



Dorothy Lopes

My name is Dorothy Lopes, the daughter of Antonio L. Lopes, and Mary Amber. I would like to introduce you to my dad. He was born in a town called Juncalinho on the island of São Nicolau in the Cape Verde islands. His parents were [inaudible 00:00:25] Angela Maria Meitra and Lorenzo Antonio Lopes. My dad left Cabo Verde when he was 24 years old. He was recruited by the captain of the William Graber whaling ship to be an oarsman. He had learned to row a boat from when... At the age of 15, he started to go fishing with his father. That skill of rowing a boat made it possible for him to be hired on this whaling ship, which had stopped in the Cape Verde Islands.

From the islands, the boat sailed near Brazil. Six months later, the boat arrived in New Bedford. The date was September 14, 1921. My dad was 24 years old. My dad received the sum of \$10 for six months working on the William Graber. My dad went on a second whaling voyage on a ship named Claudia. That was a final voyage as whaling was coming to an end. After that, he worked at various manufacturing jobs, Atlas Tack in Fairhaven, making bricks in Bridgewater, and making rope at the New Bedford Cordage Company, where he was employed for 32 years, retiring in 1962.

My dad, like so many of the men in his generation, were hard workers. They always provided for their families. My father attended school in Cape Verde until he was 15. He wanted to continue, but had to leave school to work. When he came to America in 1921, he attended night school to learn English. He read the newspaper every day and paved a way for me to be the first college graduate in my family. And now, our family is in its fourth generation of college bound men and women.

My father lived to the age of 103, passing away on August 5th, 2000. He died peacefully on that morning, and word of his death quickly passed through the neighborhood. Many people arrived at his home and the time was spent telling stories of what people recalled about knowing him. It was a real celebration of the many years he had interacted with so many people, and their stories of interacting with him. He was the last surviving whaler in New Bedford.