SOCIAL AND PERSONAL VALUES AND ATTITUDES OF NEWFOUNDLAND LIGHTKEEPERS: A DYADIC LIFE HISTORY OF A MARRIED COUPLE

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BY

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A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Folklore
Memorial University of Newfoundland
October, 1989

St. John's Newfoundland

Abstract

This study considers the life history narratives of a married couple, Albert and Averil Wakeley of Centreville, Bonavista Bay, Newfoundland. It was discovered that their oral autobiographical account is a portrayal defined by two major themes: work experience and family life. An examination of these themes was made, focusing on the social and personal values and attitudes featured in the Wakeleys' narratives.

What sets this study apart from other life histories is the fact that Albert's occupation as lightkeeper results in an overlap of work and family life that the historical nature of the job and its attendant responsibilities demands. Unlike other occupations in Newfoundland, such as fishing, mining and logging, the lightkeeping profession requires twenty-four hour attention. Elements of work pervade almost every aspect of personal life. This is particularly true for those people who work and raise their families on islands or remote regions where there is little opportunity to interact with the community.

The examination of the themes of work experience and family life revealed social, as well as personal values and attitudes. These were also studied in relation to the uniqueness of a lightkeeper's life. Attention was paid to the cultural influences that shaped behaviour and to the dyadic nature of the couple's repertoire. Material for this study was gathered during four visits with the Wakeleys in their homes in three different locations over a period of three years. The methodology for the study consisted of tape-recorded interviews with the couple. Other sources included works on life history and personal experience narratives written by scholars in those respective areas of study. An introduction is followed by a detailed account of my collecting experiences. Chapter Three is a biographical perspective of the couple, as well as a theoretical evaluation of their

life histories. The following two chapters present and analyse the Wakeleys' autobiographical narratives. Conclusions are then drawn in the last chapter. The aim of my study was to apply and expand folkloristic procedure to a subject which warrants such investigation.

Acknowledgements

There are several people I would like to thank for their support during the course of this study. First, I am indebted to Albert and Averil Wakeley for allowing me to interpret their life histories. Without their sustained enthusiasm and co-operation, this thesis would not have been possible. The Wakeleys' gracious acceptance of me as fieldworker, guest and friend was a highlight of my stay in Newfoundland.

My thanks also go to the other lightkeepers in the province who gave of their knowledge and hospitality. I am grateful to Ian Gall of the Department of Transport for recommending the lightkeepers to me.

I wish to thank the Memorial University School of Graduate Studies for a bursary at the onset of my studies and extensions during the past few years so that I might complete my thesis. The Department of Folklore provided financial aid for my fieldwork and employment in the archive, for which I am grateful.

I would also like to thank Drs. Lawrence Small and Gerald Thomas for their advice during the early stages of my thesis. My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisors, Dr. Peter Narváez, for his interest in my work, his constant encouragement and invaluable guidance; Dr. Martin Lovelace for his insight and direction in the final phase of my study.

I wish to acknowledge former and fellow students in the Department of Folklore for their helpful suggestions and support, especially Alison Kahn, Philip Hiscock, and Clara Murphy. A very special thanks goes to Lynn MacDonald for her kindness and generosity.

I could not have completed my thesis without the financial and moral support of my family. To my father, Donald Fulton, my sisters, Barbara, Nancy and her family, Kaye and Leslie, and my constant companions, Gordon Quinton and Rookee, I extend my deepest thanks.

Words cannot express my gratitude to my mother, Lyllis MacMillan Fulton, who died in 1987, and my brother, Derry, who was killed in a logging accident last year, for their help and inspiration. It is to them, and to the rest of my family, that this thesis is dedicated.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Albert and Averil Wakeley were lightkeepers, bound to the sea in a lifetime of duty to the beacon that rooted them to the land. By the time Albert retired at the age of sixty-two in 1982, the couple had spent more than three decades tending to lighthouses on the sea-swept posts of Puffin and Cabot Islands off the northeastern coast of Newfoundland. Together, with little respite, they had faced an environment that relentlessly challenged their resourcefulness, their skills, and their patience. They had worked side-by-side, sharing chores and stories in a seamless spirit of co-operation. They had raised seven children who came to learn, as their parents and ancestors had before them, that their playgrounds, on slippery lichened rocks and in sheltered coves that softened the stinging bite of the North Atlantic, were also classrooms where the lessons could be, in an instant, cruel and swift and final. Together, Albert and Averil had made a life for themselves and their family that fused the comforts of a community that depended on their abilities, with the endless solitude of the sea.

This thesis examines the oral life history narratives of the lightkeeper and his wife. The aim of my study is to determine the nature of the couple's narrative repertoire, evaluate the major themes in their life history narratives and assess the social and personal values and attitudes inherent in their stories.

My decision to focus exclusively on Albert and Averil and use their life history narratives as the basis for my study evolved from an interest in lightkeepers' narratives in general. The occupation of lightkeeping had intrigued me since my childhood when my father was in the Royal Canadian Navy. I was well aware of the close relationship between mariners and lightkeepers and I often said a silent word of thanks to the latter each time my father returned home from sea. My curiosity was aroused much later during my own travels and I envisioned the life of a lightkeeper as one filled with solitude and romance. In 1981, I moved to St. John's, Newfoundland to study folklore at Memorial University of Newfoundland. St. John's, located at the eastern edge of the island, is a port city whose heritage and culture is greatly influenced by the sea. While immersed in this environment, I felt that a Master's thesis would provide a good opportunity to investigate the occupation about which I had often fantasised.

As an initial step, I familiarised myself with lightkeeping by consulting various sources ranging from descriptive accounts of lighthouse technology to works in the social sciences dealing with the lives of the lightkeepers themselves.[1]

Life histories of lightkeepers and their families are few. I was struck by the lack of research done in an area so obviously rich in narrative material and so crucial to the lives of both Newfoundlanders and those who pass by her shores.

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[1]There are many books on lighthouse technology. I recommend the following, in particular: Edward F. Bush, *The Canadian Lighthouse*, Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History, no. 9 (Ottawa: Department of Indian and Northern Development, 1975); Canada, Department of Transport, *Canada's Lighthouses* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1968); Canada, Department of Transport, *List of Lights, Buoys and Fog Signals, Newfoundland, Including the Coastal Waters of Labrador* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1980) and Judith Tulloch, *Cape Spear Lighthouse: Cape Spear National Historic Park* (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1977). The following books discuss the lightkeeper's occupation and lifestyle: Hans C. Adamson, *Keepers of the Lights* (New York: Greenberg, 1955); Francis Ross Holland, Jr., *America's Lighthouses: Their Illustrated History Since 1716* (Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Greene, 1972); Fred Majdalany, *The Red Rocks of Eddystone* (1959, London: White Lion, 1974); David E. Stevens, *Lighthouses of Nova Scotia* (Windsor, NS: Lancelot, 1973).

However, I found two literary autobiographies related to the topic. *We Keep a Light*, by E.M. Richardson, the wife of a lightkeeper, is an account of family life at an isolated island off southwestern Nova Scotia.[2] George R. Putnam's autobiography, *Sentinel of the Coasts: The Log of a Lighthouse Engineer*, recounts the author's experiences as a commissioner of lighthouses for the United States federal government during the early part of the century.[3] In the field of social history, Donald Graham, a British Columbia lightkeeper, has written two noteworthy books published in the last five years, presenting detailed accounts of the lightkeepers and lighthouse stations of coastal British Columbia.[4]

In April 1982, I contacted the Coast Guard Office in St. John's and met Ian Gall, Regional Aids Manager. I told him I wanted to contact and interview a number of older lightkeepers as I was particularly interested in the nature and impact of change in lightkeeping due to automation in the last forty years. I believed that older lightkeepers would have first-hand knowledge of the occupation's development. Mr. Gall provided me with the names of ten retired and soon-to-be-retired lightkeepers who were stationed at or near various coastal communities in Newfoundland. He recommended three of them in particular as potentially "good" informants. Albert Wakeley of Templeman, Bonavista Bay, was among the three.

After obtaining the list from Mr. Gall, I wrote a letter to each lightkeeper in early June informing them of my 'project' and indicating the approximate time of

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[2]E.M. Richardson, *We Keep a Light* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1945).

[3]George R. Putnam, *Sentinel of the Coasts: The Log of a Lighthouse Engineer* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1937).

[4]Donald Graham, *Keepers of the Light: A History of British Columbia's Lighthouses and their Keepers* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour, 1985); and *Lights of the Inside Passage: A History of British Columbia's Lighthouses and their Keepers* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour, 1986).

my arrival in their areas. I mentioned that I would telephone each of them when I reached their respective town. The interviews were to be conducted in August to give the lightkeepers time to prepare for my visit and to respond to my letter. My brother, Derry, had planned a holiday trip to Newfoundland that August and he generously offered to act as my chauffeur and companion for the excursion--a convenient reason for scheduling my fieldwork during that month.

Receiving no word from them, we undertook our journey as planned in early August. My brother and I were warmly welcomed by the lightkeepers and their wives at each stop. Usually Derry accompanied me to the doorstep and introduced himself; occasionally he would step inside for a cup of tea either before or after the interview as a gesture of good will. The interviews lasted about one to two hours and in most cases the wives were present and took an active part. I prepared a list of questions for the interview and kept them handy but not too obtrusive. I wanted to maintain a degree of formality at first, yet I wanted the informants to feel comfortable with me. Although I kept the interviews mostly confined to the topic of lightkeeping, I became aware of how interesting each person's life was as I scanned through photographs and listened to tangential narratives regarding episodes of pre- and post-lightkeeping days.

Eventually, my thesis topic evolved from a general study of the ten lightkeepers' occupational narratives to an oral life history of an individual keeper. I discovered that it was virtually impossible to apply the established theoretical premises of occupational narrative research to a life that so dramatically combined work and family experiences. After some deliberation, I decided to focus my study on Albert Wakeley. The interview with Albert and Averil was the most successful, affording me more insight into their personal lives than the other accounts. Their enthusiasm, generosity and sincerity impressed me.

As I listened to the tapes, I became aware of the key role Averil played during the session. She contributed a significant portion of the answers, comments and narratives that evening and supplied specific information such as dates and names when Albert paused to recollect them. Averil and Albert shared many experiences in their lifetimes which helped shape the narration of their stories. Thus, I decided to focus on both Albert and Averil as the subjects of a life history study.

Clearly, there is scope for further research into the lives of lightkeepers and their families. In addition, the subject of dyads merits further investigation. As Elliott Oring has observed, a dyad is "a more or less enduring interaction between two individuals who primarily relate to one another as persons rather than as occupants of social statuses."[5] Albert and Averil Wakeley form a dyad in this sense and have developed a body of shared tradition in their many years together. Dyadic folklore has only recently been addressed, with emphasis being placed on folk speech and ritualistic behaviour.[6] To date, little attention has been paid to dyadic life history narratives. I hope this study will contribute to the relatively small body of information on this topic.

Interest in the life history as a distinct area of study within the discipline of folklore has been growing steadily since the early 1970s. In 1975, Linda Dégh issued the seminal work, *People in the Tobacco Belt: Four Lives*,[7] an

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[5]Elliott Oring, "Dyadic Traditions," *Journal of Folklore Research* 21 (1984): 19. (See pages 19-28 for full article.) For another discussion on this topic see Regina Bendix, "Marmot, Memet, and Marmoset: Further Research on the Folklore of Dyads," *Western Folklore* 46 (July, 1987): 171-91.

[6]For an interesting examination of a Newfoundland dyadic relationship see Gerald L. Pocius, "'The First Day that I Thought of It Since I Got Wed': Role Expectation and Singer Status in a Newfoundland Outport," *Western Folklore* 35 (1976): 109-22.

[7]Linda Dégh, *People in the Tobacco Belt: Four Lives*, Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, Mercury Series, Paper no. 13 (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1975).

unprecedented presentation of four complete and unedited life history texts accompanied by her analyses and interpretations. A significant number of life history related studies have been submitted as theses by folklore students at Memorial University of Newfoundland or published by the Department of Folklore at that university.[8]

All interviews were recorded on Sony LNX and Scotch AVX sixty minute cassette tapes. The recording equipment used was a Sony 110 tape recorder with an external microphone. The tapes are on deposit at the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive (MUNFLA) under the accession number 86-001. Eleven tapes contain interviews with Albert and Averil Wakeley and have the MUNFLA identification numbers C10980-C10990. Interviews with nine other lightkeepers are featured on sixteen tapes with the MUNFLA identification numbers C10991-C11003 and C11024-C11026.

In direct quotations, I refer to the interview by its corresponding MUNFLA identification number. Speakers are denoted by three initials as follows: Albert Wesley Wakeley=AWW, Averil Avis Wakeley=AAW, Patricia Lynne Fulton=PLF, Robert Derry Fulton=RDF. Two dashes signify that the speaker

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[8]Theses on aspects of life history written by folklore students at Memorial University include: Richard S. Tallman, "The Tall Tale Tradition and the Teller: A Biographical-Contextual Study of a Storyteller, Robert Coffil of Blomidon, Nova Scotia," Ph.D. thesis, Memorial U, 1974; Martin J. Lovelace, "The Life History of a Dorset Folk Healer: The Influence of Personality on the Modification of a Traditional Role," M.A. thesis, Memorial U, 1975 and "The Presentation of Folklife in the Biographies and Autobiographies of English Rural Workers," Ph.D. thesis, Memorial U, 1983; Monica Morrison, "'Small Boy in Small Town': An Individual's Response to the Study of His Own Life," M.A. thesis, Memorial U, 1977; and Alison J. Kahn, "The Jews of St. John's, Newfoundland: A Rhetorical Approach to a Community Autobiography," M.A. thesis, Memorial U, 1984. The Department of Folklore has published the following autobiographies: Victor Butler, *The Little Nord Easter: Reminiscences of a Placentia Bayman*, ed. Wilfred W. Wareham, MUNFLA Publications; Community Studies Series No. 1 (St. John's: Memorial U, 1975) and Aubrey M. Tizzard, *On Sloping Ground: Reminiscences of Outport Life in Notre Dame Bay, Newfoundland*, ed. J.D.A. Widdowson, MUNFLA Publications; Community Studies Series No. 2 (St. John's: Memorial U, 1979).

stops talking or is interrupted. Inaudible words are indicated by the phrase "unclear word" placed within brackets. Performance features such as laughter, voice modulation and gestures are indicated within parentheses. Emphasised words are italicised. Interjections, comments and questions by the interviewer(s) are placed in parentheses after the speaker's initials. Where quotes are edited, an ellipsis represents deleted words or passages. In cases where it is necessary to ensure the anonymity of individuals mentioned in the text, a letter placed in single quotation marks is substituted for the person's name, e.g., 'X'.

The thesis is divided into six chapters including this introduction. In the next chapter, I present an account of my fieldwork experiences with the Wakeleys. Chapter III discusses some theoretical perspectives in life history studies and my observations on the thematic content of Albert and Averil Wakeleys' life histories. Part of the chapter is devoted to biographical sketches which incorporate quotations from the interviews. A typology of the Wakeleys' life history narratives is introduced in Chapter IV as a means of organising and presenting the wide range of stories in their repertoire. A brief outline of alternate categories proposed by other scholars which bear significantly on the Wakeleys' narratives is included at the end of the chapter. Chapter V presents a theoretical framework for an analysis of the Wakeleys' narratives and examines the social and personal values and attitudes in the stories. Performance features will also be considered with regard to how they aid the conveyance of values and attitudes. A summary and conclusion are presented in Chapter VI.

Chapter 2
Fieldwork

This chapter presents an account of my fieldwork experiences while collecting the life history narratives of Albert and Averil Wakeley. These experiences are drawn from four visits with the couple held in 1982-83 and 1985. The meetings were set at three locations, Templeman (Bonavista Bay), Marystown (Burin Peninsula) and Centreville (Bonavista Bay) at the Wakeleys' respective homes and each lasted from one to three days.

I have organised the chapter by describing each visit under its appropriate heading. A summary and analysis of my collecting experience are presented at the end of the chapter.

2.1. First Interview, August 9, 1982, Templeman, Bonavista Bay

My brother, Derry, and I reached the home of Albert and Averil Wakeley on the outskirts of Templeman on August 9th, 1982. I telephoned them in the afternoon from Wesleyville, a nearby town, and arranged to interview Albert at home at seven o'clock that evening. Arriving as scheduled, we were greeted by the Wakeleys at the entrance of their neatly kept three-story house. Derry embarked on a tour of the surrounding area after arrangements were made for him to pick me up at 9:30 p.m. The Wakeleys were anxious that he return early enough so we could all have an informal chat and refreshments.

The interview was held in the living room. Averil and I sat on the sofa and Albert sat opposite me in an easy chair. The tape recorder was placed on the coffee table between Albert and me. I held in my lap a notebook which contained the list of questions. Before the interview began I discussed my thesis research and my family background. These discussions enabled us to relax, get acquainted, and establish commonalities. When I learned that Averil was a war bride from Norwich, England, I mentioned that I was born in England as well and had travelled through Norwich on occasion. Albert then revealed that he had joined the navy during World War II and had been posted in England. I responded that my father had also been in the navy and that I was born while my family was stationed in England. Similarly, when I told them that Derry was a logger based in British Columbia, Albert mentioned that he had done some logging locally in his early years. These exchanges helped us build a framework of shared experiences from the outset and eventually influenced my decision to select both of them as the subjects of my thesis research.

Initially Albert felt uncomfortable with the idea of a tape recorded interview. I explained, however, that by using a tape recorder I could capture everything we said and could then transcribe the interview *verbatim*. Moreover, I could not possibly write down all the information that he would give me, much less remember it at some later date.

Although this explanation satisfied him, the presence of the tape recorder posed problems that evening. I was inwardly distracted by the possiblity of a tape running out while we were speaking (it did on three occasions) or that I might have to turn a tape over during one of Averil or Albert's narratives and thereby disrupt the flow of the story (this happened twice). At times Albert seemed to be consciously performing in a formal manner. This was made obvious

after we concluded two hours of taped interview. At this point Derry returned to the house and joined us in the living room while Averil went to the kitchen to prepare a snack. These two events signaled that the interview had unofficially come to a close. However, it was clear that Albert was still in the mood for talking so, after a moment's hesitation, I put a third tape into the recorder and started the machine. The interview proceeded as before except that Derry took part. Albert directed his narratives and commentary toward both my brother and me and Derry responded by supplying an occasional "Hmm" or a question. When Averil returned to the living room with mementos from their lightkeeping days--a safety valve from the horn mechanism and a brass blinker--the talk became informal and gradually turned into two separate conversations. Averil and I discussed various photographs while Albert and Derry talked about lightkeeping and a recent personal experience the former had in Templeman.[9] Shortly after the tape was finished Albert mentioned that he preferred I not use the tape for my thesis since he felt it contained items which were not pertinent to the interview. His request presented me with a dilemma. On one hand the tape did contain information pertinent to my thesis, yet I did not wish to violate any trust between us. I resolved the situation by explaining that I would place a restriction on the tape and its transcript when I deposited it along with the others at MUNFLA.

Our visit ended at approximately 10:30 p.m. Averil and Albert generously invited us to stay overnight and when we declined they told us to be certain to visit them again if we were in the area.

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[9]For a study of family photograph albums see Pauline J. Greenhill, "Record, Communication, Entertainment: A Functional Study of Two Family Photograph Collections in St. John's, Newfoundland," M.A. thesis, Memorial U of Newfoundland, 1980, 58-83.

When my courses were completed I called Albert in January, 1983 at his new home in Marystown on the Burin Peninsula. He officially retired from lightkeeping in October 1982, and shortly thereafter moved to Marystown with Averil to be closer to four of their children who reside there with their families. Albert seemed pleased that I called and we chatted briefly about their move to Marystown. I explained that I had changed my thesis topic slightly and, since he and Averil were to be the main subjects, I was interested in gathering more details about their lives. They were both willing to take part in my research and we decided to meet for an interview in early March.

2.2. Second Visit, April 18-21, 1983, Marystown, Burin Peninsula

I arrived at the Wakeleys' home in Marystown at approximately six o'clock in the evening after a three-and-a-half hour bus ride. Averil walked to the road in the rain and fog to meet me. I was instantly welcomed and ushered back to their home, a bright yellow trailer situated amidst several similar dwellings in a newly developed area overlooking a bay. Albert was in the living room watching television with his daughter, Violet, her infant son, Christopher, and his granddaughter, Avis. He rose to greet me as we came inside. We shook hands warmly and embarked on a lively discussion of the weather, the bus ride and their new surroundings. I gave them a batch of homemade cookies which I had baked especially for the visit and they seemed to appreciate the gesture. The Wakeleys offered me some supper but I was not hungry; instead we all had a cup of tea and continued our conversation. We talked about our last visit, the university, and my family. Albert proudly showed me his certificates of service from the Coast Guard, issued after I had visited them in Templeman. They were framed and hung on a wall in the kitchen. Albert also showed me a special album of

photographs taken the day he officially retired from the lighthouse on Cabot Island. Clearly, he wanted to show me these items, which I had not previously seen, because they represented a part of his life in a concrete way. He appeared animated and eager to tell me a story about each of them.

As I looked at the photographs and certificates and listened to Albert's descriptions of them, I was overcome by a sense of ambivalence. I felt pulled by the desire to engage in a natural, spontaneous conversation with him and by the desire to record the information. This was a constant dilemma for me throughout my fieldwork. The conflicting desires paralleled the conflicting roles I had assumed, that of guest and that of researcher at the Wakeley home.

Prior to the second visit, after some deliberation, I decided to accept the Wakeleys' offer to stay with them in their home while conducting my fieldwork. My previous supervisor, Dr. Lawrence G. Small, had warned that this arrangement adds stress to fieldworkers by thoroughly immersing them in the lives of their informants. I considered the stress factor before the second visit but, ultimately, I decided to stay with the Wakeleys. I resolved that if my fieldwork were to be successful, I would have to adapt to situations as they arose and, above all, accept the limitations imposed by the type of study I had undertaken.

We arranged to hold the interview on the evening of Tuesday April 19th as it was expected to be a relatively quiet time, free from interruptions. During the day Albert and Averil had errands to run, workers were scheduled to put siding on their trailer, and family members and friends were likely to visit them.

The interview, which commenced around nine p.m., began awkwardly. At first Albert responded to my questions in an overly general manner, summarising his life in a few minutes. After Albert concluded, he joked to Averil that it was now her turn to tell her life history. Disappointment swept over me. Albert

appeared to be a far different person than the loquacious man I interviewed the previous summer.

I felt compelled to provide Albert with a chronological starting point as a means of alleviating any interview tensions.[10] I pressed further with questions concerning his early life and family background. My questioning seemed to foster in Albert a dependence on me to supply a charted course for him to follow. As the interview progressed he relaxed significantly and occasionally filled his responses with narrative and lengthy description. In addition, Albert took more directive control, particularly when aspects of his working life were broached.

At ten p.m. the tape ran out, bringing the interview to a close. Albert had relaxed considerably toward the end and was looking forward to continuing our discussion the next day.

The next evening at 7:30 p.m., I set up the tape recorder in the same location as the previous night. Albert proposed to Averil that she speak before him, indicating that he would be ready for his interview once Averil finished hers. Averil graciously accepted his proposal. I was somewhat surprised at Albert's deferment yet I suspected that he felt he needed more time to prepare for his interview and that he would be bolstered by the precedence of Averil's session.

By eight o'clock we were ready to begin the interview. Averil did not wait for me to ask a question; instead she embarked on a life history, approximately eight minutes in length, in which she sketched the years from her childhood to the present day. From there I directed her by asking questions based on the information she gave me.

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[10]My impulse to collaborate with Albert at that particular time suggests that the Wakeleys' narratives are a life history instead of a life story or "self-contained fiction," as defined by Jeff Todd Titon in his article, "The Life Story," *Journal of American Folklore* 93 (1980): 276-292.

At the conclusion of Averil's interview, we had a short break during which I labelled tapes and prepared the tape recorder for the next session. Albert appeared calmer and more confident than he had the previous evening. When I started the machine he launched into a protracted narrative about his service in the Royal Navy and his early years at Puffin Island. There were few interruptions. Albert was as thoroughly involved in his storytelling as we were in listening to it. The brief interval in which I turned over the tape was only a minor distraction and he proceeded with great alacrity from where he left off. Unfortunately, a rainstorm caused a power failure to prematurely end the interview while Albert was narrating. By the time the power was restored Albert had lost the interest and momentum he displayed earlier, indicating to me that he had talked as much as he could for one night.

I awoke early to catch the pre-arranged taxi ride back to St. John's. Over coffee, Albert, Averil and I discussed the possibility of another visit during the coming summer and it was agreed that I would telephone them in advance to confirm a mutually convenient time. I mentioned that I wished to record them as they described the contents of their photograph albums which I had briefly seen before.

2.3. Third Visit, September 3-5, 1983, Marystown, Burin Peninsula

In late August I telephoned the Wakeleys as planned. We decided to meet during the Labour Day Weekend--the evening of Saturday September 3rd until the morning of Monday September 5th. I arrived on the Saturday evening. By now I knew the route to their home and provided the taxi driver with detailed directions. Albert, Averil, Violet and Christopher had just finished supper and I

joined them for a cup of tea. The evening was spent visiting with them, several of their children, and some neighbours. The atmosphere was convivial, resembling an informal party held both for the waning days of summer and for Albert's birthday the following week. I was pleased at how readily the Wakeleys included me in their circle of family and friends and how our relationship was becoming much firmer with each meeting.

The next day I helped Averil prepare the noon dinner and shortly after we had eaten, their eldest son Bill, his wife, Julie, and their daughter, Conetta, arrived for a Sunday visit. We talked for about half-an-hour before I informed Albert and Averil that I wished to record them as they described the photographs in the living room and kitchen.

The session proved profitable but somewhat hectic. Conetta and Violet went to Pauline's house nearby but Bill and Julie remained and sat with the Wakeleys and me around the kitchen table. We discussed not only an assortment of displayed photographs, but also Albert's war medals, a wooden heart-shaped plaque bearing the names of the Wakeley family members, Averil's spoon collection, a stuffed otter, and various trophies bestowed on the family.

Although I initiated most of the discussions by referring to particular photographs or objects, Averil significantly participated in this regard as well. Albert, generally, contributed to the discussions but did not initiate them.

The next evening we met shortly after eight p.m. The interview lasted two hours and was without major distractions. Pauline arrived for a brief visit during the session and sat quietly listening to us. Albert's participation in the interview equalled that of his wife, although he intimated several times that we had seen all the necessary photographs before reaching the end of the albums. The interview ended at 10:30 p.m. We retired for the night earlier than usual as Albert planned to set out fishing with a friend before dawn.

I shared breakfast with Averil after awakening at eight o'clock on Monday morning. The taxi arrived an hour later and Averil urged me as we parted to keep in touch and plan to visit them again.

2.4. Fourth Visit, August 16-18, 1985, Centreville, Bonavista Bay

I did not visit the Wakeleys for almost another two years despite several thwarted attempts. When I called them in early July 1985, I was surprised to learn that they had moved from Marystown to Centreville, Bonavista Bay, not far from Templeman. Averil told me that they felt cramped for space in the trailer court and had missed the region in which they had lived for so many years. The couple was pleased to hear from me and seemed excited that I wanted to visit again. Stating that I wanted to find out more about their experiences at the light stations and their lives in subsequent years, I made arrangements to visit them in mid-August.

Averil and Albert gave me a warm welcome when I arrived on Friday August 16th. The three of us spent the evening getting re-acquainted and I was given a tour of their new home. The next day they suggested we journey to Greenspond after our noon dinner to meet Albert's aunt, Doris Jerrett, and her husband, John, and to view Puffin Island which lies approximately a mile from the coastal community. Our visit with Doris and John lasted approximately an hour-and-a-half. I was hospitably welcomed into their home and soon discovered that they knew of me and my study through Albert and Averil. While having tea in the kitchen, the couples described their family ties and genealogical details of Albert's family. As the Jerretts escorted us to the car, Doris told me that they enjoyed the visit and hoped I would return with Albert and Averil to see them again.

That evening, back at the Wakeley home, we conducted our final interview as scheduled. The atmosphere during the hour-and-a-half session was markedly different than in the previous interviews at Marystown. There were no distractions and Albert was so relaxed he stretched out on the sofa for the first hour. Averil sat beside him and I sat cross-legged on the carpet across from them. The tape recorder was placed on the coffee table between us. Before the interview began, Averil reminded Albert of the interview two years earlier in which he had talked with virtually no interruptions. Albert replied that the situation had been unique and that he doubted the possibility of a repeat performance. Nevertheless, Albert talked a great deal during the final interview while Averil directed much of its course. There were many narratives about their experiences at the Puffin Island Lighthouse, in particular, concerning the activities of their children.

Albert appeared restless later in the interview and on a number of occasions declared that there was nothing more to tell or that I had heard everything they had to say. He left the room once and changed positions several times which necessitated altering the direction of the microphone. Averil was more compliant, asking me at one point if there was anything else I wanted to know and remaining attentive throughout the session. The interview lost its focus when we began discussing the couple's retirement years and I decided to stop the recording at that juncture. The next day I thanked the Wakeleys for their co-operation and hospitality and promised to keep in touch with them, a promise that I have kept.

