



WASHINGTON STATE ORAL/AURAL HISTORY PROGRAM
WASHINGTON STATE ARCHIVES,

ACCESSION NO. WCT 95 ²⁰ 1 _{MR}	TAPE NO.
INTERVIEWEE'S NAME WALTER H. SCOTT	

RELEASE

I, the undersigned, hereby consent to the tape recording of conversations given in connection with the Washington State Oral/Aural History Program on MARCH 15, 1975 and to the divulging of said tape recordings and/or transcripts made therefrom.

INTERVIEWER MICHAEL A. RUNESTRAND	DATE 5/7/75
COMMUNITY ADVISOR Don Eklund	DATE 5/20/75
PROGRAM COORDINATOR Timothy Fredrick	DATE

Walter H. Scott
SIGNATURE (INTERVIEWEE)



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ACCESSION NO.	TAPE NO.
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RELEASE

I, the undersigned, hereby consent to the ~~tape recording of conversations~~ ^{photography} given in connection with the Washington State Oral/Aural History Program on 8/11/75 and to the divulging of said ~~tape recordings~~ ^{photos} and/or transcripts made therefrom.

INTERVIEWER	DATE
COMMUNITY ADVISOR	DATE
PROGRAM COORDINATOR	DATE

Mark Kendrick 8/11/75
Timothy Ireland 9/24/75

W A Scott
SIGNATURE (INTERVIEWEE)



TAPE ARCHIVE SHEET

INTERVIEWEE'S NAME Walter H. Scott BIRTH DATE 1893

HOME ADDRESS _____

INTERVIEWER Michael A. Runestrand

INTERVIEW TITLE EARLY FISHING DAYS, FISH TRAPS AND REMEMBRANCES

INTERVIEW DATE March 15, 1975 TIME _____

INTERVIEW SUMMARY Family background; Spanish-American War; Ethnic groups in Whatcom County
circa 1900; Work experience, fish traps; Otter trawling; Depression;
Traveling the rails; Memories

Also see WCT 76 - 33mr and WCT 76 - 34mr

RESTRICTIONS None

PROPER NAMES OR COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS USED Earl Markum, George Miller; George Fountain;
Matson Brothers; Frank Scott; Dave Wells; Hank Adams; Alaskan Yukon Exposition;
Pacific American Fisheries; Captain Hong; Spanish-American War; Prohibition;
Depression

INTERVIEW AND RECORDING QUALITY _____

DOCUMENTATION Photographs and charts

Mr. Walter Scott

April 15, 1975

"EARLY FISHING DAYS/WORKING THE FISH TRAPS AND REMEMBRANCES"

Interviewed by: Michael Runstrand

Washington State Oral/Aural History Program
Washington State Archives, Olympia, Washington

Accession No. WCT 75-20mr, Tape No. 3 & 4, Tape Side 1 & 2, 3 & 4. No. of Pgs. 37

Mr. Walter H. Scott
April 15, 1975

Accession No. WCT 75-20mr, Tape No. 1, Tape Side No. 1

Mr. Michael Runestrand: We're talking with Walter Scott, and, Walt, there's a couple of things I want to ask you before we start talking about...oh,...fish traps and the fishing industry, and various things about Bellingham. What year were you born?

Walter Scott: 1893.

Mr. Runestrand: And, you were born in this area?

Mr. Scott: In Bellingham, yeah. New Whatcom at that time.

Mr. Runestrand: What were the names of your folks?

Mr. Scott: My father's name was, Scott, Sprott, (Spraght?) really. Harry Sprott. He was a...he ran away...he originally...his folks, parents, came from Ireland, Northern Ireland, but, I don't suppose you want to hear all that story. And, a...Lily, you could fill him in on that better than I can.

(Lily asks, "What was that?")

Mr. Scott: He wants to know when I was born. Well, I know when I was born, 1893, but anyway, about my parents.

(Lily asks, "Your parents, what about 'em?")

Mr. Scott: Oh, who they were, where they came from? They got run out of Northern Ireland there, for one thing. (Chuckles) His folks...

Mr. Runestrand: Well, your dad, you were saying, was a tugboat captain on Lake Whatcom?

Mr. Scott: No, he ran away to sea, when he was thirteen years old. He shipped out as a cabin boy on one of those so-called, "Blue nose hell-a-floats." They were a tough breed of sailors, I'll tell you. And, I remember when he went back home to see his folks. Let's see, I forget right now, where the railroad station was, over somewheres around there by Diehl Motor. And, when I saw he was on the back end of the train there, and he was wavin' at us. And, I

saw him goin' away and I broke loose from mother there and tried to chase him down. (Chuckles) I didn't want him to go.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, your dad was a...you were mentioning to me about the Spanish-American War. You have a few remembrances of it?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah, I remember when it was the thing that impressed me most that time was...dad used to come home, and we had a Bellingham paper, the Daily Blade, and he picked the paper up and he says, "Lots of Uncle Sam's men are gettin' killed now." I remember that. And, I remember the war goin' on. I don't...I just know it was down around Cuba, and that's all I remember about it. But, I remember Teddy Roosevelt, talkin' about him, you know, the rough-riders, and a lot of the guys that fought in the war there, they were around. And, when I was a little older, I remember one of them lived in Bellingham.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Scott: Oh, they had what we called, "Decoration Day," they had a celebration. The Civil War veterans was...the North and the South...there was quite a few of those people that fought in the Civil War. They had, the Union soldiers, they had those little caps and blue suits, and the other side had the big hats, Confederates, I guess they called them, the rebels. And, then they would go out to the cemetery, Bayview Cemetery. We, my brother and I, we were about seven or eight years old, I guess. And, they'd march around there, and they had those big old Springfield rifles there. And, then they'd fire those blanks and the minute they'd throw the trap door open and eject the shells, us kids would crawl in between their legs and grab those, they'd fire a volley you know, across there then they'd...ready, load, aim, fire,..you know, and volley; and then they'd, I dunno, I think they'd fire three or four vollies, (Chuckles) and, we got all the brass.

Mr. Runestrand: What grade school did you go to? What school did you go to?

Mr. Scott: Washington School.

Mr. Runestrand: Washington School. Were there a lot of kids in school at that time?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Talkin' about some of the different types of people around in school and some of the activities you'd be involved in, and I asked you if there were any Blacks in this town at that time; and remember that story you were telling me about whatchamacallit?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, Markum, Earl Markum. He was a...they were...nobody paid any attention to whether they was Black or White or anything. A lotta Jews in town too. And, we all mingled together, played together. There was no race, I never heard of any...you know, callin' 'em niggers and downgradin' 'em or anything. The fact is, Earl Markum, he used to do a little fighting, and he was kind of a light weight, curly headed kid, and he went by the name of Nigger Markum. Imagine that? Well, there was no...oh, race prejudice or anything that I can remember, like it is now.

Mr. Runestrand: Speaking of fighting, you were telling me about when you used to wrestle down on the Southside, in one of those theaters, and I thought that was a pretty neat story. That during intermission, when you'd wrestle down in one of the theaters, and you mentioned just the smell and the people and...

Mr. Scott: (Laughing) Well, I...you had a lot of Slavonians down there and they lived on that garlic. What did they call that? They called that, one of those street cars, the last one from town, was the garlic special. (Laughter) We used to, sometimes, go to town to the show or somethin' and come over, and take your lady friend back home and walk back. Last street car, (Lily interjects, "was at midnight, usually.")

Mr. Runestrand: But, they'd have wrestling during...just as one of the shows going, eh?

Mr. Scott: Well no, they used to have wrestling matches there. They used to, this town was quite a sporting town, you know, for, oh, up and down the coast.

Not so many boxers, but, there was more wrestling. There was Chief Two Feathers, I remember, Frank Guz, maybe you've heard of him?

Mr. Runestrand: I don't remember his name.

