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Dad to sing that song. Like, people in the area had a favourite song that they would come and ask Dad to sing. For some reason --I don't know what--but Charlie John loved that song. And on his last visit home, before he went overseas--which is what we referred to when they were going to war--he came into my father's, to our house, and asked my father to sing that song for him. And they remembered that and they often spoke about it, how he came in there and asked him to sing that song. And, he never returned. And in the song, that's exactly the way the story goes, too--the soldier never returned. (Rose, what made Jimmy Curtis make the songbooks? What made you write them down?) Rose: Well, as I told you before--I'm sure the rest of the family felt the same way--I loved for people to come in in the evening because I knew Daddy would be singing. And --I don't know--his songs, his singing used to do something--just lift me. It was just real happiness for me. That's how much I got out of them. Out of his singing. And like I told you, I could see those shipwrecks and those men clinging to--as he'd be singing the song, I could see it all. Just reliving it, you know. And then I wanted to learn the songs. So I asked him one time, one winter, if he would write them for me. So he got a bunch of scribbles and he started at them. And he did, you know, I think 4 or 5 scribbles.

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scribbles. And then, over the years--I would say probably 25, 30 years--the pages were getting, you know, faded, and the writing. So in the '60s (my sister) Charlotte and I decided we should do something about them. So we got at the typing. I read them out of the old scribbles to her, and she typed them. She'd probably type one and then we'd sing it. We really enjoyed doing them. And sort of going back to different times you could picture at home when he was singing them, you know. And I remember when we were doing "The Mary L. MacKay." at one point--the hawsers. Well, I guess. Daddy always said "the hawsers." But in the scribbler, when he wrote the song for me. I think he probably put h-o-r-s-e-s. I can't be sure of this. But anyway. Or else Charlotte misunderstood me when I was reading it out of the scribbler to her. But it said something about them tying the hawsers--it was a bad storm, and the Mary L. MacKay was really having a problem to go from Portland, Maine, to Halifax or Yarmouth-- wherever they were heading. It was a wild night. And it said something about them tying something or other with the hawsers --they're some kind of big ropes or something. And when I came out with this, Charlotte said, "Rose, will you tell me, what in the hell were they doing with horses on the Mary L. MacKay?" (Rose laughs.) Well when I told that to Daddy, he got the greatest charge out of that, you know. "What in the hell were they doing with horses on the Mary L. MacKay?" (So he was living



and able to see those typed manuscripts when you were through with them.) Yes.
(And he did actually look at them.) Oh, yes. He enjoyed them, too. He enjoyed
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other, before I ever mentioned to Fresh Ftowers • Potted Plants YOU
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