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Paul Chiasson from Cheticamp: Working on Coastal Vessels Loyal readers will remember Paul Chiasson as one of the tugboat captains in the story "The Berthing of Supertankers," from Issue 6 of Cape Breton's Magazine. Capt. Chiasson had a long and varied career, most of it on the water. Here are some memories from the days he worked on coastal vessels out of Cheticamp. (Capt. Chiasson, you grew up in Cheticamp. As a boy growing up, what did you think you were going to do for your life's work?) I had no idea at all. Al? though I always had a lik? ing for boats. When I was going to school and I used to see the gypsum boats coming in, and I watched them going out. I was al? ways- -I used to make a picture--I was wondering where those boats were go? ing, which direction would they go. I would have been curious to find out, going to England, now, which way will they go? I was always interested in boats. I don't know, there was always me that interested me in boats. I left home when I was very young. I left home on a Norwegian ship called the Dago that was hauling gypsum from Cheticamp to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The gypsum mine was going. I was only about 16 then. And we used to (go) to Dingwall (where they were also quarrying gypsum)--take part cargo, and come back in Cheticamp and fin? ish our cargo, because Dingwall (harbour) never had enough water for the ship to take full cargo. I had never travelled before. I had worked a little bit during the summer vacation. I had a little bit of money in my pocket. I was not going for the money. More or less I was going just to see what it was like to be in a big city, you know. What it was like to be at sea. So that was my first experience at sea, on s something in this Norwegian ship. I started as a deck boy. (What did you do?) Anything else that the sailors said--anything that the sail? ors were doing. Tying up ship, chipping, painting. But when you started those days, you had to start as a deck boy, then ordi? nary seaman, then able seaman. It was my first ship.... And the pay was--I was not going, really, for money. I was going more or less to have a look around, to see the world. That's about the size of it. Because money, there was no money. The pay was \$9 a month! (How did you get on?) Well, the ship was a frequent caller in Cheticamp for gypsum. And my uncle was the ship chandler. So this day, it was on a Saturday, and I was helping him to put supplies on board of the ship. So he went on board the ship to find out what they wanted. When he came back he said, "The captain told me that they were looking for a sailor." He said.

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