Mr. Scott: And, oh, they had all big time stuff. On the city here, like San Francisco and Seattle, Seattle, you know, that was just, in those days, pretty small too. When they had that A. Y. P. Exposition in 1909, that was where the University district was, that was way out in the jungle. You had to go out there in the street car for quite a ways. The waterfront around Seattle there was down in what they called the Skidroads, first Yesler Way, First Avenue, Second Avenue, Third, Fourth, and Fifth, and the farther up the hill you got, the more elite it was. But those, did you ever hear of Billy the Mug Saloon?

Mr. Runestrand: No.

Mr. Scott: Boy, that was really the place. Big horseshoe bar there, and you got a glass of beer there for a nickel there. Was a great big mug about that ...it must have held pretty near...I know it held over a pint, it must have been three-quarters. Beer was five-cents and that was a pretty tough price.

Mr. Runestrand: You and your brother used to do a lot of activities together. When did you first start fishin' together?

Mr. Scott: Oh, that was around, I think that was around 1913. We got out of the sawmill. My brother Jack, he was the one that passed away, he didn't do much work. He was two years younger than I was, and oh, most of the time we wanted to get a few dollars when we grew up, we did an awful lot of hunting, you know, selling ducks to customers, and we was allowed, the month of November, we was allowed to hunt for the market. But then, we never abided with that. Oh man, I tell you, you talk about ducks and game here. They had some fellows that run a shingle mill there, George Miller was his name, and he had a, well, he could afford...they were good hunters and good shots, good bird shooters too. And, this ..as far as that clay pidgeon shooting, this little town of

Bellingham had some pretty good shots in there. They was pretty...a lot of competition. They'd go down to Seattle, well, no so much there, but down around Frisco, California. Oh, they were light bird matches!

Mr. Runestrand: And, they'd just let pigeons go, you mean, and you'd take shots at 'em?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah, they was all, practically all they'd bird shoot.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Scott: But, they had...and then they'd go up to Sumas Prairie, Sumas Lake there. I remember this George Miller and George Fountain, he was one of his shingle weavers. They borrowed our dog. We had a water spaniel and he was a fine duck dog. And, they used to take him up there and hunt ducks, and I remember this one time, we was out there in front of the house. It's over on Irving Street now, the big fir tree growin' up there, I planted from a little twig. But, anyway, we were out in the street there, well, we was rakin' up some leaves or sumpin' and the old dog, Fido, saw us and jumped off the... we saw him comin' up the street there. He was settin' up on the seat between the two of 'em, and when he saw us, why he jumped off of there. But, anyway they had that Studebaker farm wagon, you know what those are don't you?

Mr. Runestrand: I've seen pictures of them.

Mr. Scott: They had that heaped up full. I don't know how they...they must of...go up there and just slaughter them.

Mr. Runestrand: And then they'd...would they sell 'em or would they give 'em away or what?

Mr. Scott: Oh, I guess they sold them at that time, they were hunting for the market, and sport too. They liked to hunt. And, it's always been a mystery to me, how they could keep those ducks, maybe that long. They never...I believe they did dress 'em too, some of 'em, that they had for the market. They just cut 'em off like that and shake 'em like that, (Pretends to hold neck and snaps down body.) But, even at that you know, when they had 'em all piled up there,

they must have been pretty, must have had...talk about a gamey flavor. I guess that's what they meant by it.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when did you first, you said, you first started fishing in 1913? Now, that was some type of commercial fishing of sorts?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, oh, we'd been around 1909 and all along there, that's the first fishing I did. It started me off.

Mr. Runestrand: Was this...you were gillnetting?

Mr. Scott: I was working on the fish traps.

Mr. Runestrand: On the fish traps. Now, when we talk about working fish traps, you want to try to explain, you know, how a fish trap worked? The ones you worked on? Were there a few details you could mention about?

Mr. Scott: Well, they, I don't know, they drove the traps, I worked on a pile driver, drivin' the traps. And, when they got the traps drove, then they'd hang the wire and hang the gear on them. And, then they'd say...then a few of the fellows there that was on the drivers, and the trap men that were working the wire and stuff, that stayed with the company, worked on the lift. They had what they called the lifting gang. Most of 'em had camps, fish camps. There was one at Point Migley, and one...one over there by Cherry Point, Salmon banks, and then some of the traps there, they had...at that Cherry Point trap, they lifted all those traps up that belonged to the company there, up in the gulf, up in Boundary, up in Point Roberts and the Alaska Packers. They had fellows there that knew how to hang gear. That was quite a deal, to make the gear up. Over at Eliza Island, they had the...the P. A. F., pulled up the piling there. Ainsworth and Dunn, A. P. A., they had up in Birch Bay; they had to pull the piling up. They had to pull 'em out of the water, and so they wouldn't deteriorate or get lost.

Mr. Runestrand: Then they'd move 'em someplace else?

Mr. Scott: Oh, they just...I worked on the pullers...the pullers after the trap fishing was over, they'd cut that wire, lead wire down and all that stuff,

they'd just let it fall to the bottom. And, then they'd pull those piling, had what they called, pullers. These two scows and they'd put a strap, a chain around there and down the engine, and...I'll show you...I don't know whether I got a picture of a puller or not, but I can draw you a pretty good sample of what they were. And, then they'd pull 'em up and dog 'em, and wrestle 'em up, and bring 'em in. And, then they had a pile driver to pull 'em up on the...big piles of 'em you know, pull them, right out.

Mr. Runestrand: What was the fish trap season, about? How long did they run? Did they run all year long?

Mr. Scott: No, they were a few traps, maybe, that fished late in the fall, but most of 'em...had a few in the bay...there was a couple of traps out here in the bay, and they would fall fish. And, then up in the gulf too, they had a few traps there that were good for fall fish. They didn't do to well on the dog salmon because they were pretty smart fish. They were hard to catch.

Mr. Runestrand: Who, who would be the ones that would regulate the traps? Was it the Coast Guard or the Department of Game, or..?

Mr. Scott: No, it was the Fisheries Department. Department of Fisheries, they still got it on...

Mr. Runestrand: How did they check up on people?

Mr. Scott: Oh, they had a boat. I can't think of the name of it, can't think of the name of the boat. They had these, what we called the Fish Commission. Old, L. H. Darwin and deputy fishermen. That was a picture there of a fish trap. I'll show you, do you want me to get it?

Mr. Runestrand: O. K..

Mr. Scott: This is a trap driven in an easy place. A place with no tide. Oh man, that...them traps... Well, here's a Fish Commissioner's patrol boat. He'd go around and see that the aprons were down...

Mr. Runestrand: I watched you tell that deal of how those fellows would get without havin' the curtains down.

Mr. Scott: You know, maybe I can show it to you. Well, here it is. This is a little heart. Well, they had the apron on the little heart, where it entered the pot and those fellows, they pulled the apron, well, it was supposed to go to the bottom. Well, it didn't go to the bottom, anyway. They were pretty slack. And, this fellow that...this fellow that wanted to beat that fish they'd come around there, you know, and he would watch 'em. He was fishin' for those guys. He used to...when they put the apron down, why, they were supposed to seal it off there, see. No more fish could come in. Well, they watched there, with the glasses there, if they had any suspicion or anything. And, he had this...pull this rig up, the apron you know, and he had a couple of wooden pins that looked like a small fin, and all he'd have to do when he'd see anybody sneakin' up on him in the daytime there, why he just pulled the.. instead of goin' out, you know, and lashin' on the cleat or sumpin', let 'em down. Why he just pulled the pin out there, and she dropped on down. When he come up there, why the apron was down, and he was in the bunk a snoozin' away, and after they got out of sight, why he lifted it up again.

Mr. Runstrand: Did the fish companies that were...that had the traps, did they reward a guy for doin' somethin' like that because his fish trap would have fish in it all the time?

Mr. Scott: Oh no.

Mr. Runstrand: Well, fish trapping then, lasted...well, was a pretty big business in this area?

Mr. Scott: Oh, a million dollar business, I hope to tell you.

Mr. Runstrand: I've heard tell, and you told me, that you made some money off the fish traps. You've got some stories to tell about your dealings with fish traps other than working on the pilers and stuff like that. You and your brother and some other people. Do you want to relate some of those stories? About, oh, ways you'd get fish from these different guys. How'd you do it?

