

Gateway NRA, Sandy Hook  
An Oral History Interview with Bill Gould,  
1912 – 1929  
Son of Western Union Marine Observer  
Interviewed by Tom Hoffman, NPS,  
June 19, 1976  
Transcribed by Jo Anne Carlson, NPS Volunteer 2008



Postal Telegraph (left) and Western Union (right) towers were located near the northeastern tip of Sandy Hook before being moved around 1916.



Western Union tower, U.S. Weather Bureau building and Sandy Hook L.S.S. on a postcard after the move to the Northwestern end of Sandy Hook. Note: Date written on card of 1944 is incorrect.



Marine Observer Mr. Gould at top of Western Union Tower.  
Photos courtesy of NPS/Gateway NRA

TH: This is Tom Hoffman and I'm interviewing Bob Gould who is getting quite excited.

BG: Bill. (His name is William Gould.)

TH: We're looking at old photographs in our historical record file here and there's one here of the U.S. Life-Saving Station here, the 1891 Station, Bob (Bill)?

BG: That was 97. (Coast Guard Station 97)

TH: Yeah, that's the number they gave it, 97.

BG: This is Lauren Tilton. He later, after Woolley, was Lippencott.

TH: Keeper of the Station?

BG: The Keeper of the Station was Woolley, then Lippencott, then Lauren Tilton. I recognize his face there.

TH: So that would be the fourth man from the right.

BG: Right, that's correct, Tilton, Lauren Tilton.

TH: You were saying, looking at the buildings here, there's a U.S. Life-Saving Station in the right hand corner, then the one immediately to the left of that one was where you lived?

BG: That was the Western Union two family home, right.

TH: Was that made out of brick?

BG: Nope. That's frame. That's a clapboard exterior.

TH: And to the left of that one is the....?

BG: That was a Government, Army building with quarters. At the far north end was the Post Office on the first floor.

TH: You were telling me how they ...

BG: Here's your wagon you were asking about at the Spermaceti Cove Station.

TH: Right.

BG: Now here's the four wheels and in this case here, they would pull it by hand. Six or seven men could pull that by hand. There were times when they had to move it great distance and they hitch horses to it. See the oarlocks. That's a rowing surf boat and in addition to that they had motorized surfboats. They probably would have one of each.

TH: Right. You were saying about this time period, when you came here when was that about?

BG: I came to Sandy Hook in 1912, in October 1912 and I lived here until July of 1929.

TH: You were saying some of your first memories were of how they moved that house you lived in can you tell me.....

BG: Yeah. That was moved by one horse power. A horse was cabled. Let's see, how would I explain that. Well, the house was jacked up first. The jacks were underneath were placed 12 x 12 beams and they were well soaped with yellow wash soap. The jacks were lowered and the house would set on the 12x12's. Then a large cable was attached to the house. A cable perhaps 400 feet long and that would be placed on a huge spool with a diameter of about four feet. The bottom had a large pin that was driven into the ground and on the top was a long pole attached to the spool. Out on the end of the pole was a large gray horse hitched to the pole, far end of the pole. A man would stand there and he would switch the horse gently and the horse would very slowly walk around and the cable would wind up on the spool and the house would move. Of course, there was also, a block and pull, you know what that is, with the pulleys and all. And that's why the house would move, maybe the horse would walk thirty or forty feet and the house would only move one foot. You were moving a house of many, many tons. Here's a picture of the house. That gives you an idea. There was eight rooms on each side.

TH: The daily traveling was how many feet you were telling me?

BG: Oh, I would say maybe 150 (feet). It took thirty days to move it a little over half a mile. One horse moved it and he also moved these towers that we have here in later pictures.

TH: By the way, why did they move the houses at that time?

BG: It was 1916 and the War Department was in those days it was the Department of the Army. And they were anticipating apparently getting into War in Europe which had started in 1914. And they wanted all civilians and anyone other than Army out of that area there. So, they ordered all those civilian and Coast Guard buildings moved to the extreme end of the Point so that they wouldn't be in the Army's way. (looking at pictures) This fellow here is Maxin, Mel Maxim. He was in the old Coast Guard here years ago. He lived up in what is known as Chapel Hill, Leonardo.