2.5. Negotiations of Rapport

The purpose of my first visit with the Wakeleys was to obtain from Albert specific information concerning the occupation of lightkeeping. I used a directive approach, asking Albert a list of questions and giving him a chance to elaborate through narrative and lengthy description. Averil participated in and contributed to the discussion as well. Having made this important contact with the Wakeleys and taking into account the couple's enthusiastic rendering of their experiences at the lighthouse stations, I decided to change my topic to a life history study. In accordance, I changed my methodological approach, obtaining information through open-ended or non-directed interviews following the advice of scholars--Linda Dégh and Martin Lovelace, among others--who advocate using this collecting method for folklore-based life history research.[11] The open-ended approach, used in two subsequent visits, met with varying degrees of success.

Albert, given the opportunity to recount his life history, demonstrated a temporary loss of composure at the outset and I, too eagerly, perhaps, provided him with a chronological starting point in order to resolve the uneasy situation. As a result, successive interviews with both Albert and Averil were conducted utilising loose chronological frameworks, and whenever possible, general questions. Although this was not the ideal approach, it seemed best under the given circumstances and conditions.

There were other factors which influenced the direction and outcome of the interviews. The presence of various family members during some of the sessions

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[11]Linda Dégh, *People in the Tobacco Belt: Four Lives*, Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, Mercury Series, Paper no. 13 (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1975) vii; Martin J. Lovelace, "The Life History as an Oral Narrative Genre," *Papers from the 4th Annual Congress of the Canadian Ethnology Society*, ed. Richard J. Preston (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1978) 214.

distracted both the Wakeleys and me. Albert's degree of involvement in the interviews was, at times, dependent on and coloured by the mood he was in. There was interference from external sources such as the telephone and power failure. According to Linda Dégh, it is essential that the recording of a life history be conducted:

> ...in the context of its cultural environment so that the teller feels comfortable enough to speak freely, without inhibitions.[12]

In order to record the Wakeleys in their cultural environment, it was often necessary for me to adapt to new sets of unpredictable circumstances. Gerald L. Pocius has said that fieldwork involves a "continuous negotiation of rapport."[13] My efforts to adapt to the home milieu within and outside the interview situations, and the Wakeleys' attempts to purvey appropriate information and provide hospitable surroundings involved such negotiations.

When I first contacted and visited the Wakeleys in 1982, I was, as Michael Agar describes, a "professional stranger,"[14] a researcher from the university who suddenly appeared at the threshold of their world. The fact that the Wakeleys readily and generously accepted me into their home gradually changed my initial role of researcher/guest into the dual role of researcher/guest and friend. Ours developed into the kind of relationship for which I had hoped; a relationship which frequently transcended the realm of my academic research, allowing me to gain a deeper insight into the couple's personalities.

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[12]Dégh iii.

[13]Gerald L. Pocius, "Research Methods" lecture, Memorial U of Newfoundland, 28 Oct. 1981.

[14]Michael H. Agar, *The Professional Stranger: An Informal Introduction to Ethnography* (New York: Academic, 1980).

Once I had surpassed the level of acceptance and gained the Wakeleys' trust, it became imperative that I establish and maintain a code of ethics to govern the choice of material which would be included in my study. As George Carey cogently suggests:

> [The folklorist]...may need to consider each individual and community with an eye to exactly what effects public exposure will have.[15]

Many matters concerning health, family, finances, personal relationships and other topics were discussed in conversation and I made explicit my intent to keep them private.

My decision to accept the Wakeleys' offers to stay with them as their guest was well considered and ultimately, beneficial to me as a fieldworker. Despite the overwhelming amount of information I had to absorb and the adaptations I had to make, in time I was able to gain a better understanding of the Wakeleys' cultural environment and my place within it.

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[15]George Carey, "The Storyteller's Art and the Collector's Intrusion," *Folklore Today: A Festschrift for Richard M. Dorson*, ed. Linda Dégh, Henry Glassie, and Felix J. Oinas (Bloomington: Research Center for Language and Semiotic Studies, 1976) 90.

Chapter 3

The Life Histories of Albert and Averil Wakeley

The basic structure of any life history or oral autobiography is built upon the reminiscences of the informant. Its shape is determined by the informant who, in a state of imaginative recollection, interacts with the interviewer in dynamic interplay which is bound to a specific time and place. The life history is comprised of personal experience narratives, commentary and responses selected by the informant, and questions and commentary initiated by the interviewer and, in some cases, members of the listening audience.

What sets apart the oral life history from its literary counterpart, the written autobiography, is the involvement of an external catalyst, a researcher who instigates the interviews, collaborates with the informant during the discourse, and interprets the outcome. However, much has been written on the subject of literary autobiography that is analogous to the oral life history in terms of the nature of the genre, the narrator's selection of material and motives behind the presentation.

The life histories of Albert and Averil Wakeley can be considered thematically. These themes reflect what the Wakeleys deemed important and appropriate to reveal about themselves under the specific conditions of the formal interviews and informal conversations I had with them. To a certain extent, the

thematic content of the Wakeleys' life histories adhere to the suggestion of Linda Dégh that "women favor the themes of first love, marriage ritual, intimate sexual relationships, child-rearing, family life, and grievances and injustices." In contrast, men, in their storytelling, "prefer telling of heroic deeds, how they challenged and eventually beat up their bosses, and how they excelled in military service."[16] Dégh narrowed her focus to experienced storytellers. The Wakeleys are not socially designated storytellers by definition and their choice of narrative material was, to a degree, influenced by what they thought that I, a stranger, expected to hear. It is not unreasonable to assume that the initial, cursory interview gave the couple a pre-set notion that my main interest was in lightkeeping. The question of whether or not the narrow focus helped or hindered the subsequent life history interviews is a matter of debate. However, it is argued that any limitation to my methodology was offset, if not eradicated by lengthy follow-up interviews and visits, during which the range of topics was broadened and a relationship of trust and familiarity was established.

The couple's sense of appropriateness and rules of selection are vital clues in understanding personal and societal values and attitudes.[17] The Wakeleys' repertoire was vast and reflected their long and full lives. They wanted, like everybody else, to show their best qualities, talk about their achievements, and describe interesting and memorable events in their lives. Each life history presentation is unique, determined by what the informant wants to reveal to a particular interviewer. This is done to meet the demands of the situation and

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[16]Linda Dégh, "Folk Narrative," *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, ed. Richard M. Dorson (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1972) 79.

[17]Lovelace, "The Life History as an Oral Narrative Genre," *Papers from the 4th Annual Congress of The Canadian Ethnology Society*, ed. Richard J. Preston (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1978) 220.

satisfy what the informant feels are the interviewer's expectations of him or her. The Wakeleys knew that personal information would be documented and placed in the public domain. This bias must be considered as a factor in any assumption made about their representations.

Their most pervasive theme was work and all of its ramifications. It generated the most narratives and factual details, subsuming all other topics. To a great extent it determined the "pattern of organization"[18] within the Wakeleys' autobiographies. Albert's discussions focus on working as a youth with his father and on his own in isolated logging camps, his military service overseas during World War II, and his long tenure as lightkeeper at Puffin Island and Cabot Island, Bonavista Bay. The importance of work in Albert's life is made evident by the inclusion of exact dates, which marked the beginnings of new jobs (March 28, 1940 was the day he left Canada for England to join the navy; he began his lightkeeping duties on Puffin Island on the 28th of June, 1946; he started his lightkeeping job at Cabot Island in December 1960). Without benefit of a log book or wage chits during the interviews, Albert could summon exact memories of wages he received in his early years of employment (in his years logging, Albert made $53 a month for sharpening saws and had $360 in his pocket when he left camp at nineteen; Albert's starting salary at Puffin Island in 1946 was $54.89 a month; his promotion four years later to principal lightkeeper earned him $62 a month.)[19] It is reinforced by such comments as:

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[18]Lovelace, "The Life History" 217.

[19]Lovelace observes that in oral and written autobiographies of English farmworkers the first wage is symbolic of entry into manhood and is always recalled. Martin J. Lovelace, "Oral and Written Reminiscence: An Oral Canon," paper presented at the American Folklore Society Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, October 15, 1982, 10.

> ...when I was old enough to work, I worked, I went....all I enjoyed was working...when I was old enough to work....I enjoyed the life with some work to it...to make a living. [If] I [could] see how to make a dollar I would certainly get at it. (C10983)

The informant's sense of chronology is another significant factor in the life history. In Lovelace's view, it "tends to be bound to his sense of what is most important in his life."[20] Although the non-directed interview approach met with varying success, resulting in my provision of a chronological starting point for some discussions, Albert's condensed initial account of his life related during my second visit corresponds to Lovelace's suggestion that

> ...it may be that a speaker will not begin in what seem to be the logical place, with a statement about his date and place of birth, but will go directly to a point of greater significance in terms of his evaluation of his life experience.[21]

Compact and precise chronology can be seen as another indicator of importance. Of all Albert's occupations, it appears that his military experience was the most memorable. The clarity with which day to day events are recalled underlines the exotic singularity of this period, setting it apart from other phases of his working life which contain more diffuse chronological descriptions.

Averil's discussions deal somewhat with work in the public sector, limited mostly to a few sentences describing her wartime work and her involvement in community affairs, and one narrative concerning her employment as a postmistress. It is interesting to note that she, like Albert, told me what her starting and final salaries were at the latter job ($28 and $250 a month.) Most of

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[20]Lovelace, "The Life History" 216-17.

[21]Lovelace, "The Life History" 217.

her discussions focus on her work within the home, the most fully described being the years spent on Puffin Island during which the family lived and worked in relative isolation.

Certain aspects of family life figure prominently in the Wakeleys' life histories. For example, the circumstances surrounding the couple's courtship and the births, activities and pranks of some of their children are elaborated in some detail.

Albert and Averil's portrayals of their respective childhoods stand in contrast to those of their adult years. In Albert's case, details concerning his early youth were often solicited by me. As a result, these descriptions are more incomplete than his recollections of work experience. Averil provided more details about her family than did Albert but, overall, her memories of childhood are similarly a miscellany of fact and impression. She stressed that her early years were happy and that family life was pleasant but there was "...not too much in [her] lifetime growing up, only schooling...and just playing games." Averil then mentioned that she "didn't think she could recall anything else unusual. Everything went along smoothly...."(C10984)

Although the Wakeleys may have been influenced by my initial interest in their years spent lightkeeping, their emphasis on adulthood is significant. Roy Pascal states that autobiographical memories reflect experiences, events and enacted thoughts and feelings involving "action and decision."[22] Action and decision are capabilities better realised in adulthood than childhood.

The following section presents a biographical perspective of Averil and Albert's life histories which utilises autobiographical information conveyed

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[22]Roy Pascal, *Design and Truth in Autobiography* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960) 185.

through interviews and conversations. This representation is drawn from personal facts revealed to me by the Wakeleys in narratives, commentary and responses to questions. It serves to introduce the couple to the reader and provide background information for their life history narratives in the next chapter.

3.1. Albert Wakeley: Early Life

Albert Wesley Wakeley was born September 6, 1920 in Safe Harbour, a small fishing outport at the head of Bonavista Bay on the northeast coast of Newfoundland. He was the eldest of two boys in a family of six, the children of parents whose lives were rooted in the remote region of rocky coves and islands first settled by British and Irish immigrants in the latter half of the eighteenth century.[23]

Like others who settled in the area, Albert's ancestors, who came to Newfoundland from England, relied on the sea for survival. His maternal grandfather was a fisherman named Mosie Janes who, along with many men in the region, went to the waters off Labrador for his catches.[24] His grandfather's occupational knowledge and skills were learned traditionally, shared among the men in the community. Albert remembers him as a man who built and captained his own schooners, despite having had "no [formal] education at all." (C10983)

Albert has very few memories of his paternal grandfather. His paternal grandmother, however, was renowned in the Safe Harbour area as a practitioner of folk medicine and was classed as an uncertified "doctor" who would gather

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[23] John Feltham, *The Islands of Bonavista* (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1986) 2.

[24] For historical discussion on the Labrador fishery, see E. R. Seary, G. M. Story and W. J. Kirwin, *The Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland: An Ethno-Linguistic Study* (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1968) 29-33.

"herbs from the ground...steep them out and...cure sickness." (C10983)[25]

Albert's mother, Paulina Janes, was born in Safe Harbour; his father, Daniel Wakeley came from nearby Candle Cove, a community then inhabited by two families but, like Safe Harbour, later abandoned. The Wakeley family eventually moved to Safe Harbour where Daniel met and married Paulina Janes. The couple followed typical marital role patterns of early twentieth century Newfoundland. Daniel Wakeley supported his family by working as a logger and fisherman and his wife helped him wash and dry fish or "make the fish" (C10983) and managed their home.[26] Their first child, Grace, died in infancy. A second daughter, Helen, was followed six years later by Albert and then Isaac, Annie and Effie.

In the 1920s, Safe Harbour was an active and self-sufficient community. Albert's memories of it are vivid. As a boy, he kept a close watch on the nine resident fishing schooners which were anchored in the harbour. Fishermen from Safe Harbour regularly went to Labrador and brought back "three and four thousand quintals of fish" (C10983) for preparation before shipment to markets in St. John's.

The Wakeley home stood at the "edge of the water" (C10983), an advantageous position in such communities where the harbour was the centre of activity.[27] The community as a whole, however, lived without the amenities afforded by those in larger centres.

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[25]For reference to Newfoundland folk medicine see Hilda Chaulk Murray, *More Than 50%: Woman's Life in a Newfoundland Outport* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1979) 132-35.

[26]For a description of kinship networks and fishing technology in a Newfoundland outport see James C. Faris, *Cat Harbour: A Newfoundland Fishing Settlement* (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial U of Newfoundland, 1966) 84-110 and 215-35.

[27]See Faris, 36.

> [There was] not even a bike to ride, not even a radio to turn on, because no one had any radio at them times. And you get the old wood stoves and, I don't think there was any coal at that time, not to buy around, you know, because you couldn't get any money to buy it, you just had to go in the woods and...get your wood. (C10985)

Albert also remembers an absence of cars, running water and electricity. Instead, members of the community relied on more labour intensive forms of technology, such as kerosene lamps, wells and "outer toilets." (C10983) There were no roads in the Safe Harbour of Albert's boyhood, only "a little footpath going around the shore." (C10983)

Obtaining food also involved substantial effort for the residents of the tiny community. Diet staples included fish and homegrown vegetables. It was common for each family to raise a pig or a few goats to slaughter for winter consumption. "Ordinary stuff" such as salt pork or beef was available to customers at the local store, but items such as bacon were difficult to obtain because "the people wouldn't be able to afford to buy [them]." (C10983)

Despite the economic hardships in Safe Harbour, the Wakeley family was content.

> ...we enjoyed the life at that time, you know...that's the best we could do...there was nothing else we could see anybody else doing any different than what we was doing. (C10985)

The Christmas season offered the community respite from the rigours of work. It was a special time of year for Albert. During the week-long celebration, he was allowed to eat

> ...a bit of sweet cake [with]...a bit of molasses into it...some jam tart [and]...maybe a...half a...peppermint knob. (C10983)

The residents of Safe Harbour took part in mumming, a calendar custom practised throughout Newfoundland at that time.[28]

If it were a "fine night" Albert and his fellow mummers dressed up in old, ragged clothes, put on "funny looking faces" and spent the evening from seven until eleven o'clock visiting homes in the community. At each house they would "rap on the door and say...'Let the mummers in,'" followed by the question "...well, do you know me?" after they were welcomed inside. As part of the ritual, the mummers were offered some spruce beer or "a little drop of wine." 'Moonshine' was available for those considered old enough to drink alcohol but Albert "never did go for that." (C10983)

Albert's familial happiness, however, was short-lived. When he was seven years old, his mother died at home of cancer.

> I can remember her on her bed, you know, before she died, how she used to speak to us...get us alongside of her. (C10983)

The death of Albert's mother marked a turning point in the lives of the entire Wakeley family. From that time, they would no longer live together as a complete unit. Albert and his father moved in with Albert's aunt, Doris, and her husband who lived on the island of Greenspond, the second oldest settlement of Bonavista Bay, separated from the mainland by a tickle approximately one-third of a mile wide.[29] Isaac moved to his sister's home in Glovertown on the

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[28]For a comprehensive examination of mumming see Herbert Halpert and G. M. Story, eds., *Christmas Mumming in Newfoundland: Essays in Anthropology, Folklore and History* (Toronto: U of Toronto, 1969) 34-61.

[29]Feltham 5.

mainland; one of his sisters went to stay with relatives on Fogo Island, and the remaining children moved in with various relatives in Greenspond.

Albert left school permanently after the fourth grade. While his mother was alive, he could remember going to classes but "I didn't get any education, it wasn't that long." (C10983) His adolescent years were spent helping his father at work. At nine he accompanied his father on trapping expeditions into wooded areas near Greenspond. During these forays, which often lasted many weeks, Albert helped his father "tend little [muskrat and otter] traps," skin the dead animals and dry the skins by stretching them over bent tree branches. A high quality pelt usually fetched five or six dollars which was "a lot of money then...." (C10983) The expeditions forged a bond between father and son. The pair were often alone in the woods; Albert's brother, Isaac, found other pastimes: "He didn't go at it like I did." (C10983) Fording fast-moving streams, Albert would jump on his father's back; at times Daniel Wakeley would fall a tree across the water as a bridge:

> And then he used to say, 'Boy, get on my back and I'll carry you across there.' And I'd get up on his back and I'd be scared, afraid he was going to drop me? 'Now, now, don't be scared, boy, I'll look after ya.' And I'll hang onto his neck and he'd go on across on the stick, across to the other side...when I knew I was safe, I was checking out the water, just the same, underneath. (C10983)

Albert's responsibilities increased as he grew older. At eleven he assisted in his father's logging operations by "cutting limbs off the trees [to] make it easier for him to saw." (C10983) Eventually he would saw "pit-props" or thin, shaved logs and float them downriver. Albert not only worked beside his father but took his place on occasion. At twelve he steered a schooner from Greenspond to Cape Bonavista while filling in for his father on one of his scheduled trips to St. John's. A positive attitude toward hard work developed during those years.

By 1934, at fourteen, Albert was on his own. He boarded a railway boat called the *Northern Ranger* in Greenspond and ventured to White Bay to find employment at a logging camp outside Englee, on the eastern coast of the Great Northern Peninsula. For the next five years he worked there, and at another camp near La Scie, a community on the eastern shore of White Bay.[30]

At the camps Albert worked alongside seventeen other young men who were mostly his age. A typical work day began around six o'clock in the morning. After eating breakfast in the "caboose,"[31] the workers proceeded "into the dark trail in the woods" to cut, chop and saw spruce and fir. They used bucksaws that measured "two-and-a-half foot, three foot long" as there were "no chain saws in them times." (C10983) A hard day's work was usually followed in one of the bunk houses by an evening of relaxation, singing traditional or "old" songs and songs which some of the loggers had made up themselves. They also listened to the music played on "the...old-fashioned accordion." (C10983)[32] Workers' meals were simple: they often ate baked beans for breakfast. Soup was dinner on Mondays. Prunes and "plenty of them" was the only kind of fruit available at the camps, "you'd never see nothing else." For snacks the loggers ate "a cake of hard bread or something like...they uses now for the fish and brewis." Sunday was a "day...for washing...and rest" after the week's work. Albert spent sixty dollars a month on board and managed to save the rest, storing it inside a clothes bag in

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[30]For a description of the Newfoundland logging industry see John Ashton, "A Study of the Lumbercamp Song Tradition in Newfoundland," M.A.D. thesis, Memorial U of Newfoundland, 1985, 5-29; 53-158.

[31]The same facility was called a "camboose" in nineteenth century Ontario. See George S. Thompson, "A Winter in a Lumbercamp," *Folklore of Canada*, ed. Edith Fowke (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976) 224-25.

[32]For a discussion on similar leisure activities of Maine loggers see Edward D. Ives, *Joe Scott, The Woodsman-Songmaker* (Urbana: U Illinois P, 1978.)

his bunk. During these years he had no contact with his father or relatives. In fact, there was little, if any, contact with the outside world as the camps were "so far in the country, seventy or eighty miles in the country...[in the] wild, woolly west you can call it." (C10983)

When World War II broke out in 1939, Albert, along with some other young men who worked in the camp, decided to volunteer their services. The act marked "the end of [his] young days." (C10983) In January of the following year, five of them went overland to the nearest settlement, Englee, and from there they boarded the *Northern Ranger* which took them to a recruiting office in Greenspond. Albert had $360 in his pocket, which was money saved from his five years work at logging. It was "half a fortune then [as] times were bad...." (C10985) For a short time, Albert stayed in Greenspond with his aunt and uncle who both regretted his decision to enlist, "after leaving home and going away and then coming back to home again and going overseas." (C10983) He was not, however, the only family member to go overseas during the war. His father left Newfoundland to work in Scotland with the Newfoundland Forestry. Eventually, he remarried there and returned to Newfoundland with his Scottish wife.

On March the eighteenth, Albert left Greenspond and sailed to St. John's where he trained at the Church Lads Brigade Armoury for three weeks. After his training, he boarded the military ship, the *Baltrover*, and departed for Halifax for another three week training course. He then crossed the Atlantic on the *Baltrover* in a convoy. During the voyage, the ship was torpedoed and was seriously damaged. A submarine escorted the vessel until it reached its final destination in Liverpool, England. From Liverpool, Albert and his fellow sailors travelled to a military post called the "Ganges" near Ipswich for more preliminary training. This was followed by more specialised training in gunnery

operations for three months in Portsmouth. Albert chose to work as a gunner and "enjoyed that although it was wartime." (C10983) After engaging in these military exercises at Blackpool on the northwest coast of England, he joined his first boat and started minesweeping during frequent operations off coastal Germany.[33]

While stationed in Norwich on the eastern seaboard of England north of London, the young gunner met a sixteen-year-old country girl at a bus station. It would be four years before Averil White and Albert Wakeley would marry. However, from the moment of that chance meeting in war-torn Europe, their lives became forever intertwined.

3.2. Averil Wakeley: Early Life

Averil Avis (White) Wakeley was born on March 12, 1924, in the village of Old Catton which lies approximately three miles outside of Norwich, England. She was the sixth child of an eventual family of seven born to George White and Rosa (Thirtle) White of Scyton, near Norwich. Her father emigrated to England from Italy at the age of twelve with his parents, two brothers and two sisters. Averil's paternal grandfather, whose surname, Bianco, was later changed to the Anglicised name of White, died when she was two years old, consequently her memories of him are not clear, but she does know that he and her grandmother operated a fruit and vegetable stall at the local market in North Walsham, a small town about twelve miles from Old Catton, and that he made and sold his own ice cream which he and his wife delivered by horse and cart. Averil has more distinct memories of her paternal grandmother, who died at the age of ninety-four:

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[33]For a description of Newfoundland's involvement in naval operations during World War II see Herb Wells, *Under the White Ensign*, 1 (St. John's: Robinson Blackmore, 1981). While reading this book I discovered Albert's photograph on page 198.

> ...she couldn't speak a word of English and mostly we had to go by her actions until we got older and then picked up some of her Italian speech. And, she used to make her own spaghetti. She used to cook on an open stove...sometimes you...look at the pictures with the hook, with the pot hanging on the hook but, now, she didn't have that. They used to be side things on the open fire and they used to swing backwards and forwards on a swivel and this is where they used to cook most of the time... (C10984)

Having learned much about the food service industry from his parents, Averil's father established his own fish frying business during World War II, a time when he also "used to take...supplies to the airports and collect the...garbage and everything else." (C10984)

Averil recalls her mother as being a dutiful English woman who did "...housework and looked after her children." (C10984) Averil never knew her maternal grandparents as they died before she was born and she has little recollection of facts concerning them.

A self-described "country girl," Averil's memories of childhood with her siblings are happy ones:

> I had a nice home, good parents, good brother and sisters and we keep in touch with one and another now. Well the years has spanned between us and we still keep in touch. (C10984)

The community of Old Catton where Averil was born and raised was comprised of a mere eight houses and the residents were "knit together like...one whole family." (C10984) Averil maintains that in her early years there was "not too much in my lifetime growing up, only schooling, education and just playing games." (C10984) She recalls, however, discrete scenes of the time. One depiction concerns the countryside of her childhood:

> ...we had three farms...around us. We had the experimental farm...the government had that one. My uncle had another one and another gentleman...had the other one...it was really lovely at harvest time, in the month of August. We used to go in the corn fields, watch them cut down the corn and make haystacks. In fact, we used to have a ride on the horse and cart; it used to be good...that was a beautiful time of year...harvest time. (C10984)

Christmas celebrations also figure prominently in Averil's recollections:

> ...Christmas time was a nice time. We used to go from one house to another and instead of giving gifts at Christmas time or on Boxing Day, we used to wait until we had the party and we used to have all the gifts under the Christmas tree and give them out...it was really enjoyable then. (C10984)

Averil has other significant remembrances regarding the house in which she spent her early life. One concerns its physical description, "...concrete...with seashells stuck in around...," and another, a coincidence about the dwelling and its location, "...it was white...we lived on White Woman Lane and our names was White." (C10984)

The outbreak of World War II signalled a change not only in the course of Averil's life but in the life of everyone around her. Order and routine gave way to chaos and unpredictabililty during Averil's teenage years. The Norwich area was particularly targeted by German enemy forces because of its three strategic airports. An unforgettable moment for Averil occurred when she heard "the first siren" (C10984), the siren that declared the beginning of war. Another memorable time was when a German plane landed in the Whites' laneway and set a haystack ablaze. The activity in the skies over Norwich was closely watched by the area residents who would count the number of British airplanes which departed from and returned to the airports.

Amidst the confusion, "everybody [did]...their part as best they could." (C10984) For protection, Averil and her family used to go underground into their cellar and later into a specially designed shelter in the family kitchen:

> ...they had...what they called the Morrison Table Shelter. [It is]...a big steel table top and...when you get down under the table...there would be like a screen going right around so that if you had a hit or vibration from the bomb and everything came down, you would be safe in this shelter. But that would be in your house, in your kitchen, you would eat off it. And, of course, Mom then kept clean water there, a bowl there and bed linen, everything else. (C10984)

Averil responded to the exigence of wartime by joining a military catering service. She then undertook training as an electrician at the suggestion of a girlfriend. At seventeen, the pair chose to attend the University at Cambridge rather than face conscription and a compulsory posting, a prospect they would have to face if they had postponed their decision until the following year. After they passed their practical and theory courses, they remained in Cambridge and worked at the local airport cleaning and repairing damaged airplanes. Averil enjoyed the work, "found it really interesting" and thought it would be of "benefit" to her in later years. (C10984) She enjoyed the wartime occupations as well, including employment as a conductress on a double-decker bus in London for one week and as a tailor in a factory for four months.

3.3. Averil and Albert: Courtship and Married Life

Albert and Averil met in 1940 in the railway/bus station at Norwich. She was there to see her brother off, who was leaving with his fellow Royal Marines. Albert, who was about to board a bus with a fellow serviceman, was instantly attracted to her, approached her, and asked for her address. They met again four

days later when he returned to Norwich and dated for a year-and-a-half before he was sent to British North Africa for minesweeping duties. They corresponded during the four-and-a-half years they were apart and married on September 20th, 1944 after he had returned to England.

A few days after their marriage Albert was sent to Germany on a raid which extended into a three month mission. The couple was reunited briefly upon his return but he was soon called away again minesweeping, this time off Lowestoft and Yarmouth, both situated approximately twenty-five miles from Norwich. Albert managed to see his new wife again on an unapproved visit before the end of the war in 1945.

After the war, Albert spent six months clearing mines. He asked Averil what her feelings were with regard to moving to Newfoundland and she replied, prophetically: "Yes...I'll go anywhere suppose it's on a little, small island." (C10985) They were to wait another three months before enacting their decision, as Albert was placed on indefinite leave and ordered to stay in England until further notification. The couple moved into a house near Averil's home and Albert got a job working on a farm for three months. He was then summoned by the British Admiralty to Portsmouth and did not see his wife again until they made separate journeys to Newfoundland. Averil reached St. John's three weeks after Albert. Both had experienced eventful passages. During Albert's voyage he was asked to blow up icebergs which floated outside the "Narrows" at the entrance to St. John's Harbour. The ship on which Averil and other British war brides sailed made an unscheduled stop in Halifax due to coastal ice conditions.

In St. John's, Albert was offered a job as a lightkeeper on Puffin Island, near Greenspond, by a man who had worked with his grandfather in the fishery. Albert accepted the position despite its low salary and, after he received his back

pay for his military service, he and Averil travelled by train to Gambo and by boat a week later to Greenspond.

On June 28th, 1946, the couple moved to Puffin Island where Albert began his duties as assistant lightkeeper, earning fifty-four dollars per month. They lived on the island year round for thirteen-and-a-half years. After the fourth year, the principal keeper retired and Albert was promoted to his job. His monthly salary was increased to sixty-four dollars and the Wakeleys were provided with a new home to replace a stone house that they considered inadequate.

Averil and Albert led a full and busy life together on the island. Albert exchanged six hour watches with a second keeper who also lived on the island with his family. Their daily routine included operating the light and fog horn and "keeping things clean and keeping things under repairs." (C10908) Once a month they cut the lawn with a scythe and every July the entire station was painted. There was no radio communication at that time so they were responsible for sending monthly reports to the Coast Guard offices in St. John's.