Mr. Scott: Well, we always made a deal with the watchman. Some watchmen would

sell fish and some of them wouldn't.. Some of 'em were honest. (Chuckles)
 But, I think they were about all in the same boat. It was just dog eat dog,
 that's all. If you could get those fish there, and some of those fellows...
 they was all wanted to make an honest dollar, or most of 'em did. But, some
 of 'em didn't have as much nerve as the others. Some of 'em had too much
 nerve. Like the watchman there, he was a good watchman. They guys that sold
 the fish, they caught the fish too, you know. If you didn't...that's one thing,
 I don't understand, how stupid those guys could get. All they could think of
 was so much a month there. They didn't want to pay 'em enough, so they would
 take care of the trap owners interests. They just didn't give a damn, that's
 all. What was the difference if they didn't catch any fish, why they was on
 the trap, and you had to fish those traps. You had to close 'em off there and
 watch 'em and take care that they got into the pot and into the spiller. And,
 when the tide was right to let 'em in from the pot into the spiller why, you
 had to open it wide, the tunnel wide, and when you got 'em in there, you just
 stayed there and watched them. Maybe some of 'em might take a notion they
 want to go back out again. You know, when the tide got slack, naturally, they
 always bucked the tide, and when the tide was runnin' strong, why they'd work
 fine. But, then when the tide began to slack up and the tunnel was set from
 the pot into the spiller and the tide got slack, why they would wander around
 in a big school there, see, and maybe some of 'em would keep goin' out. You
 had to watch the tides. The different stages of the flood, you'd have to
 manipulate those tunnels. The more fish they caught, why the more fish that
 we would take.

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) Who was the...whose boat were you using at this
 time? Did you have a boat at that time or was it your brother's boat?

Mr. Scott: No, two brothers had a boat. I was...I didn't have any boat. I
 was the business, I used to go around and make these deals with the watchmen
 and the foremen of the liftin' gang and all those guys.

Mr. Runestrand: How would you approach 'em? What would you tell 'em?

Mr. Scott: Well, would you like to make a few extra dollars?

Mr. Runestrand: (Chuckles) What was...you were telling me that story about the..when you were starting to do a little business with those watchmen on the fish traps and you ran into the Coast Guard, and they wanted to know what was on your boat? How did that deal go?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, you see, they...when those Coast Guards came in, they came in there in 1925, I think it was. Yeah, 1925. And, they were going to patrol the fish traps. They used to have the cannery tenders patrol the traps, but they didn't do very well. So, they thought, well, we'll make a deal with the Coast Guard; in fact, they thought, they had us licked. In fact they told us so, one guy did. The first time...they'd been briefed by some of these trap owners there about what went on. They didn't know what went on as much as they thought they did. They knew they was losin' fish, but they didn't know how...what the method was we was usin' to get 'em. Some of the deals that they thought up to keep us out of those traps were pitiful. They had one deal there, they had a big cedar, like a shingle bolt there, a bouey, and they had grapplin' hooks, those grapplin' hooks they made out a there, and they bored a hole through that thing....

Mr. Walter Scott
April 15, 1975

Accession No. WTC 75-02mr, Tape No. 1, Tape Side No. 2.

Mr. Walter Scott: Now this...the first time we was overhauled by this boat, the 268, they stopped us and looked us over, the light, wanted to see our registration and everything. And we had this square net all piled nice and neat on the boat there. All ready...when we come up to a trap why we'd just toss these lines up there and make the boat fast and drag it off and back over to the other side of the spiller, drop her down, and then we'd drag it up. We could just about clean it, get every doggone fish that was in the spiller if the conditions were right. So, anyway, this Coast Guard come up along side of me, slowed us down, and stopped us. He come aboard, it was dark, we had lights on and everything, and he was puzzled. He was looking things over and he said, "What is this net you got here?" "Oh" I said, "That's a fish net, what they use to catch fish with." And, I said, "It's licensed gear too..". And, I said, "Come here," I said, "I'll show you," and I took him down into the cabin. I said, "You see that license there?" That one there was for that gear that's on deck. It was very...he took a ...talk about cheap...he took out a drag seine license. It was fifty cents a foot. That's what they charged for it, I think it was fifty cents a foot. And, that one was only forty feet long, so we only bought a forty foot license. (Laughter) I think it was about fifty cents a foot, I dunno, it wasn't much, \$2.80, and \$2.50, something like that. And, then he...there was nothin' much he could say, that's what it was for, it was to catch fish with. And, then we had the brailer there, a big, beautiful brailer, hung right and just perfect shape. In fact, we could...those fellows would have been money ahead if they'd a hired us guys to fish their traps, why, get rid of the liftin' gangs and all that stuff. We could drag...play one of those out, oh, four or five hundred fish or something like that, or a thousand. Well, anyway, we could brailer

just about as fast as those guys could with a steam brailler, really. But, the ..we had that brailler there and it was layin' back in the net hole there ..the net room, and a standin' on end there, up against the...on edge. And, he come there and he wanted to know what that was. "Oh," I says, "That's for dippin' the fish out of the net." And, I says, "they can dip in our net there and scoop 'em aboard." I says, "we've lost lots of fish by not havin' one of those aboard." He knew we was givin' him the business, but he couldn't say nothin', we was answerin' his questions.

Mr. Runestrand: (Laughing) Yeah.

Mr. Scott: So...those guys never got us. We slipped through their fingers every time. Oh, they pinched us or cited us for different things, and we got out of every doggone one. I never paid a five cents fine. They cited us for ...one time...under way with a...oh, tied up...you see, we had oil, some oil lamps there. On one boat, we had oil lamps, runnin' lights, head light, and side lights, and then we'd put a lantern up on the mast when we was runnin' or just up above so as to see all around, and be legal. And we were in the watchman's shack there, it was a nice moonlight night, just as calm, and we had some of those traps, they had guys lived on 'em, and they had a couple of those come there. And some of them even had the whole liftin' gang lived on 'em. The Apex trap there used to have a full crew, with the deck hands on the cannery tender. So, anyway this...put a piece of canvas, laid it over there, instead of, you know, just blowin' the lights out and then, you know, the bother to light 'em up again. And, so we just threw a canvas over...and we'd been in there quite a while and the doggone light caught a fire. Smothered it out from oxygen. Well here, I thought, well jeez, I'd better fix that. So, I stopped the boat and was layin' there, and by god, here this old Coast Guard boat spotted us a layin' there. He come over and looked us over. I told him what happened...the light caught fire, just stopped to let it cool off so I

could light it again. Aw, he didn't say nothin' and by god, here he cited me, I got a citation for runnin' without lights. So, I went in on that one and I told the commander of the Coast...the station was in Anacortes...what happened. I told him, I says, "I admit I was technically under way because I wasn't... the anchor wasn't fastened to the bottom, but, I told him it was a nice calm night there and I didn't see any sense of throwin' the anchor out." I says, "We were just waitin' a few minutes for it to cool off so I could light it again." By god, he called that guy in there and he really gave him a goin' over. He says, "I want you fellers," he says, "to stop botherin' these fishermen," he says, "when they're fishin'," he says, and he says, "I don't want to hear anymore of that;" he says, "I want that to stop right now," he says. Well, he really...that guy's face...here I was a takin' it all in, and I wasn't gettin' into any trouble at all. (Laughter) Here's a big skipper here, by god, oh, he was...he could of bite a nail, a ten penny spike one, too. So, he told us then, the commander, the big man at the base, the commander there, he told me, he says, "Well," he says, "I'll tell ya," he says, "that's out of my hands now," he says, "but, you write in to Seattle and tell 'em down there at headquarters just what you told me," he says, "I don't think you'll have any trouble." Well, we got out of every one of those, and we was in four or five jams there. Some technicality, is all.

Mr. Runestrand: They weren't doin' it because you were, you know, because they knew you were messin' around with the fish traps?

Mr. Scott: That's what they were...

