

**Narrator:** William Hryb (WH)

**Company Affiliations:** Lakehead Shipping Company Ltd.

**Interview Date:** 14 February 2012

**Interviewer:** Nancy Perozzo (NP)

**Recorder:** Ron Perozzo (RP)

**Transcriber:** Jake Alfieri

**Summary:** In his first interview, former ship's agent for Lakehead Shipping Company William Hryb discusses his early career in the port of Thunder Bay. He begins by sharing the story of his early interaction with the grain trade when he sold newspapers to the crews of grain ships docked at the terminal elevators. He shares the story of his family's immigration to Canada from Ukraine, of his father's work for the CPR as a section man in the grain door department, and of the many uses for grain doors in the East End community. Hryb then describes his first role with Lakehead Shipping Company as a clerk under the ship's agent. He explains the company's role as shipping coordinator and representative of the shipowner, including working with the Canada Ports Clearance Association, Transport Canada, and CFIA. He recalls his first day on the job and subsequent memorable interactions with the ships' crews from around the world. Other topics discussed include the history of Lakehead Shipping, the different commodities taken by different countries, the culture of drinking among the ship's crew, changes to the size and responsibility of the ship's crew, and automation.

**Keywords:** Lakehead Shipping Company Ltd.; Ship's agents; Grain transportation—ships; Ship loading; Grain shipping logistics; Lakers; Ocean-going vessels; Seafarers/sailors; Canada Ports Clearance Association (CPCA); Alcohol use; Grain varieties; Automation; Ship's captains; Transport Canada; Canada Food Inspection Agency; Ship inspection; Immigrant workers; Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR); Grain car doors

Time, Speaker, Narrative
NP: We are conducting an interview this afternoon at 227 Southern Avenue in Thunder Bay and it is February 14, 2012. I will have our narrator introduce himself and just very briefly state the positions he's held related to the grain industry.
WH: Well, first of all, welcome to my home. Thank you very much. I really appreciate this opportunity and privilege to be a part of this. My name is William Hryb. I first started in the grain business, per se, in 1975. I was a 26-year-old young man who never

thought he would get into this type of business. I didn't know too much about it, except when I was growing up, when I was 7 or 8 years old, I used to sell newspapers on grain ships, and in particular foreign ships, because they would give you the most tips. You wouldn't have to ask for the dime. They would give you a quarter.

We used to call it two bits in those days. But I remember running over to the *Times Journal* on May Street. I used to have a clever way to get there, earlier than the other boys, because I had a note from my father that I forged his name. And I fessed up to him years later, but I had a note say, "Please excuse Willy,"—they called me Willy in primary school—"because he has an appointment with the dentist."

Of course, I did that for four weeks in a row, and the teacher says, "Well how many dental appointments are you going to have?" Mrs. Dickerson her name was, in Grade 3. She used to let me out at 3:00. Regular school would be out at 3:30. I'd get out and run like heck to the *Times Journal* going to the back and buy 20 papers for a dollar, that's four and a half cents a paper at that time. Then run like heck down Victoria Avenue, and sometimes you'd see a few people walking around and you'd say, "Paper sir, paper ma'am." It was a lot of business. A lot of stuff happening, especially on a Friday or Thursday. But anyway, I used to sell the papers there, as many as I could, and I used to go over to the Adanac Hotel.

There used to be a lot of mariners that used to stay there, especially the pilots. We had, in those days, pilots that would navigate the ocean ships. They started coming in 1961. I was about 11 years old. I knew they were there, and I used to sell four or five there, 50 cents apiece. They would tell me where the ships were. They'd say, "Okay kid. There's a ship over at Pool 8," which is the derelict elevator we have on the Kam River. I said, "Okay, great!" I'd run over there, and I'd have eight or ten papers left, and I'd sell them to the captain for about 25 cents each. So you could see the profit was really--. I've never made more profit in my life since then. [Laughs] But that's when I first got a sense of what grain was because I noticed grain coming out of these elevator spouts at Pool 8 there. So I mean, fast forward, I didn't think too much about the grain business.

You know, I did my formidable work on the streets selling newspapers, going to the various bars and doing that. We weren't too well-off when I was a young boy. My father didn't have the means to give too much to his boys, gave as much as he could. I had two brothers. So this was 1960 range, '61, in that range. And this is when the Keefer Terminal was just developing, too, I remember. We lived in the East End, and we'd noticed all this activity, and the elevators were there. You had this huge concentration of elevators at the intercity area. It was always fascinating to see. These are huge things! What do they do? We used to sneak in and there's pigeons all over the place and we were just moving around just trying to find out what these huge buildings do. So it was quite interesting. But anyway.

NP: Did anybody ever stop you?