During the summer, the Wakeleys combined business and pleasure with trips ashore, often weekly, to shop, pick up mail and visit friends. Winter trips were less frequent and were tied to the need to "stock the pantry up good." (C10990) A lack of electricity forced a reliance on nature, not refrigerators, to preserve domestic fare and the plentiful supplies of ducks, seals and turrs. As Albert describes:

> The weather would be cool enough then that you could kill it in December and it would stay till March month, before it'd get bad, before it'd thaw out. (C10989)

To supplement their food supply, Albert and Averil bought and raised fourteen sheep and, at one point, had twenty hens, a rooster, cats, dogs, and thirty-three rabbits kept as "entertainment for the children." (C10989) Albert also tended a summer garden which yielded abundant crops of cabbage, turnip and potato. He also did "a bit of fishing" as "the wages was low so everything was a help." (C10989) "To pass the time," Averil sheared, carded and spun sheep's wool and sent batches of it into St. John's for dyeing. Upon its return, she knit socks and sweaters and sold them as an extra source of income. She also knit blankets and hooked mats.[34] Evening chores were completed by the light of a kerosene lamp. Kerosene was also used to fuel the guiding beam atop the lighthouse. During Albert's tenure on Puffin Island, the Tilley light was introduced. Revolving continuously by means of compressed air, the light could be seen "somewhere around ten to fifteen miles away." (C10989)

In 1948, Bill, the couple's first child, was born in the hospital at Brookfield, a small town on the "mainland" of Newfoundland. Before the birth of their son, Averil had worked alongside her husband in jobs outside the house.

> I used to go birding, fishing, sealing--whatever Albert done, I done. And then of course, Bill came along and it kind of crowded a little bit. But in the meantime, the lady that was out on the island, she took Bill, so that I could still carry on. (C10985)

In the years that followed, four more children were born to the Wakeleys, Leonard, Pauline, and John who were delivered by a midwife in Greenspond, and Evelyn who was born in Brookfield.

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[34]For a description of Newfoundland textile crafts see Gerald L. Pocius, *Textile Traditions in Eastern Newfoundland* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1979).

The children added a new dimension to Averil's life.

> It was a lonely life, really, but then you had your own work and time used to pass by because I had the children during the day and that was enough in itself, with the house full. (C10980)

When the children reached school age, Averil taught them lessons at home for a "couple of hours a day." At the end of every week she forwarded their work to the Department of Education in St. John's where it was examined, corrected and returned. Two more children were born to the Wakeleys in the 1960s, Violet and Isabel. In their free time, the children "made their own fun." (C10989) The boys built their own boats and also learned to knit. In the summer months the children spent many hours picking berries.[35]

Despite their relative isolation from the residents of Greenspond, Albert and Averil played important roles in their lives. During sealing season, Albert would put a sign in the community post office indicating that he would blast the Puffin Island fog horn three times to let them know if seals were plentiful. He and Averil regularly made lunches and tea for the sealers, sliding it to them over the rocks. They also administered brandy to those who were weak. In return, they were given flippers for their help. Throughout the year, they provided shelter and food to weary mariners and gave many people tours of the lighthouse. It made the Wakeleys "feel good" to be of service, Averil's motto being "the more you give away...the more you have." (C10989)

Albert retired from his job at Puffin Island in 1959 and the family moved twelve kilometres to Templeman, on the northwestern shore of Bonavista Bay. Six months later, he accepted a lightkeeping job at Cabot Island, an even smaller

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[35]For discussion on work and play activities of island boys in the Bonavista Bay area see John Feltham, 95-106.

island, five miles off the coast. The nature and duties of lightkeeping had changed in the decade since Albert's first posting at Puffin Island. The occupation was to evolve even further in the course of the next twenty-three years on Cabot Island.

By 1972, automation had replaced much of the manual labour associated with the job. Diesel generators afforded the luxury of electrical lights and refrigerators.

> We had it good then, compared to what I had in 1946...with nothing only the kerosene oil lamps and [an] old pair of crank motors. (C10989)

There were still everyday chores to do that no degree of modernisation altered. The brass work in the tower and on the machinery in the horn house were cleaned and polished once a week. Saturdays were reserved for what Albert likened to

> ...a woman's work in the house...we had to clean up the floors and polish the floors and then we had to...clean up our dishes up in the cupboard every week...we had to make up our own bread and bake it. (C10989)

Family life, however, changed with the new rules that separated Albert and Averil and their family for extended periods of time. Wives and families were no longer encouraged to live on some work sites on a year-round basis. Instead Averil and the Wakeley children remained in Templeman and visited Albert on Cabot Island every summer. The Wakeley children had the companionship of nine others their ages, children of the assistant lightkeeper and his wife. In Averil's view

> ...the children really enjoyed themselves and they said now that they would *love* to go back there and relive it all over again. (C10989)

Significant advances in the area of communications also meant lightkeepers were no longer required to stay at their stations during the winter months. Consequently, Albert was able to spend from mid-January until late April in Templeman with his family. During the rest of the year he worked one month shifts. Helicopters were used to transport the lighthousekeepers to and from the island instead of boats.

From 1964 until 1982, Averil held executive positions with the United Church Women's Association, the local hospital auxiliary and the community of Templeman, and was employed as a postmistress at Templeman. Both she and Albert retired from their jobs in 1982. The couple remained in Templeman until the following year when they moved to a trailer-home in Marystown on the Burin Peninsula in order to live closer to four of their children and their families. In 1985, they moved back to Bonavista Bay into a new bungalow in Centreville where they still reside.

The preceding theoretical perspectives and chronological ordering of the life histories of Averil and Albert Wakeley contribute to an understanding of the couples' autobiographical narratives presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

The Narratives of Albert and Averil Wakeley

During the course of my interviews with Averil and Albert Wakeley and through repeated listenings to the tape recorded interviews, it became apparent that many of the couple's life history narratives were linked thematically. To facilitate analysis of the narratives, I devised a typological scheme using "etic" categories. This procedure entailed locating narratives with similar themes, extracting them from the contextual framework of their respective interviews and arranging them into classificatory groups. While from an orthodox structural position, "naming" clusters of narratives may appear to divest individual narratives of their component relationships, such an approach has contributed towards understanding the ideational and attitudinal coherence of my informants' worldview.[36] It may be said, therefore, that although such a classification uses "etic" headings, it is based on "emic" ideas which, as will be shown, evidence structural relationships. Thus, in this chapter, I will present a typology, comprised of general thematic headings and their attendant narratives in chronological sequence. The typology is divided into the following nine categories: Heroic Acts, Significant Achievements, Initial Experiences, Dangerous

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[36]Lawrence W. Levine defines this coherence as "folk thought" in his examination of Afro-American worldview: *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom*, (New York: Oxford UP, 1977) ix.

Incidents, Social Confrontation, Remarkable Incidents Concerning Work, Remarkable Incidents in Family History, Pranks, and Humorous Incidents. The intention in this chapter is to present the full body of narratives rather than interpret them.

The narratives are by no means categorically exclusive; a close reading of the stories will reveal a great deal of thematic overlapping. Conceivably, I could have chosen other categories to aid in the interpretation of this collection of narratives. For instance, Albert's multi-episodic story about his experiences overseas during World War II befits a distinct category. Similarly, the couple's cluster of narratives concerning their life at Puffin Island or the theme of Albert's personal progression in work experience could engender separate sections. These themes merit further consideration.

Many of the stories also fit into categories proposed by scholars who have analysed the personal experience narrative in different areas of folklore study. Their categories are presented at the end of the chapter in a section titled "Additional Narrative Categories" and will be also be considered in my analysis of the Wakeleys' life history narratives in the next chapter.

4.1. Heroic Acts

A heroic act is one in which an individual puts the safety of others before his own in a dangerous situation and performs with fearless courage. The heroic deed demands the following from the individual: resolve, clear-headedness, and the strength to withstand adversity and suffering. Six narratives of the Wakeleys focus on a heroic act as a main theme. In all the stories, the heroic act is the rescue of a human life or lives and Albert Wakeley and two of his children, Bill and Leonard are the heroes.

The first two narratives are considered together as they contain the same essential plot. In each story, narrated by Averil, Albert rescues a Wakeley child who is involved in a life-threatening accident. In the first narrative, of which there are two versions, Leonard Wakeley falls overboard and almost drowns:

Narrative 1.1

Version 1 (Averil)

AAW: And another time, uh, that, that was when I was pregnant with John, we went out to the island, I stayed in Greenspond then, but we went out to the island, Cabot Island for Christmas-- AWW: Puffin Island. AAW: Uh, Puffin Island, rather. And, um, it was a, a dory, it was a dory and, uh, my sister-in-law had a, a case, it was one of them tin cases and Leonard *would* sit up on this tin case and we kept saying to him, "*Sit* down, *sit* down." No way, he was *stubborn*. So, it was Albert's brother that came in to Greenspond to pick us up and when we got to, uh, Puffin Island there was an undertow and just as we came in the cove to land, the undertow came in and popped up the stern of the dory. Of course, when it done that Leonard went overboard (PLF: Hmm.) and before I had a chance to say, "Oh my, Len overboard," Albert ran onto like a point and dived off and they just got him before he went, like there was, um, a shelf with the rocks under the water, before he tipped over and into the shelf. And Albert brought him up to the, uh, landwash and, uh, had to pump him and by and by Leonard opened his eyes, he said, "I'm okay, Daddy. You can *stop*." (PLF: laughs softly) And he had his rubber boots on and a big parka and everything. (PLF: Hmm.) He was just about *gone*, yeah. (C10984)

In another interview, Averil repeated the story, altering its tone from the lightheartedness of the first version to one that reflects the sobering admission that she was deeply frightened by her son's close brush with death.

Version 2 (Averil)

AAW: And another time we went out to, uh, the island for Christmas. I was seven months pregnant with John then, you see we wanted to spend Christmas out on the island with the men and, um, when we landed in the cove, well we had to wait a little while because there was a nice undertow and it was a, a flat-bottomed boat and, um, Len would always sit on *top* of the case, he wouldn't get down, he had to be up to see everything what had to be seen. He was sitting up on the suitcase and it happened to be one of those old-fashioned tin ones and, uh, when we come into the beach to land, the undertow took the

bottom of the boat and up, um-- AWW: Tossed him right out. AAW: Leonard tossed out. AAW: And before I could say, "Len overboard," Albert had ran out onto the point and dived off and grabbed Leonard but he'd gone into the deep water, so Albert got him and brought him ashore and, uh, of course he was filled up with a bit of water. He had his rubber boots on and parka on, just enough to weigh him down (PLF: Hmm.) and, uh, Albert then give him a bit of artificial respiration and by and by he looked up and said, "I'm *okay*, Daddy. I'm okay." I'll tell you that was a *fright* I got there that time. (C10989)

In the second narrative, which Averil told on three occasions, Bill Wakeley falls over a cliff and remains suspended upside down from a rock until Albert and Leonard save him:

Narrative 1.2

Version 1 (Averil)

AAW: ...one of our boys fell over a fifty foot *cliff* and his knee got caught in a crevice of a rock. He was head *down* and, uh, Albert then had to kind of edge his way over the *cliff* and his brother had to hold him by his feet and get his thumb out, and he has that mark *today*, so. (C10980)

Version 2 (Averil)

AAW: Our oldest son did fall over a *cliff* one time, a fifty foot drop and as it happened his knee got caught in the *crevice* of a rock. His head was hanging *down*, his feet up, and Albert had to lay on his tummy and his brother had to hold his *feet*, uh, for Albert then. But he's still got them marks today. (C10984)

Version 3 (Averil)

AAW: And, uh, one time that, uh, they were chasing butterflies and, uh, there was three of them. Bill and Len and Norman, that's their cousin, and, um, playing around and by and by someone said, "Bill is overboard," and we ran out to see what happened and here he was hanging with his head downwards right towards the ocean, forty foot drop. So the only way to get him *up* then was for Albert to lay on his tummy and, uh, his brother then turn him around and, uh, held him by the legs and the tail of his coat and we looked, he had his *knee*, that was the only thing that was holding him up because his knee got caught in the crevice of a rock. (PLF: Ooh. Huh.) He's got that in his leg now, scars. So they pulled him out and, um, after Bill got to safety his brother, Albert's brother, got really mad and took off his rubber boot,

(AWW laughs) threw it, but the [unclear word] never struck him, but, um, that's just *one* of the incidents-- (C10989)

The third narrative was also related to me by Averil, on two separate occasions. In this story, Bill and Leonard save their young cousin's life when she accidentally slips into the water off Puffin Island:

Narrative 1.3

Version 1 (Averil)

AAW: ...another incident though was when our oldest, uh, boy, Bill, he saved his, uh, cousin's life there. She went down to the landwash and fell overboard, and Bill had to go hand-in-h--, hand-over-hand on the tow rope of the moored boat and he took Shirley by the hair of the head until Leonard got there, our other son, and between both of them they got her ashore. (10984)

Version 2 (Averil)

AAW: ...another incident was that, uh, their cousin, a girl, was down by the landwash another time and she slipped overboard and there was a boat tied in the, the cove like, motor boat, the men used to use and, uh, Bill ran out and he went hand over hand along the life line of the boat, and he held on to Shirley by the hand until Leonard went over hand in hand and took the other hand and kept her afloat until the men got out and saved the little girl's life. I think Shirley was around about, uh, oh, six, seven years old then, yeah. (PLF: Was she a local girl, Shirley?) Uh, well she belonged to Dover at that time, not far from here (PLF: Hmm.) and, uh, she's always *talking* about that, how her cousins saved her life that time because the men weren't around, they were busy in the horn house at the time until they heard her cries for help and, uh, Len and Bill held on to her until the men got down and brought her safely to shore. We've had some narrow, narrowing experiences there. (C10989)

Albert is the hero in the following three narratives, each of which involves rescuing a local boy or boys from potentially fatal circumstances. He is the principal teller of the stories.

In the first narrative, Albert helps to save two adolescent youths adrift at sea by combining knowledge of the environment with a spontaneous ingenuity.

Narrative 1.4 (Albert (Principal Narrator), Averil)

AAW: Uh, well there was two men went, uh, two young boys, shouldn't say men, teenagers, I suppose, and, um, they were on the missing list. And there was ice around at the time. That was the last of April, wasn't it? AWW: Umm. AAW: And, uh, these two boys, uh, were adrift and, um, now the *man* that brought us down in his boat, was one of his sons. And Albert said, "Well, I'm not going to leave the island until we find them, suppose they never gets down to the mainland. AWW: [unclear word] AAW: So he went up into the light tower then, took the binoculars and spied. And he saw them, oh my, how far was that? AWW: Uh, about six miles-- AAW: Yeah. AWW: From the mainland drifting out to sea. And instead of coming towards the *water*, you know what I mean now, that everything was, uh, we'd say, *covered* with the ice outside but inside to the westward, we would call it, was all water. Well instead of coming in *towards* the water well, you know, their boat was going to get them, but they couldn't *see* it on the inside and they still walking the, in the opposite direction. They were going over towards St. Brendan's, over across there, they were, that's where they were going. So anyhow, I jumped aboard the boat with him, could, I could see them, I knew *exactly* where they were to because I know me bearing. But the man in the boat he couldn't *see* them but I knew exactly the bearing. So I jumped in the boat with him, went on. I jumped out on the ice and I went towards them. And I keep going on and *shouting* to them. Now but they *still* keep going on because they never heard me. Keep going on away from me so I got up on this big high pinnacle and took my coat and put it on the stick, on the gaff I had in my hand and started to wave it. They looked around and they saw, saw me so they [unclear word] and come towards me. And I said, "Now you're coming in the right direction, boy, come on. (laughs) You're sailing off the boat right here by the inch. Here we'll take you." So that's the *last* thing I done on the Puffin Island when I left. (C10981)

In the following narrative, Albert, enroute from Greenspond to Puffin Island, helps to save the life of a boy who fell over a wharf. In an agonising assessment of the situation, he debates the option of remaining in the boat or jumping into the water to disentangle the boy.

Narrative 1.5 (Albert (Principal Narrator), Averil)

AAW: And he saved two children's lives, too, while you were up there. Two children. (PLF: Um hmm?) One fell off the, the wharf, government wharf. AWW: On his bike. AAW: He went right over on his bike and we were just coming from Pond Head, they calls it, we

went through like a tickle-- AWW: Going out to the lighthouse I was. AAW: And he sung out to Albert before he went overboard. AWW: This was a little boy just went off the wharf on his bike. I said, "Whereabouts did he go, boy?" Just, uh, like I say, the only outboard motor was there was mine. And I was coming out and he was telling me the story of the little boy who went over the wharf on his bike. I said, "Whereabouts, boy?" "Right down there," he said. This man was running the, fellow at the plant, fish plant there then. "Right over there, boy." And I could see the bubbles coming up so I just cut off my motor and took my paddles and just stayed there at the scene. And the only thing I was worrying about, I was afraid the poor little boy was tangled up in the bike, down there, tangled up and couldn't get clear and I was all in, uh, you know, agony, wondering if I should jump off and go down, you know, that way and, and grab him. So [unclear word] I seen the bubbles by and by, I see them coming. And I don't think he would have lasted that long because I think he must have been up top so when he come up I grabbed him and pulled him in and the poor little boy couldn't stand up. I pushed up into, in the small wharf out there and this man come and took him and got him up and started to work on him, give him the artificial respiration, the way we used to do it then, you know, it's different from what we do it now. (PLF: Um hmm.) Well I got it with him and, you know, we brought him around and this, his *father* was a businessman, Roland Carter his name was. And this boy now is, up, oh, he's, uh, getting up in years now. And he always said to me, "Boy, I've got to thank *you* for saving *my* life." (PLF: Hmm.) Yeah. (C10981)

The story of the boy on the bicycle was followed during the interview by another rescue narrative involving a second youth in danger of drowning. As in the other incident, Albert is not the first person on the scene. However, in this case, he tears off his sea boots with no hesitation nor internal debate about the proper course of action.

Narrative 1.6 (Albert (Principal Narrator), Averil)

AAW: And another time he was walking down-- AWW: And another time I jumped, I was walking down to the harbour, what we call Greenspond Harbour, walking down and some woman, some woman was coming up and saying, I think it was a Bragg, saying her little boy just after falling overboard. So I just, I used to use sea boots all the time, you know, when you're going on the lighthouse. Well you don't know what, you can't [unclear word] jump out, we say, with, just with, with shoes on because you will get your feet wet. Well, in summer you

> don't worry about getting your feet wet. So I had my sea boots on and I just hauled them off because I was with [unclear word] on the road and took off, jumped off and, and got the little boy. So then like I said, well I mean, I would have done that if I *wasn't* a lightkeeper, while I was around. (laughs) AAW: Hmm. (C10981)

4.2. Significant Achievements

A significant achievement as I define it in this study, is a vehicle for the elevation of an individual's status through work and within formal groups. These groups, as Edward H. Spicer suggests, are structured social organisations of individuals who:

> ...act together for certain purposes and who abide by certain codes of behavior, however unconscious of these codes they may be. [These codes] consist of rights and duties which the group expects its members to abide by [and are] the basis of co-operation.[37]

Five narratives of the Wakeleys feature a significant achievement as a primary theme. In the first story (Narrative 2.1), the formal group is comprised of community fishermen, who rely on co-operation for their survival and livelihood. In Narratives 2.2 and 2.3, military duties exact their own code of behaviour. The last two narratives deal with lightkeeping. Narrative 2.4 involves competition among a group of potential lightkeepers vying for the same job. In the last narrative, a member of the formal group is called upon for help even after his official retirement. All narratives concern Albert Wakeley and are told principally by him.

The first narrative in this category, in which Albert steers a fishing schooner at twelve years of age, stemmed from a brief discussion about the fishery in Safe

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[37]Edward H. Spicer, "Conceptual Tools for Solving Human Problems," *Human Problems in Technological Change: A Casebook*, 1952, ed. Edward H. Spicer (New York: Wiley, 1967) 288-89.

Harbour. Albert's sense of achievement at the helm of the schooner is twofold: not only did he perform capably and win the respect of older sailors who invoked his father's reputation, he also lived up to his father's good name.

Narrative 2.1 (Albert)

PLF: And were you, did you ever go on any of the schooners?
AWW: Uh, I went on a schooner to, uh, when I was about, uh, twelve year old. I went to St. John's on my father's place, uh, when I was, uh, around twelve, I would say. And I know when we got out of the harbour the skipper said, uh, he said, "Now Albert," he said that, uh, "this is where your father take the wheel, take charge here." And he said, "You've got to s--, do the same thing." So I *did* the same thing. So I took the wheel and steered across, almost across to, to Bonavist Cape. At twelve year old. (C10983)

Another significant achievement for Albert was his initial duty as a gunner. Acting as a volunteer, newly recruited and inexperienced, Albert reacted courageously when his ship was torpedoed.

Narrative 2.2 (Albert)

AWW: And, uh, when we got hit, when we got hit with a torpedo she didn't take us right, you know, for to, that way, we say, for it to, uh, so we sink, you know, she didn't put a direct hit, more or less. It just took across the stern and just took a piece off the stern but she made her leak. So they come down and then they as--, they asked for, uh, volunteers for gunners to go up and give hand the guns because the other fellows run a risk because, I mean, the Germans were, was after us. So I volunteered then to go up and, and relieve the gunners, one of the gunners. So I went up and took his place. And I didn't know anything about, I knowed how to shoot the gun alright, but, uh, you know what I mean, the, I felt pretty scared but I had to do it. I mean to say for your own sake, more or less. (C10983)

Yet another significant achievement of Albert's was his acceptance into gunnery training at a military school in Portsmouth, England during the war. As Albert explains, this was not accomplished in the routine manner.

Narrative 2.3 (Albert)

And, uh, we were in Ipswich, uh, I done training, I was five, five weeks in Ipswich doing our training and then when we got our training done they wanted to know what jobs we want, what kind of *boats* we

wanted to go on and well, I said, "I think I'll take the *small* boats." Well the small boats were *minesweepers* and our jobs was sweeping the, the mines, blowing up the mines. And, uh, we used to go into, into the convoy. Sometimes we have seventy, eighty, I don't think we had over a hundred ships in the convoy. Then we used to go ahead and blow up the mine fields for the other boats to get through. And, uh, they asked us then, asked me what kind of job would I like to take on the boat. So I said, uh, "I think I'll take gunner," on the boat I was on, "I think I'll take a gunner, gunner's job," because I had an idea, we say, how to operate, we say, like a, a shotgun and shoot birds, that kind of a way, so I enjoyed that although it was in wartime. And, uh, if I take gunner I would get more *pay* because I would be complete responsibility me, on me because I have the whole ship's company, more or less, I'd be, they'd be depending on me for my life. So this is why they used to give me more pay so I said, "Yes, I take *gunner*." So he said, "Well, if you takes *gunner* you would have to go to school." Well I had no education then when I lived the young days, we say, in Newfoundland, I, I had no education. And, uh, I told the captain. I said, "Now, I haven't got no education." "Oh," he said, uh, "I'll look into that." So I was going to, I was going to the gunnery school in Portsmouth, Whale Islands, Portsmouth, and, uh, he said, "I'll *write* that letter, now," he said, "and you give it to your, the man is going to look after you when they give you your training." So I begin to worry about it and I said, "Okay, sir, I'll do that. Thank you, man," and then we went to Portsmouth. And when we went into the school in Portsmouth, Whale Islands, there was a lot of English fellow there, well-educated, there was a hundred of us altogether. They were well-educated, I weren't, I had no education. And they come around with papers, went around the school with papers, and when he come around with the paper I handed him the letter from the captain on the boat. He took it and read it so, he didn't give me, he didn't give me a paper. I just got a, a recommendation, I was operating the guns, *acting* before on the boat and now I had to go and take the final tests on guns, depth charges, shells that I forward in the guns. So anyhow, I took my training, I was there for, uh, three months. (C10985)

In later years, Albert faced a similar situation and succeeded once again in procuring employment on the strength of work experience and not academic background. In the lengthy narrative that follows, he describes how he was offered a job as an assistant lightkeeper at Cabot Island, chosen over applicants who had the required level of formal education.

Narrative 2.4 (Albert)

AWW: But this man I got now, this man I got now, he was on Cabot Island before me out here and, uh, Department, now they had another principal lightkeeper there and he didn't like him, that kind of a way, he didn't like him, couldn't get along together. But I think it was the other principal's *fault*, the principal's *fault* and, uh, they used to always have trouble with the fog alarm, *always* had trouble. This was the old type fog alarm. And, uh, he was there nine years, he was the principal nine years and, uh, he used to blame it on the assistant, the man, I mean now, he was the man on assistant. And, uh, anyhow, he got rid of him. So Department, Department, he got a message back, "Disconterminate your assistant. In the near future we'll have assistant with experience." They meant this fellow didn't have no experience. And this is what Department told him to do, disconterminate his assistant in the near future. So they, I was there operating the sawmill because I had a breakage from Puffin Island for a few minutes, few, few, uh, months and I went operating the sawmill there, and, uh, I never had no intention to going out on the Cabot Island so they asked me would I go out and put the fog alarm *right* because she was, the mechanics had her, the mechanics couldn't get [unclear word] theirselves on her. So they give her to me. I had all this experience, fourteen years experience on those 'F' Diaphones. They asked me to go out there and, and, uh, fix it up. So they, they asked me would I take over principal's assistant, I mean, principal's assistant on shifts, a month on, a month off. But I was, you know, up there right on through all the winter long, you know, it was, it was, it was boring, more or less, all winter long, hardship and children and all this kind of--. So I said, "Yes, I would." So, more or less, we'd say, they really want me to do it. I never got it. I did go and get interviewed. There was *nineteen* working for this, month on and a month off, like we got now. That's my first experience, month on and a month off. So there was *nineteen* going to be interviewed up here in Valleyfield. So they wanted men with grade elevens, that's what they wanted, men with grade *elevens* and I didn't even go to school, I never went to school. And, uh, I went up and went in and I *knowing* them so well in the Department, knowing them so well, I knows what they did. When I went through the door I had one of those raglans on and one of the engineers where they're interviewing, he come out and "Boy," he said, "I'm some *glad*, old man, to see you. I'm glad you come back with us again Albert." "I'm not saying," I said, "I'm the man for, for the job, I'm only just come up to get interviewed." So, uh, he just helped my coat off, took it, put it on a hanger [unclear word]. And he said, looked up and he said to me, said, "Now, what can I tell *you*," he said, "about the fog alarm on Cabot Island?" Said, "Now look," said, "Mr. Bowring," I says, "a big bookful *I* don't know. Some queer things can

happen to those fog alarms." But, he said, "You never been puzzled on them, you never been out on them yet?" I said, "No." He said, "Would you go out?" he said. I said, "Yes, I'll go there." So I said, uh, "I can't see how you can *tell* me that I'm going to get the job," I said, "you got eighteen more people to interview." Anyway, he interviewed the rest of the fellows and I had a big boat here then, I used to go down the fishing ground. And when I come in you come down with a message saying, saying, uh, "Mr. Wakeley, you are the successful candidate for the Cabot Island." So I went out in-- AAW: Was the sixth of December. AWW: Sixth of December. AAW: [unclear word] AWW: Sixth of December, wasn't it, sixth, was it fifth or the sixth? Six of December. PLF: What year was that? AAW: 1960. AWW: 1960. *(C10981)*

Another significant achievement for Albert occurred shortly after his retirement when he was asked by the Coast Guard to fix the radio beacon at Cabot Island.

Narrative 2.5 (Albert)

AWW: ...only yesterday morning they phoned me from, where would they phone me from, uh, Radio Division, in here or in St. John's? AAW: No, it was in St. John's. AWW: They phoned me from St. John's yesterday morning, said, "The radio is, uh, the radio beacon is not heard on the Cabot Island, old man." Said, uh, "You're the principal keeper?" And I said, "Yes, sure, I'm retired, I'm gone now," I said, "just about a month." "My," he said, "I'm sorry about that," he said, "but you're still listed here." He said, "We don't knows all our fellows except what they told me to get in touch with *you*." I said, "That's someone making a mistake." But I said, "I'm , I'm just satisfied to help you," I said, "boy," I said, "just change the code to a 'A'." Had to tell him, "Change the code to 'A', punch it till the 'A' comes up," I said, "she'll be alright again." "Thank you, sir," he said, "you phoned the [unclear word] day." (laughs) You know, and that's it, that's how it is, see, this, what I'm saying about it but, uh, he wasn't supposed to call *me*, they, they had a fellow from Forteau, (PLF: Um hmm?) they had a fellow from Forteau, Labrador, acting principal, acting in my class but he, he wasn't listed in there. See, my name was still listed but my name should have been *off*. (PLF: Hmm.) So I said, "I'm off duty now," joking with him, you know. He said, "The Department said that, uh, you wouldn't mind, you know...." (C10982)

4.3. Initial Experiences

The main theme in three of the Wakeleys' stories were first-time experiences. The first two narratives concern Albert starting new jobs. An experience of Averil's in a new cultural environment is recounted in the third story.

In the following narrative, Albert describes how, after working at a lumbercamp for a few years falling trees, he started a new job as a saw filer. Again, Albert draws upon comparisons between his father's abilities and his own desire to perform the task well.

Narrative 3.1 (Albert)

AWW: And when I did that then, after I was there for, I must've been there a couple years, and I still remember about it, you know, [unclear word] the lumber camps and, uh, they asked my boss if [unclear word] a very good hand for sharpening saws, the [unclear word]. "Do you think you'd be able to take it?" he said, "Your *father* was a good hand." I said, "I'll have a go at it." So I was sharpening saw almost two year, I believe I was, sharpening saw [unclear word]. And then I was getting fifty-three dollars a month for doing that, fifty-three dollars. (C10983)

Albert began his career as a lightkeeper under similar circumstances. He details below how he was offered a job at Puffin Island upon his arrival at St. John's after the war. This time, it was his grandfather's reputation as a good and dependable worker that not only opened the door to a new job, but also set a high standard of expectation.

