We were scared to death. In fact, we didn't – people didn't know what it was all about. We were young.

C: So folks, dowe have your permission to put this at the university and let people use it?

T: I have nothing to...

E: By the way..

T: I have nothing to hide.

R: Me too. I didn't have much to say.

C: Yes?

D2: Yes – it is a yes.

E: Yes.

T: If you find something you don't like, just erase it.

E: I want to tell you something. Do you know Doctor Ray?

C: I know him.

D2: Authement.

D: I know him, but he knows him very well.

C: I worked for him for over thirty years.

T: Oh yeah, he was –

E: You did?

C: Yes I did.

T: He was one of our friends.

E: You know where he's from?

C: Yes sir – Boudreaux Canal.

E: Boudreaux Canal.

C: In fact, I interviewed him about that about five years ago about when he was a little boy over here.

T: Two houses away from me.

C: Really?

D1: Yep.

T: Oh, he was so good working. The one that was – (inaudible).

E: His daddy worked at the store – the Boudreaux Canal Store.

C: Well that's what he told me. He first developed a love math – mathematics when he - because part of his job was to help count – to help his daddy count the pelts. The furs when they came in.

E: Yeah – that's right. All the way up to the...(inaudible)

D2: That's a PHD in uh, mathematics?

C: In mathematics.

?: PHD in mathematics?

C: yeah.

T: My son is in math - teaching highschool.

(inaudible)

C: Yep.

T: Teaches math and he can't keep a straight checkbook.

E: Ray turned out smart and I turned out stupid.

T: It all depends what direction you take.

E: Yeah.

T: well her name was Elphie too, you see. That's the...

E: This property was his grandpa's property.

T: Yeah. Right.

D1: First cousins, second cousins maybe.

C: Well I'll be sure to tell him that I met with all of ya'll.

(inaudible)

C: Folks, I want to thank all of you. This was wonderful.

E: You have enough?

C: I – I'm not speaking for him, but I know I learned a lot.

D: Oh yes. We gotta come back because um, we need to know where those cans – we need more information about those cans.

E: Cans?

D: Oh yeah. Just keep thinking about those cans, that's all. Just keep thinking about the cans. Oh, but I'm real interested in the fact that American Can Company apparently leased the equipment to you.

E: Yeah. Right.

D: Well, I can assure you that's not written anywhere. So that means every factory probably were leasing machines from American Can.

C: And probably with the revise of the – they buy the cans from American Can Company.

D: And if you start thinking in terms of business economics, it starts going, oh wait a minute here. I gotta think this through better.

E: Which is the – which is the same thing going on today.

D2: Yeah.

E: And going all on with your shrimp dealer. LaPerre and all of them - I don't know what LaPerre's name is. But they own all the shrimp – the shrimp peelers. Even in their last one. (inaudible) come on. Help us.

D2: Well, La Pere. Who's La Perre?

E: La Perre from Grand Caillou. The one that invented the shrimp...

D1: Shrimp peeling machine?

D2: Oh yeah.

E: Come on Bobby.

B: The one that invented the machine?

E: Yeah. He was a Samanie that they claimed that they branded the machine.

B: That's the crab machine. That's for crab. Uh, Samanie.

E: La Perre.

B: La Perre is the shrimp peeler.

E: La Perre owns all the shrimp peelers.

B: Oh yeah.

T: There's a machine that peels crabs?

E: Yeah.

T: Here?

B: Yeah. That was Semanie. Uh, Richard. What was Richard's daddy's name?

D2: Semanie?

B: That was his last name.

D1: Samanie. S-A-M-A-N-I-E.

D2: S-A-M what?

R: Samanie.

D2: Semanie. I don't know that name. S-A-M-O...

R: S-A-M-A-N-I-E.

T: It's S-A-M-O-N-I-E I guess.

(inaudible)

E: I don't think there's an O in it.

T: You can look it up in the phone book.

D1: It's a U?

(inaudible)

D1: Alright.

T: In Houma? Or from Houma or what?

E: Grand Caillou.

D2: Grand Caillou. Dulac.

T: Dulac, alright. Chauvin, Bourg...

(inaudible)

B: They got a Bobby Samanie or Richard Samanie. Bobby and Richie. I don't remember the daddy's name.

D1: Dulac.

T: Okay. P-Q-R-S.

E: The daddy's been dead.

T: Samanie. Okay, here we go. Samanie Packing Sompany. The first one one on top. It's F – F. SAMANIE.

D2: Samanie.

T: S-M-E – S-A-M-A-N-I-E. Yep. They're all spelled with an A.

D1: Unusual names – they got some strange names in the cemetery too. Anyway, okay. Ya'll want to wrap it up?

D: Yes. Thank you so much for all of your help.

D2: Oh yeah.

(inaudible)