WH: We were told to get out of there many times. They just told us--. The foreman would say, "Hey! What are you guys doing here? You're not supposed to be here." They would chase you away.

NP: Just to go back to your dad. So your father wasn't connected to either the railways or shipping?

WH: My father was connected with the railway. We came here in 1949. My father and my mother immigrated to Canada at that time. Actually, they were from the Ukraine, and they were taken by the German forces, my father in 1941. He was a young man of 19, and he was taken forcibly to Germany when the Germans invaded the Ukraine. My background is Ukrainian. You can see my name is different. It's pronounced Hryb [rolls the r] in Ukrainian language and Hyrb in English language. Anyway, my father was taken away to Germany, and he met my mother who was taken by the Germans in 1943 as the Soviets were pushing out the Germans in that particular--. In 1943, two years after my father was there.

They took a lot of young people back, and they took my mother. She was only 14 years old, believe it or not. Quite a young lady. So they met in 1944, they romanced, they had their first--. The war ended, they got married in May of 1945, and they had their first child, my brother Mykhailo, which is Michael. And they had me in 1948. But a year before that, my father discovered that his father, my grandfather, was living in Fort William. Fort William of course, before we were amalgamated to Thunder Bay. You had Fort William, and you had Port Arthur.

My grandfather came here in 1927 to make some money and then ostensibly go back and buy some land or buy another couple of head of cattle or pull horse or something. They had a little farm, two hectare farm in the Ukraine. So my grandfather had good intentions but unfortunately—he was a 33 year old man at that time, 1927—1928 he got a job with Great Lakes. He was there for when the first paper machine was developed in 1927, so it at all started then, right on the spot. And you know, they were communicating, but all of a sudden, things changed from 1927 to 1932. 1928 is when Stalin took power, and he shifted a lot of Ukrainians all over the place because Ukrainians were really nationalistic, and Stalin didn't like that too much. He shifted a lot of these people to Kazakhstan, Siberia, just so that the notion of independence, he didn't want that. So some of my grandfather's friends, whose name was William as well, they made the mistake of going back. They were here two or three years, a year maybe before my grandfather.

My grandfather got wind that when those guys went back to--. Everything was just expropriated. Just taken away. My grandfather says, "No. I'm not going to go back" because he probably had a little bit of a nest egg. Then he just said, "No. I'm not going to do this. I'm going to wait. It's going to change." Well, it never changed. It got worse.

You got the big Ukrainian famine, the Holodomor, in the Ukraine. So millions of people were killed, were starved to death. So they sort of lost touch, in a way. There were some letters. It started to get less and less and then the war came, of course, 1939, and my grandfather was firmly entrenched here, and then he had friends, and he was quite the character I understand. He still has a reputation even though he's been gone since 1983. I still hear old people in their eighties saying, "Yeah, I remember your grandfather. He was quite the guy. Quite the lady's man." [Laughs] So he got that reputation to really think about.

NP: To live up to?

WH: To live up to or to live down. [Laughs] I'm not sure which one.

So anyway, to make this story a little bit shorter—because I could go on and on—my father wanted to emigrate somewhere. He didn't want to go back to the Ukraine because in 1947/1948 they were sending a lot of Ukrainians back who were taken forcibly, and my father heard these very, very bad stories. And my father said, "No, I don't want to go back" because a lot of these people who did go back were met, thinking that they would go back to their own home. No. They were considered traitors, really, and they were shifted all over because they worked with the German war effort.

Of course, the authorities at that time didn't like that, and so my father wisely says no. My mother wanted to go back badly. She was still a young lady. She was married at 16 and had her first child when she just turned 17. She missed her mother and her sister. My father said, "No, no. We have to go. We have to leave." So they went to the Red Cross, and my father discovered that they could print their name in various newspapers throughout North America to see if somebody would find their relative because you needed a sponsor to go to Canada or the United States.

So they were married. I came along, and there was still no news until somebody in Winnipeg picked up the name in one of the big newspapers in early 1948, late '47, saying, "Oh Hryb. I know a Hryb. I used to chum around with a Hryb in Fort William when I go there, had a great time!" [Laughs]

He phones my grandfather, and he says, "I think your son is looking for you." My grandfather says, "Oh, gee." I think he was a little bit reluctant because he had his life here and didn't know what to do. The Ukrainian community here got on his back and says, "Hey listen, you've got a son and a couple young boys." So he acquiesced, and he sent us the money, and we flew. We flew here. Actually, he didn't send money. My mother and father diligently saved enough to fly and flying in 1949 was just unheard of. Probably my grandfather gave us some resources, and my father and my mother had some. We got here in April of 1949, but on the plane, we had to stop in Reykjavik because there was an engine problem, my mother tells me. We had to wait for this part for 13 days. We would've taken a boat quicker. The conventional way of an emigrant. [Laughs] But anyway, we finally got here and got to Montreal and came to Fort William by train, a two-day train ride, and we were greeted by my grandfather.