Narrative 3.2 (Albert)

AWW: But, uh, before I went back we were, went to the Naval, a place called the Naval Dockyards. That's where we got paid off, that's where we got our payment, that the oldest for being in the, in the Navy, all our back time. Well some people was looking forward to it pretty bad. And, anyhow, as I, when I was getting paid off, when they shouted out my name, that there was a man there knew, knew my grandfather and he said, "Wakeley?" And I said, "Yes, sir." He said, uh, "You just stay ov--, you just sit down over there for a minute, I'd

like to *speak* to *you*." And, uh, after he had all the boys paid off, sailors paid off, well he said, "Do you know Isaac Wakeley?" I said, "Yes, that was my grandfather." He said, "I sailed with him to the fishery." And he said, "If you're so good a *man*," he said, "as your grandfather, *dependable* as your grandfather was," he said, "we've got a *job* for you." And I said, "Very good." So he said, "I got a job for you, there's not a big lot of pay into it because there's no pay," he said, uh, "no wages going now." I said, "What is the pay?" He said, "[unclear word]," he said, uh, "fifty-four eighty-nine is the pay." He said, uh, "That's on a lighthouse, Puffin Island." I said, "I'll take it on the light, I'll take it because I haven't got nothing in sight now, I'll *take* it." So I went to Puffin Island. (C10985)

As a newcomer to Newfoundland after World War II, Averil Wakeley had to contend with the challenges of an unfamiliar environment. With the help of Albert, she relates below the story of her first attempt at preparing an indigenous Newfoundland meal.

Narrative 3.3 (Averil (Principal Narrator), Albert)

AAW: We was in St. John's about, uh, three weeks I think and I couldn't eat the food. I couldn't eat the food at *all*. (PLF: Why not?) And, uh, uh, Albert said to me one time, that was when the sealers was in, I'm going on the South Side now," he said, "to get a bit of the seals." And I said, "Go on, then." But he said, "You put the pot on now," he said, "and cook the vegetables and put in a bit of salt meat." Told me what to do, which I'd never seen salt meat before. I said, "Okay." And I thought I was doing *great*, my first meal cooking for Albert and, (PLF laughs) (laughs) uh, came home and he cooked, uh, liver, I believe it was then, we had seal liver and he fried it up and it looked tasty. So I took up the vegetables, put on the plates. By and by Albert said, "*Oh* my, this is some salty." "Well," I said, "I only done what you told me to do, put a piece of salt meat in and put the vegetables in." He says, "Yes, but how much salt meat did you put in?" "Well," I said, "*a piece*." Albert said, uh, "Let's see it." And I took it up on the platter. I had five pounds of salt meat put in. (PLF laughs) (AWW laughs) (laughs) So you can imagine how salty *that* was. AWW: What'd I say, I was going to see you back on the next boat, Mother? AAW: Yes, Albert says, uh, "Boy, if you don't block 'em up," he, "if you don't--" AWW: "If things don't get no better than *that* you'll go back on the next *boat*." (laughs) (AAW laughs) (C10984)

4.4. Dangerous Incidents

The narratives in this category describe dangerous incidents in which the Wakeleys were involved. Although some stories in other categories also describe dangerous incidents, these narratives differ as they are told without noting the speaker's heroic behaviour. The first two stories describe incidents which occurred during World War II and the final two narratives recount occurrences at Puffin Island.

The following two narratives, told by Albert, describe dangerous incidents which occurred during the Second World War. In the first story, Albert and a group of fellow sailors hide from an enemy airplane.

Narrative 4.1 (Albert)

AWW: And when we got to Liverpool, we took the *bus* there, all sailors got on the bus, all Newfoundlanders and we was going to a place called the 'Ganges,' that was in, near Ipswich in England. And we was going there for to do our training and on our *way* in this bus the *German* come over, German plane come over. Of course, he, they, got to *know* that this bus was travelling to the Ganges with *sailors* aboard, troops they call it, troops aboard. Of course, if they could got this bus it would've been a wonderful thing (PLF: Hmm.) so what they did in, with the bus was put her in through a, pushed her into this big tunnel, there was a big tunnel there, and that's where they pushed the bus to, in through there. And, of course, the Germans, the plane couldn't, couldn't see any sign of any lights or anything so we stayed there because there's a big raid on then. Of course they come over and they, they bomb all around and, of course, they was trying to get, trying to get the bus but they couldn't see any sign of the bus, see any lights or anything so they was just taking *chances*, dropping their bombs down now and the bus would be somewhere on the, on the, on the, on the street coming that way but we were in the tunnel. They had us there waiting for the raid to get over before we, uh, carry on. So anyhow, when the raid was over we, they took us out of the tunnel and we travelled on to Ipswich. (C10985)

Averil and Albert confront unidentified soldiers in the second narrative.[38] Mistaking them for Germans who had strayed onto English soil, the couple assert control of the situation.

Narrative 4.2 (Albert)

AWW: So anyhow, uh, the next morning I got up and, and, uh, she went to the station, the war was still on, and, uh, we were going to the station, the railway station to pick up the train to go to my boat. And on my way down, down to the station was, wasn't [unclear word] light, daylight, she was walking down with me, and there was two, as I thought were Germans in the bush. And they jumped out of the bush, now when they jumped into the bush I couldn't identify them that quick, I thought it was Germans. I had a revolver on my side, I had a rifle, bayonet, fixed. So I thought sure they Germans so I shot them on guard. And, of course, she checked their identification, I put the, the gun to them and she checked their i--, and they were on, they call it, fanouevers-- AAW: Manouevers. AWW: Manouevers. And they had a str--, strained ankle, so they were just crawling along and I saw them crawling along, I thought sure they were Germans so I wanted to know, we say, what they were doing and make sure they was our own. So I took them then and I escorted them to the station and they were going on the train, same train that I were going on. So they used to saying on their way along, "Boy," he said, "You give me some fright. I thought you were going to stick that bayonet in me." (laughs) So anyhow, it was our own soldiers, British soldiers. (C10085)

Averil and Albert displayed the same fortitude and clear-thinking years later on Puffin Island during a dangerous incident that resulted from the couple's attempt to shelter their boat in a storm. The following narrative was told to me on four occasions, three times by Averil and once by Albert. Averil's versions precede Albert's account in the presentation below.

Narrative 4.3

Version 1 (Averil)

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[38]This is an inset narrative extracted from Narrative 5.7. Although the Wakeleys are not in actual danger, they *believe* they are at the beginning of the story. For that reason, I have included the narrative in the Dangerous Incidents category.

AAW: And we've had some quite--, experiences because now, uh, one time, (asks AWW) we didn't have no children then, did we? Sunday night, well the keeper went ashore and, um, he didn't say he wasn't coming *back*. So the wind changed northern and we had the boat out. So Albert said, "C'mon, light the *lantern* and we'll go down now and haul in the boat." Uh, we went down the, the landwash and just as he got aboard the boat the lop, the swell of the water broke the tow rope and, of course, kinda took him off balance and threw Albert out on the water. Now here *I* was on the island by *myself* with just the lamp. Now *he* was alright because he just come out of the navy and could swim pretty good but he was worrying about me being on the island by myself. So, however, he kicked off his rubbers and oil coat, he said, "Now," shouting out, "go over to the point!" And there was a gulch there and from *that day* to *this* I'll never know how I jumped that gulch with the lamp in my hand. And he came in, in this little swimming pond, we call it, and there was a scratch down on his chest and he had a lot of water taken in at that time. So he went up and took a drop of methylated spirits and threw up [unclear word]. But the next morning we went down and the lightkeeper come on. I had a big stick (AWW laughs) hiding here in my pocket (laughs) in case, because he was a man, you know, would get a little bit huffy. (PLF laughs) (AWW laughs) And then he said, "What happened to the *boat*?" And the boat was all smashed up. (PLF: But nothing, uh, he didn't, did he get upset or--) Uh, no, no. He didn't no, no. Only just asked what was wrong with the boat and what happened. Well he said, "I didn't come off," he said, "I figured I'd let you go in next week and go to church." AWW: He was principal too. AAW: He was the principal. (PLF: Hmm.) AWW: He lost his job, you know. I took his job. That's four years over there I was with him, assistant. So I took his job and, you know, not for that, but-- (PLF: This was at Cabot or Puffin?) AWW: No, Puffin Island. AAW: Puffin Island. (C10981)

Version 2 (Averil)

AAW: I can remember one time, we didn't have any children then, and the principal went ashore, uh, to go to church service, it was on a Sunday, but he didn't let us *know* that he wouldn't be coming back that night so that somebody else could stand in for him. And the wind chopped up to the north and we had our boat out in the cove. So we lit the lantern and, uh, went down to haul *up* the boat and Albert jumped aboard, I had hold of the lantern. When he jumped aboard, the tow rope burst and swung Albert *out*. When, when he swung out it, also the wave came in and tipped the boat *over* and Albert just fell into the *water*. Now he could have swam ashore to Greenspond but, uh, he was thinking about me on the island by myself. So now *I ran*, there was another kind of inlet like, and I ran to this inlet and there was a gulch

there and from that day to this I never know how I jumped across that gulch. But I did with the lantern and then Albert swam in. But, uh, of course, his chest was all kind of scraped up and he had a nice bit of water taken in. That was one good storm, too. So anyway, the wind subsided then in the morning and the principal came off and he said, uh, "What happened to the boat?" And, in the meantime, I had a stick behind me because he was a man with a temper and I didn't know what he *would* do. I had this stick behind (laughs) just in case. (C10984)

Version 3 (Averil)

AAW: That was, uh, when we was on Puffin Island. (PLF: Um hmm.) And, um, well the lightkeeper he went *ashore*, he went ashore to, um, go to church but he never came back, he stayed overnight, and then the wind chopped? And we had to go down and haul in the boat and when Albert did, the tow line broke and at the same time the undertow came in (PLF: Um hmm.) and threw him out. Now *he* was alright because he could *swim* but he was thinking about me on the *island* (PLF: Um hmm.) by *myself*. And I had a lantern in my hand and, um, he said, "I'm alright, I'm alright." But there was a *gulch* and I don't know how I jumped across *that* and I *still* don't know. But I managed to jump across the gulch and get the lantern for to guide Albert in but he took in a nice bit of water too because the water was a bit rough and he had his chest all scraped up here. He took some, uh, methylated spirits then and made himself vomit? Of course, that brought most of the water. (PLF: Um hmm.) But, uh, I can, you know, visualise what that woman went through because going through my mind I was saying, "Oh *my*, will he make it to shore?"[39] (PLF: And were you watching him the whole time?) AAW: And I was watching him, yeah. (PLF: Um hmm.) And when he got in, when he got in and he was thinking, "Well, uh, my, she's on the rock by *herself*." You know. (PLF: Um hmm.) It was an awful *experience*. So I can understand how *that* woman felt. I mean, *everybody* can, you know. But me, I think I find it *more* how she felt because I was in a situation *myself*, not so *bad* as her but still now just a *touch* of it. (PLF: Um hmm.) Yeah. And you're, you know, you're away from the mainland and when you don't know how to *operate* anything, this is why Albert used to, uh, show me things because I mean you, you never know, it's from one day to another, (PLF: Mmm.) what's going to happen. (C10986)

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[39]The woman Averil refers to is a lightkeeper's wife from the English Harbour area in southern Newfoundland. Prior to narrating this story, Averil read me an excerpt from a booklet describing the woman's experiences during a severe storm which claimed the life of her husband.

Version 4 (Albert)

AAW: And, uh, the *boat*, did you tell them about the boat? AWW: I believe I did. Did I tell you about the time when, uh, when I upset the *boat*? The sea took the boat, turned her *over*? I believe I was telling you about that? (PLF: Um.) I believe I was telling you about that. AAW: Yeah, that was, uh, late in October month. AWW: Yeah, that was, yeah, that was in October, yeah. AAW: Yeah. AWW: When, uh, (clears throat) I was, uh, I was *assistant* then, I wasn't, I wasn't the principal keeper, the principal keeper went ashore and he stayed all night *ashore*, the boat was still out in the, in the water, what we call moored with the anchor. So anyhow, the *storm*, the *storm* come up and I said to Averil, "We'll have to go down now, maid, and get the boat in because the wind is breezing, before the wind breezes up too much and we won't be able to get at her." So I went down and got aboard the *boat*, I got aboard the boat alright, but when I got aboard one of those big seas come in, took me right out, upset the boat, and took me out of her, but when I went out, I *grabbed* the boat and I hold on to the boat so long as I could and then the boat hove in clear with the sea, pitched me right out into it. (PLF: Tsk.) So I got out, cleared it, got to could--, try to make this *cove*, there's a little cove there, a little harbour you might call it, a little cove there, so I say, "If I could get in that little cove, I'd be safe but I know I could make it." So anyhow, when I look I see the seas, the white seas tip the water away so I dived, to go underneath because it wouldn't be so bad underneath, there wouldn't be the smack on top. (PLF: Um hmm.) So I went over in this little cove and the wife with the lantern, it was in the night, the wife with the lantern, she walked over across the cove and got over on the other point so's I could see her better. So when I saw her, saw the light then I *knew* where the cove, where this cove was to because you couldn't see that well in the dark, so I see the light I knew the cove was there so, so I got over there and, of course I swimmed, *made* it in the cove, the sea took me and pushed me into this cove where the water was nice and smooth but *still cold*. And then I got ashore and I had my, my chest scratched up a bit, I lost my sea boots, I kicked them off and I kicked off my, my cold therm shorts, and then I went up to the, went up to, walked up to the lighthouse, only me and her, we had no family then, I walked up to the lighthouse, I was really bad, my stomach was, of course I had water down in my stomach, I went up in the light tower and I got some spirits, methylated spirits, what we used to use for cleaning the lights, so I come down and then we put some of that into the, into water, diluted it down, put a bit of sugar into it and I dranked it, and then I throwed up, brought up all that old stuff that I'd taken down. So, uh, that was a *near* one. (laughs) That w--, that was a *near* one *that* was. (C10989)

Another dangerous incident, recounted by Albert below, was a helicopter flight through hazardous "low" fog off Cabot Island.

Narrative 4.4 (Albert)

AWW: ...'tis only about a couple years ago, I come off the lighthouse and when we got in the helicopter and got up she run [unclear word], we couldn't see a thing and the pilot said, "Oh my," he said, "we're caught right in." So I said, "I *told* you, boy, we was going to be caught in, I *saw* it coming in there. Come on," I said, "let's hurry up and take off before it gets here." So when we got up, here it comes right by the window and we couldn't see where we were going, or couldn't see anything. And he said to me, he said, "What course," he said, "is it take you in to Templeman?" I said, "By the nor'west." And he *still* didn't put her nor'west. He was running up about west. And I said, "Old man," I said, "I said nor'west and here you're running up about west." "Oh, yes," he said, "that's right." But he thought he might run out the fog, run out of it. He not thinking the fog was going *with* him but he thought he was going a little bit faster than the fog and get *out* of it. So when I said only nor'west, well only the wind was going to trip, further off the land, in air, that would clear the fog off in air, so we went about a hundred yards, no more that that, out we run right out of it. We come in here and pitch down then by the oil tank [unclear word] come in here. (C10981)

4.5. Social Confrontation

The eight narratives belonging to this category tell of a type of achievement which is not accomplished through normal channels, involves self-initiative, and through positive action is beneficial to the family or community. All stories concern work experiences of the Wakeleys and in each Albert or Averil confronts a superior (Albert *versus* the Coast Guard and his principal keeper; Averil *versus* post office officials), co-workers (Albert *versus* his assistant keeper), or members of a social group (Albert *versus* a visitor at Puffin Island and local merchants).

In the narrative below, Albert describes how he demanded that unless a new home be built for him and his family on Puffin Island, he would quit his job lightkeeping.

Narrative 5.1 (Albert)

AWW: ...we'd work right on through winter and summer on the lighthouse and it was, we had some hard times there in the winter time. And, uh, we had, uh, to live into a old, rock building, well, we can call it, it was a stone building, I suppose, one way of speaking, but it was the *stone*, the rocks that were on the island. They were, they, they were *cut* there and they was *taken up*, we say, and the building was built up with her. They done it, that one was *seventy-two year old*, that old building and they was, uh, there was *rocks* falling out of it and, anyhow, we had to live in there, that's where we had to stay, that was our living accommodation. So after I got there for three months on that light station, I didn't, didn't care too much about the building and my wife was starting to complain about it was leaking and it was leaking bad. So we send into St. John's, I send into St. John's and told them if *they* didn't build me a home, comfortable home, that I would have to retire. I was assistant keeper then. And, uh, and I had a letter back saying, "We will, we will be coming to your station and seeing--", see what I wanted done with the old house. And then there was a man come there, Mr. Bowring. He come there from St. John's and he said, "Old man," he said, uh, "how much *money* would you think it would take," he said, "to repair up the, the roof, stop the leaks from coming down?" And, uh, he said, "Think *ten dollars* would do it?" "Well," I said, "ten dollars won't do very *much* but it could stop a *little*, I suppose, make it a little better." And I said to him, I said, "I think, now, we should have a *new* home. If you spend ten dollars on this one it's only going to patch it up and then something else will give out. It's not fit to *live* into." So I said, "I'm going to continue on, I'm *not* going to withdraw my, me retire, me, uh, I'm *still* not going to stay here unless you puts a new home here." "So we'll see then what we can do when we get back to St. John's." So then after they got back to St. John's I had another message saying that, "We're coming down, select a scene for your new home." And they send out a man from the mainland, from Ottawa, and he, he said to me, he said, "If you promise me you *stay* here on this island I'll build you one of the best homes is on Newfoundland island." And I said, "I'll do that, I'll promise I will." So they built a home, it took three years to build it and they built the home and the cost at that time, 1946, uh, no, that was 1946 or '47 [unclear word]? AAW: Nineteen-- AWW: 1950. AAW: Fifty. AWW: They built a home and it cost at that time, they was three years before they completed it because it was difficult to get lumber there because it had to be done by boat. And, uh, we had no helicopters at that time, and, uh, it cost, uh, thirty-three thousand dollars, complete the home. And when they complete the home, they come out. Now, they come there for to make the inspection on the home, they come there in the,

one of those, uh, I would call it a flying boat, airplane, flying ship, we call it, sea plane, in other words, and she pitched over in a place called Port Nelson. And, uh, they went over and picked them up, you know, just a local speedboat and they brought them back to the, those officials, landed on the, brought them back to the island and they inspect the home. New, no one ever been into it, it was *just built, just for me.* They come along and they hand me the keys, there was only, there was just, we had one child, Bill? AAW: Three. AWW: Three children then. AAW: Yeah. AWW: Three children. AAW: [unclear word.] AWW: Yeah, yeah. And he said, "Here it is. There's the keys and this is your home." (PLF: Hmm.) So I went in, uh, and we had, uh, all hardwood floors, all hardwood going upstairs, all hardwood floors upstairs, bathroom upstairs, uh, cistern, water cistern for water supplies down in our basement. And we had a pump to pump up our water, that was convenient at that time. And then, uh, we had, uh-- [recording cuts off] (C10985)

Another work-related confrontation occurred between Albert and his immediate boss, the principal keeper at Puffin Island, over a broken fog horn.

Narrative 5.2 (Albert)

AWW: And when I went out, uh, 'Z' was the principal keeper here, I was only assistant, you know. I had to take my orders from *him* which I was satisfied to do. And, uh, that night come in thick a fog and he was on shift, he was on watch. And, of course, we had to start, uh, start the old motors up. And he said to me, he said, "Albert," he said, "what do you *think*?" he said, "You been at it fourteen years," he said, "what do you think of this fog alarm?" I said, "Well, 'Z', boy, you *ask* me about it," I said, "I'm going to tell you, she's not right, my son, this fog alarm not right," I said, "she should be louder than this." He said, "What do you think is [unclear word]?" I said, "The gaskets is gone, boy, on the Diaphone." "But we--," he said, "Sure, old man," he said, "we just had a mechanic come down here and transfer this from one building and put it into the other, this is new place they built now." So I said, uh, "Well, boy, this is wrong." I said, uh, I said, "It's a wonder she don't stop *blowing*, blasting," I said, "it's a wonder she don't stop *altogether.*" So, uh, I went and turned in. I was coming on watch two o'clock. I went and turned in and that was coming on twelve o'clock. I was in my bunk, cots we have out there, that's what we have [unclear word] cots. And I got in my, uh, in my cot. So I wasn't even in that ten minutes before he come in. He said, "Albert," he said, "you know what? The fog alarm stop." I said, "Yes, boy, I heard her. I thought it had cleared away." I thought it was cleared up, you know, fog cleared up? He said, "No, boy, something gone wrong." So, uh, I went out. I

said, "Old man, it's only about ten minutes work to fix it." (PLF: Was it, this the Diaphone machine?) Diaphone, yeah. (PLF: Um hmm.) I said, "It's only about ten minutes work to fix this," I said, "we don't have to no--" We had, uh, a set there, communications set. I said, "No need of notifying Department, it's only about ten minutes." And when I went to do it he wasn't satisfied, he was a hard fellow, hard man, he wasn't satisfied with it. He was the principal. (PLF: Um hmm.) He was the principal, he was the man. "No," he said, "you're taking the time off the fog alarm." He said, "That's a mechanics job." I said, uh, 'Z' his name was, "'Z', never done it before old man, you?" "No, boy, never done that," he said, "I always send in for the mechanic." "Oh," I said, "I done that lots of times, only a few minutes work, old man, we can fix that and, well, notify Department after to our trouble, complain after." He wasn't satisfied. He went in and called up the set. He called up St. John's, he said, "Our fog alarm's out of operation and I'm unable to fix it." So they had, uh, the head mechanic there. So, uh, Mr. Bowring said, uh, "I won--" No, the big shot said to Mr., Mr. Stone was the head man then-- AAW: [unclear word.] AWW: And he said, uh, "I wonder what could be *wrong* out there that *Albert* can't fix." [end of recording: Side A] [beginning of recording: Side B] He said, "What could be wrong Albert is not able to fix?" Mr. Bowring said that he wouldn't, the mechanic now, we only had one mechanic then, that's all we had. Now we got eleven. He said, "I'm wondering what's wrong," he said, "Albert can't fix." Mr. Bowring said, "Nothing," he said, "nothing on that island, nothing wrong with the Diaphone that Albert can't fix. Only thing, 'Z', he," he said, "is the principal and Albert is not going to do anything if he says 'No.'" But he said, he said to Mr. Stone, "You tell him to *fix* it. And," he said, "he'll fix it." Next morning, here comes a message back to 'Z'. He said, "Our assistant in your station is familiar with that type of equipment and tell him to check it and advise us." And he got vexed, he got vexed over that, he got vexed over it. But now I had orders from St. John's now to fix it. I never bothered him at all with it but, oh he was vexed, he was mad [unclear word] so I went and fixed it and I know that he had some wrenches all around everywhere, you know, loose wrenches? You know, not properly hooked up, I call it, because alarm was never allowed there. He never, they, they wouldn't operate an alarm properly. They never had the, the, the gaskets put into them which should be there, (PLF: Hmm.) you know. So anyhow, I said, uh, I said, "Now, boy," I said, "She's going to blast, she's going to blow," I said, "You want to tighten everything up there 'cause she's going to shift it now." "But this one's never been right," he said, "she hasn't been right since *years*." And when she blowing, everything started up [unclear word.] "But, oh my," he said, "she's off her blasts, she's not right." I said,

"Boy, she's perfect now, dead on, boy" [unclear word.] So, uh, he got vexed over it. So he wired back, he sent back a message, told them, he said, "If you think," he said, "Mr. Wakeley got more *knowledge* than me over the fog alarm," he said, "you can accept my notice." They wired back to him and said, "Your notice has been accepted. We want Albert to take it over." (PLF: Hmm.) So I took over like that. (PLF: And what happened to him?) Oh, he, he just lost his job. (PLF: Ahh.) He lost his job because he got *saucy*, but I said to him, I said, "Now, 'Z', don't, don't go worrying about that, old man, just forget all about that." (PLF: Hmm.) Well that's all slipped back, all slipped back, you know, to me, principal's assistant and that you take him on again but they wouldn't accept him. So this man that they fired, 'Y', fellow was working with me now, 'Y', this man they fired, when the Department come down, ask me if I want to take my own men, this is the man I took back again. And now he been working with me twenty years. So that's one of the men that Department butt off. (PLF: Hmm. Did they get the real story after--?) Yeah, oh yes. They got the real story then. (PLF: Did you tell them?) Yeah, I told them the real story. And they blamed it on 'Y'. (PLF: Um hmm.) And they blamed it on 'Y'. And it wasn't 'Y' at all. It was *him*. (C10981)

Another confrontation on the job site at Puffin Island took place between Albert, who was principal keeper, and his assistant over the latter's poor work habits.

Narrative 5.3 (Albert)

AWW: ...I, I've had, uh, uh, one year I took on assistant, he was, uh, really good for his work, really good and, uh, he asked me for the job and I said, "Yes, boy." He was a war veteran, overseas with me in the navy. And he said, "Boy," he said, "you've took on three or four assistants now," he said, "and you haven't given me a chance." I said, "'X', boy [unclear word.] And I said, "Boy, I'm going to give you a chance now, I'll take you on." So he come on the lighthouse and he married to a Scotch woman and (asks AAW) three children? Three children. AAW: He had two then. AWW: Yep. So he come on and we used to start our watches, I'd say, eight o'clock in the morning up till two o'clock when, if I was on till two o'clock, well I come off and he come on, that kind of a way, he'd be gone and he'd come off and I'd come on and he'd come on, that kind of a way. So anyhow, I said to him, "Now, boy, you be back now, uh, two o'clock, 'X', boy." And he never showed up. And he's a [unclear word.] And, uh, he used to drink and drink ashore and not thinking about he had to be back two o'clock and might be *three* o'clock before he get back. And he'd come back, of

course, you know, what a drunken person is like, well he's not capable of what he's doing anyway. And it's a big chance to let him, to let him do things where you think he could have *hurt* himself, like starting up machinery and that kind of a way. So anyhow, this time I let him go on for three or four– AAW: Months. AWW: Months, I suppose and I says, uh, "'X', boy," I said, "Now you're getting me down, you're really getting me down." And I said, "Boy, you know, you can't operate like this. You've had, uh, you come down here two o'clock," I said, "I can't depend on you because you're drunk and it take you a couple of hours to sober up so I mean I can't go on, carry on, while you're hurting, hurting a lot, hurting me." So I said, "'X', now, I'm going to give you another chance," I said, "I don't want to, to fire you," because I could fire my own assistants, I said, "I don't want to fire you one little bit." I said, "it's something that got, you got to change or you'll have to lose your job." So I mean, next day he went ashore again and the same thing, thought I was going to let him off again. But when he come off it was getting thick, thick as snow and that was in, that was in December, getting thick as snow, and he only just could stand up. So he said, "I got to put the horn on now, I'll go and put the horn on." Said, "No, boy, you can't. You can't operate the machinery. You might be able to operate the machinery," I said, "'X', just as good as I can but, like you are, I'm afraid [unclear word.] Like I say, he went in the horn house and he went over and I started up the machinery. He went over and put [unclear word] and we used to always keep the windows up in the horn house, we used to call it, whistle house, we used to call it, there, always keep the window up so the fresh air could get in and make the compressors easier to breathe, you know, compressors be taking the air in and putting it in the tank so they'd be taking in better air from outside than what they would around the building. Well when I looked down then, he was crying. And he said, "So you're going to get rid of me." And I said, "Yes, boy, I got to." And I said, "Now, you've hurt me so much in the last three or four months," I said, "now, boy, I can't take no more chances." It was hard for me to do it. So I told him to pack his case and his belongings, now he had his family there and I said, "Now, and have your family out of it by tomorrow morning, eight o'clock." So it was *hard*. (PLF: So, how did he get over?) Oh, he went by boat. It was only three quarter of a mile, see? So he went ashore and he didn't think I would be able, you know, I would, I could *do* that, you know. He didn't think I could *do* that (PLF: Hmm.) with him, so, you know, he, I suppose he sent a message to Department. So Department wired him back, said, "I think now," he said, "there must have been something wrong for Albert," he said, "to get rid of *you*." You know, and "how could you, how could you *do* anything like that?" So this is, this is what I say that, uh, I don't think

the Department, uh, I don't think they *should*, I think the principal should have the preference to take on their own men, they should know. (PLF: What about firing, now, um, have the--?) Uh, no, Department. I, I, every year I get what you call appraisal form asking about the man that they give me. I just puts his complaint there if I got anything against him. And this is how they, they got to get rid of them, this is how they get rid of them by putting whatever it is there, you put it in the mail, of course, and send it back. They don't know anything about it. That's how it's done now. But one time you just tell them yourself and that's it. But now, like I said, they do's, like I said, Department don't, they *know* him by speaking, just speaking to them just for a half an hour or so, that's all, but they could be the worst kind. But, uh, but I never did have, it was only *that* man that ever I [unclear word] with and he was the best kind when he was sober, you know, when he didn't have to drink, he'd be the best kind. But I put him some [unclear word] and, and the people told him in to Greenspond, they said, "You know what you're doing?" You're hurting Albert, awful lot, although you mightn't know it." They said, "By and by Albert's going to get *turned* the other way," they said, "and he's going to get rid of you." A fellow told him that who owned a business, a fellow in business. "You're going to hurt Albert so much [unclear word.] "No," he said, "Albert has too good a heart to do that," he said, "Albert is too good-hearted." But I had to do it for my own (PLF: Um hmm.) sake and for the sake of the *mariner*. If I could have left him there like that, we say, drunk as he was, he could have staggered in across some of the belts and got killed. So that's what I say, that, uh, I think the Department should, should do like they always done, give the, ask if the keeper--, anyhow, ask the keeper. But they have, I must say, that our Department, they have consulted with me before they give me assistant, ask me what I think of him before they put him on and that kind of a way. If I didn't think, you know, a little bit at all, one way or the other, they always consulted with me again and say, "If it's some little thing Albert, you're not freely, you know, to say--" (PLF: Um hmm.) See? "Now come on, boy, say it." And, and that would be the-- [trails off] (C10981)

A confrontation of sorts occurred while Albert was lightkeeper at Puffin Island. A visitor ignored his warning about the danger of sitting too close to the fog horn and suffered the consequences, as Averil relates below.