Mr. Runestrand: That's what they were tryin' to do it for?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, they were...we was...harassin' us, harrassment, if you know what I mean. They couldn't pin anything on us that would hold us. That was just plain harrassment, that was all.

Mr. Runestrand: Tell that story about when you were gonna braille out that trap and you saw the boat comin' and you parked over behind another ship and

pretended you were asleep. Tell that story. That's a good one.

Mr. Scott: Yeah, that's...you know, they couldn't slip up on us, you know, they made so much noise. We could..we had really fine hearing just tuned, you know, to certain...we knew every kind of a boat there was, see. Those Coast Guard boats were always after us. They was goin' someplace, goin' full speed, you know, instead of sneakin' along. This was this Northern Nelson trap, we was talkin' about it yesterday. This Fido Wilson here, this fellow that we went down to...that we saw there, tryin' to...sure he'd know what a star scow held, exactly. But, he didn't know any more about it than we did. (Chuckles) We'd forgotten. Well, anyway, this...we'd go out there just a little before dark...dust.. We'd get out there, they set out from shore quite a ways. And, I'll show you where it was on the charts here, after awhile. So, they had... they could figure out that we couldn't...that they couldn't sneak up on us without any lights, so they figured that they could see that we didn't pay any attention to the boats with lights. so, they thought, well, by god, we'll get those guys. So, they went way out...we didn't notice 'em. It only took us about ten or twelve minutes, aw, eleven minutes to fish that trap. It was all set, all ready to go, you know, and by god, we saw this boat, little boat out there. There was these little puddle jumpers they had, and they would go like hell too. But, they made an awful lot of noise just a goin', a gettin' there. So, they'd think well, they don't pay attention to a boat runnin' around there with lights, so they'll get us. So, they turned their lights on and they started in...to come in there, see, they figured we'd be there right in the midst of it. So, I says, I spotted the lights when they turned 'em on. I could see them as plain as the nose on your face. And, they says, "Well, here comes that little Coast Guard, we gotta leave." Naw, the watchman says, I don't think it's the Coast guard, he wouldn't be runnin' with all of his lights on. And, I says, "That's that little Coast Guard", and I says, "We're gettin' out of here." I says, "We'll be back." And, so we ducked right around

the spiller there, and right up against, and then we went down the lead, you know; and by that time, they were....they had got away from...they figured they were gonna pounce on us see. This watchman says they come up there and we were gone, and they knew darn well they saw us go in there with the glasses. They knew we was in there. So, he come out, rubbin' his eyes. "What are you fellows up to? What do you want?" They say, "Where's that little boat that come in here?" "What boat?" he says, "There's no boat in here." "Oh," he says, "You guys must be dreamin'." While that was goin' on, if they'd have looked off the end of the lead, they might of caught us...saw us. But, they were so doggone sure, that by the time the arguement was over, and we weren't there, and this guy had never seen us...we were over tied up by...they had one of those star scows, the Dolphin, there, they'd towed out there to maybe lift in the mornin'. Well, we never fished that trap, because it was no good. They just layed on that all the time. So, we tied up there. We saw 'em comin' over. They figured that maybe we might have gone in there. And, they come buzzin' up there lookin' around, and they saw us layin' on the other side there. When we saw 'em comin' we turned the lantern up and set it on deck. They turned around and tied on the other side of the star scow there, they come up lookin' ...see those star scows had planks there, you could cover them up and you could walk up those planks, loose planks, you know. So, they come over there, and they'd look down at us. They didn't know what to do. It was all quiet as a mouse down there, door shut, little light layin' there on deck. And, we watched 'em peeking through the little side window there, porthole. So, we took off our shirt and pants.....and ruffled up our hair, and swung the door open and come out in our shirt-tail...underwear. And, oh, by god, I says, "Where did you guys come from?" "I thought," I says, "I thought I heard a little noise out here." I says, "You fellows weren't here when we tied up were you?" "No." And so, well, I says, "We broke down," I says, "We drifted in to the scow here and got a hold of the scow and thought we'd lay here til daylight." It was to

late to set out gillnettin'. We'd lose...we'd lost first dark. And, oh,... they were really puzzled. And so in the meantime, the cannery tender come up there, the Nile, was the name of it. Old Cap Hong, and he come up and he told us...the coast guard was layin' on one side of the scow and we was layin' on the other...and he says, this Cap Hong come up there. And they had a dolphin lay to, out...I think that, no, they had...that was a different dolphin. They had a dolphin where they tie up there. Maybe he'd been patrollin' the traps. And, he come over there and he says, "Hey," he says, "you know," he says, "this is private property here." And, he says, "we don't allow anybody to tie up to most of these scows." "Well," I says, "Jesus," I says, "that's all right," I says, "we broke down and drifted in to here." I says, "and instead of drop-pin' the anchor out, why," I says, "I thought we'd tie up here and wait til morning." "If you insist," I says, "we can drop the anchor off the bow here, right here and...". "Oh," he says, "you broke down, why," he says, "that's different." So, then these fellows on the Coast Guard, they went over on the cannery tender and had some coffee there and everything. When they come back, I thought maybe this skipper on this boat might be fishin' around for an opening or sumpin', you know, to maybe make a deal or sumpin'. So, I says, "Hey, Captain!" I says, I pulled out...I always had a few bills there at that time... I says, "Here," I says, "here's twenty bucks," I says, "if you'll take and hold me and tow me out of sight, out a little ways there and let me go." Oh Jesus, when he saw that money, I dunno whether it was fifty, I think it was a fifty dollar bill..so, he saw that and he backed right up, you know. I could see then that he wasn't lookin' for any...and, he says, "Well," he says, "No," he says, "I couldn't take that, but," he says, "if you're broke down," he says, "I'll tow you where you want to go." "Aw hell," I says, "we're not broke down." I says, "Frank," I says, "Come on." I says, "let's go." I says, "Jack must be through by now." You know, those guys followed us, right behind us and we...kind of a moonlight night...and we got out there and so we...we

had a cannery tender called, "Red Star" that tended us; didn't do anything but take care of us guys. It was out there all the time to get fish when we had 'em. Sometimes we had to unload and go back and get another load, a couple of times.

Mr. Runestrand: Well now, in your time, you know, when you were fishin' the fish traps and people sort of knew what you were doin'. What would...now you were telling me there was a court case that stated that until the fish were finally in the cannery's boats, they were anybody's fish, isn't that right?

Mr. Scott: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: So, they couldn't arrest you or anything for what you were doin'?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, they had a big jury trial, a big trial in Superior Court... this old Welsh...Bellingham Cannin' Company. The Fisheries Department, I think they...I dunno how it started out...but, anyway, they was going to claim that they was fishin' illegally, had those fish impounded illegally. No, the trap was fishin', that's it. They sneaked up on 'em. (Lily says, "Cannery men's trap.") Yeah, old Welsh's. Well, anyway, they went to court and had a jury trial and everything, big case out of it. And, they finally proved that the fish didn't belong to the cannery, the fish trap owner, until they...until they had 'em in their absolute possession, until they was on the scow. Because he says, they proved that the fish swam in there, were swimming free in the trap, if they swam in they could swim out.

Mr. Runestrand: So, what it meant, is what you'd been doing, what you were doing then, fish trap piracy, was then legal to do, after that case. Is that right?

Mr. Scott: Well, we wasn't takin' 'em from anybody.

Mr. Runestrand: No, you weren't taking 'em.

Mr. Scott: We had licensed gear to catch 'em with. We'd paid for the license. (Lily says, "Welsh was getting them illegally in his trap. Could of been... should have been closed, weekends. Close the trap every weekend.")

Mr. Runestrand: I see.

Mr. Scott: They was fishin' it right straight through. And, they'd sneaked up on him some way. I don't know how they...but, they had..they arrested him for fishin' illegally. They said those fish was...oh, the apron was up, they was swimmin' in, you know, and they could swim out. That was it.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when did you stop fishin' in that way? WAs that after they closed the fish traps down? Or, did you quit before that time?

Mr. Scott: I don't remember.