NP: So your father arrived, I'm assuming, without the ability to speak English.

WH: He did not speak English.

NP: And without a job. So how did he get onto the railway?

WH: He got onto the railway with my grandfather's help. My grandfather, he knew a lot of people, and--. Oh no, let me retract that. My father wanted to get on with the Great Lakes Paper. I'm going to correct this because this is going to go down in history here. I don't want to be wrong. He tried to get on a job at Great Lakes, but for that particular time, for some reason, my grandfather didn't want to have him there for some reason. I don't know why.

They were fighting because the moment they got to the train station—they started to fight like cats and dogs—because my grandfather had this woman on his arm and a big fur coat and a fancy hat. My father said to him in Ukrainian, “Who is this?” And my grandfather says, “This is my girlfriend.” “Girlfriend?” Well, you know, it just hit the fan right there because my grandmother was still alive, and then it started. They had this vitriol for years. And this job thing didn't help things too much.

We stayed at my grandfather's place on Dease Street for a few weeks because there was no place to go. Finally, my father knew some people that he met for several days he was here on the railway. They said, “Hey, they're hiring at the coal docks.” So my father went to the coal docks, and he got a job. He got a job as a section man, and he worked with Ukrainians, Italians. There was nobody who spoke English! The foreman was a Ukrainian. So my father didn't really learn to speak English, as we do, for his entire life. He was a brilliant man in his own way. If he would've had the education, I'm sure he would've been a real success. He was a real political-minded guy too. He just knew everything about--. Instinctive intelligence. Anyway, he worked there for a while and then--. He actually worked there for 22 years.

NP: Now, excuse my ignorance.

WH: Not at all.

NP: Because I'm assuming that the coal docks unloaded coal. Is that--.

WH: Yes.

NP: Exclusively then? So did his job include grain cars at all?

WH: Yes, because he knew a lot of people who worked with the grain door--. The grain car people on the CPR. There used to be a section called grain doors. And, actually, my father did work with the grain door department when he wasn't doing the section man work. Section men in those days would change rail, change ties, bang spikes, clear snow. It was very hard work. Very hard work. And when it was slow there, they would put him on the grain door staff, where they would take the grain doors out of the grain cars, break them down, and stack them. That was his first experience with grain.

NP: Excuse me, those grain doors would be--.

WH: Would be--. The grain doors, at intercity here, they would convey those cars there and also at Pool 5. I believe there was a grain door shack there where they would dismantle as the grain was discharged into the elevator. Of course, in those days, they didn't have the rail cars that we have today that just dump out of the hopper. But they secured their grain with wood—grain doors, they used to call them. They used to take that to break down the inside of the rail car, and they were just coopered to the walls, and they'd break that down, and there'd be a lot of dust and that stuff. So when he was in the '50s, I suppose he got into that kind of grain thing.

A point to note, too, I remember he was having a problem with his eye. They took him to the Mayo Clinic, and he had this condition called Pterygia. Pterygia is a condition that people get who work in the grain business. There may have been some sort of effect on his eyes because of working with the grain.

NP: Do you know anything more about Pterygia? How does it--.

WH: Pterygia is a condition where there's a--. It's not like a--.

NP: Cataract?

WH: It's a growth across--. If it's not treated it covers your eye. The other curious thing the doctor told us at the Mayo was that it's a condition that's prevalent in sugar beet countries when they're harvesting sugar beet because of the dust and whatever. One of the doctors says, "Have you been in the sugar beet business?" "No." "Grain business?" "Yes." But the condition started, and it just stopped for some reason. It just didn't continue. So there was no reason for an operation. That could've been because of the grain business. But my father worked among the elevator environment doing track and things like this and the grain doors.

NP: So he was closest to the Empire Elevator then I guess.

WH: Yes, absolutely!

NP: Do you have memories of the Empire Elevator?

WH: I sure do. The Empire Elevator was quite the attraction for young boys there because we used to swim in the Kam River. Living in the East End, you didn't have any pools, or you didn't have the parks. You had Dease Pool in those days, that's about it. But from the East End to Dease Pool it was like millions of miles away. [Laughs]

So we used to go and swim at the Kam River, right, looking at this huge purpleish elevator. Quite impressive. Right in the East End. Right in your backyard. Trains going in, a lot of noise, it was an attraction for a young kid. Six or seven years old and there was the old brick wall there in the East End we used to play at. But not the Empire Elevator. I'm glad you brought that up. That didn't come to mind until you brought it up. It was quite the place.

NP: Now given that you were in the East End, I can check out some stories with you to see if you can add to them or deny them. [WH laughs] We pick up different stories as we go through these various interviews, and I'm interested in the community involvement with the grain elevators in a non-legal way. So for example, you hear stories about people going out into boats and augering into the grain cars and taking a little bit home.