Narrative 5.4 (Averil (Principal Narrator), Albert)

AAW: The only thing is that in the years he's lost a bit of his *hearing* for the sound of the horn. Now years ago, now, like he was mentioning, that, uh, you could hear it for *miles*, but now, I mean, you

can't hear it, only about four or five miles out now. But, uh, when it used to blow it used to almost *shake* the island with the force. And, in fact, we did have visitors one time, remember? And, uh, of course, she was told that, this was a captain, Salvation Army, and she was told not to sit too *close* to the horn. And, "Oh," she said, "I'll be alright, don't you worry about *me*." And Albert said, "Okay then, you were warned." And, of course, when he blew the horn for her, she just automatically toppled over with the sound of it. AWW: The vibration. AAW: The vibration, yeah. It was really a noise. So in the years he *has* suffered with his hearing a little bit. (PLF: Um hmm.) But, otherwise, physically, not as far as I know, anyway. (C10980)

As mentioned, the Wakeleys kept a large vegetable garden. When Albert offered mainland residents his homegrown cabbages and potatoes for sale at low prices, local merchants, irked by his competition, confronted him *via* his employer, the Department of Transport.

Narrative 5.5 (Albert)

AWW: I had to do it because, you know what I mean, I had a family coming along and so I had to, and grow cabbage, there's a--, the cabbage then, I used to sell my cabbage for ten cents a pound, the cabbage and that's, that's all I sell it for now, ten cents a pound. (PLF: Hmm.) Now those stores around here, goes to work and sells it for thirty, I believe. (PLF: Mmm.) it could be seventy now. (PLF: At least, yeah.) And, and that, that's when my cabbage comes in I'll be selling it for ten cents a pound. And I haves heads of cabbage grows seven and eight, and I've had them thirteen pounds, one head. (PLF (laughs) Thirteen pounds!) Thirteen pound heads. (RDF: Hmm.) Seven and eight like that, pound heads. (PLF: Wh--, where was your market for, for your fish or--?) Oh, oh, they would just come and take it from me [unclear word.] When I comes in here they'd be lining up for my cabbage to come out. "What time will Albert's cabbage coming in?" And you'll see them coming here in their trucks and cars and that and picking up the cabbage. Selling it, you know, I don't sell it now hundred pounds to a person, but like, twenty-five pounds, give everybody a chance, you know. You know, uh, people have *wrote* in about it, because you know you've got to have some in the place, "Whatever it is you do, you have," you know, "that I don't," come in by and by. Now people have, have *written* in to my Department and saying what I do, you know. Comes in and sells out my cabbage and the merchant can't sell his. (PLF: Hmm.) You know, that kind of a way, a little bit something wrong, but I suppose it's the truth somebody's speaking. But I don't *realise* that. You know, that don't

come to my mind and Department have answered back to them, say, "Well, if Albert took a garden shovel and growed hundred sacks of potatoes or a thousand pounds of cabbage, that shows he's not lazy. I wish everybody *else* was like him." (PLF laughs) (laughs) This is the answer they put. [recording cuts off] (C10982)

While Averil was the postmistress at Templeman, post office officials decided to shut down operations there because of funding cutbacks and the community's small size. In the following story, she describes how she challenged her superiors by spearheading a petition on behalf of the community in a successful bid to keep the post office open.

Narrative 5.6 (Averil)

AAW: It was a nice ways, about five minutes walk from the main highway. Now, um, the public had to come *over* there, well they didn't mind but in the winter time it was a kind of a different *story* with all the snow and what have you. So, um, the postal department then said, "Well, we'll put--", uh, these big, uh, not letter boxes but *bag* boxes so that I would have one for outgoing mail, one for ingoing mail and, um, they never did do that. Then they decided, "Well, we'll take it *completely* from Templeman altogether," and we'd have to go out to Newtown or Pound Cove for our mail. So the people, uh, signed a petition and I wrote a letter in with the petition, "The people didn't want the post office to be removed from Templeman." So then, uh, this house was for sale that was on the highway and, uh, we put in for i. and we got it. And we bought that one for fifteen hundred dollars, at that time, that's all we paid for that big home, fifteen hundred dollars. And the land in itself, well we paid two hundred dollars for the piece of land, and that was years after. So we had a good bargain *there*. (C10990)

While in military service overseas, during the war, Albert was anxious to stay in close contact with Averil and was willing to break rules to do so. In the following two narratives, he describes the consequences of taking unapproved leave from the naval base to contact his new wife. Albert provokes a confrontation with his superior when he follows his heart rather than military obligations in the first story.

Narrative 5.7 (Albert (Principal Narrator), Averil)

AWW: I went home for a little while and, uh, they said, uh, the war wasn't over, they said that, that they had a job for me down to, uh, to Lowestoft, that's about twenty-five miles away [unclear word] but I said, "Oh, captain, don't send me *too* far away because I got a *wife* in Norwich." And, uh, he said, "We're going to send you to Lowestoft." So we went there and we went out on a boat called the [unclear word] and we went, uh, minesweeping again, went back to it. So then, uh, 'VJ' Day I was in Yarmouth, that was about, uh, about the same distance, I would say, twenty-five miles. And, uh, the old captain said, "Well, boy," he said, uh, he said, "We'll give you time off," he said, "but you haven't got to go *too* far away." And I just was, was a bit grave, we say, and I said, uh, "I've got my wife in Norwich." I said, "Now, what would *you* do if you had *your* wife in Norwich?" I said, "Would you try to sneak off?" And he didn't say yes or he didn't say no so, anyhow, I, I went to Norwich, I hitch-hiked to Norwich because the wife was there, I hitch-hiked. And, uh, when I went to hitch-hike I seen this *lorry*, we call them, army truck coming along, they call them lorries over in England, was, saw this lorry truck coming and he was coming [unclear word] and he said, stopped and said, "Where are you going?" "Going to Norwich." "Boy," he said, "you're lucky, that's where *I'm* going, right to Norwich." So I got aboard and, and, uh, he said, "What part of Norwich are you going? Where do you want to get off at?" "Boy," I said, "I want to get off so close as I can to White Woman Lane." He said, "Boy, you're *right* at home," he said, "you're talking to Averil's brother." (laughs) (PLF laughs) So he dropped me right off, yeah. And that's my first time at meeting her brother. So anyhow, uh, the next morning I got up and, and, uh, she went to the station, the war was still on and, uh, we were going to the station, she was going to work and I was going to the station, the railway station to pickup the train to go to my boat. And on my way down, down to the station was, wasn't really light, daylight, she was walking down with me and there was two, as I thought were Germans in the bush. And they jumped out of the bush, now when they jumped out of the bush I couldn't identify them that quick, I thought it was Germans. I had a revolver on my side, I had a rifle, bayonet, fixed. So I thought sure they Germans so I shot them on guard. And, of course, she checked their identification, I put the, the gun to them and she checked their i--, identification, and finally they said they were our soldiers and they were on, they call it, fanouevers-- AAW: Manouevers. AWW: Manouevers. And they had a str--, *strained ankle*, so they were just crawling along and I saw them crawling along, I thought sure they were Germans so I wanted to know, we say, what they were doing and make sure they was our own. So I took them then and I escorted them to the station and

they were going on the train, same train that I were going on. So they used to saying on their way along, "Boy," he said, "you give me some fright. I thought you were going to stick that bayonet in me." (laughs) So anyhow, it was our own soldiers, British soldiers, so we went to, I went down, she went to work in the factory and then I went and, uh, took, uh, took the train to the boat. And when I got to my boat, or just before I got to my boat, I saw the flags up. Saw the, her, numbers, our, our, our ship carried the number by flags, the number that she had, I seen the--. So I start to scrabble and I said, (whispers) "My dear," I said, "my boat's ready to sail [unclear word] my dears, I'm going to have to make it." And when I got [unclear word] we didn't go [unclear word] "My dears," I said, "I'm going to be in the *wrong*. I've done wrong. I went to Norwich and never got *back* quick enough." But the boat was just swinging off, she was just going to get ready, we say, to, to, to put the gl--, gang plank ashore so I jumped on the gang plank and went aboard and when I went aboard old captain was on the, on the top bridge telling me to come up. I went up. I gave him the salute, he said, uh, "Where were you?" "Oh," I said, "I was at Norwich." And he said, uh, "What made you go to Norwich?" I said, "I've got a *wife* in Norwich." (laughs) "Oh, yes," he said, "oh, oh," he said, "I'll let you off for this time." So we went down and, uh, I went back and the boat went out to sea and we went on over so far, we was out minesweeping. (C10985)

In the second narrative, Albert again risks repercussion when he confronts his inflexible commander with an accusation that procedure had been arbitrarily changed. Guided by his intractable sense of duty to his spouse, Albert once again breaks rank to contact Averil.

Narrative 5.8 (Albert)

AWW: So I went to work on the farm and I worked there for about, oh, six months I su--, no, three months and then I gets news from the Admiralty, "*Return* to Portsmouth immediately." Nothing about the wife, only just me. I went back to Portsmouth and, and I said, "Now, I'm *married* and I want to get my wife back to Newfoundland." [end of recording: Side A] [beginning of recording: Side B] So, uh, I told him that I had the understanding that when we go back our wives was going to travel with us back to Newfoundland, I didn't like the idea of our wives going on a separate boat from us. Well he said, uh, "We, we can't *do* that, it is impossible for us to do it," uh, "you, you sailors have to work your way on a aircraft carrier, take up your duties the same as you done during the war years," he said, "and work your way across," on this aircraft carrier, she was coming to Newfoundland. And I said,

"What about our *wives* then, maybe our wives thinks that we might be trying to, to get away from them, that kind of a way." And he said, "We're going to contact your wife and so I couldn't be contented like that, I wanted to speak to him myself so I, I asked for *permission* to go out in town so I could get out to a phone so I could speak to the wife, and they wouldn't give me permission to go out so I spoke to the guard on the gate although the war was over, spoke to the guard and he said, "No," he said, "we can't give you permission." And I said, "If you don't give me permission, I'll have to go over the wire, (PLF laughs) we'd go over. So there, there was three more Newfoundlanders there with me, "Yes, boy," I said, "we'll go right over the *top*." So anyhow, they didn't give us permission so we *went* over the top. So we went over the top of the wire, we got up over and went out and in to a phone and I called up *her* and I never forget that when we were going on this pay phone, you just had to have the, the cash, you know, to use. She'd be singing out, singing out, "Money, please. Shilling, please. Shilling, please." And as we was speaking she'd keep calling for the shillings and the boys was giving me the change, keep, keep giving money. And I, I got in touch with *her*. I said, "My dear, we're going to, we're sailing tomorrow on the eighth." And I said, "*You'll* be sailing on the eighteenth, that's our orders from the Admiralty, we can't sail together." "Oh my," she said, "what am I going to do?" And I said, "My dear, you'll have to try to get to Liverpool and you knows all about that." And anyhow we sailed on the eighth. We come back, when we come up to the guard, when we told him what we did, we told him what we intend to do, so we did it, went over the wire and come back and we went in to Portsmouth and we didn't, didn't get a charge for it because I told the, the, the, the commander was there, I said, "Now, you told us we was going to travel with our wives and it was all lies. We didn't get the opportunity to do it and you've changed it again. So's," I said, "this is what we did, we went over the wire," and, uh, there were six of us. So anyhow she, we went back to work then and, uh, we joined our aircraft carrier. (C10985)

4.6. Remarkable Incidents Concerning Work

In five narratives told by the Wakeleys, a remarkable incident which occurred at work is the main theme. These incidents occurred on Puffin Island, Cabot Island and at the lighthouse station at Fox Cove and include extraordinary sightings and unusual deaths and burials. On two occasions while lightkeeping on Cabot Island, Albert saw strange lights in the distance and investigated them with his assistant.

Narrative 6.1 (Albert)

AWW: ...one morning I come on watch two o'clock, I was working that shift, I looked, there's a little *pond* on the island. I seen something shining, glisten in the pond. I said, "Now--". Cyril said, "Old man, *look*!" Now we used to rise up the window some days and look out through, the window come up, you see, right up now and look through. I say, "What do you see, Cyril?" "Old man, look out there glistening in the pond, well, wha--, what's that, down there?" This little pond on the island, you know, the pool of water, we call it. And I said, "Boy, I'm going down, see what it is. I got an idea what *that* is." He said, "What do you think it is?" I said, "Boy, that could be a *bird* of some kind and his eyes glistening." So anyhow, I dodged down. When I got down I was so close, off he flied, a great big owl. (laughs) (RDF laughs) Cyril said, "I know you like haven't got no nerve now," he said, "I was scared stiff, here looking out the window without going." (laughs) (PLF laughs) He said, "I was scared stiff," he said, "here, looking through the window without going [unclear word.] But that's what I'm saying, you know, people say they *see* things, you know, but, uh, I never *did* believe in that. (C10082)

Narrative 6.2 (Albert)

AWW: And another time we had, we were there, we saw something down by the rocks. That was another assistant I had from, fellow from Newtown. Something down there shining, and this was a little fish. (PLF: Hmm.) This was a little fish, you know. Certain times in, in, in the night you'll see a *glow* even on your paddle when you're rowing a boat in the night. I don't know if ever you did see that or no--. (PLF: Um hmm.) Like uh, uh, little sparkles on your paddles, see? Well, what is it, what do's it, I wonder? What, what really *happens* there? Little sparkles on your paddle like your paddles is burning. E--, ev--, ever notice that? (RDF: Um hmm.) Yeah. And now this was, this was a little fish, see, used to come up in the pond. (raises voice and quickens speech) Come up now and push hisself up on the rocks, see, part of the ways out of the water, see, and it used to burn, see, he'd disappear again. So anyway, I got down there with a flashlight and I said, (lowers voice) "That's a little fish, I knew that, sure, before I come down here. Something like that, something *live* alright." Assistant, he said, "Something *live* anyhow." "Yes, I wonder, a little fish caught in the pond there, you know, I never think he's come up [unclear word.] Well that's like, like I say, when you're rowing a boat sometime, we'd say, you know, in the dark you'll see, now there's only, s--, now, not *all* the time that don't happen. That don't happen *all* the time. Like you can go home and row a boat and maybe the next night not *see* that. (RDF: Um hmm.) But 'tis against--. AAW: That's like you're just [unclear

word] that. (PLF: Um hmm.) AWW: I, I, I think there's again-, no, I think there's agains--, against the weather or something like that, the atmosphere, I think, got to have something to do with it, I think, because it don't happen *all* the time, do it, boy? (RDF: No.) No. (C10082)

The following three narratives told by the couple concern remarkable deaths at lighthouse stations. In the first two stories, the subject is the care of a corpse in the days prior to helicopter service; the untimely death of a lightkeeper who takes a risk and loses his life is the subject in the third story.

Narrative 6.3 (Albert (Principal Narrator, Averil)

AAW: There *was* a man passed away on Cabot Island, uh, a few years *back* and, um, because he went on, his brothers, two lightkeepers, brothers and, um, the other man, the brother went up to the flagstaff and dipped the flag backwards and forwards. There was a boat passed by and he started to wave. Now the boat thought he was just *waving* to him and that was it. But, however, um, his *son* was aboard one of the boats, (asks AWW) wasn't it? AWW: Yeah. AAW: And he said, feel like there's something wrong on Cabot Island because at that time they didn't have the communications and, um, so, however, this is one of the men had taken a heart attack and his brother had to, uh, look out to him and I believe he buried him, (asks AWW) did he bury him out that time? AWW: Uh, no, they-- AAW: Or did they put him in salt? AWW: They put him in salt. AAW: Right. AWW: They salted him down. Them times they used to have what you call a chesterfield now, they call it *couches* at them times. I guess you heard tell of couches, have you? They call it couches so they had, I don't know how they *got* him there, this was on Cabot Island, he got him up on the couch and then he built a edge (gestures) on the outside part, of course the couch got the back and he built a edge out like this on this side of it, on the outside, and then he got his brother, of course, before he built the edge, he got his brother in on the couch and then he salted him down with what you call fish salt. They had a lot of salt on the island so they salted him down, buried him right up with salt and he was there five days and five nights, with his brother on that, on Cabot Island, five days and five nights, and then the helicopter, uh, come out and took him, I think it was the *seventeenth* day of December. That's when it happened. (PLF: What year was that?) Uh, my dear, oh my, I was on the Puffin Island. AAW: Yeah, was about a couple of year before you left to come down, eh. AWW: Let's see, nineteen-- AAW: Fifty-seven. AWW: Fifty-seven, fifty-eight. (PLF: So was this a lightkeeper, former lightkeeper?) Oh, yes, this was a lightkeeper, this was a

lightkeeper. This was on the island I just retired on now. (PLF: Lightkeeper before you?) Yeah. (PLF: Um hmm.) Lightkeeper before me. And that's when he was there. (C10980)

Narrative 6.4 (Albert (Principal Narrator), Averil)

AWW: And another time there was a little girl, a little *boy* took sick there, took pneumonia and they couldn't get him out of it and they had to bury *him* there, they buried him in November and at that time the station used to be in operation *all* the year round, all the winter time, all the year round. They buried him in November and, uh, they took him up in April and brought him ashore and buried him, of course, on the mainland. He's buried on the lighthouse. (PLF: And now it would be different, wouldn't it?) And now it would be different because we got the helicopters and that kind, yeah, and there was no helicopters at them times, see, no helicopters. AAW: Well you got the Search and Rescue, too, now, which they didn't have at that time. AWW: No helicopters then. (Pause) But, you know, there's a lot of *difference* that was 1946, than what it is now I can tell you. (C10980)

Narrative 6.5 (Albert (Principal Narrator), Averil)

AAW: ...there that time when 'A' went to, uh, Fox Cove. AWW: Oh, he went, he, he, he, he was the keeper, the, the principal, he went in to the *mainland* and he said he'd, he said to his assistant, "Are *you* going anywhere?" He said, "No, *I'm* not going anywhere. I'm going to stay on the station." He said, "Now don't go *bothering* about the birds, if there's any birds come in underneath, don't *bother* about them." "No," he said, "I'm not going to bother." So anyhow, away the skipper was gone in to Fox Cove, he saw the birds and he went down to shoot them (PLF: Hmm.) and he, and he shot and he killed *four*, four ducks, so he thought he'd go over and launch the little boat close by, over on the beach. He went over and launched the boat to go out and pick them up? And he went in a bit close and the *sea* took him and turned his boat over (PLF: Oh.) and he got drownded. And when his, uh, when the keeper heard it, he was out in town, when he heard there was a, a fellow drownded, "Oh *my*," he said, 'B', that's him, I got to go on." And when he went out, sure enough his assistant was gone, drownded, went out, and they had a group in the boat and, but they never--. AAW: That was three days, was it? AAW: Three days before they got his body, before they could, uh--. (PLF: Um hmm.) AWW: Yeah. That was [unclear word.] AAW: Boy, it's a horrible place, it's a big dip down. I, I reached (PLF: Um hmm.) over like that and I couldn't get the bottom of it with my camera. (PLF: Oh, wow.) I'll show you a picture of that one. (C10987)

4.7. Remarkable Incidents in Family History

Three of the Wakeleys' narratives feature a remarkable incident in their family history as a main theme. Individual stories in this category describe the couple's courtship, Averil's migration to Newfoundland as a war-bride, and her unusual trip home to Puffin Island from the local hospital with her newborn son, John.

Averil and Albert first met at the train/bus station in Norwich and arranged to hold their second meeting there also. That second meeting almost never took place because of an incident leading to a misunderstanding on Averil's part. Each of the couple describes the incident in separate narratives as follows.

Narrative 7.1

Version 1 (Averil)

AAW: ...I think I was sixteen when I met Albert. I went down to the railway station to see my brother off, my brother was in the Royal Marines and, um, to have company for his wife to come back, or at that time his girlfriend, and along came Albert with *another* fellow. And this fellow, he was a little bit under the weather, Albert was trying to keep him *away* from it. So when he spoke to my girlfriend then, of course, I stepped back and he came along and *spoke* to me and he asked me for my address. (PLF: Albert did?) Oh, yeah. So I gave him the address and that's all I *thought* about it, you know. And it was about three or four days after that and Mom says, um, "Telegram here for you. Somebody by the name of Albert." And I said, and then I told her then. So I hopped on my bicycle and I rode down to the railway station about three to four miles from the house. And when I *got* there *he* was talking to *another* girl. So I said, "Well, that's okay." I turned around and I walked *out* of the railway station because the, it was a bus terminal, too. He came out and, uh, he *followed* me. This was a young girl, I found out after, asking if a certain person was there. (C10984)

Version 2 (Albert (Principal Narrator), Averil)

AWW: And when I went to Lowestoft that's where I met my girlfriend. And, uh, like the story she just said just now that, uh, I met her in the railway station, she told me she was waiting for her brother, come off the train. AAW: No, going on the train. AWW: Going on the train, seeing her brother away, that's what it was, seeing her

brother away. So I asked her for a *date*. (laughs) Yeah. She say, "You can, you can see me to the *bus*," but I didn't *see* her to the bus. I didn't see her to the bus that night. I said, "I'll tell you what I'll do, now. I'll be," uh, "I'll be coming back again shortly and I'll send you a telegram and let you know what time I'll arrive here in the station, Norwich." So I sent her a telegram and she come down and, and meet me in the station, uh, uh, I think I was speaking to another girl and she asked me about another fellow, a Weaven, a fellow, Weaven, from Conception Bay, Newfoundland and this is the time she come into the station. She *saw* me speaking to this *girl* so she thought I was a bad lad, you know, (PLF laughs) (laughs) and took back off again. So, anyhow, we were alright and then we, we were going together for four years. (C10985)

For Averil, the emigration to Newfoundland in the company of other war-brides was a memorable and difficult journey. In the narrative below, she recounts the experience.

Narrative 7.2 (Averil)

AAW: But when I came over here I *sailed* from Liverpool, England and the hardest part about it was the band on the pier singing "Auld Lang Syne." (PLF laughs) (AWW laughs) That was the *hardest* part. As the boat (PLF: On the British side--) was moving off from the pier the band was on the, uh, pier playing and that was the *hardest* part. And then when, uh, I got in Halifax, we had to go in Halifax because *ice* was around. And when we got in Halifax, uh, there was a *boat* pulling *out* with over seven hundred war-brides unclaimed. Their husbands had been married before, they were Canadians and Americans. And then, I left Halifax on the "Fort Amherst" and when I got to Newfoundland, in St. John's in, in the harbour, I, uh, looked on one side, that was the south side, all I could see was the army house. I said, "Oh my, what am I coming to?" And the stewardess came along and she said, um, "You're looking at the wrong side, go on the other side of the boat. (PLF laughs) And on the other side they weren't much better. (PLF laughs) There was five women there, were unclaimed Newfoundlanders and, uh, of course they had to go back home again. (C10984)

In the following narrative, the couple tell how a group of men pulled Averil and her newborn son, John, on a sled from Greenspond to Puffin Island in mid-winter.

Narrative 7.3 (Albert (Principal Narrator),Averil)

AAW: Now this is at Greenspond in the distance there. (points to photograph) This is the ocean all frozen over. (PLF: Hmm.) And that was the time that they dragged me with this little fellow then, John, from Greenspond out to Puffin Island. AWW: On the slide with the baby. AAW: On the slide. AWW: She wrapped up on the slide with the baby. They had seven or eight men pulling her on the slide. And when we got to the lighthouse door, we was going over to the *kitchen* door that way and, of course, we had a nice, uh, big door in front of it, they call it dining room door, you know, we go inside it and go into the dining room and now one fellow said, uh, "We'll open this door." And we *did* open the door and he said, "Now my dear," he said, "we'll put you right in your chair." (laughs) They'll put you right in your chair, you *sliding* off. (PLF laughs) Went right on the slide. Boy, there's nobody, you know, there's no--, there's people hardly *believe* that, you know, things that they used to do. The ocean was frozen over, it was that cold, the ocean frozen over and they pulled her out. (RDF: Um hmm.) She was only, the baby was only about four days old then. (RDF: Hmm.) I was only on that lighthouse when she--, it was a good boat, it was fourteen feet long and she sitting in the bottom of the boat and I put the baby in her arms and I got the [unclear word] out and go ashore on the beach. (C10982)

4.8. Pranks

Four narratives told by the Wakeleys have a prank as the predominant theme. Individual stories describe pranks played by Bill and Leonard Wakeley on their parents or those played on the boys by Averil and Daniel Wakeley, Albert's father.

As youngsters growing up on Puffin Island, Bill and Leonard Wakeley amused themselves by building their own boat and deliberately hiding it from their parents. There are three versions of this story, told jointly and individually by Albert and Averil.

Narrative 8.1

Version 1 (Averil and Albert)

(PLF: Are any of your children lightkeepers?) AAW: No, my dear. No. But, uh, they really enjoyed--, they made their own fun and, uh, they made their own *boat*. And covered it up, you know, took the, took

the turf off and then during the day probably Albert would be busy cleaning up the horn house or something and they'd be gone ashore for groceries and, um, one day he come off from Greenspond and he says, uh, "Who's out on the island?" And I said, "I don't know." "Well," he said, "there's a boat around here." I said, "I don't know." When we come to discover this is the three boys, because your father was with you at the time, they made this little flat and every evening then they would cover it up-- AWW: So then we wouldn't find it. (laughs) AAW: And so that the men wouldn't see. AWW: So you know, if they knew what we *had* it, that kind of a way, well they wouldn't feel very good, you know, because we wouldn't give them a chance to go out on this little tinker. We didn't think it was safe. But they just made it theirselves for to play around down by a little pool we call it, enough to float the boat, that's what they used to do. (C10980)

Version 2 (Albert)

AWW: And then, of course, another well after that we had another increase in the family, in Leonard, he come along then and, of course, you got a *buddy* for Bill and, uh, they used to, uh, we'd say, have their own fun together and then the assistant, he had a--, he had a family there on the lighthouse and then they'd play around together and one day they, we missed paint going away from us and wondering where it was going to and oakum and, and nails and we was wondering where, where it was all going and we mentioned it to the boys, they were big enough then to get around and use the hammer and drive nails, and we was wondering what they were doing and, so we went down on the end of the island to have a look around, and see what was going on and we found a *boat*, (laughs) the boys after building (laughs) and when they go ashore to use it in the small pond there, they used to use it in the little small pond to paddle around, so their mother saw them and they was wondering if it was our boat, our own boat that we had ourselves but "No," we said, "we have no boat out." So this is what it, what it was, the boys build the little boat, this was where our nails was going, and our paint and our oakum. (laughs) So they built (PLF: Hmm.) a little boat and they start paddling around the little pond, when they see we coming they pulled the boat up again and put her down this big hole they had dug and hide it away do we wouldn't see it, because, I mean, if we see it well then they know that we were going to take it away. So this is how they used to enjoy theirselves. (C10980)

Version 3 (Averil)

AAW: Well the children *really* enjoyed theirselves and they said now that they would *love* to go back there and, and relive it all *over* again. (PLF: Hmm.) Because there are five that was reared up on the island, yeah, and, uh, they used to do some terrible things. I suppose like all

youngsters, they had to do *something* to occupy their minds. Like building a boat that time when they took all the nails and the oakum and the paint, had it all missing and we were wondering where it was all *going* to. And, uh, one Sunday the men was walking around the island and they came across this dried up grass, like sods all dried up and they said, "Well," they'd never seen that before, "wonder what happened?" So they rooted away with their foot and when they did they see some wood and they rooted further and when they did they come across a *boat*, and this is what the boys had been doing with the nails and the oakum and the paint, was build a boat for theirselves. (Speaks to AWW) And one day you come up after getting groceries and you said, "Who was out on the island?" I said, "Nobody." "I see a *boat* then." I said,"No way, there's nobody here," I said, "you must be seeing things." And, uh, "Oh yes, we see a boat." And, uh, the boys said, "That was *we*, rowing around, in our little boat." They, they used to enjoy theirselves. (C10089)

To assuage her fear of the boys endangering themselves by using their homemade boat, Averil tricked them, as she and Albert describe below.

Narrative 8.2 (Averil and Albert)

AAW: ...first when, uh, the outboard motor came around, we used to warn the children, "*Don't* go down to the landwash because you'd fall overboard and we'd never be able to get you. And probably now a plane will come over and throw down his *hook* and *grab* you." And this time somebody come along with the first outboard motor-- AWW: Making a noise. AAW: Making a noise, and they *heard* it. And the boys, the men had the boat turned upside down-- AWW: Bottom up. AAW: Bottom up. And, uh, this is where they crawled to-- AWW: They thought it was a plane coming (PLF laughs) with the hook down. AAW: --under the boat, they thought it was a plane coming to hook them up. And Bill was looking through a plug hole, it, there's a plug in the boat AWW: In the bottom of the boat. AAW: --for drainage, draining out water? And this is where Bill was, looking through the hole. AWW: He was looking *up* through to see if he could see the plane coming. (laughs) AAW: Yeah, to see if he could see the plane (laughs) coming with the *hook* to come down. (C10089)

In the next story, Daniel Wakeley, Albert's father, plays a prank on the two boys by disguising himself as a bear.

