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Alex Poirier, Fisherman from Plateau Alex Poirier in the following discussion is talking about three different fish buyers and the changing relationship between the buyers and the fishermen. He is one of the few people with whom we've talked who fished under all three systems: Robin Jones, the Jersey company that owned a fishing station in Cheticamp since 1770, when the Acadians arrived; Fr. Fiset, the priest/businessman who competed with Robin Jones; and the fishermen's own Co-operative. I was 11 years of age when I started with my father (that would be 1901), fishing for the Robin outfit. I was fishing with my father for 4 years, then I gave it up. I went away, worked at Inverness at the coal mine. I was away for 5 years. Then I came home. I was 25 years of age. I got married. Then I started fishing for myself. (When you fished for your father, were the Robins still at The Point?) No, it was down at The Harbour (Le Havre on the map). Fr. Fiset (the parish priest from 1875 to 1909) bought (Cheticamp Island), and he was buying the fish there at The Point. The island (had) belonged to the Robin Jones. I was fishing a couple of summers there for Fr. Fiset. (Was that different from the Robins?) It was a little, you know--there wasn't much money given. He had a shop and we used to buy our stuff in the shop. From Fr. Fiset. Buy flour and tea and molasses and butter. Well, we used to get some on the farm--but the flour and the molasses we used to buy at the shop. The store was down at The Harbour and we were fishing at The Point. We were getting a dollar for a hundred pounds of fish, splitting. Fifty cents for the hake, split. And the haddock--they didn't want to buy the haddock at all. There were only two kinds of fish they were buying--codfish and hake. The haddock wasn't any good to them. The haddock is the best now. They were buying fish and salting them--in the big house, you know-- and then they had what you call the "vigneaux" ("wire netting over posts on which fish is dried")-- when the fish was salted about 15 days, well they would wash them, and then put them to dry. They were taken out with horses and truck, wooden wheels--go in the woods and big logs you've seen, butt them and make a hole for (the axle). to haul their fish My father was fishing at The Point for a time. Then the Robin Jones moved down The Harbour--when The Harbour was dug out and it was a good harbour. At The Point it wasn't much good, you know--when the southeast (wind) would strike them. So when the Robin Jones had Eastern Harbour (present-day Cheticamp) they moved down there--so (then) they had a good harbour and anchored their boats there. There were a hundred boats there one time--sailboats. (Did your father actually get the money?) Oh, yes. Well, he'd get some money if he wanted to--a little, you know. Well, he had to get some to pay the government taxes, and at the church, you had to pay a "dime" they call it. For the priest. And sometimes some mass, you know. So they were getting money for that. (So they'd get part in money.) And they were getting their flour and molasses and tea from them. There was a lot of stuff you had to buy at the time. The tea was 25¢ a pound and the molasses was 25¢ a gallon and the flour was \$3 a barrel.... (Did you ever fish for the Jersey?) Oh, yes. When I got married, before I got a boat for myself, I was fishing lobsters at The



Point, for the Fisets, and then, when the season was done, well I moved down The Har? bour and got a boat from the Robin Jones-- fish codfish you see. (The Robins firm