WH: Yes, there was quite a bit of activity. I won't mention the nationality that used to do this but, you could probably--. A lot of the people in the East End they were Ukrainian, Slovaks, Italians. You had this wondrous mix of people. This quintessential melting pot. And during the '50s, you know, resources weren't there, and you had this--. People who worked on the railway, and there was a lot of seepage through the doors, and you used to have a lot of people with bags, burlap bags, who would go and know when the CPR Police would be there because they would get a pattern. They'd be clever enough to be at the right spot at the right time to gather up the grain. In some cases, drill into the wooden railcar and have it seep out, then take off and feed their pigeons or their chickens. [Laughs] We had chickens at home. There was a little farm right back on McPherson Street. I remember a woman had one cow, and she had a little business selling milk. I remember my mother going there and buying milk. I think there was another one that had a goat. [Laughs] It was quite the thing.

We had chickens and my mother used to go every Sunday—we had a chicken coop of course—and my father fortunately had Sunday off, and first thing on Sunday, we'd go to church. My mother would dress us up and take us to church, and then later that day my mother would take us to—after we got back from church--. It was Church of the Transfiguration, by the way. There was

four churches, and Sunday in the East End was very special because everybody went to church, except some guys from the Italian church who ended up going to the river and were playing craps. [Laughs] They'd leave Saint Dominic's church and meet some of their buddies from the Slovak Church and they'd go to the river and shoot craps.

Church would start at 9:00, and as kids we'd excuse ourselves from our church mid mass, "Mom I have to go to the bathroom." [Laughs] We would escape church and make a beeline down Macintosh to the river, and we'd look over the bushes, and they'd be playing craps. You'd hear these things like, "Yeah, yeah! Mama needs new shoes," and, "My baby needs new shoes." And all this stuff. And the wads of money these guys had. There was guys there I remember--. Should I mention any names? No, maybe not.

NP: No. No need to mention names.

WH: [Laughs] No. Okay, but anyway. They used to have a grand time, and we used to watch them, and most times they'd look and say, "Hey! You guys! Get out of here!" So we'd run back and make the last two minutes of mass. My mother and father would say, "Where were you?" "Well, you know, just had to take a bit longer."

NP: [Laughs] Another thing that I'm interested in just because sometimes my husband, who's family is also from the East End—I'm sure they weren't playing craps though—is the use of grain doors.

WH: Yes.

NP: What kinds of things were grain doors used for other than by the railway?

WH: Well grain doors had a lot of uses. You could imagine. This is wood. A lot of the homes in the East End were made of wood, practically clapboard and insulbrick. Insul you'd have no--. I bet there wasn't one house that was brick, or if there was, that was a very rich guy. The priest had a brick house. [Laughs] The local priest had a brick house. But grain doors were there. They could make--. First, they burned it. You could burn it. There's a lot of potbelly stoves. We had a little house my father bought for \$800 when my grandfather and my father sort of split. But that didn't last too long. Anyway, they had a big potbelly stove in the middle of the living room, and there was only one bedroom, and I remember my father used to not only burn coal, but he burned wood, which was dangerous! But sometimes you didn't have the coal. So that was one application for that.

Plus, they built things with the grain doors. Chicken coops, pigeon coops, sidewalks. Remember in those days? You'd have those big ditches, and people made their own sidewalks to their homes, I suppose. So it wasn't just for grain. It was a practical way to use something and make good of it for your own use, I suppose.



NP: So as we move along then from your father being in the railway business, is that what you initially saw yourself doing?

WH: No. I did not want to get into that business.

NP: Why not?

WH: Well, because I knew it was hard. My father used to come home, and he was tired. He didn't have that much time to be with his children. As a section man, they would work 14-16 hours a day sometimes. My father never shirked working overtime because we had no money. I think my father had 18 cents when he arrived here. He worked hard, and I very quickly discovered I did not want to do this. There were other ways to looking at making a living. So, no. I never even dreamt about it. Although, I took a job on the section gang in 1966 when I was just in my Grade 11 summer.

I needed a job, and my father got me a job on the extra gang. I worked the summer there, and it was hard. It was hard work. I really appreciated what my father was doing because we changed ties. He learned how to hit a spike with a big hammer. A 16-pound hammer. No, a 20-pound hammer. I forget. But it was hard work. Change ties, tamping, change rails. So I had no--. I did one summer. I said, "There's no way!" Had a great tan that summer. You got some muscles. I remember I always admired my father's physique. He was a small guy, barely 5'5", but he had a physique we were just amazed by. When we were kids, we used to run to him—we didn't want to bother him—but we were amazed how big his arms were, you know? We'd say, "Pops! We want to see your arms! Do this!" We had that thing. God bless him, he worked hard, but he ended up getting a job at Great Lakes, finally, through my grandfather back in 1966, and he worked his career to 1986, when he retired from there.