TH: He is one, two, three...

BG: Third from the left.

TH: He's got that white mustache, like.

BG: Right.

TH: That's interesting you were saying, that at that same time in 1916 when they moved your house, they also moved this old Life-Saving Station.

BG: The Station was moved to the Point and all their little cottages that these married Coast Guard lived in were up there. There were five little cottages that were moved in the same manner as the Western Union building.

TH: That was all in 1916?

BG: The Coast Guard went in (19)15 and Western Union moved in '16.

TH: So that Life-Saving Station was moved in 1915.

BG: '15, right that's correct.

TH: Did you ever get to see them practice with the Lyle guns?

BG: Many times, many times. Sure, I've watched it. This looks more like Spermaceti to me.

TH: Yeah, I believe so because of that sand dune there. There's the station we saw that's 1937. I see.

BG: Yeah that's the new Coast Guard. There it is.

TH: There's your 1891 station.

BG: Yeah. There's the one I was speaking of. That's the Coast Guard station number 97. Ninety eight was at Spermaceti, 99 was at Monmouth Beach, 90 was at Long Branch, etcetera all the way down to Cape May.

TH: That's the Coast Guard vessel I have here in the 30's.

BG: That's not the original double ender motor lifeboat that was designed after the English lifeboats. They had the old motor lifeboat was a double ender, size thirty six feet and had been used by the Coast Guard for maybe thirty years. But the original design came from the Coast Guard of Great Britain. Here we have a picture of the two towers and these were built on this site.

TH: That looks like Battery Urmston over there.

BG: It could be.

TH: There's a three inch gun battery.

BG: That doesn't look familiar to me at all. This is the Postal (Telegraph Company) homes. This is a three family (building) to the left of the steel structure. This (the tower) was all sheet metal, corrugated metal. This was all built by huge beams and rafters. This was a very heavy tower. Now this was moved standing upright. They didn't lay it down and move it. This was eight stories and they just cabled it and moved it the same way with a horse. It's fantastic.

TH: Was Johnny Simpson responsible for ....

BG: No, Johnny did not. That was an outside contractor.

TH: I see.

BG: But when they wanted to tear this down, the Army called Johnny Simpson over and Johnny pulled it down. He got under there with some electric saws and it was up on steel beams. He got under there and he knew exactly just what beam to cut with his electric saw. He put a block and pull on it and it went down to the beach. That was not at this site, by the way. It was up beyond the Coast Guard Station.

TH: Right. Yeah.

BG: No plumbing in those days.

TH: Yeah, the outhouses.

BG: But there was a family that lived in here by the name of White.

TH: In the Western Union?

BG: There was an apartment in this part. See the Postal (Telegraph Company) had one building with three families. Western Union had a two family house and they also had the third family lived in here.

TH: Right inside the tower.

BG: Inside the tower, the first two floors.

TH: I see. There's the three inch gun battery behind. Now it's either Battery Morris or Urmston. It's one of the two because there's the three inch gun battery behind.

BG: I'm trying to compare it to this one it doesn't .....(inaudible) I'm trying to recall the story. (inaudible) The towers just to the north was built around 1916.

TH: Was it 1916? Tommy (Gould) wasn't sure he gave me this date around 1910.

BG: I was alive. I remember that because when they were moving this, Western Union operated on top of that water tower. They had a little shack up there. That's where my Father worked because it took them a long time. It really took a long time. He worked there for five or six months on top of the water tower.

TH: Right. Right over here in the old Civil War fort.

BG: Big, big water tower. Well, right up on the north end of that water tower they put a shack up where he worked while they were moving this. He was up there for months. I mean they moved the house in thirty days but this thing took a long time to move.

TH: They moved the Western Union Tower from behind the gun battery there around 1916.