Mr. Runestrand: When did you...you worked the fish...and then you started working with an otter trawler. Isn't that right? Or, was there a break in between there?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah. They voted the fish traps out by that time.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Scott: They had initiative 77. I don't remember now which year they voted 'em out. They went out kerplunk' Well, they'd a been out anyway. It was gettin' so...gettin' too expensive to drive those traps. Some of those traps cost...oh gee, they cost a lot of money to drive. I remember there was one trap over there, I think it was out in the gulf, in the summertime, you know, in August...big tides. And, they had to use pile capping and lash that pile, trap piles, big long trap piles on the lead instead of...and brace the spillers and like that. And, you could hear 'em when the big tide was runnin' strong there, you could hear those old traps just groanin'. Jee..sus, workin' those big piling traps, one hundred and ten foot piling, some of them. And, cables on 'em and lashed there and gee, that cost a lot of money to put 'e m in. Those were good locations and it was worth it. But, in fact, some of those traps there workin', you know, the piling, the capping and the piling workin' there, they caught afire, the friction you know.,started smokin' and oh man, I tell you, that was really something to see.

Mr. Runestrand: O. K. Now, I want to ask you where some of the different fish

traps were, around this area, around Whatcom County. And, the waters around the area and the names of 'em. If you could name a location of where you know the different fish traps were located?

Mr. Scott: Well, I imagine this was where...there used to be a cannery there in Blaine called Ainsworth and Dunn and Alaska Packers. And, this was an Ainsworth and Dunn trap. I don't know now, according to law, it should be, it should have been right off here.

Mr. Runstrand: Right off Birch Point?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, because it was supposed to be in sixty five feet of water. That's at low water.

Mr. Runstrand: At low water. That was the ruling on fish traps?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, it couldn't be over, well, a lot of those traps were; this was a killer, these out here. Oh boy, log booms and boats and everything.

Mr. Runstrand: You men, it was a...when you say, a killer, you mean it really brought in the fish?

Mr. Scott: Yeah. Yeah, it set out here like that. Birch Head, well, Birch Point, Birch Head, ...here's Whitehorn, now, let's see, Whitehorn must've set about off here.

Mr. Runstrand: What was the name of that one? Just the Whitehorn fish trap?

Mr. Scott: Yeah. Yeah, here's where it set out see, I measured it wrong where they got...along in there. Of course, they had sixty five feet of water, it didn't bother 'em too much.

Mr. Runstrand: Yeah.

Mr. Scott: That was a killer there. That's the one we made the most money out of, or enough. We got some of the biggest loads out of there. We got six thousand there, one night.

Mr. Runstrand: Six thousand sockeye?

Mr. Scott: Yeah!

Mr. Runstrand: That's a lot of fish.

Mr. Scott: Yeah, that was a dollar apiece, you know. That was...it was blowin' one of those Westerlies, you know.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Scott: And, we was the only...they was two or three outfits up there had fine boats that could...but, they were too big. And, we..this doggone..well, anyway, we had a long line on the spiller. I have to show you...aw, it don't make any difference anyway. We fished...we had the...the wind was blowin' right along the face of the trap, face of the spiller, and we had a long line, good line, around from the pot...come down around. Then, we had two of us, two of us was holdin' the boat off, and two of us was...oh, I guess one...we had to have somebody on the other boat, and then we'd hold it off and it would go clear down to the bottom of the spiller there. Great big swells, they were oh, twelve, fifteen feet high, more than that. And, by god, we got those fish out of there. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: How many fish traps did they have in the area? You mentioned they had some right here in Bellingham Bay?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, well, they had...the Matson boys' had two. One was up there ...let's see, do you see a little...a few little houses there? See that bank down there, that bluff?

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah. Past the cement plant?

Mr. Scott: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Scott: Well, then you see...it looks like a little gulley in there.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Scott: Well, there was one right there.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, um hum. That was the Matson Brothers' fish trap?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, Ed Matson. He caught quite a few small fish out of it. And then, they was a couple up...I can show you a fish trap location pile down there. It was driven in 1898. Frank and I was down there and it's still there.

(Chuckles) Ya know, no terridos or anything, fresh water and everything. Well, here's where this...these were fish...this was...there was a trap off of here.

Mr. Runestrand: Village Point?

Mr. Scott: Village Point, that was a killer; and they was a couple out in here. See, this runs out in..that's where that picture of the reef...the indian reef nets.

Mr. Runestrand: A....what's that bay called?

Mr. Scott: Legoe Bay.

Mr. Runestrand: Legoe Bay.

Mr. Scott: And, then they had a couple along in here someplace. They had Johnson...the Northern Johnson and the Southern Johnson. Those were good traps.

Mr. Runestrand: Down, goin' towards the Southern end of Lummi?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, I don't know just exactly where they...I never fished these down here. They was traps there and they was out in here, and along in here.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when they knocked off the fish traps, that's when the reef netters went in there then?

Mr. Scott: Yeah. Then they had a...they had a trap off of here. That was this cannery, Carlisle Cannery Company, and then they had one here.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, did these have names right here? These ones off the West side of Lummi?

Mr. Scott: No, I don't know which...I just know they were there. And, this was the Migley trap. There was that bouey there, I guess that was right off of here...Point Migley. Oh, it seemed to me...it seems to me it run like this here. And, then they had a trap over here at Sandy Point. They had two. That thing didn't catch any. A few nice king salmon....

Mr. Walter Scott
April 15, 1975

Accession No. WTC 75-02mr, Tape No. 2, Tape Side No. 1

Mr. Runestrand: This is more traps?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah, the traps are.....

Mr. Runestrand: Up by Cherry Point?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, this was it, right off this point here; that was Cherry Point, that was Campbell's trap.

Mr. Runestrand: Campbell?

Mr. Scott: And then there was...there was one out in here. The Gearheart, I think, about here...that's my memory, the Gearheart, and then there was the Kildog, out here. I think about here.

Mr. Runestrand: The Kildog was North of Cherry Point and the other one was South.

Mr. Scott: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, all the...did you fish all these traps up North?

Mr. Scott: Oh no. No. We had...we fished this one here, and we fished the Gearheart. Yeah. There was some we...and they had some off of the point here. Where in the hell is that?

Mr. Runestrand: Over here? On the other side? Lookin' at this chart here.

Mr. Scott: This here was the Milligan trap.

Mr. Runestrand: Milligan?

Mr. Scott: That was a killer for...that belonged to P. A. F. We fished thatwe never did fish that only after they dropped the gear down, why we fished it. Fished the pot. Some of those traps. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: Well, when you were fishing these different traps, what...you were trying to get sockeye, mainly, is that right?

Mr. Scott: Oh, anything.

Mr. Runestrand: Anything you could get?

Mr. Scott: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, sockeye, you were getting for a dollar each.

Mr. Scott: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: What would the other types go for?

Mr. Scott: Oh, humpbacks, they were gettin' about, I dunno, thirty cents, I think, twenty five.

Mr. Runestrand: This would be what...about 1915? 1913?

Mr. Scott: No, no. This was 1924, '25, 1923, '24, '25, and '26. And, then we...then we...I don't remember now. I guess, maybe we didn't have any traps to fish. Aw, we went up North in '17. We had a got religion, I guess. Us Sunday schoolers. (Chuckles)

Mr. Runestrand: Well, during the depression, after the...you were fishin' the traps in the mid-twenties, and the depression hit this area about what time? Early '30's, when you were then seining and stuff? Or, trawling?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah, we...Frank, my brother, Frank, and one of those fellows that was with us fishin' the traps, Johnny Baker, we bought a seine boat. The old Tagatoff, from, oh, I can't think of the name of that outfit. We got a good buy on it. There was a fellow there, name of Kinky Alexander, he was an old timer, and he was in with that...oh, it don't make any difference anyway; but, he give us a pretty good buy on that boat there. It had a four-cylinder hawl scott, and I think it was a four one reduction gear. It was a fine engine. Gas, it was gas. And, we averaged...when we was draggin' with it, put that drag gear on, two gallons an hour. Now, that's somethin' isn't it.

Mr. Runestrand: That's really...really economical.

