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Aloysius Burke, Survivor Aloysius Burke, River Bourgeois: I had been home on vacation, on leave. And we were heading back for Newfoundland. We went to Halifax, but we missed the boat. So they sent us down on the Caribou. And, well, we didn't quite make it. (Was there any talk that something could happen with the Caribou, before you went?) No, I can't remember any at all. There was a lot of talk after people were picked up, that they claimed they had a funny feeling, and all that stuff. Somebody had some kind of an omen before the Caribou was struck, you know. (What sort of an omen?) Oh, just kind of a--just a strange feeling, I guess, and some kind of a--well, I don't know if it was a bad dream or what, you know. I myself never heard anybody talk about it. (Did you have any bad feelings?) No bad feelings at all, no, just felt perfect. Came aboard the Caribou, and a few of us went down to the second class sleeping quarters that were in the rear part of the ship, while others went to the front quarters, first class sleeping quarters, in the middle of the ship. But that's where the torpedo struck. But before that, they wanted us to move back with them, up ahead, in the first class sleeping quarters. But the rear, the second class sleeping quarters were perfect. I mean, you couldn't ask for any better. I believe it's a good thing we stayed there. I never saw them again. They more or less got killed when the torpedo struck. Because that's just right there where it struck. There were a lot of servicemen there. There were hardly any left to be picked up, you know. To tell you the truth, I can't say that I heard the bang. I don't believe it's a torpedo that woke me up. I believe the fellows that were hollering, "Get up! Come on! They got us!" And, just to hear those fellows hollering out that they got us-- boy, it didn't take us long to get up then. I just had a pair of pants on and a shirt. When I was sleeping. We weren't actually supposed to take off our clothes. (Did you have lights when you woke up?) No lights at all, no. And just going running up the stairs, well, the water was coming down. The sea washing over the deck, I imagine. But the boat went down fast. (Did you take time to put on your shoes or anything?) No, nothing at all. Just ran. (Did anybody stay behind to take anything?) No. No, they got out of bed and got out fast. The boat was standing on an angle, even then. She was split right through and through. Because she was a former--well, she was half icebreaker, you know. It was a heavy ship. Oh yes, she went fast. They claimed then that she went down in about three minutes time. Three or four minutes. It would be in about that time. It would be no longer. I ran to my boat station, which was on the port side of the ship, at the back. But the boat had been smashed, hanging down. So I went around the back, on the other side, the starboard side, and I just put my foot on the rail, just waiting for a chance to jump. And when I thought it was about time for me to jump, I jumped. (You didn't have a boat to jump into?) Oh no, no, no. (There was nobody there?) Nobody there at all. Possibly there were a few in the water, swimming around. I was wearing a lifejacket. Because I was using my life-jacket as a pillow, and when I--as soon as I woke up, I just put it on me, and made for the deck. I was putting it on me while I was running for the deck. (You stood there at the rail, and you thought about whether you



should jump in or not.) Yeah. Well, at that time of the year, a fellow--it's kind of a hard job to do, jump overboard in that water from a (44) * QUALITY SAME-DAY DRY CLEANING * 6 DAYS A WEEK * Vogue Cleaners Wedding Gown Cleaning & Heirlooming a Specialty GLACE BAY • SYDNEY Danena's Restaurant and Take-Out OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK Home Cooked Meais * Home Baking 383-2118 South Harbour On the Cabot Trail near Cape North