NP: So you moved off into a different direction. How did you get to--. We haven't even talked about what you were doing.

WH: Exactly! Well let's--. We'll cut to the chase here because I know you want to talk about grain. I like to talk. [Laughs]

NP: It's better to interview someone who likes to talk than someone who doesn't.

WH: Anyway, I completed high school 1967 and I always wanted to get into broadcasting, journalism, writing. I don't know, newspaper work. In particular, broadcasting. I loved guys like Foster Hewitt and Danny Gallivan, those guys, those play-by-play announcers. I wanted to be one of those type of guys. I took a year off school. 1967, I went to Confederation College, and I took a two-year course in Communication Arts. Studied broadcasting. I completed school in 1971. I got an offer with a radio station in Williams Lake, British Columbia, back in 1971.

Ended up going to Vancouver, and we had a couple weeks--. My buddy and I, we went to Vancouver. We had a couple of weeks. I had to be up there on the 16th of December. So we left here about the 1st. Well, we never made it because we got caught up in Gastown. Do you remember Gastown, Vancouver? The hippie stuff? Well, we got caught up in all that, and I missed the gig! [Laughs] I missed the gig in Williams Lake. My parents were disappointed. I had to phone home, get some money, come home. Tail between my legs, you know?

My father says, “Well, what are you going to do now?” Of course, this is all in Ukrainian. We spoke in Ukrainian all the time. And my friends who did come over, they were always sort of admired that I could speak two languages. Although they didn’t understand, they sort of sat back there amazed. But anyway, I had this wanderlust, and I loved to travel, and I ended up--. I wanted to go to South America and pursue my journalism so-called career.

So I ventured to South America in 1974. I went to meet somebody there, never met them, and I was heading to Chile to do a story on the Allende assassination. He was killed in 1973 when there was the revolution. CIA was a part of that, Kissinger, that sort of intrigue. Anyway, I ended up in Chile, and the first thing they asked—my passport it had journalist, *periodista per espãñole*—and they said, “What are you going to be doing Chile?” Naive kid, I said, “I’m going to be writing a story about Allende.” “Oh, Allende?” And I said, “Yes.” [Laughs] “No, you’re not.” They escorted me back under rifle. These two guys, they said, “You’re back,” and ended up back in Peru. Threw me back.

Anyway, I spent about eight months there, and I came back. I had no money, and I wrote a journal. I was never published, unfortunately, with the stuff I did there. But I came back and met my wife who is my wife now after 35 years. In 1970—late ‘75, or no, ‘74—just to show Lee’s parents that I wasn’t just a roustabout or the footloose and fancy-free guy that Lee’s mother called me several times, [laughs] Lee says, “Hey you better get a job.” So I got a job. I got a job at Lacy’s Taxi. I drove a taxi for a few weeks. This job came up—Lee spotted the job in the newspaper—it was “Lakehead Shipping Company requires water clerk.” So Lee says, “Why don’t you try this?” And I said, “Well, what’s a water clerk? I don’t know.” She says, “Well, try it. Give it a shot.” And we had just been going together for about three or four months.

NP: So what is a water clerk?

WH: Water clerk is a clerk who works for Port Agency who goes to the ships and does documentation in terms of fills out Custom papers. Every ship coming in, if it’s a foreign ship, has to file a Customs declaration. As a water clerk, you’re the runner for the agency. In those days, the brass wouldn’t go to the ships. Captain Mann occasionally went to the ship. He was the owner of the company, Lakehead Shipping. Lakehead Shipping is a port agency who offer services to ship owners and charterers in terms of

paying their bills in the port, making sure both the charterer and the owner know the parameters of the contract or the charter party. So we, as a port agent—I gave you this analogy before—you got a drink, different ingredients in your drink, and then you have the port agent who’s the swizzle stick. The port agent makes sure everything goes well. **[Interruption]** Where was I?

NP: You were talking about the swizzle stick.

WH: The swizzle stick, the port agent. Well, that’s a euphemism, let’s face it. But it’s not far from the truth because that’s what a port agent does. He makes sure that everything is there that the ship needs to run, to operate well. A ship’s purpose is to load their cargo or discharge their cargo as quickly as they can and be on the move. Sitting at berth at an elevator or a facility just doesn’t make any money. The ship owner has to have that ship move. It’s got to be moving. So as a port agent, you expedite the operations of that ship. Loading operations---. What a port agent does, he liaises with the grain port authority, which is still Canadian Ports Clearance Association. They’re the pivots. That’s the first thing I learned in the grain business years ago when I first started. “Be mindful of Lake Shippers Clearance Association.”