Mr. Scott: Yeah. You see, we didn't run it hard. She'd slop up about seven or eight gallons if you opened her up, but it was just...we could travel, you know, average speed there. And, then when we was draggin' the trawl there, why, we didn't use much. Very efficient.

Mr. Runestrand: Now, was the Tagatoff, an otter trawler?

Mr. Scott: No, it was just an old seine boat and we put the otter trawler on.

Mr. Runestrand: Uh huh.

Mr. Scott: At that time, there was...I don't think there was one otter trawler operating out of the states of California or Oregon.

Mr. Runestrand: Is that...you were one of the first ones to use one around this area? Or, this coast?

Mr. Scott: Yeah. Not the first. At that time, when we got rigged up, they was about...the otter trawlers, I think you could...there was about twenty, twenty otter trawlers. The gear that they used in those days, down at California those Italians, they didn't know...the otter trawlers were built with tapers.. whole tapers, and the Italians didn't know anything about that taper business. The way they tapered their leads, you know. They'd start in with say, ten meshes, and twenty, and thirty, and so many fathom there, and that built it up to the top of the trawl. While the otter trawl, they tapered it down and split the second hundred meshes. A hundred mesh lead cut and divided, cut four meshes and dropped one, four more or three or two and a half, and sewed it together. And, this fellow that, he was an old time otter trawler, he was a Dane. And, he rigged us fellers up, showed us how to rig it up. And, we caught a lot of fish. An awful lot of fish. And, there was lots to catch in those days. Before I forget it, I'll mark her where there's some...well, I can do that later.

Mr. Runestrand: The...you were telling me about giving fish away?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah. Did you see in the paper here the other night where the trawler gave twenty thousand pounds away?

Mr. Runestrand: No, I didn't see that.

Mr. Scott: They'd only pay 'em ten cents a pound for his fish.

Mr. Runestrand: So, he gave his fish away?

Mr. Scott: Yeah. I think he gave twenty two hundred dollars worth of fish. He might as well give 'em to the poor people.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Scott: Oh, we didn't cut that out, did we? (Lily says, "I don't think so, I don't think I saw it. I believe you read it to me.") Oh, they come there, and one feller come down and took off his coat, good business suit, and wrapped a fish up inside. It was about the same way here, they come down there with big cars, gasoline was cheap, and no money, and they come down there a lot of those fellows, I don't know if there was any doctors or lawyers there but there was a lot of business men. I tell you that was...that depression was really a dilly.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, did...you did this just out of the kindness of your heart, or cause you couldn't sell your fish or what?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah, just...we couldn't get nothin' for 'em. You couldn't even sell true cod. You know, a cod fish. (Lily says, "You got ten cents a pound for sole, didn't you?") Ten cents? (Lily says, "Wasn't that gaul..") A cent and a half a pound. (Lily says, "Was it? Wasn't that when all the Greeks came down and got a lot of free fish?") Who? (Lily says, "Blackdahl and the Greeks.") Yeah, we used to give 'em. We shipped 'em to Seattle there, to some of those markets down there. The only good decent market we had, was the Japs.

Mr. Runestrand: They're the ones who gave you the best deal?

Mr. Scott: The best deal, yeah, you bet. They'd pay us...they'd take what they could and they'd pay us for the fish. Oh, maybe two cents a pound or sumpin' like that.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, these people that would come down...did you ever give fish away with the idea of being able to barter for something else? If somebody owned a farm or somethin'?

Mr. Scott: No, no. (Lily says, "Some of them would come down with gunny sacks and get a gunny sack full and say they could take it out in the country and trade it, trade some of those fish for potatoes, a sack of potatoes.") Oh,

one feller come down and he asked me if...he says, "Can I have all I want?" And I says, "Yeah," I says, "Can I have a box full?" And, I says, "Yeah, if you can carry it away." "What will you do with a box full of sole?" And, he whipped a gunny sack out of his coat. He says, "I'm gonna try and see if I can peddle them around through the country." He had an old broken down car there. So, he went a staggerin' up the ramp there, down there in the waterway, with all the sole he could carry. It was a hundred pound, hundred and thirty pound box. A hundred pound box of fillets would weigh about a hundred and thirty five pounds.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, then you fished Alaska quite a bit?

Mr. Scott: Yeah.

Mr. Runestrand: What was...you were going to tell about taking your boat down to California on the railroad.

Mr. Scott: Oh, that's a....that's quite a story. (Chuckles) You want to hear that one?

Mr. Runestrand: Sure.

Mr. Scott: Well, sir, I jumped in the car, Lil and I did, and we went down to see about this mack...scoopin' mackeral. We'd heard about it down there. And, that was in the fall, yeah, in November, I guess, nothin' to do here. So, we drove down, that didn't take long to drive down there. Not much traffic and, found out about it. What this thing looked like. So, by god...we'd heard about it up here, so we'd drove down and found out it was all right. So, that was in the winter time, so we figured to ship the boat down on a flat car. Get down there, and that's the best way you could...you wouldn't attempt to run it down there in the wintertime. Even in the spring, I wouldn't attempt to run it back up here. In fact, I shipped it up on the lumber schooner there for, it was supposed to be fifty dollars, but I didn't pay 'em much. Oh, I got all ready. All you needed was a little dip net. The cann...Grimshaw...they had a big hoist over there, got it in a box car,

got in there and picked her up and set her down on the...or, I mean, a flat car, and...I was on our way. Well, the first...we first started out, the station agent told me, "If I was you," he says, "I'd ride that boat down." He says, "How are you goin' down?" I says, "Well," I says, "I'm goin' down by car." "Well," he says, "If I were you, I'd ride that boat down. Somebody's liable to break into it and cause you trouble or sumpin'. Don't say anything, just jump aboard." Well, when we started out, we was down here where the old P. A. F. was over here, and here come a couple of hoboes. They had a lot of...that's the last year they had those jungles. After the Second World War, well, they...that was the end of 'em. And, they had those fellers that...they were professional bums. They'd roam all up and down the coast, by name and everybody, and that. So, anyway, I didn't have any stove oil. Those fellers that got aboard there...I told 'em, I says, "Here," I says, "here's some money, go over and get some stove oil." I says, "and we can have some coffee." "Aw," I says, you know what stove oil sold for then? This furnace oil?

Mr. Runestrand: No.

Mr. Scott: A cent and a half a gallon. A cent and a half a gallon, and now what is it? (Lily says, "Well, the last we paid was, \$.39 cents, but, before that, last October, it was \$.39 and a half cents, that's the highest we've paid. Jumped from, I think, \$.21, up to \$.29, and then to \$.39 and a half and then back to \$.39, and we haven't bought any since.") Diesel oil was three and a half cents a gallon. So, you see what things were like in those days. Well, anyway, they come back. I had a five gallon oil can there. They come back with, oh, about four gallons of stove oil in it, I guess. And, they wouldn't take any money then. (Chuckles) A cent and a half a gallon. Well, anyway, we got on there and we got down to Seattle and we was fouled up there for awhile. Those fellows, you know, they knew all the ropes. They knew when the trains would pull in and when they would pull out, and went up-

town and come back with some hamburgers and chops. We cooked 'em there when they pulled out. We had the stove goin', makin' coffee. We got down as far as Beaver, they left then, they didn't go into Oregon. Another feller came on there, and he knew...one another and who they were. And, we got down in Oregon there and we stopped there one night, right close to...around Beaver, I think it was. And, the shacks as they called 'em, brakemen...they were good fellows, told the boys the best car to get on was that flat car that I had the boat on. And, they piled out of the jungle there and come aboard. I was up on the poop deck (Chuckles) quite bold lookin' down there. Here was a guy and his wife come aboard and it started to rain, and he was tryin' to get under the boat there, under the keel there, to get out of the rain. Some of 'em, I invited up, I said, "Come on up here, you guys. Make, put, spread your blankets in the net hold there." Then, when this guy and his wife, or somebody's wife, I dunno...but, by god, they were fine people. So, I says, "You don't need to bed down there," I says, "Come up here." I says, "We got a...I got a spare bunk up here." And, I says, "The lady, she can sleep in the lower bunk there." So, by god, they come up and made themselves at home. By god, you know, I'd sure like to have a picture of that, you know. Goin' over the Siskiu mountains there, you know, up into Oregon...up into California there. It was snowin' and snow, big snowflakes comin' down, smoke comin' out of the cabin stove pipe, you know, and the hot water. They all had little cans, you know, to heat water in. And, I had that stove goin' full blast all the time, heatin' water and makin' coffee. And, by god, here was a great big four-point buck standin' off to the side of the road there, watchin' us.... goin' up through the timber there and the smoke comin' out of the stove pipe. And, then we got down over the hump, got down around Modesto, someplace. Yeah. The train stopped there. I was always....in fact, they pulled the drawhead out of the...when the...big long couple of engines on 'em. Big, long drag there and they set a...you know, how they even...takin' up the slack and then they