Narrative 8.3 (Albert (Principal Narrator), Averil)

AAW: And another time (speaks to AWW) your Dad was out on the island with you and they used to have their little guns then when they

got a bit older, their 'B.B.' guns and, uh, they went around and Dad said, "Now, I'm going to *frighten* them *boys*, got no business to be down by the landwash." So he got a, a sealskin, AWW: A sealskin-- wasn't it? AWW: Yeah, and wrapped it around himself-- AAW: And oakum. AWW: And then he got some oakum and put it all up around his face, all up around his neck and that and then he, he got down on his hands and knees and crawled down on the *back*, and got out in this pond where the boys was to, and then he got up, mounted the ice, the, the ice was frozen along the beach up a bit high, oh it must be ten foot high in places, to what we call, Newfoundlanders call, ballycadders, and this is where father got up from under there and he's starting to *growl*. Well now the boys was o--, just over on the other end of the beach and they heard the noise. "Oh *my*," (softens voice) Bill said, "Leonard, a *bear*! A *water bear*! Up on hard [unclear word] ballycadders, up on hard ice." Well Len said, "Yes, Bill, I'm going up." So he jumped up and run away and Norman, that was Isaac's son, my brother's son, he got up and runned away but Bill *didn't*, Bill was going to take a shot with his 'B.B.' gun. And he peeked up under the ballycadders and there was his grandfather up there on the ballycadders with the oakum all up around his neck and the sealskin on. (AAW laughs) "Now *I'm* taking a *shot*." And he thought it, it was, thought sure it was the bear up from under the ice, so took a shot and went so close to grandfather's face he had to make himself known and he sings out, "This is not a bear. (laughs) This is *grandfather*." "Come out," he said, "if you don't," he said, "I'll knock the *eye* out of you!" (laughs) (C10089)

Caught up in the excitement and suspense of Christmas Eve celebrations at Puffin Island, young Bill and Leonard Wakeley try to outwit their parents in the following story.

Narrative 8.4 (Averil (Principal Narrator), Albert)

AAW: Uh, Christmas time, you know, uh, like every children they'd be *excited*, wondering what they're going to get and they used to hang up a pillow slip, it wouldn't be a *sock*, it'd be a pillow slip then and, uh, they'd get their toys, and Christmas Eve then we'd be probably trying out things, see if they'd work and that and before you know it then the two boys would be looking down over the bannister rail, *unknown* to us until you hear someone say, "Who've you got *that* for, Mommy?" (AWW laughs) So anyway, after we went to bed they'd creep down and *this* time they were *hungry*, and they wouldn't ask me for anything to eat because they figured I was *asleep*. And like Albert was saying, we, we never had any electricity, only the Tilley Lamp? And, uh, (lowers voice) come down, and, uh, well Len took out the *Christmas* cake,

(AWW laughs) Len was going to cut the Christmas cake and he wanted a bit of (laughs) *sweet* stuff. Now Bill said, "No, Mom'll be crazy, don't cut *that*!" And just as they're deciding *what* to do the water dog, we kept her in the house night time, wagged her tail-- AWW: And knocked the chimney off the *lamp*. (laughs) AAW: There goes the chimney off the lamp. (laughs) Now that made a *noise*, see, which disturbed us, come down. But after that, after Christmas Eve they'd be a week or two, hanging up a sock, they was hanging up a sock. AWW: Thinks Christmas was still around, see? AAW: And we had to put cookies in, an apple in or an orange-- AWW: She had to bake up then. AAW: --or a cookie. (laughs) AWW: Every second day'd bake up some little thing so they had something put in their stocking, see, the Christmas continued on for them, on the lighthouse for *weeks* after Santa Claus went, every night was Santa Claus. (C10989)

4.9. Humorous Incidents

A humorous incident is the primary theme in two of the Wakeleys' narratives describing animals, both wild and domestic, which played a key part in the lives of the Wakeley family on Puffin Island. In the following run-on narrative, Albert and Averil describe the antics of their pet cat and sheep.

Narrative 9.1 (Albert and Averil)

AAW: You *did* find a nest one time, remember? And, um, well we had our cat missing. Didn't know where she was to and we kept calling and calling her and no way. And by and by we come across her and what should she be doing but *sitting* on the-- AWW: On the r--, young rabbits, AAW: -- little rabbits, little tiny newborn rabbits. AWW: -- nursing the little rabbits. Yeah, the mother rabbit was gone at the time? And this is what our cat was doing. AWW: Looking after the baby rabbits. AAW: Nursing them. And our, our sheep we had first, Daisy we called her, well she was, oh, *almost* human and if you left the door open, Daisy, Daisy-- AWW: And she'd-- AAW: --would come in and she'd snoop around. AWW: If there was any flowers, she had a lot of flowers, the wife do in the dining room, AAW: And I'd leave a flower in the corner. AWW: --and she made her appearance, well then through the door and she'd smell the flowers in the dining room, in she *goes*, and lays onto the flowers. (laughs) AAW: And leaves a track behind her. Oh, ho, I was [unclear word.] AWW: Come off with the *flower*, (laughs) with the flower pot and all, right across the dining room. (PLF laughs) (C10989)

A captured otter, now a stuffed memento in the Wakeley living room, the central figure in another humorous incident, told by Albert. Unwilling to risk a fifty dollar fine for shooting the animal on a Sunday, Albert improvised in his method of capture. The incident leads to a moment of entertainment at work.

Narrative 9.2 (Albert (Principal Narrator), Averil)

AWW: One Sunday morning I was going out to the, out to the horn house to check on things and I heard my dog *barking*, bawling down over the cliff and (lowers voice) when I went down, this is what it was, a otter. And he want to get in the sea. Now he was up on the dry land and he want to get down to sea but the dog didn't want him to do it. The dog wanted me to get up. So I went down over and she *still* stayed towards the sea so we wouldn't get down and for to turn him up into the cliff where I were to. So I walked down and when I did he come for to get in the cliff and I just give him a *smack* with my boot, shouldn't have done it. (RDF: Yeah) (PLF laughs) I said, I said, "That's very good, it's a very good kick for myself, fifty dollars." (RDF: Yeah. (laughs)) Fifty dollar kick. AAW: It was Sunday, couldn't shoot. AWW: I said, "That was a very good kick, kick for myself, fifty dollars," I said, "that's very good, boy." (PLF laughs) So when he, like I took him then and, uh, hove him on my shoulder and I come up over the island and the assistant was in getting dinner, Sunday morning. He was in peeling the turnip and he said, "My *dear*," he says, "what have the old man got this morning?" he said, he said to hisself. He look and, "Oh, what in the name of goodness the old man got there this morning?" We come in through the door and this is what it was, a otter. And he *gathered life*, I just hit him, just knocked out like stunned, see? And he gathered life. Boy, what a, what a going on we had in the kitchen with that one. (PLF laughs) Cyril said, Cyril was afraid of him, see? But I wasn't, see I wanted to get stuck into him. "The best thing we can do," I said, "boy, is get a bit of nylon line, rope, push around his neck and let him go down the steps inside the basement." So that's what we (laughs) (PLF laughs) done, go down the basement and tied him up. We didn't want him round the kitchen, we'd get him down in the basement, he could kick the place all he like down there. (PLF laughs) (RDF laughs) So that's what we did with him. (C10989)

As mentioned, many of Albert and Averil Wakeley's stories fit into narrative categories proposed by other folklore scholars. In the following section titled, "Additional Narrative Categories" (with subsections "Occupational

Narratives," "Family Narratives," and "General Narratives"), a list of relevant categories is presented with accompanying definitions.

The relationships between these categories and my own will be demonstrated in the subsequent analysis chapter which examines the social and personal values and attitudes found in the Wakeleys' narratives and how they affect the couple's behaviour.

4.10. Additional Narrative Categories

4.10.1. Occupational Narratives

In devising an "oral canon" for English rural workers, Martin J. Lovelace identified five categories of occupational stories, all of which are relevant to this study.[40]

1) *Stories of the significant first time* a boy proved his ability to do a man's work: "The phrase 'I thought I was a man then' is an almost formulaic closure to these narratives" (5).

2) *Confrontation stories:* "replay a verbal conflict with another worker or a boss over the teller's ability" (5).

3) *Testimonial stories:* a "Significant Other gives due praise to the teller (thus allowing him to technically avoid the despised trait of boasting)" (6).

4) *Anecdotes of other men's follies:* reveals "eccentricity, the obverse of competence" (6).

5) *Praise of others for their ability:* "often linked to a story of learning some particular skill from them" (6).

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[40]Lovelace, "Oral and Written Reminiscence: An Oral Canon," paper presented at the American Folklore Society Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, October 15, 1982, 5-6.

The following categories of occupational narratives proposed by Jack Santino also apply to the Wakeleys' stories:[41]

1) *Cautionary tales:* a type of accident story--"document[s] the unusual accident, suggest[s] a system wherein the reason for the accident can be determined, and, if the lesson is properly learned, similar accidents can be avoided in the future" (203).

2) *The first day on the job:* related themes include "how I got started" and "reminiscence and stories about the old days, or the *good old days*" (204).

3) *Characters and heroes:* "heroes" include stories of "work-related daring physical feats" (205).

4.10.2. Family Narratives

Categories of family stories or categories that apply to this section include the following, proposed by Steven J. Zeitlin, Amy J. Kotkin and Holly Cutting Baker,[42] Linda Dégh,[43] and Richard S. Tallman.[44]

1) *Heroes:* "Tales of heroic action" wherein "virtuous protagonists triumph over malicious opponents, with wit and wisdom or a decisive physical stroke" (Zeitlin et al. 20).

2a) *Mischief Makers:* concern pranks and practical jokes, "the tales in their essence depict characters in conflict, A getting better of B, B sometimes

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[41]Jack Santino, "Characteristics of Occupational Narratives," *Western Folklore* 37 (1978): 203-205.

[42]Steven J. Zeitlin, Amy J. Kotkin, and Holly Cutting Baker, *A Celebration of American Family Folklore* (New York: Pantheon, 1982.)

[43]Linda Dégh, "Folk Narrative," *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, ed. Richard M. Dorson (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1972) 53-83.

[44]Richard S. Tallman, "A Generic Approach to the Practical Joke," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 38 (1974): 259-65.

turning the tables and getting the better of A....The pranks are usually directed towards figures of authority--[e.g.,] parents...--and have, by their very nature, a build-up, a conflict, and a climax" (Zeitlin et al. 20).

2b) *The Practical Joke/Prank:* a traditional narrative describing a "competitive play activity in which only one of two opposing sides is consciously aware of the fact that a state of play exists; for the joke to be successful, one side must remain unaware of the fact that a play activity is occurring until it is 'too late,' that is, until the unknowing side is made to seem foolish or is caused some physical or mental discomfort" (Tallman 260-61).

3a) *Migrations:* "...the family member escapes from a home riddled with hardship and oppression, making his way across ocean and land to establish himself in a new home....The migration story has three parts: a reason for departure, a journey and a struggle for survival in a new home. Although there may be a dramatic narrative about only one of the three parts, all three are often touched on by the family storyteller" (Zeitlin et al. 20).

3b) *Emigrant and Immigrant Epics:* Narratives told by "uprooted and relocated people in their new community of compatriots" containing both "labor reminiscences" and "life stories" (Dégh 80).

4) *Courtships:* "Any early dating episode is likely to be recalled as a first encounter, mixed emotions are transformed into love at first sight, coincidence is changed to destiny, and motifs, themes, and details from fiction romanticize reality. The result is a sort of charter for the family's life together, the family romance" (Zeitlin et al. 94).

5) *Other stories:* include tales "difficult to categorize...[they] remind us that although family members share many life experiences with other Americans, some of their tales are particular to a specific ethnic group or region; others are simply unique to an individual family" (Zeitlin et al. 94).

4.10.3. General Narratives

1) *Stories of luck:* included in this category is the theme "narrow escapes from grave danger" (Dégh 78).

2) *Humorous stories:* "bear a strong resemblance to improvised anecdotes but are usually narrower, centering on one comic incident" (Dégh 78).

While the above categories suggested by other scholars are useful to my study, the unique situation arising from the overlap of work and family in the Wakeleys' case precludes a clear-cut delineation. In other works, that line is stronger. However, it is obvious that there are aspects of Newfoundland family and occupational life which are not that simple to categorise interdependently. Certainly, the study of lightkeepers and their families is one such example.

Chapter 5

Analysis of Narratives

Folklorists have developed analytic categories for narratives into which many of the Wakeleys' stories fit. All of the stories can be considered under the broad heading "personal experience narratives," what Dégh terms "everyday stories" which "follow the trend of the more established genres." Personal experience narratives, related in first or third person, evolve from "reminiscences of the past, and events, hearsay, rumor, gossip, and personal experiences of the present."[45]

Some of the Wakeleys' personal experience stories are occupational narratives or labour reminiscences. Such narratives detail the experiences of workers including themes such as: the nature of particular occupations, professional and social successes and failures, and personal relations associated with the workplace.[46] Occupational narratives illuminate both physical challenges faced by workers, and social or sociological problems related to responsibility, status, and authority.[47] Other narratives told by the Wakeleys are

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[45]Dégh, "Folk Narrative," *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*, ed. Richard M. Dorson (Chicago: U of Chicago, 1972) 53-83.

[46]Dégh 78.

[47]Santino, "Characteristics of Occupational Narratives," *Western Folklore* 37 (1978): 212.

family stories which are a family's creative accounts of a common past,[48] representing the family as a distinct and unified personality.[49] Many of the couple's stories can be considered a form of dyadic folklore. A dyad is an informal interaction generated and maintained by two individuals whose relationship is not based on social status, such as friends or couples who are united conjugally. Dyadic traditions are manifested in both behaviour and language, recognised by the couple as being of historical significance to their relationship.[50] I wish to extend Elliott Oring's definition of dyadic folklore from "names, metaphors, gestures, interactive routines, [and] rituals,"[51] and Regina Bendix's addition of "playful enactments,"[52] to include life history narratives exclusive to a particular couple.

An analytic typology in concert with these theoretical conceptions of narratives does much to enhance our understanding of the Wakeleys' entire repertoire. Also, it is crucial that these narratives be understood in the performance context of the collecting experience. To that extent, it is important to consider what Lovelace views as "component narratives" or:

> ... stories of specific events in the life of a narrator which have been told before in other contexts and perhaps for different functions; they exist as available material in the narrative repertory of the individual and are used when appropriate to his sense of the demands of the

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[48]Steven J. Zeitlin, Amy J. Kotkin, and Holly Cutting Baker, *A Celebration of American Family Folklore* (New York: Pantheon, 1982) 2.

[49]Sandra K. D. Stahl, "The Oral Personal Narrative in Its Generic Context," *Fabula* 18 (1977): 33-35.

[50]Elliot Oring, "Dyadic Traditions," *Journal of Folklore Research* 21 (1984): 19-20.

[51]Oring 20

[52]Regina Bendix, "Marmot, Memet and Marmoset: Further Research on the Folklore of Dyads," *Western Folklore* 46 (July, 1987): 185.

communicational situation.[53]

In the performance contexts of my interviews with the couple, I found that some of the Wakeleys' stories were told more than once to repeat or to introduce a different point. In either situation, the stories featured similar or, in some cases, exactly repeated words and phrases. This strongly suggests that they are component narratives which are enduring items in the Wakeleys' repertoire. When asked whether they told their life history stories on other occasions, Averil replied that they often had while reminiscing with others.

Oring contends that most dyadic traditions are enacted within the dyad but occasionally may be presented in the presence of others. The latter form of enactment is relevant to this study. Many of the narratives in this collection are dyadic on two levels. First, the stories told jointly by Albert and Averil are, by their very nature, dyadic. Their narratives reflect a shared frame of reference. Second, there are instances of verbal cueing whereby one helps the other recall a particular narrative or details concerning the featured incident during the actual telling. Although the basic transcriptions presented in this study cannot demonstrate the complex performative nuances of verbal and non-verbal interactions between husband and wife, it must be recognised that the dyadic factor is constantly present.

In interpreting the content of the Wakeleys' narratives major values and traditional attitudes are apparent. Traditional attitudes, as defined by Sandra K. D. Stahl, are traditional elements of content in personal narratives reflecting cultural evaluations that are "not necessarily consciously employed but do in their

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[53]Martin J. Lovelace, "'We Had Words': Narratives of Verbal Conflict," *Lore and Language* 3.1 (1979): 30.

covert stance make the stories more significant [and] give them meaning." These attitudes represent "the unverbalized segment of a group's worldview."[54]

Traditional attitudes are similar to what Clyde Kluckhohn has termed "covert culture" or "conscious assumptions" which stem from "that sector of the culture of which the members of the society are unaware or minimally aware."[55] Alan Dundes considers traditional attitudes are folk ideas which constitute a group's "unconscious culture." Folk ideas are "basic unquestioned premises concerning the nature of man, of society, and of the world."[56] As an individual is often not even aware of these ideas or concerned with voicing them, the onus is on the folklorist to isolate them so that patterns may be discovered.

In many cases, the speaker does make a point through evaluative statements that subjectively explain his reactions to events and specify how those events relate to evaluation and beliefs.[57] According to Labov and Waletzky, the evaluation is one of two functions of the personal narrative. It is essential because it identifies "the narrator's interpretation of the incident, his personal reactions, and the consequences of the incident for himself or significant others."[58]

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[54]Sandra K.D. Stahl, "The Personal Narrative as Folklore," *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 14 (1977): 19-21.

[55]Clyde Kluckhohn, "Covert Culture and Administrative Problems," *American Anthropology* 45 (1943): 213-227.

[56]Alan Dundes, "Folk Ideas as Units of Worldview," *Towards New Perspectives in Folklore*, ed. Americo Paredes and Richard Bauman (Austin: U of Texas P, 1972) 101.

[57]John A. Robinson, "Personal Narratives Reconsidered," *Journal of American Folklore* 94 (1981): 63-64.

[58]William Labov and Joshua Waletzky, "Narrative Analysis: Oral Versions of Personal Experience," *Essays on the Visual and Verbal Arts*, ed. June Helm (Seattle: U of Washington, 1967) 12-44.

Evaluative performance features, such as direct speech and dramatic dialogue, asides, repetition, sound expressions and effects, and motions and gestures embedded into the narrative, not only enable the listener to vicariously experience events related by the narrator, making these events seem more "authentic," but they support "the narrator's viewpoint or the *moral* judgement which is the central theme of the story.[59] Similarly, by examining the points of narratives and understanding how these stories are generally accepted "one can gain a good picture of the values and cultural presuppositions of a people."[60]

Personal experience narratives have also been considered by folklorists interested in functional analysis and many of their comments are germane to a discussion of the values and attitudes as interpreted in this study. These stories can have both cognitive and interactional functions. In the most pragmatic sense, the narrative form is used by the speaker as "a means of organizing personal experience for presentation to others."[61] Personal narratives are also told to illustrate general truths, beliefs and attitudes.[62] Robinson considers an "epistemic motive" as the essential factor behind the telling of narratives of remarkable experiences and stories of achievement. Recounting the former represents an attempt to codify the unexpected or unfamiliar for future reference, in other words, "to update our model of the world;" in the telling of the latter, the narrator can experience a "vicarious reaffirmation" of "his ability to control his

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[59]Nessa Wolfson, "A Feature of the Performed Narrative: The Conversational Historical Present," *Language in Society* 7 (1978): 222. [italics mine]

[60]Livia Polanyi, "So What's The Point?" *Semiotica* 25 (1979): 207.

[61]Richard Bauman, "The La Have Island General Store: Sociability and Verbal Art in a Nova Scotia Community," *Journal of American Folklore* 85 (1972): 336.

[62]Gillian Bennett, "Narrative as Expository Discourse," *Journal of American Folklore* 99 (1986): 432.

affairs."[63] A "transpersonal motive" also underlies the narration of these stories, representing an effort by the teller to affirm personal identity and socially sanctioned doctrines and values.[64]

As William R. Bascom asserts, folklore in general functions to "maintain the stability of culture." Three of the four functions posited by Bascom pertain to the Wakeleys' life history narrative presentations. Some of their stories reveal certain frustrations, serving as an "escape" from societal repressions. Their narratives are also pedagogic in nature, conveying useful and practical knowledge about virtuous rules of conduct within work and family institutions. Above all, the couple's narratives serve to validate culture through their portrayal of the foremost values and attitudes associated with work and family.[65] The theoretical conceptions of personal experience narratives presented above can be applied to my own observations on the Wakeley repertoire. As discussed earlier, I found that family life and work experience are the main themes which dominate the Wakeleys' narratives. I use these two themes, along with my typology headings outlined in the previous chapter (Heroic Acts, Significant Achievements, Initial Experiences, Dangerous Incidents, Social Confrontation, Remarkable Incidents Concerning Work, Remarkable Incidents in Family History, Pranks, and Humorous Incidents), to organise my analysis of values and attitudes featured in the couple's stories. Narrative categories proposed by other scholars as outlined at the end of Chapter Four are incorporated into the analysis. Each of the nine main typology categories is divided into two sections, "Values and Attitudes

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[63]Robinson 60.

[64]Robinson 64.

[65]William R. Bascom, "Four Functions of Folklore," *Journal of American Folklore* 67 (1954): 333-49.

Concerning Work Experience" and "Values and Attitudes Concerning Family Life." In each section, the relevant values and attitudes are listed and discussed. The chapter ends with a summation of my findings.

5.1. Heroic Acts

For those who live and work at the edge of the sea, the line between heroism and tragedy is a fragile thread. Bountiful and life-sustaining at one moment, the ocean at another is a cold and merciless adversary. To one sociologist, the unpredicability of the Atlantic is an enduring reminder to Newfoundlanders of the "constant presence of physical danger," a harbinger of the possibility of sudden death that "moulds their attitudes to such fundamental questions as the meaning of life...."[66] Francis Ross Holland, Jr., an American historian and authority in the study of lighthouses, suggests that few occupations matched the danger of a lightkeeper isolated in remote, storm-swept locations. However, he also contends that, faced with a grinding monotony that precluded creativity, the lightkeeper did not

> ...consider himself as being an especially heroic breed. He did what he felt the job called for, whether it was to remain on his station in severe weather, or to go to the water's edge at the height of a storm and rescue someone in distress.[67]

The heroic acts narratives recounted by Averil and Albert Wakeley technically fit more easily into the area of family life than occupational

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[66]Ian Whitaker, "Socialogical [sic] Preconditions and Concomitants of Rapid Socio-Economic Change in Newfoundland," *Canada: A Sociological Profile*, ed. W.E. Mann (Toronto: Copp, 1971) 295.

[67]Francis Ross Holland, Jr., *America's Lighthouses: Their Illustrated History Since 1716.* (Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Greene, 1972) 54.

experience. This differs from the approach of Jack Santino who restricts his study of heroes to occupational narratives which recount "work-related daring physical feats."[68] However, given that the two realms were inextricably linked on Puffin Island where duties did not end with a factory whistle, they reflect certain aspects of both.

A folk hero embodies, through past actions or a social role, some aspect of the collective ideals and values of a society. Heroism or heroic actions reveal an individual's primary concern for others and an accompanying lack of self-interest.[69] The narratives in this category have as their underlying value, self-sacrifice for the benefit of family and community. In each of the stories, the heroic act is the rescue of a human life or lives, and Albert Wakeley and two of his children, Bill and Leonard, are the heroes.

Heroic stories in family folklore feature "virtuous protagonists" who defeat "malicious opponents" with "wit and wisdom or a decisive physical stroke."[70] The malicious opponents over which Albert and his sons triumph in these narratives are the natural elements and the environment. In Narrative 1.1, Albert battles the winter sea off Puffin Island to save his drowning son, Leonard. Albert and Leonard brave a fifty foot cliff to rescue Bill in Narrative 1.2. Narratives 1.3--1.6 resemble Narrative 1.1 in their portrayal of potential drowning incidents. Bill and Leonard save their young cousin from the waters off Puffin Island in Narrative 1.3. Albert challenges the icy sea in Narrative 1.4 and helps to rescue

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[68]Santino 205.

[69]I am grateful to Peter Narváez for this idea. For detailed discussions on heroes and folk heroes see Orrin E. Klapp, "The Folk Hero," *Journal of American Folklore* 62 (1949): 17-25; and the chapter, "Heroes and Celebrities," in his book *Collective Search for Identity* (New York: Holt, 1969) 211-56.

[70]Zeitlin et al. 20.

two adolescents who are perilously adrift. In Narrative 1.5 and 1.6, Albert confronts the harbour at Greenspond and rescues two young boys from the community who have fallen overboard. Although Averil is the principal narrator of the first four stories and Albert mainly tells the final two, most of the narratives exhibit strong dyadic elements. In Narrative 1.6, the phrase, "walking down," is used as a mnemonic device by the couple to spark the narrative performance.

All the stories in this category have a "Dangerous Incident" as a congruent theme and thus Albert and Averil would likely be surprised at my interpretation of these particular narratives as heroic acts. In certain interview contexts they were offered as examples of dangerous incidents or community appreciation, with scant hint of the degree of heroism involved. As previously explained, many narratives were repeated during separate interviews for various purposes. In terms of narrational style, it is interesting to note that Albert's humorous manner of storytelling in Narrative 1.4 suggests that he is downplaying the danger inherent in the incident without diminishing its importance. These narratives might have been told by the Wakeleys as cautionary tales in other performative contexts to teach their children about the dangers of being careless or reckless (Santino 203).

5.1.1. Values and Attitudes Concerning Work Experience

Self-Assurance: All narratives in this category reveal either Albert or his sons' self-assurance. Ian Whitaker comments that "the sea breeds a man who must be able to deal with sudden danger swiftly and without hesitation."[71] Albert's repeated assertion in Narrative 1.4, that he knew his exact bearings, "I

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[71]Whitaker 204.

knew *exactly* where they were to because I know me bearing. But the man in the boat he couldn't *see* them but I knew exactly the bearing...", shows that he had faith in his own ability and felt secure in his environment. That same self-possession enables him to take control of situations in which life is at risk, acting with authority in a clear-cut course of action while others stood by. Self-assurance is a necessity for survival in the isolated reaches of Newfoundland. This attitude has pervaded Albert's way of life since birth. However, it takes a strong and undaunted personality to temper action with rational behaviour.

Resourcefulness: In Narrative 1.4, Albert displays quick-thinking and clear-headedness in the act of putting his coat on the gaff and thereby best using the available resources to rescue the two youths.

Perseverance: Albert shows tenacity in Narrative 1.4 in his refusal to leave the island until the boys were rescued. Although there are others ashore aware of their plight, it is Albert and another man who persevere in their search.

Keeping Calm: In Narrative 1.6, Albert remains calm in the midst of panic, logically removing his boots before jumping in the harbour to save the drowning boy.

Self-Reliance: When faced daily in a one-on-one battle with what Whitaker describes as "perhaps the least predictable of the elements,"[72] the sea, Newfoundlanders, like others of littoral environments, must learn to rely on themselves. This is accomplished through a combination of experience and instinct. In Narrative 1.4, Albert shows his independent nature in his decision to proceed with the rescue despite the other man's lack of bearings and the hazardous conditions. Narrative 1.5 also involves a combined rescue effort wherein Albert pulled the boy out of the water and the fish plant manager gave

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[72]Whitaker 294.

him artificial respiration. However, Albert's character shows a hesitation to act on his own which is not typical of the other narratives in which he appears to be a heroic man who acts instinctively and more independently. This was a moment of uncertainty, despite the knowledge that others were actively involved. Had the outcome been different, and had the boy drowned, Albert's hesitation would have had tragic implications.

Pride in Work: Albert's closing remark in Narrative 1.4, "So that's the *last* thing I done on the Puffin Island when I left," implies a certain pride in his work. It is noticed, however, that throughout Albert's narratives describing what most would consider supreme acts of heroism, Albert is reticent to assume a hero's role. Instead, acts such as these are a reality of life, not to be aggrandised, but accepted as reasonable behaviour in somewhat extraordinary circumstances. Such deeds build onto what Albert considers to be more important, that of a "good reputation" among his peers.

Good Reputation: In Narrative 1.5, the fish plant manager sought Albert's help, revealing that the latter was regarded as a reliable person. Albert's enduring good reputation is indicated in the gloss, "And he always said to me, 'Boy, I've got to thank *you* for saving *my* life'"--words of gratitude repeated years after the incident by the young man whose life he helped save. This story may also be considered a "Testimonial" story as defined by Lovelace wherein a "Significant Other" praises the narrator for a work-related skill or achievement, allowing him/her to avoid the undesirable trait of boasting.[73] The "Significant Other" in this narrative is, explicitly, the boy whom Albert saved and, implicitly, his family and the members of the community who, undoubtedly, would have

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[73]Martin Lovelace, "Oral and Written Reminiscence: An Oral Canon," paper presented at the American Folklore Society Annual Meeting, Minneapolis, October 15, 1982, 6.

heard about the incident and would have praised Albert for the rescue. Making light of personal sacrifice can be seen as a traditional modesty in a culture such as that found in Newfoundland, where boastfulness is discouraged and where dwelling on one's own exploits is considered to be immodest. The offhand manner in which Narrative 1.6 is told, suggests that Albert is moderating his image as someone who is aware of being looked upon as being capable and reliant. This narrative reveals that Albert is aware of people's first impressions of him and opinions concerning his reputation.