LSCA are going to be your saviour or they’re going to be your nemesis. You’ve got to be on good terms with them at all times because they assign the berths for you, they tell you what cargo you’re getting in the elevator. They are the de facto people that are giving you these orders, so you know where to put that ship, how long it’s going to take. So you’re really working with Lake Shippers Clearance Association, which is, as you know, turned into Canadian Ports Clearance, which is on the verge of extinction, unfortunately. That’s a source of a lot of consternation with a lot of people in the shipping and grain business.

NP: Since you’ve brought it up that they’re going to be extinct, they just sent out a note saying August 31st of this year they will no longer be operating.

WH: Correct.

NP: In their absence and in the absence of anything taking their place, what goes wrong?

WH: Well, what I think is going to happen, a lot of these big grain companies like Viterra, Richardson, Cargill—in that order in particular—will probably dictate to the other users as to what ships are going first because they’re the big guy on the block. By virtue of their behemoth size, they are going to not bully, but they’re going to tell ships, “Well, no. Not first come first serve anymore. I’ve got 10,000 tonnes of amber durum I got to move. Even though that ship was first or whatever, it’s going to have to wait because I have to move this.” So they’re going to be the people that are dictating where these ships are going to go. It’s going to be a bit strange.

RP: Can you explain why the Canadian Port Authority is disbanding? The Clearance is disbanding?

WH: The Canadian Wheat Board is one of their big customers, and Canadian Ports, their executive have rationalized that if the Canadian Wheat Board isn't there—because the CWB they're the big players on the block—and if they're not going to be there, then Canadian Ports, the reason for their existence is compromised. There's no reason, according to their rationale. They've got 11 staff across the country. Wheat Board goes, they've got no role to play. But you know what? There's a lot that could happen from now until August 31st. This could change. We don't know. A lot of people think it's writing on the wall, but there might be somebody that the big grain companies appoint to take over that position as a controller, as a coordinator.

This is an opportunity for somebody or organization to step into that role because we still have eight elevators active in the port. You still have to coordinate where that ship is going to go, and really knowing where the grain is and communicating to the captains. That's what they do.

Roy, who's a one-man show here, Roy Ward, which I hope you have an opportunity to interview, along with Dan O'Connor. These are the guys who work with the captains directly, hands on. So they advise the ship where to go, what to do, and how much they're going to take. With say one grain company, like Viterra says, okay they're going to have to set up communications with the ship, the laker owners, which they have, but it's not as close as what Lake Shippers or Canadian Ports have developed over all these years. I mean they know these captains like they're relatives. They know what to expect. It might be chaotic for a bit, but you know with something you think might go down as a poor decision might just come up smelling roses. You don't know until that dynamic really takes hold.

NP: Now from your perspective though, as a ship's agent, what will that mean for you?

WH: Heretofore, it'll continue up until August. What my responsibility is for the ship owner and the ship charter, as the representative of the ship, when I get the appointment from my principal either in Europe or Montreal—normally it's from Montreal—they represent a lot of the shipowners. They would say, "Okay Hryb, we got a ship for you. We've got the motor vessel the *Federal Hudson*." And they say, "Okay, we'd like you to operate it for us. We'd like you to be the port agent for it."

The first thing you say is, "When is it due? What's the ETA?" You establish that communication, and then they say, "Well, we'll keep you posted." So you take the reins. Then, when you get the permission for the owner to let Canadian Ports know, which is a public entity--. Because some ship owners or some charters don't want to let some Canadian Ports know because other competitors like Richardson's. Or they don't want Richardsons or Cargill to know there's a ship in place because they're trading, you know?

Grain business is a huge trading dynamic, so sometimes they want to keep it really close to the chest, up until three or four days before the ship arrives, which is a bit of a problem for Canadian Ports because they want as much lead time as possible, so that they could have everything coordinated. There's other ships so, as far as I'm concerned, the sooner you give the ETA of the ship to Canadian Ports, they put it in the lineup, and heretofore, first come first serve for Canadian Ports. That's the way they played this game up until about four years ago when the big guys started to say, "Hey, that's not in our best interest. We're the big guys here. We want that ship in there right now." So it's sort of usurped Canadian Port's thing. It's been frustrating for them, but they've tried to keep a hold on it, the reins on it. Just to get back, once you put the ship in the lineup.

Officially Canadian Ports starts working with Winnipeg, who are working with the Wheat Board. We would daily give updates on when the ship is here, what's going on, what the ship could load, give them a stow plan. We are always feeding them information so they could give us the timing that we need to make sure that the ship operates as expeditiously as it can.