get this flat car that I was on...the airbrake locked there. When it come up there, it pulled the...broke the coupling, you know, the automatic coupling there, broke it right off. It was layin' down there in the railroad track. Oh, there was another delay there. And, we was gettin' along fine, you know, and we got down into...around...I forget the name of the place. It was right.. a station there...anyway, Modesto. So, the car stopped...the train stopped there. So, I come out on deck and I looked out there, and jesus, it was right in the station there, and the onryest, meanist, no good son-of-a-gun of a stationmaster that ever lived. Oh, he says, "What in the hell are you doin' on here?" "What am I doin' on here?" I says, "This is my boat." I says, "I'm ridin' it down to San Pedro." "You got a ticket?" "No," I says, "I don't have a ticket." Then this feller heard the uproar out there, so he says, "Two of you S. O. B's on there," and then the uproar there, we was tellin' him what we thought of him and all his relations. (Laughter) And, he was swearin' right back to us, oh boy, he was really duty bound. He was just really frothin' at the mouth. But, then when the woman come out...(Laughter) I thought...I thought he was goin' ape. So, we told him what he could do and we took a suitcase and the woman had a little bag there about like this. And, she had a dress in it. So, we...we hit the grit, "Hit the grit, you son... (Lily says, "Ah...ah,...ah...)) you know, what sons, I mean. (Laughter) So, then we got over there to this town. I forget the name of the town. There was grapes.. a field of grapes there, right along the road there. And, here we were, I had my suitcase and here we were on foot. And, we went there and cut ourselves a couple of big bunches of grapes, a grape apiece, and was sittin' there along side of the road, eatin' grapes. I asked the guy, I says, "What chance do you think we have of pickin' up a ride?" "Oh," he says, "Not very good." He says, "If it was just me, alone," he says, "why, wouldn't have...probably wouldn't have much trouble, but," he says, "The woman along why, might not go very good." They was a little leery. Well, by god, a feller pulled up there in a truck

and he says, "Where you folks goin'?" I says, "Modesto." "Well, hop aboard." And, doggone it, he took us into Modesto there, and this guy knew all the ropes. Went down to the skidroads there and we got a...wanted to clean up and shave, and the woman change her dress. And, the landlady charged us four bits for, you know, just for usin' the water and washin' up. That was pretty easy. So, then this woman had some relations over in Sacramento and she was gonna ride over on the stage and the other guy was gonna ride the rods up, and meet her up there. So, I bought him a ticket. Heck, it was a dollar...I don't know, it wasn't much, a dollar and a half, a dollar and six bits. Well, I went up and got a pint of whiskey there and set it on the table and they wouldn't touch it. "Nope," he said, "That's why we're here today."

Mr. Runestrand: Is that right? So, you finally got down to California and your boat was all right after you didn't get to ride with it the rest of the way?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah, it was all right. I got a...I got a good deal on gettin' Jeez, it was hotter than heck there, and I went out and got a dozen cans of beer and some ice. I don't think it cost over a dollar and a quarter, a dollar and six bits. I brought it down there and those...so, the crew that was goin' to...it was on the flat car there and they had a mobile hoist there run by steam. Had a steam hoist, a donkey engine in it. So, I brought the beer out there for 'em and by god, they appreciated that. And, when they lifted it off of the...he said, "Why don't ya...now is a good chance to copper paint it." I says, "Yeah," but I says, "I don't have any paint." "Well, we can take care of that." He went and got a gallon of copper paint and a brand new brush and he lifted it off of the flat car and held it up there so I could copper paint it under the keel and I asked him, "What's the damages?" "Well," he says, "Fifteen bucks worth of hoist." I says, "How about the copper paint?" "Oh," he says, "That's a present for ya from the Port of San Pedro." (Laughter) This guy told me...he says, why they don't fire those things up for less than twenty five bucks. Some guy had told him what it cost me to get it off of the

...set it down in the water and I was in business.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, then you fished how...about how many years? You started fishing about 1913. When did you finally retire from the fishing business?

Mr. Scott: Well, I don't know. I got fouled up around, oh, what time was the last time I was fishin'? Dave...Dave..I got acquainted with Dave here..(Lily says, "Yeah, but I wouldn't call that fishing. You just went out a few times with 'em.") Oh no, no, no, we..I had those boats, the Time and Tide, and all the... (Lily says, "Oh yeah, yeah, and the Sharon V., that you fished for somebody else.") Yeah, the Sharon V., and what was that big...another big boat there, fine boats, and I fished 'em on shares. That's where Dave got into trouble. He got...he like that '...that fishin' there, you know. (Lily says, "That was about four years ago, three years ago, you were in California and you didn't get to fish that summer. About four years ago.") Yeah, then Dave got a little...had a little boat there and he got some gear, second hand gear, and went up there, and one night we had, I think it was a thousand and five dollars worth of sockeye (Chuckles) and, that was fatal to Dave.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, lookin' back on your life. And, you've seen a lot of changes, as you've mentioned, with the fishing business and stuff, and the amount of game around this area, and you've seen the changes, do you still.. is this still the best place you've ever seen? You know,...what do you think of the changes that have occurred around this area?

Mr. Scott: Well....

Mr. Runestrand: That's a pretty broad question, I've got to admit it, but a.. person that's been around awhile ought to have somethin' to say about the general..

Mr. Scott: I wouldn't live down in California if you give me the whole business there. Although we enjoyed ourselves when we was down there workin'. I lived in San Pedro there. (Lily says, "I think his heart's pretty much in Alaska.") Oh, Alaska was a good place to go in the summertime. Fish up there, but now, like I've said before, I'd like to get out...away from this rat race around here.

Go up into Canada, British Columbia. Out on the coast there. But, I guess maybe things might have changed up there too. I don't know. Kitty cat! Lookin' for a corner there. (Lily says, "No, he isn't, that kind of a kitty.") (Laughter) (Lily says, "You ought to tell 'em what Mike Caine said when you and Dave had a thousand dollars worth of fish, when you came in.") Oh yeah, do you know Mike Caine?

Mr. Runestrand: No, I don't. I don't know him.

(Lily says, "He's a gillnetter.")

Mr. Scott: We come in there, and Mike...(Lily says, "Up in Blaine, wasn't it?") Yeah, up in Blaine, and we was layin' there and we had that little boat we started to pick up....oh, we could have really loaded that boat, but Dave had to get in there and go to work. And, we was pickin' 'em up, pickin' fish there and they was hittin' a lot...but, anyway, we got in there, pretty heavy blow come up offa there, and we got in to the fishhouse there. And, this Mike Caine he had a big fine boat there, and he looked there and saw me at the wheel there of this little puddle jumper...

Mr. Walter Scott
April 15, 1975

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Mr. Scott: Shot up like a clerk, folded his little tent like the Arabs..
A-raabs, and silently stole out of there. Well, we had...I think Dave said
we had a thousand and some dollars.

Mr. Runestrand: Oh boy, that was a good catch. Well, Walt, I can't think of
anything else I want to talk about right this second, but is there somethin'
else you want to add or...right now, to this tape? We can think of...old
fishin' days or huntin' days or..?