Responsibility: As all narratives in this category concern a heroic rescue, a corresponding sense of responsibility by the rescuer(s) for those saved is demonstrated in each story. In Narrative 1.6, Albert makes it clear that, as far as he is concerned, there is no distinction between his responsibility as a lightkeeper and as a bystander in rescue operations.

Co-operation: In a littoral environment, the ability to co-operate with others, and to know when co-operation is vital, is as essential as the ability to act alone. John Feltham notes that such co-operation permeated every facet of island living in early Bonavista Bay settlements. It sprang from a "spontaneous desire to help, created and nurtured by the insular environment."[74] In all but two of the six heroic feats described in the Wakeleys' narrations, Albert co-operates with others. In Narrative 1.4, Albert assumes the leadership role when he directs his companion to where he knew the drifting boat is heading. It is Albert who later jumps onto the drifting ice to capture their attention. By mutual effort, the two men are able to bring the boat to safety. In Narrative 1.5, Albert pulls the drowning boy from the water, but leaves the task of resuscitation to the fish plant manager who waited on the dock. Working together, the two save the boy.

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[74]Feltham 107-108.

5.1.2. Values and Attitudes Concerning Family Life

Commitment to Family: Narratives 1.1 and 1.2 in which Averil recounts Albert's rescue of their sons Leonard and Bill respectively, illustrate three parental attributes: love, the instinct to protect, and responsiblity. Albert and Averil stress the last attribute since, in raising their family in a very dangerous place, they probably felt a heightened sense of responsibility for their children's safety.

Preservation of Family: In Narrative 1.3 which describes Bill and Leonard's rescue of their young cousin, Averil reveals two lessons taught by all parents to ensure family survival: the need to keep calm and the need to act sensibly when faced with challenging or dangerous situations. Composure and common sense are vital characteristics for those who live by the sea. The boys did not single-handedly attempt to rescue their cousin but did it as a team and then called for help, proving that they had learned from their parents to respect the power of the elements. These traits were undoubtedly reinforced by observing their father at work.

Trust in Family: Narrative 1.3 also illustrates a certain trust that the parents had in their children. The fact that the men were in the horn house and the children were outdoors reveals that the former were secure in the latter's abilities. Similarly, the fact that the young visiting cousin was placed in the boys' care shows an element of trust which the boys evidently deserved.

Pride in Family: Averil's parental pride is evident in the telling of her sons' accomplishment in Narrative 1.3. The inclusion of the gloss, "...she's always *talking* about that, how her cousins saved her life that time..." with stress on the word "talking," conveys her pride and reveals the significance of the rescue from the time it occurred to the present day. It also acts as a testimonial as defined by

Lovelace. In this story, the "Significant Other" who praises the boys' efforts is Averil's niece, Shirley ("Oral and Written Reminiscence" 6). The boys' heroic act might have superseded any possible negligence on their part or reprimand they might have initially received. In experiencing the narrative performance, I suspected the story evolved over time with the act distilled into a heroic one, now told in view of a life being saved, not endangered.

5.2. Significant Achievements

A significant achievement is the main theme in five of the Wakeleys' narratives (Narratives 2.1--2.5). All stories concern Albert Wakeley and are told principally by him. As it pertains to Albert's life history narratives, a significant achievement is a means for him to gain status through employment and within formal groups.

In Narrative 2.1, twelve-year-old Albert steers a fishing schooner in his father's place at the captain's command. The significant achievements in Narratives 2.2 and 2.3 relate to Albert's military service in World War II. In the former story, Albert performs the brave and voluntary act of relieving a gunner while under fire and only a new recruit in the Royal Navy. In the latter narrative, Albert gains admission into specialised gunnery training at a British military school despite his lack of formal education. Similarly, a lack of education proves no barrier to Albert being hired over other applicants as lightkeeper at Cabot Island in Narrative 2.4. In the last narrative in this category (Narrative 2.5), Albert, newly retired, is accorded recognition and respect by the Coast Guard who recommended him to a co-worker to help fix a radio beacon at Cabot Island.

5.2.1. Values and Attitudes Concerning Work Experience

Self-Assurance: Young Albert displays self-assurance in Narrative 2.1 in his swift reaction to the captain's order to steer the schooner. In Narrative 2.3, Albert's statement, "I'll think I'll take a...gunner's job," shows decisiveness and self-assertiveness. However, his reasoning, that he was good at shooting birds as a boy, though inspired, is somewhat naive, demonstrating how the work ethic surpassed the limitations of boyhood in Albert's life. He did not consider shooting birds a form of play as much as a kind of work experience which he could apply, in this case, to a position as a gunner.

Self-Reliance: In Narrative 2.2, Albert is not an isolated individual who acts independently, as he is often is other narratives, rather, he is part of a collective unit or entity and the element of individuality is on a national as opposed to personal scale. In Narrative 2.3, Albert's sense of independence is made evident through the following polarities which also serve to underline his achievement and emphasise his pride in his identity: one hundred *versus* one, Englishmen *versus* Newfoundlanders, educated *versus* non-educated. He is isolated, an uneducated stranger in the midst of educated native British applicants and he is set apart further from the others by the captain's special recognition of him. In telling the story, Albert chooses to remark on his own reaction to the events and not on the reactions of others which isolates him even further. He sees the events as revolving around him, omitting complexities about the involvement of others in the story. This defensive stance and ability to blot out that which might jeopardise confidence and self-esteem suggest a survival instinct in Albert that could be related to his self-oriented upbringing. In Narrative 2.4, Albert once again stands apart from a group and is recognised as a deserving individual. He wins the job over eighteen other applicants on his own

merit and despite new rules which required a level of formal education that he does not have. His qualities of self-reliance and dependability are recognised by his employers as being more than adequate for the position.

Pride in Work: In Narrative 2.4, Albert's willingness to fix the fog horn at Cabot Island reveals a pride in his occupational knowledge and ability rather than an intent to be rehired. Though seemingly secure in his own mind about his level of expertise, Albert acknowledges the new recruitment standards in his indication to the Coast Guard official that there is "a big bookful I don't know."

Good Reputation: Albert's good reputation in the navy, earned during his preliminary training, is revealed in Narrative 2.3 as the captain waives the required examination for gunnery school for him so he could enter more specialised training. In Narrative 2.4, Albert is respectful of the hiring regulations in his reminder to the official that there were eighteen other contenders for the job. However, his good reputation and relationship with his former employer ultimately qualify him for the position. Narrative 2.5 is further testimony to Albert's good reputation and good working relationship with the Coast Guard. His willingness to help even when he had a right to refuse indicates a loyalty to and a preoccupation with his job, substantiated by earlier comments about worrying about work despite being retired. The reward implicit in the act is the appreciation of the Coast Guard and his continued good standing in the opinions of his former employers. The narrative also demonstrates that by his retirement, if not before, Albert achieved the same reputation as his father and grandfather had in their respective areas of work.

Responsibility: In Narrative 2.3, Albert's sense of self-preservation is viewed in terms of group protection, the enemy *versus* the home country. The story also relates the initial experience of Albert as a gunner and fits easily into

categories proposed by Santino, "The First Day on the Job: How I Got Started" (204), and Lovelace, "Significant First Time A Boy Proved Ability to Do a Man's Work," ("Oral and Written Reminiscence" 5). Albert's brave and patriotic response to the call of wartime danger is suggestive of a heroic act.

Meeting Challenges: In Narrative 2.1, Albert confronts a formidable challenge, demonstrating that he has an inner strength even at a young age. The achievement is magnified with the realisation that Albert assumed the responsibility for the safety and lives of other people--older men of his community who trusted him. The act in Narrative 2.1 can be viewed as an initiation rite into male adulthood whereby Albert is expected to perform an adult's job in a capable manner. This story also falls into Lovelace's category, "Stories of the Significant First Time a Boy Proved His Ability to Do a Man's Work," ("Oral and Written Reminiscence" 5). In Narrative 2.2, Albert admits to fear for the first time. However, he notes that he overcame that fear and did what was expected of him.

Motivation to Achieve Higher Status: In Narrative 2.3, Albert's motive for wanting the job is made clear. He wished to better himself in terms of status and reward. The position ensured both an increase in salary and responsibility for the lives of his fellow marines. His character in this narrative appears to be more astute and self-serving than the character portrayed in the heroic acts narratives who acts on instinct. A subtle side to his nature is revealed by the fact that, while he worried about such obstacles as not being able to read and write, his inherent pride in his own ability permitted him to allow others to do him favours so he could better himself and meet the challenges presented to him.

Loyalty to Superiors: In Narrative 2.4, Albert obliges the Coast Guard in their request to fix the fog horn at Cabot Island, demonstrating a loyalty to his former employer.

Good Family Reputation: On more than one occasion, Albert is reminded of the past achievements and reputations of his father and grandfather. He is hired because of them in two instances. In Newfoundland, as in many other societies where small communities are considered to be extended families, there is an assumption of inherited traits, good or bad, and an importance placed on knowing a person's lineage. This stands in contrast to individual recognition, in which respect is not inherited but is personally earned or lost. However, these achievements or failures become a part of the ongoing family history and, in a perpetual cycle, add or detract from the family name. Despite the succinctness of Narrative 2.1, much is revealed regarding Albert's particular achievement. As a boy, Albert proves to himself and others that he is as capable and hard-working as his father, much like Bill and Leonard do years later (Narrative 1.3). He measures up to his father's capabilities and reputation in two ways: in his own image and in other's opinions. In an unfamiliar situation, he is presented with a test and passes it. He was motivated and encouraged by the fact that his father had once successfully faced this test. Narrative 2.1 also fits into Lovelace's narrative category, "Praise of Others for Their Ability," as the captain and crew praise Albert's father for his sea-faring abilities ("Oral and Written Reminiscence" 6).

5.3. Initial Experiences

Three of the Wakeleys' narratives focus on an initial experience (Narratives 3.1--3.3). The first two narratives in this category deal with Albert and his work experiences--starting new jobs as a saw filer in Narrative 3.1 and as a lightkeeper in Narrative 3.2. In the third story (Narrative 3.3), Averil describes her initial experience cooking Newfoundland food. It may be considered part of her personal

"Emigrant and Immigrant Epic," according to Linda Dégh, which follows similar epics told by members of immigrant colonies in the United States. Dégh elaborates:

> ...each individual has his own, continuously repeated life story, beginning with the memory of the Old Country, a dramatic performance that remains always relevant to the community. Everyone's story has similar facts, yet everyone's story is unique.[75]

5.3.1. Values and Attitudes Concerning Work Experience

Self-Assurance: In Narrative 3.1, Albert's quick reply, "I'll have a go at it," to his employer's offer of a new job as a saw filer at the lumber camp reveals a self-assurance at a young age. Similarly he is quick to accept another new job offer in Narrative 3.2, despite a lack of experience as a lightkeeper. Albert shows a sense of realism in accepting a low paying job, demonstrating that he is willing to make the best of opportunities and not set unreasonable goals. Both narratives fit into Santino's category, "The First Day on the Job: How I Got Started" (204).

Good Family Reputation: Narratives 3.1 and 3.2 reveal the importance of family ties in Albert's life, the extent to which his father and grandfather were role models for him, and the continuity of work through generations in his family. In Narrative 3.1, more is revealed about Daniel Wakeley than Albert. The latter had neither the experience nor reputation for sharpening saws to obtain the job on his own; he was offered it on the basis of his father's reputation as a "good hand." The offer was not made as a favour to Daniel Wakeley nor rooted in a subjective memory of him as a person. Instead, it was directly related to his working abilities. Yet if Albert had not been considered dependable himself, he

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[75] Dégh 80.

would not have been offered the opportunity to work at saw filing. The enduring significance of the promotion to Albert is revealed in the gloss, "...and I still remember about it, you know." Narrative 3.2 bears a similiarity to the preceding story in that it reveals how Albert started a new job on the basis of reputation. In this case, the position of lightkeeper at Puffin Island was offered to him directly because of his grandfather's reputation as a "good" and "dependable" worker in the fishery and indirectly because Albert had done nothing to discredit himself or his family. Both stories fit into Lovelace's categories, "Praise of Others for Their Ability" and "Testimonial" ("Oral and Written Reminiscence" 6).

5.3.2. Values and Attitudes Concerning Family Life

Narrative 3.3 may be seen as part of Averil's personal migration saga, specifically, an "adjustment story" which explains how an immigrant "establishes a new home." It shows an immigrant's efforts to cope with a new lifestyle and environment, providing the basis for a humorous family narrative.[76] This type of incident, which Richard M. Dorson describes as the "comic misadventures of the newly arrived immigrant" is "clearly traditional."[77] The evolution of such stories is described by Stephen J. Zeitlin, Amy J. Kotkin, and Holly Cutting Baker:

> At times, humorous incidents attach themselves to one of the parts of the migration story, incidents which would have been long buried had they not taken place in that sensitive period.[78]

Family Unity: This narrative not only deals with Averil's initial experience

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[76]See Zeitlin et al., 66.

[77]Richard M. Dorson, *Folklore: Selected Essays* (Bloomington: Indiana U P, 1972) 68.

[78]Zeitlin et al. 64.

cooking Newfoundland food but also the first time she prepared a meal for her husband in his native country. Although the failed effort was probably a source of embarrassment and disappointment for her and dismay for Albert at the time, the couple's ability to translate the unfortunate occurrence into a humorous incident indicates a strength in their relationship. Had they been unable or unwilling to see the lighthearted side, the incident may never have evolved into a family story. Albert shows a dominance at the beginning of their new regime as his ways take precedence and he possesses the culinary knowledge required for making the meal, his choice. Averil is not in control of this particular situation but nonetheless demonstrates a willingness to please her husband and adapt to a new environment. As far as this story is concerned, Albert has the upper-hand both in the event and later during its rendering; Averil accepted his instructions and later retells the incident in a somewhat self-deprecating manner. It has been suggested in some past studies of Newfoundland outport life that males play a dominant role in areas of family and social life, while females often passively serve without question.[79] This premise does not apply to my study, although the cooking narrative does convey "proper" wifely modesty on Averil's part and serves as a counterpoint to Albert's stories of his own abilities, virtues, and competence.

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[79]It is interesting to note that the authors of these studies, listed in my bibliography, are predominantly male. One exception to this view is that of Ian Whitaker, who suggested in 1971 that "the role of women in the power structure of the contemporary Newfoundland family remains to be fully investigated" (295).

5.4. Dangerous Incidents

Four narratives in the Wakeley repertoire have a dangerous incident as the prominent theme (Narratives 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 [four versions], 4.4). These narratives describe dangerous incidents without emphasising heroic behaviour and fit easily to Dégh's category "Stories of Luck" which feature narrow escapes ("Folk Narrative" 78.) The first two stories describe occurrences in the Second World War. In Narrative 4.1, Albert and his fellow naval recruits find shelter from an enemy airplane; Averil and Albert face unidentified soldiers in Narrative 4.2. In Narrative 4.3, the couple's attempt to secure their boat during a storm at Puffin Island proves hazardous. The final story (Narrative 4.4) describes Albert's perilous helicopter flight while stationed at Cabot Island.

5.4.1. Values and Attitudes Concerning Work Experience

Self-Assurance: In Narrative 4.2, Albert and Averil display self-assurance in their ability to act independently and react quickly to a possible dangerous encounter with unidentified soldiers. By staying calm, acting sensibly and working as a team, they are able to resolve the misunderstanding before the situation gets out of control. Albert's laughter at the soldier's comment, "...I thought you were going to stick that bayonet in me," can be viewed as a means of diffusing the extreme tension at that moment. Albert demonstrates self-assurance in Narrative 4.4 in his assertion that his judgement about the weather conditions was correct, "I *told* you, boy, we was going to be caught, I *saw* it coming in there."

Resourcefulness: In Narrative 4.1, Albert and his fellow sailors make a quick decision to protect themselves from an enemy airplane and hide in a nearby tunnel. Albert's act of apprehending the unidentified soldiers is a quick and resourceful response to the possible dangerous predicament in Narrative 4.2.

Responsibility: In Narrative 4.1, the decision by Albert and his fellow sailors to hide themselves from an enemy airplane shows a sense of responsibility for their own protection and for the good of their country. This is also shown in Narrative 4.2 when Albert and Averil defend themselves and their country against possible foes.

Co-operation: In Narrative 4.1, Albert, newly arrived in England after his ship was torpedoed enroute from Canada, experiences his second brush with sudden wartime danger. Unlike his character in other narratives, he does not stand apart from a group. Instead, he relies on a collective decision for his own protection. In Narrative 4.4, the helicopter pilot's unwillingness to accept Albert's views on weather and directions leads to faulty judgement which jeopardises their safety.

5.4.2. Values and Attitudes Concerning Family Life

Commitment to Family: Averil and Albert demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility for and commitment to each other in Narrative 4.3 as they mutually help avert a disastrous drowning. Albert plans a successful strategy to counter the perilous situation threatening him and his family: staying afloat in the stormy waters, instructing Averil to go over to the point, swimming to safety, and concocting a medicinal solution of methylated spirits, water and sugar to make himself vomit the sea water he had ingested. Both he and Averil demonstrate a noteworthy calmness in the face of a catastrophic drowning in this narrative. The significance of the story for Averil is revealed in the similarly-worded gloss in all her versions: "From *that day* to *this*, I'll never know how I jumped that gulch" (Version 1); "From that day to this, I never know how I jumped across that gulch" (Version 2); "But there was a *gulch* and I don't know how I jumped across

that and I ***still*** don't know" (Version 3). The use of this device heightens the drama and conveys Averil's sense of wonder and fear. It is interesting to note that in Albert's version, the couple use the mnemonic device, "the boat," to trigger the narrative. It is the second example of this particular form of dyadic folklore (see also Narrative 1.6).

5.5. Social Confrontation

During my interviews with the Wakeleys, it became clear that Albert is, by necessity and temperament, a practical man. He is an individual who has steadfast convictions and is not easily swayed if he believes he is right. Averil was not as forthcoming in relating stories suggesting her virtues and competence. However, in one narrative, she, too, reveals tenacity and strength of conviction in the face of adversity. These traits are evident in eight stories (Narratives 5.1--5.8) involving work where social confrontation is necessary to protect personal interests and self-worth. The narratives in this category describe achievements by the Wakeleys which are not carried out through prescribed norms. The couple's achievements reveal their self-initiative and ability to creatively interpret the predicaments in which they find themselves. The confrontations are ultimately of value to the Wakeley family. However, the local community also benefits as a result of the positive actions of Albert and Averil in six narratives describing incidents that take place in Newfoundland. Because the community is behind them, the Wakeleys not only resolve their personal disputes but also exhibit a civic-mindedness. The narratives show that, despite Albert's stubborness, he goes out of his way whenever possible to avoid conflict, a cultural and social trait noted in studies which find that a high level of co-operation is needed in small

communities.[80]

In Narrative 5.1, Albert confronts his new employer, the Coast Guard, delivering the ultimatum that unless they build a new home for him and his family, he would quit his job. Albert confronts his superior, the principal lightkeeper at Puffin Island, in Narrative 5.2, over the latter's lack of faith in his abililty to fix the fog horn and is personally endorsed by the Coast Guard as a result. In the third story (Narrative 5.3), Albert confronts his assistant over the latter's poor job performance due to alcohol abuse. A visitor to Puffin Island, in Narrative 5.4, does not heed Albert's warning about the hazard of the fog horn and pays the price. In Narrative 5.5, Albert is once again supported by the Coast Guard when confronted by local merchants for selling his homegrown produce at cheaper prices than theirs. Narrative 5.6 describes a confrontation between Averil, acting on behalf of the community of Templeman, and her employer, Canada Post, in an effort to save the local post office. A confrontation between Albert and a military official is the subject of both Narratives 5.7 and 5.8. In both instances, he breaks the rules in order to contact his wife but is not punished for his insubordination.

The Wakeleys' social confrontation narratives fit in varying degrees into Lovelace's category, "Confrontation Stories." In these narratives, the teller re-enacts a verbal dispute with a co-worker or employer over the former's reputation or competence as a worker ("Oral and Written Reminiscence" 5-6). Dramatic dialogue is used by the narrator to vividly recreate the conflict. Just as the intensely recounted verbal exchange acts as a cathartic vindication for the teller,

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[80]For discussion on avoiding conflict in Newfoundland culture see Melvin M. Firestone, *Brothers and Rivals: Patrilocality in Savage Cove* (1967; Newfoundland Social and Economic Studies 5, St. John's: Memorial U of Newfoundland, 1980) 117-19; and John R. Scott, "Practical Jokes of the Newfoundland Seal Fishery," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 38 (1974): 275-83.

[81] the overall narrative affords the speaker a "fictive release"[82] for aggression, revealing the "tensions and frustrations of the working situation."[83]

Social confrontation narratives are most likely long lasting items in the Wakeleys' repertoire as Lovelace notes:

> It is likely that the majority of these stories last no longer than the initial telling within their peer group, but from the evidence of their appearance in life histories, it is clear that some are found particularly memorable and thus remain in an individual's story repertory available for use in other conversational situations of which the life history interview is one."[84]

Albert's motive for telling these confrontation stories is what Robinson calls "transpersonal." As he explains:

> We may grant that narrators will often endeavor to portray themselves as more clever, skillful, resourceful, or of higher moral character than their antagonists. This attitude is not to be disparaged, for it is not merely an attempt to exploit a sociable interaction to further one's self-esteem. It is a semiritualized means of affirming both one's personal identity and socially sanctioned beliefs and values, particularly those that ascribe responsibility, hence blame or praise.[85]

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[81] Lovelace, "We Had Words" 35.

[82] Santino 212.

[83] Lovelace, "We Had Words" 35.

[84] Martin J. Lovelace, "The Life History as an Oral Narrative Genre," *Papers from the 4th Annual Congress of the Canadian Ethnology Society*, ed. Richard J. Preston (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1978) 219.

[85] Robinson 64.

5.5.1. Values and Attitudes Concerning Work Experience

Self-Assurance: In Narrative 5.1, Albert displays self-assurance in demanding the government build a new home for him and his family, "...I send into St. John's and told them if *they* didn't build me a home, comfortable home, that I would have to retire." Albert shows similar confidence in Narrative 5.2, claiming he can can fix the fog horn without the Coast Guard mechanic's assistance, "I said, 'Old man, it's only about ten minutes work to fix it...I done that lots of times, only a few minutes work, old man, we can fix that and, well, notify Department after to our trouble, complain after.'" After Albert repairs the fog horn and the principal keeper insists that it is still not functioning properly, Albert asserts confidently, "Boy, she's perfect now, dead on, boy...." He maintains his composure during his dealings with the principal keeper. The latter, however, got "saucy" and "vexed" which led to his resignation/dismissal. Albert asserts his authority over his assistant keeper in Narrative 5.3, ordering him to change his habits and firing him when he fails to co-operate, "'X', boy,' I said, 'Now you're getting me down, you're really getting me down...you can't operate like this...." However, he stays collected and handles the situation evenly and calmly. Albert's decision to sell low priced produce to local residents despite competing merchants' disapproval in Narrative 5.5 is a personally motivated act, underlining his self-assuredness. The moonlighting dispute puts Albert in an awkward position. As Firestone notes in his study of a small Newfoundland community, "there is competition and each man goes his own way to maximize his own endeavours." However, individual action is not supposed to conflict with the set flow of community life. When community members feel that it does:

> ...they will split up. The integration of local society consists, then, of a balance between two analytic aspects of social life: individuality and

group orientation.[86]

Continued disruption is averted, however, by the Coast Guard's intervention and commendation of Albert's industriousness. That ended the matter. Averil reveals self-confidence in Narrative 5.6 in her act of representing the community of Templeman in its fight to retain the local post office. Albert demonstrates he is self-assured in Narratives 5.7 and 5.8 as he defies military orders to contact Averil.

Resourcefulness: In Narrative 5.2, Albert draws upon his work experience and knowledge to fix the fog horn despite new regulations which discouraged this.

Perseverance: In Narrative 5.1, Albert insists that he will quit his job lightkeeping if a new home is not built for him and his family. Albert shows perseverance in attempting to repair the fog horn in Narrative 5.2 despite the possibility of repercussion for insubordination. In Narrative 5.3, Albert perseveres in his efforts to convince his errant friend and co-worker that his behaviour is unacceptable. Averil perseveres on behalf of the community to save the local post office in Narrative 5.6 by not only spearheading the petition but writing an accompanying letter to her employer. Albert displays perseverance in his plan to disobey military orders and visit Averil in Narrative 5.7. Similarly, he shows persistence in endeavouring to call Averil in Narrative 5.8.

Self-Reliance: In Narrative 5.2, Albert repairs the broken fog horn without the assistance of the principal keeper or the Coast Guard mechanics. Self-reliance at one time was a need as well as an attribute in communities such as those found in Newfoundland where, as Whitaker notes, it was necessary to master as many skills as possible. There was also a pride in the ability to cope with a wide assortment of technical problems. He states:

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[86]Firestone 133.

> In a country with inadequate communications valuable time might be wasted if the individual had to call on the services of remotely situated specialists.[87]

Albert sets his own standard in dealing with the assistant keeper in Narrative 5.3. At that time, principal lightkeepers held more authority and could make personnel-related decisions independently without authorisation of the government. In Narratives 5.7 and 5.8, Albert relies on his own judgement, acting independently in his decision to break the rules to contact Averil.

Pride in Work: In his fight for a new house in Narrative 5.1, Albert reveals a sense of pride in desiring proper living conditions for his family on Puffin Island. His statement "...it was *built* just for me," conveys his pride. Albert's pride in his work is evident in Narrative 5.3 by his resolution to maintain a high level of professional conduct and performance at the Puffin Island light station. Narrative 5.6 demonstrates that Averil views herself more in context of the community than does Albert, although the fact that she was residing in Templeman year round at the time does colour that suggestion, somewhat. Averil is more understated than Albert in conveying pride in accomplishments, downplaying her role and responsibility as manager of the local post office. This unadorned narrative corresponds with other accounts of her non-domestic work indicating that she believed this kind of information or story was not as relevant to the life history as those concerning family life.

Good Reputation: Albert's good reputation with the Coast Guard is evident in four narratives told by him. In Narrative 5.1, his high standing is revealed by the Coast Guard's show of faith in him in accepting his demand to build a new

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[87] Whitaker 301.

home. It confirms that they want him to remain as the principal keeper on Puffin Island. The three other narratives fit into Lovelace's "Testimonial" category, wherein praise is given by a "Significant Other." In all cases, the agent is the Coast Guard. In Narrative 5.2, the Coast Guard official tells the principal keeper, Albert's immediate superior, "I'm wondering what's wrong...[that] Albert can't fix....Nothing on that island that Albert can't fix. Only thing...Albert is not going to do anything if [the principal] keeper says 'No'." The inference is that Albert is correct in his action. Similarly, the Coast Guard praises Albert in Narrative 5.3 in their message sent to the assistant keeper: "I think now...there must have been something wrong for Albert...to get rid of *you*...how could you *do* anything like that?" In Narrative 5.5, local merchants who complain that Albert is undercutting them by selling cheaper vegetables to their customers, are informed by a Coast Guard official in St. John's that, "if Albert took a garden shovel and growed hundred sacks of potatoes or a thousand pounds of cabbage, that shows he's not lazy. I wish everybody *else* was like him." By directly quoting the Coast Guard, Albert avoids overt boasting, an act which is culturally frowned upon in Newfoundland.

Responsibility: In Narrative 5.1, Albert shows a sense of responsibility not only for the welfare of himself and his family but for that of successive lightkeepers and their families by demanding suitable living conditions on Puffin Island. Albert assumed responsibililty for repairing the fog horn in Narrative 5.2 as he was accustomed to doing. By taking direct action with a negligent co-worker in Narrative 5.3, Albert displays a sense of responsibility to his job, and to the welfare of his assistant keeper and mariners. Albert's warning to the visitor at Puffin Island about the danger of sitting too close to the fog horn is a responsible act in Narrative 5.4. In Narrative 5.6, Averil displays a sense of

responsibility to her community in representing the residents of Templeman in their fight to save the local post office. Although Albert breaks military rules to see Averil, Narrative 5.7 shows that he felt torn between the responsibilities to his wife and his duties as a soldier.

Meeting Challenges: In Narrative 5.2, the principal keeper challenges Albert's knowledge and expertise and Albert faces and rises above the challenge. The assistant keeper challenged Albert's ability to follow through on the latter's warnings in Narrative 5.3; Albert carried them out.

Loyalty to Superiors: In Narrative 5.1, Albert fulfills his verbal contract and remains lightkeeper at Puffin Island after the government built a new house for him and his family.

Compassion: In Narrative 5.2, Albert shows compassion in asking the principal keeper to disregard the altercation over the broken fog horn. Narrative 5.3 demonstrates Albert's kindness toward the assistant keeper in hiring him at the onset when he needed work. The story also reveals Albert's sense of compassion and fairness in his recognition of the assistant's problem and his willingness to give him a second chance.

Co-operation: In Narrative 5.2, Albert wants to co-operate with his superior, thinking the best way to solve the situation is to fix the fog horn himself. However, the principal keeper does not co-operate and his attitude and actions lead to his resignation/dismissal. In view of Albert having been a principal keeper in his previous lightkeeping job, this story suggests there could be a possible tension because of his subordination. However, he appears to be respectful of his position and will not step beyond his limits in his statement, "I had to take my orders from *him* which I was satisfied to do." The personal conflict in this story may reflect a larger, moral socio-political conflict in recent times concerning the

value of manual labour as opposed to automation.[88] Albert demonstrates co-operation in Narrative 5.3 by providing the assistant keeper with a second chance to prove himself. When the latter fails to co-operate Albert fires him.