We don't want to be waiting out at anchor for three days because even minute delays, minutes, add up to hours. Hours add up to more hours, and a ship is worth anywhere up to \$2,000 a day, \$2,000 an hour! Some ships are worth \$16-17,000 a day if you extrapolate that. So timing is important. That's where Canadian Ports really play the game very fair for ship owners and charterers. Sometimes charterers are saying to themselves, "Oh, we can do this ourselves. We're big enough to do that." So it's going to be a bit of a chore. It's going to be difficult. It's going to be a new thing.

NP: I understand that my technical assistant would ask questions, which is great.

WH: Okay. [Laughs]

NP: But I'll introduce him, so the listener knows the voice. This is Ron Perozzo. He calls himself the technical assistant in training.

WH: The IT guy. [Laughs]

RP: I'm just curious how the ships coming up, salties, would apparently be coming up with a load and then taking back something?

WH: Not necessarily, Ron. Saltwater ships normally would come into the Seaway with steel cargo—traditionally steel cargo—and they would discharge that at Cleveland or Detroit or Chicago for the steel mills. Of course, when the car industry was really revved up, there was a lot of steel coming in. It was steel coming in, grain going back. They would discharge the steel in either Cleveland,

Toledo, Chicago, Milwaukee. It's like a milk run. Steel coils, steel pipe, steel for the car industry. There were other applications as well but normally for the car industry.

Then they would come up to the grain ports of Thunder Bay or Duluth, our nemesis, and they would pick up grain. They would haul that grain back either direct to discharge ports overseas or to a St. Lawrence River port where they would top off because you had a restriction here on this side of the Welland Canal. You cannot exceed eight metres because of the restrictions in the lock system there. So you've got ships that could load, hypothetically, 35,000 tonnes if there was enough water to get through. Ships do top off in the St. Lawrence to get their appropriate summer lift.

RP: And what about lakers? Are they coming up empty?

WH: Lakers are moving up here. There's a system of coal systems here. They're coming back and forth here. You had a great year in lake traffic this year. You had a lot of movement of Wheat Board ships. They would come here, load, go to Baie Comeau, Port Cartier, and come back empty. They would do this as a regular trip. I think this year there must have been 350 lakers. I'm not sure. I don't have the statistics. Of course, as you know, Ron, lakers are the biggest networking of grain shipments here. I think we shipped 6.5 million tonnes of grain this year and out of that, probably 85 percent were laker shipments. So let's say 5.8 million tonnes and the rest was saltwater traffic.

NP: We got off track a little bit. I'd like to go back to your early days as the clerk with the Lakehead Shipping.

WH: Lakehead Shipping Company Ltd. started by Rolland Mann, Captain Mann.

NP: And where was he from originally?

WH: Captain Mann was born in Ireland, and he joined the Navy when he was a young man. War broke out, and he saw his duties in the Far East. He rose in ranks to officer, and he became a captain. A delightful man! He was such a gentleman. I remember the first time I met him. He was a big, tall guy, and he had this impressive--. Even though he was born in Ireland, he didn't have this Irish accent. He had this typical English accent—very impressive. Anyway, he left the English Navy, and he started in the--. He became a captain in the Merchant Marine. I think in the early 1950s, he took a job ashore. When you take a job ashore, you work for an agency, or you become an advisor or somebody working in charter parties or contracts and marketing and all that stuff. But you got a job.

He met a woman from Norway. He travelled all over the world, and he met this really nice lady from Norway, and they got married, and they decided to come to Canada because that's where it was a lot of immigrants in the early '50s were coming, to Canada. A lot of people from the UK.

He took a job in Hamilton. I think it was 1955-56, before the Seaway was completed. It was just starting. He saw a lot of things that were--. There was a good future for the shipping business, and he wanted to eventually start a business. Anyway, he worked for these people. It was Hamilton Shipping. He worked there for three or four years and then in 1959, his boss had the idea that, "Wow, the Seaway is going all the way to the head of the Great Lakes where all these elevators are! Ocean ships are starting to come in, and we need a man up there." So he sent Captain Mann, Rollie Mann, on a sort of fact finding trip in 1959.

Actually, I'm doing a story about him. He's going to be one of my chapters in the next *Movers and Mavericks* book. Been looking forward to be writing about him. But he came up here, and the first thing he discovered, there was nobody that was doing anything about the possibility of receiving ocean ships. He went to people like Paterson. Paterson didn't want to have anything to do with him because there was competition. I mean it was lakers. They didn't want ocean ships up here. There's no way! So he met up with some brick walls. He went to Lake Shippers, and there was a notorious guy there, his name was Hendel, I'm sure that story--. Hendel in your research will come up. This fellow ran Lake Shippers like Napoleon, like Joseph Stalin, actually. [Laughs]

He didn't want to have anything to do with ocean ships either, but Rolland Mann being a very persistent fellow—and he knew how to talk to people—he realized the potential here. Of course, you had two ports in those days. You had Fort William and Port Arthur. Two port authorities.