Mr. Scott: Aw, some characters there....Sockeye Mary and Dark Moon Pete.

Mr. Runestrand: Sockeye Mary and who else?

Mr. Scott: Oh, let's see, Dark Moon Pete. That was August Peters. And,
Tattoo Chris, Hank Adams, Sockeye Mary, Charlie Budrow, Hoboe Charlie, Scarface
Dan.

Mr. Runestrand: Are these old fishin' guys?

Mr. Scott: Yeah, old characters. Good fellers too, all of 'em. But, aw,...
you know they...have some awful stories to tell around about in those early days,
you know. And, nobody's makin' any money, well you didn't need much money.
They got a...and they'd...that was the days before the...a lot of these...days
of the sloops. When I started in there, before that time they had pretty near
all sails...sloops. And, this Dark Moon Pete and Tattoo Chris and those guys,
One-eyed Tom Myers, they used to go out...Dark Moon Pete, he had a nice boat.
He was a fisherman, he was ambitious there and dirty as a pig. (Chuckles) And
him and old One-eyed Tom there, they'd go up there to...the boat he had was a
nice boat. It was about a thirty four foot bowpicker and he fished halibut
and everything, pirated logs and finally got himself a year in McNeil's Island
there, stealing piling, those creasoted piling. And he..he tried his doggon-
dest to get us guys. He says, he called us the Scotty boys, wanted to go with

him. And he used to...log buyers, they used to steal those logs and they had those mills, you know, that would buy 'em...big discount. And I've seen quite a few they'd take and saw the brands off. They were branded and...oh, maybe that much off there...and then they'd have...get rid of the brands. But, I wasn't about to try anything like that. But anyway, they used to go up there and at River's Inlet, and the Skena...they never went as far as the Skena... they went across Queen Charlott's Sound, and they'd go out there...in those days they had all sloops...99% of 'em, cannery gear and new gear. Well, they'd go up there and they'd pick up those nets and then they had a place over on.. oh, I forget the name of that place there...just across Queen Charlotte's Sound there's some little islands there, well, they built..put in a net rack and they'd go over there and pick up these nets. Sometimes they'd pick up a whole net. Old Pete would go up there and load down with this Eugene V. Debs. E. V. Debs, he was a great socialist. And then they'd come...go outside of Vancouver Island and come down here and then they had nets for all those guys and for themselves. Good gear. Oh, they had some awful times, awful characters.

Mr. Runestrand: Were people...that you worked with better people, do you think? You were mentioning about the honesty, even when you were workin' the fish traps. You know, you knew that...you'd give fifty-fifty with a guy.

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah, yeah. Oh, they had some of those skunks there that would rob 'em blind. I remember one time, we had a trap and we had that Milligan trap. We...we sewed up the entrance to the spiller there, you see, and fished the pot. Well that was...those fish were ours, we didn't have to split with anybody. And this...Baldo was his name, I think of the guy...that had that boat. Why they was so doggone crooked, you know, they robbed guys blind, some of 'em. And we told this feller that we couldn't...we wanted to, you know, fish that Milligan trap because we wouldn't have to dig up any...I says, "You got enough chance to get rid of your fish," I says, "You just figure us guys out." He could give 'em to anybody that come along. By god, you know that...we was

up there one night fishin'...we had loaded up with fish out of our trap. There's this Baldo...those guys...this Curly Strictland was the guy's name, and by god, he wouldn't give him a fish. He says, "Well they told...we told Baldo that we wouldn't be able...see that Curly,..we wouldn't be able to get there, didn't think we would because there was quite a few fish and it was before dark." And, by god, he went over there and wanted to get his fish and they wouldn't give 'em his fish. "Well," he told 'em, he says, "Scott says he can't get over there and us guys...and for you guys, for Curly to give the fish to you fellows." "Well," he says, "I won't give you guys a fish," he says, "unless you got a note from Scott there that they can't get there." And by god, they figured that we'd be fishin' up there and here they come. And he says that Curly, he says, won't; he says, "We gotta have a note from you with your signature on it there, that you can't get to the trap." By god, he wouldn't give 'em one. By god he says, "I don't like that deal."

Mr. Runestrand: That was good, because you treated 'em fair.

Mr. Scott: Yeah. Well, I tell you, that's right. We never...and you see they got sometimes, you know, when we was hangin' around waitin' for the run to start or sumpin' like that, we'd tell 'em, "How about a little dip?" You know, just a few dollars for gas and grub and, "Yeah, sure, that's fine." That's the only way we got...took any free fish. That's an absolute fact. Because we figured that's why we did so good on that Whitehorn trap. There wasn't a one of those fellers there that, like, Red Custer and all, they wouldn't...this feller there I forget his name,...they called him, Deafy, and he was...he...I guess we must have had a good reputation because he knew we didn't talk. He says, he told me he says, he wouldn't let Custer...I told him Custer was a good guy, honest man; "Well," he says, "I says I wouldn't sell any to Custer when I get, you know, make a deal with him, because," he says, "he talks too much."

Mr. Runestrand: You kept a pretty tight lip when you were doin' this business?

Mr. Scott: Oh yeah, mind their own business. Oh, he...there was another feller on there...old Charlie...can't think of it now. He was an old Norwegian. He wasn't a citizen and they bumped him off the trap. He was on there for two .. two years. They caught him on there without a...that he wasn't a citizen. And, he...when they'd come there, he'd hide in the trap can...I guess they got wise to him. Well anyway, they took him off the trap and some fellow that knew him was tellin' me about him. He knew that I was fishin' that trap. And, a...you know that old Charlie, he says and I told him, I says this former friend of his told him...just begged him..."Why don't you sell some of those fish there?" He says, "Do yourself a little good." No, by god, he wouldn't do anything like that he says, "When I'm workin' for a man," he says, "I ..well, I wouldn't even think of it." And by god, you know, he says, "I talked to him like a brother and he wouldn't budge; he wouldn't give a fish away." And by god, he says, "You know when that son-of-a-gun got fired off that fish trap for bein' an alien, you know what he did?! He went and bought a big farm up there and paid cash for it." (Laughter) Well, you...a thousand dollars was a lot of money in those days.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah.

Mr. Scott: There used to be a guy there with a thousand dollar notes. That's all he could talk about; he was always good for a thousand dollars. Fishin' season, he used to dip in the traps a little bit too, thousand dollar notes.

Mr. Runestrand: Yeah, pretty colorful characters.

Mr. Scott: Well, you know, those king salmon...Lil and I, we took...we had a cannery up there. We bought those...what did we pay for those pound talls from the A. P. A., there? (Lil says, "I don't remember. Pound flats, you mean?") Pound flats, yeah. (Lil says, "Yeah, we didn't can any of those. I don't remember. Forty-eight cans in a case.") Clams? Aw, you'd go out there and dig.. dig, say I think Johnny Baker and I went out one low tide, extreme low tide there, and we dug nine sacks of clams in one tide there.

Mr. Runestrand: That was in town...in Whatcom County?

Mr. Scott: Point Roberts.

Mr. Runestrand: What was....when was that?

Mr. Scott: Oh, that was in...the 1930's, wasn't it, Mama? (Lil says, "No.") '20? '05, no, it wasn't, '25? (Lil says, "No, no, it was, maybe, '37, '38, around in there, '39.") That's the time I went up there with the skiff, had that milk route. Well, we had a fifty gallon oil drum with the center cut out, and had it built up there and had a lot of driftwood and those salmon that we got there was only a dollar apiece, king salmon, spring salmon. Oh, we... had a regular cannery goin' there. In fact, I, one winter, we didn't have much money, in fact, no money, and I had a watch, good watch, but it's mainspring had broke and the jeweler wanted six dollars to put in a mainspring, and that's what he...and so, I give him a forty-eight pound flat of fine king salmon, canned salmon, for six dollars. That's what we got for it.

Mr. Runestrand: Boy, oh boy! Forty-eight pound....Jeez!

Mr. Scott: Forty eight pound flats.

Mr. Runestrand: Well, prices sure have changed.

Mr. Scott: Oh, terrible.