BG: That was 1916 - 1917. The Postal (Telegraph Tower) went in '16. They moved the Postal first. This one was moved up first.

TH: Up to the north tip.

BG: Yeah. Now, it was on the left hand side of that dirt road. That's there where I showed you just past the Coast Guard. This was on one side and the Western Union was on the other side, the right side. And then the two family house that you saw in the previous picture was on this side of the house when they moved it up to the point. This is amazing. You know, I'm just looking at this. This could well be Dad.

TH: Looking at us.

BG: That could be my Dad.

TH: Yep.

BG: Because he came up there in 1912. Look at the plank walk. I used to come here. When a man got a day off, he had to work two tours to get a day off a week. In other words, so my Father had to work from midnight to eight in the morning and he had to work another half of the day till noon twice a week to get one day off. In other words, this job called for seven days a week but the company let the three men work it out the schedules so they could have a day off a week. But they went in at midnight and kept their eye on the ocean out here and watching the ships coming in and recording them. See, there's where the telescope would be out through these ports. There's one, two, three, four, five. There's five ports at the top of this Western Union Tower and they'd look through these six foot telescopes and report the names of the ships coming into the harbor. This all started before radio.

TH: I notice there are other, like slits, is that for ventilation?

BG: No, no, no. There would be times when the fog level would be of a certain height. And when the fog was up higher, up to this level, the fourth or fifth story, then they used to come down below the fog level to see better report. So that's why these ports are there. This was all one monolithic structure.

TH: How old do you think that tower is there? Did they ever tell you how old?

BG: Near as I can remember, 1912.... I would say that Western Union went to Fort Hancock about 1886. 1886 was the start. Now Postal came there about (18)96, about ten years after Western Union. Postal, of course, was the Mackey Telegraph. Now, over at Fire Island there was a Postal Tower like this and it was operated by a one time chairman of the board of RCA, General Sarno. And that was the first job he had in America. He was a telegraph operator and a ship reporter and he ran in competition with Western Union at Fire Island which is quite a ways across the channel.

TH: Yeah, Long Island.

BG: On Long Island and he was the Postal reporter and that was his first job. He was a teenager, General Sarno, who was Chairman of the Board at RCA and he had his telegraph key going into Manhattan Island, just as these had their telegraph keys. Here's your poles, see?

TH: Right.

BG: And there's telegraph and electric on these. They had the Morse radios in those days. This was a huge flag pole and at certain times when they couldn't read the name of the ship, they used to hoist the signal flag up. And the man would come out here where

this man is and he would raise certain flags and signal. There were three or four flags up to question what ship. And the Captain would always seem to want to be cooperative because they had contacts with the New York City Harbor and they would give the name of the ship and when they expected to be docked and etcetera and etcetera. This was done by flags when other facilities weren't operating.

TH: It was important to know when the ships were coming in, wasn't it? That's why they had telegraph.

BG: Well, the Western Union and Postal (Telegraph Company) had what they called the ticker service in the earlier 20's and before that they used various trucking companies and supply houses that would supply the ships with fuel and food, etc. They would have to know what time the ship was coming in because they would have to start their loading immediately because many of these ships would turn around in a few days and go off again. And they paid for all that service. Plus the U.S. Government had to know about it because they had to put aboard their doctors to examine the crews coming in and the passengers to make sure that there was no contagious diseases.

TH: That reminds me, mentioning that, we have an Island down here that somebody dubbed Skeleton Hill Island and I do know that they considered Sandy Hook as a quarantine station back in the 1870's. I was wondering did they ever set any quarantine stations up and did they bury maybe dead horses out on the island down here or is that just .....

BG: Dead horses? No, all the dead horses were buried up at the extreme end of the point.

TH: Really? At the tip then. I was just wondering that down below down at Spermaceti Cove there is that island that they called Skeleton Hill Island...

BG: Oh that I don't know.

TH: Well, they never had a quarantine station but you were saying that the doctors ...