5.5.2. Values and Attitudes Concerning Family Life

Commitment to Family: Narratives 5.1--5.3 reveal that Albert's loyalty to his wife and family is stronger than his loyalty to his superiors when a choice is to be made between the two. He is willing to risk his military position and lightkeeper's job and suffer the consequences. Despite his risk-taking, Albert proves to be a good provider and a good husband. In Narrative 5.7, Albert uses dramatic dialogue to good effect to make his point: "...don't send me *too* far away because I got a *wife* in Norwich"; and show how he tried to invoke an empathetic reaction from the captain: "Now what would *you* do if you had *your* wife in Norwich?" Albert breaks the rules again in Narrative 5.8 to demonstrate his commitment to Averil. Obviously disappointed that they would not be travelling to Newfoundland together, he wanted to cushion the blow Averil would probably feel at hearing the news by conveying the message himself. Direct speech is also employed by Albert in this story to add drama to the confrontation between him and the commander.

In Narrative 5.1, the confrontation is presented in the form of an ultimatum narrated as a paraphrased quote from a message Albert sent to officials in St. John's. Albert's ultimatum, that a new home be built for his family or he will

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[88]For a discussion on the impact of automation on the occupation of lightkeeping see Donald Graham, *Lights of the Inside Passage: A History of British Columbia's Lighthouses and their Keepers* (Madeira Park, BC: Harbour, 1986) 244-58. This dilemma is not confined to lightkeeping. Archie Green has commented on the negative effects technological advances have had on workers, contending that folklore helps to "demystify experience and redress loss." See "At the Hall, In the Stope: Who Treasures Tales of Work?" *Western Folklore* 46 (1987): 153-170.

quit his new job, is repeated to the inspector only after he has offered a reasonable argument for doing so.

In Narrative 5.5, Albert's reaction to local merchants' complaints of moonlighting is one of defiance and he continues his practice despite social pressure. He concedes that although others regarded his sales as "a little bit wrong," he does not believe so. His motivation for selling the produce was financial gain for his family; in his role as wage earner, he desired to be a better provider. The narrative reveals Albert's innate business savvy in his ability to undercut the local merchants.

5.6. Remarkable Incidents Concerning Work

A remarkable incident concerning work is the primary theme in five narratives told by the Wakeleys (Narratives 6.1--6.5). Narratives 6.1 and 6.2 describe extraordinary lights seen by Albert and his assistant on the waters near Cabot Island. They correspond with the family story category, "Supernatural Stories," suggested by Zeitlin et al., describing "...occurrences that seemed supernatural at first but that later investigation revealed as quite ordinary..." (113).

Death is the focus in the last three stories, none of which involve the Wakeleys personally, which are told by the couple as historical, third-person narratives. The remarkable incident in Narratives 6.3 and 6.4 is an unusual burial; in Narrative 6.5, it is a remarkable risk taken by a lightkeeper which proves fatal.

5.6.1. Values and Attitudes Concerning Work Experience

Self-Assurance: In Narrative 6.1, Albert displays self-assurance in immediately claiming that the strange light in the water could be a bird and subsequently investigating the matter. In telling the story, Albert effectively uses dramatic dialogue to contrast his fearlessness with his assistant's apprehension and refusal to join him in confronting the situation. Albert exhibits the same confidence in Narrative 6.2 when he investigates another mysterious light. His statement in Narrative 6.1, "...people say they *see* things, you know, but, uh, I never *did* believe in that..." and his assertion in Narrative 6.2, "That's a little fish, I knew that, sure, before I come down here....Something live alright," are directly related to an inquiry of mine which prompted these narratives as to whether he experienced anything supernatural while at the lighthouse stations.

Resourcefulness: Narrative 6.3 reveals the resourcefulness of a lightkeeper at Cabot Island, his son and others in attending to the corpse of the keeper's brother by using the best available resource: "fish salt."

Self-Reliance: The unorthodox burial procedures in Narratives 6.3 and 6.4 illustrate the self-reliance required by lightkeepers in the era before advanced communications systems on lighthouse stations. These stories demonstrate that their isolation from hospitals and funeral homes dictated that they attend to illness and death independently and provisionally until outside assistance was offered.

Responsibility: In Narrative 6.5, the assistant keeper acts irresponsibly in disobeying the principal keeper's order not to leave the island to hunt birds. The assistant's decision not to follow his superior's order results in his untimely death. The narrative fits into Lovelace's category, "Anecdotes of Other Men's Follies," as it describes a capricious act which is the obverse of competence ("Oral and

Written Reminiscence" 6). As the story documents an unusual accident, suggesting a system for determining its cause and how similar accidents can be avoided, it can also be considered a cautionary tale as defined by Santino (203).

Co-operation: Narratives 6.1 and 6.2, involving the mysterious sightings, demonstrate the co-operation between Albert and his long time assistant, underlining the mutual understanding and acceptance they have of each other's idiosyncrasies. In Narrative 6.5, the assistant keeper's lack of co-operation with his superior and his refusal to obey rules had disastrous and fatal consequences.

5.7. Remarkable Incidents in Family History

A remarkable incident in the Wakeley family history is the main theme in three narratives told by the couple (Narratives 7.1 [two versions], 7.2, 7.3). In two versions of Narrative 7.1, Averil and Albert separately describe the unusual circumstances surrounding their initial meeting and subsequent first date. Averil recounts her memorable trip as a war-bride from her native England to her new home in Newfoundland in Narrative 7.2. Narrative 7.3 describes a remarkable journey by sled from Greenspond to Puffin Island undertaken by the Wakeleys, their newborn son, John, and several men from the community.

Narrative 7.1 clearly falls into the "Tales of Courtship," category as proposed by Zeitlin et al. Stories of courtship describe:

> ...seemingly serendipitous first meetings of husbands and wives. Romance inevitably transforms reality. Two persons meet as a result of some meaningless combination of circumstances.[89]

Narrative 7.2 which details Averil's journey to Newfoundland can be viewed as the second part of her migration saga (Zeitlin et al. 20).

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[89]Zeitlin et al. 91.

The idiosyncratic nature of the story describing the remarkable trip by sled to Puffin Island (Narrative 7.3) suggests that the experience may be unique to the Wakeley family. Therefore, it can fall into the category of "Other Story," i.e., those narratives that are difficult to classify in terms of traditional content. (Zeitlin et al. 94).

5.7.1. Values and Attitudes Concerning Family Life

Commitment to Family: Narrative 7.3 relates a dangerous incident in which Averil, Albert and their neighbours demonstrate a pioneer spirit, a necessary attribute for that particular environment. This is an indirect display of commitment to family, in that it suggests the Wakeleys are anxious to begin this new chapter of their life as a family in their own environment, risking all to do so. The importance of this is emphasised in Albert's gloss, "People hardly *believe* that, you know, things that they used to do."

Family Unity: Although the Wakeleys' courtship in Narrative 7.1 is an entertaining and humorous story, it may have another, more subtle function as Zeitlin et al. suggest: "Marriage bonds seem to be strengthened by the memory of a romantic, passionate courtship, of love at first sight" (91). All three narratives in this category serve to foster family unity for the foremost reason that they are stories selected by the family as positive representations of they way they feel about one another.

5.8. Pranks

Four narratives told by the Wakeleys feature a prank as the main theme (Narratives 8.1 [three versions], 8.2--8.4). The purpose of a prank or practical

joke is to "fool someone [and] have fun at the expense of someone else."[90] In Narrative 8.1 young Bill and Leonard trick their parents by building a small boat for their own enjoyment. Averil fools the boys in Narrative 8.2, telling them an airplane hook will grab them if they play near the hazardous landwash on Puffin Island.[91] The boys are tricked again for the same reason in Narrative 8.3--this time by their grandfather, Daniel Wakeley, who dresses up as a bear. In Narrative 8.4, young Bill and Leonard try to sneak some Christmas cake from their parents who overhear their escapade. This prank, as well as that described in the first story, fit into Zeitlin et al.'s category of "Mischief Makers," in which pranks are usually directed toward figures of authority, such as parents (20).

Pranks and practical jokes serve multiple functions as Richard S. Tallman explains:

> This behavior and narrative all serves its practitioners and carriers in important functional ways--release from suppressed tensions in a manner acceptable at least to the esoteric group, and group identity, solidarity and conformity.[92]

In addition, pranks and practical jokes often provide an aggressive function for the instigators and serve to communicate affection and unity to all involved, including the victim.[93]

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[90]Richard S. Tallman, "A Generic Approach to the Practical Joke," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 38 (1974): 269.

[91]For an examination of verbal threats as social control mechanisms in Newfoundland culture see J.D.A. Widdowson, *If You Don't Be Good: Verbal and Social Control in Newfoundland.* Social and Economic Studies, no. 21 (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial U of Newfoundland, 1977).

[92]Tallman 260.

[93]I. Sheldon Posen, "Pranks and Practical Jokes at Children's Summer Camps," *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 38 (1974): 306-7.

5.8.1. Values and Attitudes Concerning Family Life

Preservation of Family: Both Narratives 8.2 and 8.3 describe how efforts were made to protect Bill and Leonard Wakeley from the danger of playing too close to the landwash. In the first story, Averil warns the boys that an airplane will snatch them if they continue to play in their boat--an exaggeration that nonetheless alerted them to the possible hazard. Daniel Wakeley, the boys' grandfather, plays a trick on them in Narrative 8.3 by dressing as a bear to deter them from playing near the dangerous landwash. These tactics are a means of controlling the boys' play activity and protecting them from harm.

Pride in Family: The building of the boat in Narrative 8.1 and the "water bear" story (Narrative 8.3), in which Bill turns the tables on his grandfather, are simple pranks. However, they are also stories which show the emergence of culturally admired traits, courage, independence, and ingenuity, of which Albert and Averil are proud.

Family Unity: Zeitlin et al. state that "pranks and practical jokes make especially good family stories and are extremely widespread."[94] All four narratives in this category revolve around pranks played within the Wakeley family circle. In Narrative 8 1, Bill and Leonard build a boat and hide it from their parents. The humorous aspect to this story probably increased through time in its repeated tellings. All three versions of the narrative were told during discussions of the children's pastimes on Puffin Island. Both Averil and Albert, prior to the first and second versions, explained that the boys "made/had their own fun." This explanation agrees with psychologist Erik Erikson's view on the freedom from responsibility allowed children during their formative years:

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[94]Zeitlin et al. 34.

> Each society and each culture institutionalizes a certain moratorium for the majority of its young people....The moratorium may be a time for horse stealing and vision quests, a time to go out west, or a time for pranks.[95]

Averil's comment at the outset of the third version validates Erikson's view in terms of the Wakeley family: "[...the children] used to do some terrible things. I suppose like all youngsters, they had to do something to occupy their minds." It seems likely that the boys wanted to assert their independence by building the boat in secrecy and, perhaps, emulate the adults on the island by having a boat for themselves. The prank in this narrative and the one involving the Christmas cake in Narrative 8.4, directed at the adults, might have brought the boys closer together as brothers and friends. By considering the incidents to be humorous pranks, Albert and Averil help strengthen family unity. The practical jokes played on Bill and Leonard in Narratives 8.2 and 8.3 balance the severity of the problem with humour, again strengthening the family unit. Narratives 8.1 (Version 3), 8.2 and 8.3 were told in a cluster during one interview.

5.9. Humorous Incidents

Two of the Wakeleys' narratives feature a humorous incident as the predominant theme (Narratives 9.1--9.2). The narratives in this category detail experiences with animals at the light stations, reflecting in a humorous way both the Wakeleys' closeness to and dependence on the natural world and like Dégh's category of "Humorous Stories," these narratives centre on one comic incident ("Folk Narrative" 78).

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[95]Erik Erikson, *Identity, Youth and Crisis* (New York: Norton, 1968) 158.

In Narrative 9.1, Albert and Averil co-narrate two amusing incidents involving the family's pet cat and sheep. Albert relates a humorous incident in Narrative 9.2, describing his capture of an otter on Cabot Island.

5.9.1. Values and Attitudes Concerning Work Experience

Self-Assurance: In Narrative 9.2, Albert displays self-assurance in pursuing the otter. Although he admits he circumvented the law, "I shouldn't have done it," he does not hesitate to capture the animal.

Self-Sufficiency: Narrative 9.2 followed a discussion of a stuffed otter kept in the Wakeleys' living room in Templeman. Earlier in the interview, Albert explained how he needed to supplement his lightkeeping wages with revenues from growing vegetables. The produce, along with various animals he captured, added significantly to the Wakeley's food supply. This particular catch, however, was so unusual that it merited stuffing and formed the subject of a story.

Co-operation: The incident related in Narrative 9.2 took place on Cabot Island where Albert and his assistant keeper lived without their families. Albert emphasised earlier in the interview that the ability to "get along together" was of crucial importance to co-workers at light stations. This narrative reveals the extent of the co-operation between the two men and suggests that humour was used to strengthen their relationship.

5.9.2. Values and Attitudes Concerning Family Life

Family Unity: The incidents described in Narrative 9.1 reveal the family's attentiveness toward and tolerance for animals. That such incidents could form the basis of a family narrative, shows a creativity in their approach to fostering unity in their family.

5.10. Conclusion

The Wakeleys' narratives reflect both social and personal values and attitudes which add up to what Toelken calls a worldview. This worldview is a patterning on all levels of "expression, codes, structures, and cultural premises" which are reproduced by society.[96] For the purposes of this study, social values and attitudes are defined as those imposed and maintained by an external influence. These influences include such formal groups as the community, the church, the state, the military, peer groups and occupational circles. Personal values and attitudes, on the other hand, are those which are formed internally by the individual. They are self-serving in nature, held by the individual to better herself or himself. These values and attitudes can arise from, but not be dictated by, social pressures. This raises a problem in that the line between categories can thus be blurred. For example, family values and attitudes are difficult to assess in such a narrow definition. Society expects a person to provide for his or her family and, indeed, there are sanctions against those who do not. However, the desire to establish and maintain a certain quality of life can also be personally motivated, out of love, out of pride, out of self-esteem.

In this conclusion, I wish to point out the distinctly defined social and personal values and attitudes expressed in the Wakeleys' life history narratives. I will also explain how these are shaped by a distinct culture of Newfoundland. It is argued here that this cultural influence bridges social and personal values and attitudes.

A distinct example of the effect and role of social values and attitudes can be found in Albert's narrative concerning an assistant lightkeeper whose drinking

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[96]See Barre Toelken, "Folklore, Worldview, and Communication," *Folklore: Performance and Communication*, ed. Dan Ben-Amos and Kenneth S. Goldstein (The Hague: Mouton, 1975) 266.

interferes with his job performance and jeopardises the safety of mariners who depend on him. Albert's compassion for the man's weakness prompts him to give him a second chance. However, in the end, fearing that he might do himself or others harm, he fires him. Albert's personal regard for the man, both as a friend and as a good employee when sober, is superseded by his social responsibility.[97] Thus, Albert fulfils the social obligations expected of him in his role as principal lightkeeper by removing the source of disruption. He also exhibits the cultural trait observed in small Newfoundland communities by other scholars on the importance of avoiding conflict. By affording the employee a second chance and by warning him repeatedly that he was not only hurting himself but also hurting the community, Albert tries unsuccessfully to convince the man to mend his ways. Scott notes that "the all-important and basic social rule of isolation occupations [is] to avoid direct confrontation."[98] Firestone found in his research on a Great Northern Peninsula community that people try to maintain harmony "not as an ideal striven for but as a working arrangement in everyday life." He argues that the individual is an adaptive agent who sees that "...helping others and not being immoral are ways he maintain an optimum social position."[99]

A clear example of how personal values and attitudes can dictate behaviour despite possible social repercussion is found in the two instances during World War II when Albert deliberately ignores the official military rules in order to contact his wife. He does so out of a personal love, and a sense of responsibility and commitment to her. He acts on personal values and attitudes which mean nothing to his superiors.

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[97]The importance of friendship in Newfoundland culture is noted by Lawrence G. Small in his article "Traditional Expressions in a Newfoundland Community: Genre Change and Functional Variability," *Lore and Language* 2.3 (1975): 15-18.

[98]Scott 275-283.

[99]Firestone 118.

Other narratives in the Wakeley repertoire exhibit varying degrees of the same values and attitudes that influence patterns of behaviour.

5.10.1. Social Values and Attitudes

In the social values and attitudes category, Albert demonstrates his compliance with what others expect of him in his display of a sense of responsibility and commitment to his job; a loyalty to his superiors; and co-operation with his co-workers.

One of the initial displays of social responsiblity in adult life is Albert's enlistment in the Royal Navy in 1940 and, soon after, his voluntary service as a gunner on a British warship. Newfoundland at the time was a colony of Britain; Albert's enlistment, like that of the many Newfoundlanders who rallied to the mother-country's aid at the outbreak of war, is an act of patriotism, perhaps a youthful quest for adventure, but not yet a requirement. With the two exceptions of Albert's defiance of military rules, both he and his wife take their responsibilities to heart. At one point, he and Averil, a British citizen who worked in a military catering unit as well as with an aircraft maintenance crew, encounter two unidentified soldiers on a lonely road. The couple, thinking the soldiers are German, have the pluck to "capture" them and demand identification, fulfilling the role expected of them by the military to defend and protect their country.

Back home in Newfoundland, Albert complies with the accepted social and cultural requirement that one must "work their way up" the occupational ladder to gain status and experience. He accepts new jobs at low pay, as a saw filer at a logging camp and as assistant lightkeeper on Puffin Island, to better himself as well as to fulfil his role in the workplace. He reflects the larger socio-occupational

necessity of displaced workers to adapt to a changing work environment by adjusting to the rapid strides that technology brings to the profession of lightkeeping, thus accelerating his promotion to that of principal lightkeeper. Yet he loses neither his traditional skills nor his culturally reinforced audacity to use them when needed. In point: he wilfully ignores a superior's insistence that the newly instated rule book be followed and an outside mechanic be called in to fix a fog horn. Like self-sufficient and able Newfoundlanders before him, Albert fixes it himself.

The often onerous challenges of maintaining and operating a lighthouse are accepted by Albert as a daily requirement of the job. He polishes the brass on the machinery for both aesthetic and safety reasons. Nothing is too trivial if it is a potential threat to operation. Even mysterious lights on a moonlit night are investigated, upon his insistence and against the wishes of a fearful colleague. He dutifully warns a visitor against sitting too close to the silent fog horn, but respects her right to do as she pleases when she announces she is fine where she is. Moments later, a horn blast topples her from her perch. Albert's loyalty to the job extends into retirement. He returns to work after his official departure to obligingly fix the fog horn on Cabot Island. From his narratives, it is clear that Albert does these things because he believes it is expected of him.

The same may be said about Albert's acts of heroism, the selfless displays of bravery that, for those who live on or by the sea, are a part of the reality of daily life. To lightkeepers, courage and clear-headedness are virtual job pre-requisites. Donald Graham comments that "keepers of these lights willingly risked their lives time and again for people passing on ships in the night, knowing better than to expect any reward."[100] Albert's comment that he would have jumped into the

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[100]Graham 168.

water to save the drowning boy even if he "hadn't been a lightkeeper," reveals that he perceives an added responsibility. This is also evident in his refusal to give up the search for two others adrift at sea until they are found and safely on shore.

Albert is by no means unique in his efforts to secure a role in the community. Other case studies catalogue legendary exploits of lightkeepers who extend their duties past the technical requirements of their jobs. Albert expresses appreciation of co-operation and resourcefulness by recounting stories of past colleagues, one who helps preserve a body for burial by packing it in salt, and another who helps find a temporary winter grave for a young boy who died of pneumonia. Albert infers that his colleagues found socially acceptable solutions in otherwise awkward and difficult situations. He expresses no such admiration in the cautionary third-person tale of the assistant lightkeeper who loses his life in a drowning accident after he disobeys his superior and goes hunting for birds.

The possibility of insubordination faces Albert when he and his family move to their first posting on relatively isolated Puffin Island. Three months after their arrival, the leaks in the draughty seventy-two-year-old stone house provided them by the Coast Guard become intolerable. Albert takes drastic action. Personal values and attitudes overshadow the social need to conform. He travels to St. John's and threatens to quit unless the Coast Guard build a new house. The fact that it took three years to complete the house is of lesser importance. Albert is successful in his fight to provide for his family in a fashion he considers reasonable and within the bounds of social standards. The implicit assumption is that he also staged his battle for the welfare of successive lightkeepers and their families.

The quality of family life is of essential concern to lightkeepers stationed on remote sea coasts and islands, distanced from both the amenities and pressures of

civilisation. During Albert's tenure, education is a luxury, not a right. What children learn in self-sufficiency and resourcefulness is often at the expense of social skills needed to survive in an urban environment, where time is measured in dollars and ability is determined by the length of a resumé. Each society grants children licence to have fun. Albert and Averil show parental and social responsibility by creatively using pranks in their children's early years as tools to teach them of the hazardous environment and the value of life. Society's laws and mores are respected and observed, even when no one is around to laud or condemn. Albert rejects the temptation to shoot a stray otter because it is Sunday, showing that social values and attitudes overshadow his stated personal desires.

Averil, as well, exhibits the influence of social values and attitudes that shape and condition the life she shares with Albert, their children and the community. Soon after her arrival in Newfoundland, she cooks a meal of seal, using an unfamiliar method with comic results, partly, perhaps for the personal satisfaction of trying something new, and partly in deference to the social and cultural role imposed upon her as wife and homemaker. A third role emerges with Averil's willingness to organise the community's fight to retain the local post office, the loss of which would mean the end of her job as postmistress. A motivating factor for Averil in preventing the action is the much larger ramification it would have upon the community of which the British immigrant is very much a part. That same community responds in kind when, in a show of co-operation and concern, neighbours arrange to transport Averil and her newborn son by sled from the hospital in Greenspond to her home on Puffin Island during a bitter cold spell in mid-winter. The action is a response by a community in the care of one of its own.

5.10.2. Personal Values and Attitudes

There are also strong examples of personal values and attitudes that emerge from the Wakeleys' narratives. These, too, are tempered to different extents by dominant cultural influences that shape life in isolated Newfoundland communities. One of Albert's enduring traits, from childhood in Safe Harbour to his adult years overseas and back home on the northeast Newfoundland coast, is a personal sense of accomplishment and a desire to better himself. He accepts low-paying jobs to forge a career and gain experience; he prides himself in work well done; he refuses to let a lack of education limit his choices in the pursuit of a job. Certainly, this is partly due to the social and cultural milieu that surrounds him. But his singlemindedness suggests a deeper drive, and a private goal that is greater than that of elevated status in the community.

Albert's personal sense of right and wrong leads him to challenge the local merchants and defend his right to sell fresh, homegrown produce at cheaper prices. The threat to quit his job over inadequate housing, detailed in the category of social values, is another indication of how Albert's personal sense of responsibility and loyalty to his family is ultimately greater than to his loyalty to his superiors.

Albert asserts his faith in his instincts and abilities when called upon to help find and rescue the two boys adrift at sea. He is confident that he knows where they are, how to get to them and how to bring them to safety. His conviction is so strong that he does not hesitate to take command. Nor does he find it necessary to consult or co-operate with others in the rescue party. His companion bows to this self-assuredness and follows Albert's directions. In the incident involving the two lost boys at sea, Albert does not wait for suggestions or orders. He follows his own instincts and thinks for himself once again, making the

independent, logical decision to put his coat on a gaff to attract the boys' attention. In yet another episode, he calmly removes his boots before jumping into the harbour to save a drowning boy. His personal sense of responsibility to his family extends to other human life. As far as Albert is concerned, in offering help when needed, there is little distinction between his duty as a lightkeeper, his moral obligation as a bystander, and his love as a father and husband. These are attributes that Albert implicitly suggests are shared with his father and grandfather. They are part of a personal legacy passed down directly through generations, or realised in reflection later in life. The abilities and good names of his family members are incentives for the young Albert and guideposts in his later stages of moral development and social advancement. When the Wakeleys' sons combine logic and resourcefulness to rescue their cousin who falls overboard, it is an indication that the legacy is passing to yet another generation.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In this study, I have attempted to interpret the nature of Albert and Averil Wakeleys' life history narrative repertoire by determining the narratives' major themes and extrapolating their inherent social and personal values and attitudes. I found that work experience and family life were the two predominant themes in the Wakeleys' narratives. However, as the couple's family stories focused on their life on Puffin Island where Albert was employed as a lightkeeper, the realms of work and family were found to be interrelated. This stands in contrast to most situations in which the private realm is geographically and socially segregated from the sphere of work. These separate spheres engender their own distinct narratives.[101]

In general, the topics of Albert's narratives concerned his work in the public sector and those of Averil's dealt with aspects of family life and work within the home, corresponding to Dégh's view regarding experienced storytellers that such topics are prefered by men and women. However, there were notable exceptions to this traditional pattern, in that some of Albert's narratives dealt with family life and some of Averil's stories concerned the occupations of lightkeeping and postmistress.

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[101]Peter L. Berger discusses the idea of different spheres in "Some General Observations on the Problem of Work," *The Human Shape of Work*, ed. Peter L. Berger (South Bend, IN: Gateway, 1964) 217.

There were interesting examples of this interrelation. The Department of Transport hired Albert and it was his name on the monthly paycheck. However, husband and wife worked side-by-side, sharing many occupational as well as family-rearing duties. Albert grew cabbages and sold them to the community to supplement his salary; Averil raised sheep and used the wool she sheared, carded and spun by herself to knit sweaters and blankets to sell. Later, she ran a post office while looking after the children alone on the mainland during the winter months Albert worked on Cabot Island. While Albert tended to the technical and physical demands of lightkeeping, Averil kept the log book. She also learned enough of the operation procedures to keep the lighthouse functioning if, for any reason, her husband was unable to work. They went hunting, fishing and sealing together. "Whatever Albert done, I done," Averil said. They shared the raising of their seven children. Albert taught them practical skills, such as how to hunt game. Averil, whose formal education in Britain included post-secondary training in engineering, spent more than an hour each day teaching them provincially-approved lessons during the thirteen years the family lived on Puffin Island.

In isolating social and personal values and attitudes found in the Wakeleys' occupational narratives, however, crucial differences were found in the way each presented their stories. These differences serve as useful insights into how values and attitudes affect narrative content.

The narratives of Albert Wakeley showed a sense of responsibility and commitment to the job, as well as a loyalty to superiors and co-operation with co-workers that secured his place in the public workplace. Albert's sense of obligation to others who required assistance proved his worth to the community. His willingness to adapt to developments in advancing technology while retaining and using basic skills when needed made him indispensable to employers and thus a valuable asset to society as a whole.

It is interesting that the only narrative recounted by Averil concerning her work in the public sector was that of her role as an activist in the organisation of a community fight against a federal government agency which threatened to close down the local post office. The occupational narrative contained little detail, compared to those of Albert. Other accounts of her public sector experiences--as a caterer, a maintenance worker, a bus conductress and a factory employee during World War II; as a designer and maker of woolen goods; and as an executive with an assortment of community volunteer groups--were relegated to a few descriptive sentences without elaboration. The sole occupational narrative is significant in light of the numerous family stories that revolved around the exploits of her husband and children or described domestic life.

The extent of the importance of Averil in Albert's occupational life might never have emerged, had it not been for the dyadic nature of their storytelling. In her narrative about a possible confrontation between Albert and his superior over his loss of a boat, Averil asserted that she not only faced the man with her husband but also carried a stick behind her back in case of trouble. Because the couple consistently relied on one another for details and supported each other in recollections, it was obvious that knowledge was shared. It was also clear that the Wakeleys were recreating their past in a way that confirmed that both were active participants in each other's life and that, indeed, they viewed life from a similar perspective.

Where the couple's narratives did not differ in presentation and content was in the strong sense of social and personal values each showed with regard to their family. They were committed and responsible parents who were proud of, and dedicated to, their children. Both responded in similar fashion to the cultural influences that shape life in small Newfoundland communities. Albert did not

overtly boast and he avoided conflict when possible, yet still remained competitive. He wanted to perpetuate the good reputation that his family has built in Newfoundland over the generations. Averil, on the other hand, was a newcomer, but one who was willing to adapt to the different cultural environment. As their subtly didactic narratives show, the Wakeleys want to convey the knowledge they have learned in their lives, those virtuous rules of conduct that have worked for them, not only to their children but to others who showed an interest in them. The conveying of useful knowledge is often a primary justification used by 'ordinary' people in telling their life histories.

For more than a century, in these respects, the lightkeeper and his family quietly carried out the kind of life that corresponds to the direction that appears to be reshaping Western society. The dynamics of social change, which include the increasing presence of women in the public sector and the consequent shifting roles in family life and occupational patterns, are altering the perception of fixed roles in both domains. Therefore, application of research conducted prior to these changes as a tool in determining behaviour, without reflecting how life has been altered, could distort the outcome of the study of modern-day behaviour and perpetuate stereotypes which no longer apply.

It is hoped that this will warrant the consideration of lightkeeping families such as the Wakeleys--and other similar liminal figures who live and function betwixt and between, literally at the physical boundaries of society--as useful models that might be applied to future life history studies and dyadic, family and occupational folklore. In the end, justification for such inclusion can be found in the words of Francis Ross Holland. The lightkeeper, he writes, "symbolizes what we think of ourselves as doing in our better moments: when the situation calls for that extra bravery and devotion to duty, we can rise to the occasion and not be

found wanting."[102]

[102]Francis Ross Holland, *America's Lighthouses: Their Illustrated History Since 1716* (Brattleboro, VT: Stephen Greene, 1972) 54.

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