BG: Quarantine stations would be at Staten Island and they also had a Postal and a Western Union there too because sometimes conditions would be so bad that these operators could not get any information from the ships. The radios in those day were well at this time here, this picture was probably taken prior to 1916. I don't know how old this picture is, but it is definitely prior to 1916. And the radio, even though it was in existence, it was very poor. Marconi radios were used in those days. As far as the vacuum tube wasn't perfected or wasn't being used back commonly in those days. Reception was desperate. Conditions had to be ideal.

TH: Could you tell me a little about your Dad? Because he was here for an awful long time maybe you could give us a ....

BG: Well, my Dad went with Western Union as a Marine Observer in 1896. He was stationed then at Quarantine Station on Staten Island, Fort Wadsworth. That's in the (Verrazano) Narrows. He was there until 1912 when a vacancy occurred at Sandy Hook. The reason he took the transfer was because there was a home was also provided by the Company. And it was a nice area in those days; fishing and swimming, etcera. Was very good and very clean. So, he thought it was a great place to raise children and at that time he had two. And we moved in 1912, in October 1912 to Sandy Hook. And he was a Marine Observer there consecutively until 1930. At that time he transferred to Staten Island to cover a man who had retired. And he was made manager there in the office until 1934 when the Sandy Hook manager retired and my Father decided that he would like to back there. There was a, we had a terrible depression in those years and he was just sick and tired of paying rent in Staten Island, New York. We moved back to the, my Mother and Dad moved back to Sandy Hook. Conditions were a lot better there for them. So he stayed on there until 1942. After Pearl Harbor, the Federal Government required Western Union and Postal to close down all operations at Sandy Hook. And my Dad was retired and the Western Union men were retired and that office never opened again after 1942.

TH: That was the last use of the towers out there as telegraph towers.

BG: As telegraph towers they were never used again. I think the Coast Guard used them there on a temporary basis during World War II...

TH: For observation, probably.

BG: Yeah, yeah for observation. An interesting thing you were telling was when they tore them down. When was that when they tore the two towers down?

BG: I wasn't in the area then. I was living in New York but it was done by the outside contractors but it was ordered by the Army. The Army had taken possession of them after 1942. The Western Union never went back to that business again. They just got out of it. It wasn't profitable enough and they just dropped it. They didn't want any part of the buildings and the Government, the Army, used them as housing for enlisted men during World War II and after the War with the drop in Army enrollment they didn't need these old buildings. They were rather expensive to maintain so the Army just bulldozed them down. See, there's a picture of the U.S. Weather Bureau building. And that was a beautiful tapestry brick building built in 1916 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture which had control of the Weather Bureaus in those days. Because originally the Weather Bureau was used more for instead of for shipping, it was more important to the farmers of the country. That's why it came under the Department of Agriculture. In 1916, this was built. It was a beautiful tapestry brick building and it always leaked. Try as they might, the different contractors that the Government would call in never could stop it from leaking. So, some smart contractor said, "Let's put a new face on the whole thing." It was sprayed on and it was a beautiful glittering stones on top of the masonry and it was a beautiful building but the building still leaked. I don't think it ever stopped leaking but it was a beautiful building.

TH: Here's the sidewalk where we were.

BG: Here's the sidewalk that comes right here by the door. We used to skate up here around there. The sidewalk ended really right here at the end by the end of the Weather Bureau. I was showing you where that hydrant is out there.

TH: Yeah, that hydrant is still there.

BG: Incidentally, these hedges on the Officers' line, you know, on that main drag out in front, that was hedge all along there on the water side of that road and there's not one inch of hedge left. That was constant hedge and it really thrived there being so close to the salt water I never could figure out how it could thrive so much right near the water there. Because you know on westerly gales the water would splash up there and that hedge thrived for years. Now it's all gone. I don't know when it was pulled. There is the, this is the Postal three family house.

TH: Right.

BG: Right across the street is that metal Postal Tower. And there's the two family Western Union. And that's the Western Union tower there with fire escape inside, which was a real trap.

TH: Oh you mean the tower itself there?

BG: Oh yeah on the outside was an iron fire escape. In case of a fire and they couldn't get down the inside stairway they were supposed to climb out one of these windows and get on one of these iron ladders and get down. There's four cables stabilizing this tower and then down on the ground they didn't .....(tape cuts off.)

TH: Unfortunately we didn't ... we were talking about stabilizing the tower with one of these four cables and then I think I asked you about your Dad's routine, again.

BG: Yeah.

TH: I think we missed that and the famous story you were telling me about.

BG: I'll try to consolidate that story. I dragged it out a little bit. For many years he worked on the midnight to eight shift. He would go in at twelve o'clock and relieve the man on the four to twelve shift. He would scan the ocean and the channels for the newly arriving ships. Of course, he had his radio there which were not too, in the old days were not too efficient. He also had a big light at the top of the tower where he put the flashing international code to get messages from the ships. To get their description get their cargo, time of arrival and their home port, etc. Then he put his wireless receiver on his head. He would have them on all through the night until eight o'clock in the morning listening for the dots and you know dashes that would come over the ocean waves. He'd

be on duty until about eight o'clock in the morning until the man on the day shift would come in and relieve him about eight.

TH: He had to climb all the way up that tower?

BG: Yeah, eight stories.

TH: Did he like that?

BG: You know he never complained. I never really heard him complain about that. They were contented people. They never traveled much and never saw much of the world but all those men seemed to be content. He had a comfortable home and the company supplied them with fuel and they had free rent and they really never had any worries about.

TH: Security, right.

BG: It was, they had a great sense of security there. Of course, most people on the Post were that way. You had the Weather Bureau. He was a federal employee, the weather meteorologist. And then you had the Coast Guard and the Army. The Lighthouse Department in those days was not associated with the Coast Guard.

TH: Right. The Lighthouse Service.

BG: Lighthouse Service. Everybody was pretty secure there and it was not a hectic life. Incidentally you didn't need a drivers' license in those days or insurance on your car to drive on the Post. I was driving a car on the Post when I was fourteen. You didn't need a license.

TH: Your Dad served all night long by himself?

BG: Twelve to eight, yeah.

TH: By himself, wow.

BG: And Postal was right across the road in direct competition. It was really, in these days they would have consolidated right away but in those days, no they fought to the bitter end. Clarence Mackey founded the Postal Telegraph. That was known as the Mackey system. Western Union was formed years before Mackey formed the Postal Telegraph Company. Western Union was a series of companies and they grew around the time of the development of the railroads in the West and they developed their communications. That's about all I can give you.

TH: But the story of your poor Dad there.

BG: Oh that was the time when they brought back this international manipulator. Samuel Insull he was brought back. He had absconded to Greece. He was brought back by the U.S. Government for trial and he was brought into New York Harbor. Prior to landing in the Harbor the ship and the Government allowed reporters to interview him and go out into the Harbor. A newspaper pool was formed. Several reporters went out there. Interviewed Insull and they consolidated their report and it was brought back to the tower. My Dad happened to be on duty at the time. It was approximately a thousand word report of Sam Insull's interview. My Dad had to send this out all over the country. Western Union was already to shut down all their other lines to make sure that this got through as quickly as possible. San Francisco, Portland, Oregon and Chicago all went out simultaneously. My Dad, who had been a telegrapher for many years, had developed a very sluggish wrist which was important to send on a telegraph key. It took him quite awhile, almost an hour, and he just banged it away nice and slow. He wondered later, what these young telegraphers thought about him. They must have felt very sorry for that poor old guy in Sandy Hook sending out that message concerning the interview of Samuel Insull. You know, back in those days, we had a lot of rum running incidents. It was very active here in the 20's. After 1930, it more or less, dried up. But between 1920 and 1930, particularly the middle and later 1920's, the rum running here was real fierce. It was something to watch. The Coast Guard never did seem to catch them. They didn't have the boats fast enough. Although many of the rum runners would bounce up on the beach in a storm and dump their liquor, cases of liquor on the beach to try to save their boat. This went on for a period of years.

TH: Down at the Visitor Center, that was the old Coast Guard Station. When you first came in, you were telling me about it you remember it as a boy, the staff of Coast Guard men. Could you run through some of the names and tell me the story of that rum runner again?

BG: Ohhh, that was at Spermaceti Cove Station #98. Yeah, that was Captain Francis Downs. He was the skipper of the Spermaceti Cove Station. This was in the year of 1928. There was a rum runner, a 65 foot rum runner by the name of Uncas. I believe it was named after some Iroquois Indian Chief of upstate New York. The Uncas came ashore on a fog and had approximately 500 cases of imported whiskies. I was tipped off about it and when I got down there most of the liquor was piled up on the beach. The Coast Guard was trying to guard it and there were soldiers all around trying to steal it. There was quite a lot of hell to pay. The Coast Guard was sitting on the edge of the beach there. It was a very cold wind blowing in off of the ocean. They partook of some of the spirits to keep warm. By the time I got there, they had everything under excellent control. I myself, picked up a couple of cases of Canadian Club, got it on my bicycle and took it home. Then at Spermaceti Cove there was a surfman called Sam Van de Ver and he was in charge of the horses. He had a horse cart and a horse and he was carrying the liquor up to the station for storage to be transferred to New York. Poor Sam, he got pneumonia that day and he almost died after that, but he survived.

TH: Was he an old timer then?

BG: Sam was an old man then, yeah. I think in those days they could stay. Well, they could stay regular till they were 65 and then they would use them as a watchman or something, up until the age of 70.

TH: You mentioned running the horses, then we got to talking about this. You said they had two surfboats they had there.

BG: At Spermaceti one was a motored and the other was a rowing surfboat which comprised of six oarsman and a coxswain. Under ordinary conditions, just down from the, six or seven men could drag this wagon down to the water's edge and they would back the rear end into the surf. The boat would slide down on rollers into the surf and the men would jump aboard. If a horse was there handling it they would just give him a slap with the whip and he would run back up on the beach and he'd stay up there until the surfboat got back from their rescue mission.

TH: To your knowledge, were they sending men up and down the beach? You know, they used to patrol it.

BG: Oh yes they had patrol and patrol and have and go punch a clock. North of Spermaceti, he'd go up and punch a clock right near the Sandy Hook Station which was #97 where they would punch. Then the Spermaceti man would go south and he would meet the man from Monmouth Beach and they would have clocks there to punch. When that was going on, twice a night they would have two patrols. And of course, they always had a man in the tower.

TH: Up in that watchtower there?

BG: Yeah.

TH: He'd be on the lookout.

BG: And in the Sandy Hook they didn't use that little tower. They used the Western Union Tower. Western Union permitted the Coast Guard man to be on watch there, so the night man always had company there from the Coast Guard there.

TH: That would be your Dad?

BG: Yeah. He would have company from the Coast Guard there twenty four hours a day. There was always a man there. On rare occasions when they were shorthanded for rescue operations, and that would only be for short periods, then the man would be taken out of Coast Guard for an emergency. But other than that, there was always a man in the tower.

TH: You were saying that the rum running all started with lobstering?

BG: The lobster boats started it, and they had a trick. In 1920, when they first started, they were very small operators and they would go out and buy off the big rum ships offshore. They'd go out and buy maybe twenty-five or thirty cases. They would tie a case. They would remove the wooden boxes and underneath would be sacks. The bottles would come in sacks. They would tie the ropes about every ten or twelve feet they'd tie a sack of imported whiskey to the rope. And to the far end would be a small buoy with about a fifty foot length of line and on the bottom of that would be a ten pound bag of salt. And that whole thing if the Coast Guard started chasing them, they'd dump it overboard and the everything would go to the bottom. Then after about twenty-four hours the salt would dissolve and the buoy would come up and later on the rum runner would come looking for his, and pull it up out of the bottom. This went on for a couple of years before the Coast Guard realized what was going on. That was one of their early tricks. That actually happened.

TH: Where were those were those boats coming from by the way though?

BG: In the bay area here, the biggest area here, Highlands was the number 1, rum running center. Probably second would be Leonardo, had an inlet there and Keansburg also had an operation but not as big as Highlands. Highlands was the biggest. Leonardo, Atlantic Highlands was a small operation, Leonardo a little larger.

TH: And the boats supplying them were coming down from Canada?

BG: Oh yeah, these were big sloops that came in. They were coming in from Nova Scotia. And others used to come up from the French islands in the Caribbean and they would bring in French Cognac. They'd anchor off of Sandy Hook. In those days, it was the three mile limit. So, they'd anchor only about four miles out. Just outside of the Scotland Lightship which was the three mile mark. The small boats, the fishing boats and the lobster boats would go out and get the supplies from these big schooners. They'd lay out there for weeks till they emptied their schooner and then they'd go back to Nova Scotia or go down to the French Caribbean islands. Then in 1929, the Federal Government got these other countries to agree to a conditional twelve mile limit. That was to prevent, that was to try to enforce the law. It didn't work anyway because the rumrunners from the states would get bigger boats and they could go offshore.

TH: Sure. Yeah.

BG: Even though the rum boats were twenty miles out, they still brought it in. Although it started to get tighter and tighter. And then of course when the liquor was legalized in 1933, in March why that was the end of all the rum running. It was a lively area here in those years.

TH: Any running gun battles out here with the Coast Guard?

BG: On more than one occasion I'd see these, they had a, the Coast Guard used to use these sub-machine guns. And about every fourth round would be a tracer bullet. At night

we could see these tracer bullets going through the sky and we knew there were lead ones behind it. Another active time here, I'll just spend a few of more minutes and then.... Was when we had the America's cup races here for years and years way back in the 1890's. Of course, I was aware of the 1920's. In 1920, Sir Thomas Lipton brought his *Shamrock Three* over and he was challenging *Resolute* owned by Commodore Vanderbilt, I believe in 1920. He was very active here. Of course, he used the Western Union and Postal as his message center because his empire reached around the world with his tea and different condiments etcetera from the East. He'd bring over his huge steam yacht, *Erin*, and anchor in the (Sandy Hook) Bay and he lived on the *Erin*. The rule of the America's Cup Race was that a foreign competitor had to sail his boat across the ocean. They didn't bring it over on a big ship. They had to sail that boat. So they put a short mast on it and sail it from England into Sandy Hook Bay. And he'd anchor right out in front of the Western Union and the Postal Towers. And Commodore Vanderbilt would have his private yacht there. That happened in the summer of 1920 and the summer of 1924. These races were held off of Long Branch and Sandy Hook. It was a triangular course right off of Long Branch. It was quite interesting. Gertrude Ederle swam her first long swim was from the Battery in Manhattan to the tip of Sandy Hook. I stood there on the beach as she swam ashore in approximately 1926, the summer of 1926, and she swam in with a powerful stroke but she could hardly crawl 'cause the rule was that she had to crawl up on a dry beach. That was the year before she swam the English Channel, Gertrude Ederle.

TH: Yes. I remember her.

BG: Well, I was on the beach when she swam ashore on Sandy Hook in 1926.

TH: Yeah, that was right out here the far end of the Hook.

BG: You know where that little light is that I told you that they kept moving?

TH: Yeah. The tip light. It's out this way.

BG: Okay. Right on the tip end, that's where she came ashore. In fact, I had climbed that light to watch for her to see if we could see her. She dove overboard at four o'clock in the morning in the dark to take advantage of tides and she swam down through the channel and down to Sandy Hook. That's about a seventeen mile swim. The water's cold at four o'clock in the morning. Then the following year she went to England and swam the Channel. Well, that's about the only thing, I don't know, I can probably think of things later on.

End of Interview