So in any event, he went back to report to the owner of Hamilton Shipping, and he reported--. He gave a pretty good picture. "This is a pretty good place to start an international shipping business agency, as a port agent." He said, "Yeah, okay. You head back there, and you start it." So he came back, and one of the first people he met was an accountant named Mr. Chernick, John Chernick. God bless him, he's still alive. He's 93 years old. First thing he did, opened up an account with him or had him open up the accounting part of the business, and he got started with a little office on top of where Agnew Surpass Shoe Store, was on the corner of May and Victoria. That started in 1959.

He had his first ship here in May, May of that year. There was no linesmen. There was no pilotage, so he started the Pilotage Association. He started the linesmen. He persuaded the tugs, who didn't want to have anything to do with the ocean ships, to start because he needed towage. These ships had to be pushed, towed, and shifted. He managed to convince Oscar, or Mr. Styffe, who owned the Red Tugs, to be his tug people. Of course, they arranged for tariffs and what to charge and all that. He started that. He started his shipping company.

There was another fellow, his competitor here too, Sandy Henderson. He ran Henderson Cartage on Simpson Street. He was his competitor. Sandy Henderson. There's a young Sandy Henderson. We used to call him Young Sandy Henderson, but he's 70 years old now. So he's not that young. His father started the business. I remember when I started in the business, Captain Mann was always saying, "Don't let Sandy Henderson know anything about our business." You know it was very tight. They held everything tight because they were so ardent competitors.

NP: So I'm going to send you back to 1975 when you started. You knew, I would think, not much about shipping or ships. So when you think about when you were starting, if you can put yourself back say on the first week on the job, what surprised you?

WH: I was amazed! Actually, the interview to get the job was amazing too. I remember the fellow, his name was Charlie Umpherson. He was the operations manager of Lakehead Shipping. Captain Mann hired him in the mid '60s. He knew nothing about shipping, but he learned. He learned quite well, very well. He was a very effective operations manager. He was a very effective operations manager, but he happened to be an appliance salesman at Gary's. My father, 19, bought his first stove off Charlie from Gary's. So when I went in for the interview for the water-clerk job, I didn't know. Water clerk meant bathroom attendant as far as I knew. I didn't know. So he described the job, and he says, "By the way, your dad. Is your dad's name John?" I said, "Yes, that's my father." He said, "Oh yeah! I sold him his first stove back in 1954. What a great guy." I said, "Yes, he's my father. He's a great guy."

So that, I think, got me in the door because he really enjoyed my father's company, and Charlie knew my grandfather too. [Laughs] They tilted a few drinks during their time. So it all came to sort of name recognition. And of course, he knew--. He asked me, "Do you speak any languages?" I said, "Yes, I speak Ukrainian, and I said I speak Spanish too." I learned how to speak Spanish because I spent all that time in South America. So I was able to speak that language. He thought it would be an asset because we had a lot of Russian ships coming in in the mid '70s. There was a huge trade with Russia in rye. We haven't shipped the grain, rye, out of this port for I don't know how many years, but in the '70s we used to have a lot of Soviet ships come in, and Ukrainian being close to Russian, he thought it may be an asset.

The first thing he asked me when I got into the interview, he said to me, "Hey, you afraid of heights?" I said, "No." "You smoke cigarettes?" "Yes." Meanwhile he's smoking his Export As, swirling all over the place. He says, "Okay, that's good." [Laughs] Maybe he figured I'd bring him cigarettes now and again, but I don't know. Anyway, he said, "Okay, I'll call you in a couple of days" because he had a few people to interview. He called me, and he said, "Okay kid. You're hired. Be here May the 1st."



I remember the first day I got there, and he says, “Okay, we’ve got a ship. We’ve got a great ship at Cargill Elevator. I’m going to take you there. We’re going to show you what you do, and then I’m just going to hand it over to you next week. You’re going to be doing what I’m showing you to do. But if you’ve got any questions after, don’t hesitate. You ask.” And I said, “Okay.” He had this huge Buick. He had a brand-new car every year this guy. Holy smokes, there is good money in this game! Even the money I started with was pretty good, at that time. It was more than what a labourer would make at Great Lakes. It was--.

NP: What was that?

WH: At that time, I think they gave me \$640 a month in 1975, which was reasonable, I guess. When I worked as a camp clerk at 601 a couple years before that, I was making considerably less. But anyway, I thought it was good. It was good money. Then I was -. And Charlie looked prosperous, nice car, and I thought “Oh, gee.” I’d have my own office, young kid. Well, I was 26, but I thought it was prestigious. You get to meet all these people.

Anyway, we went to Cargill. It was the first ship I had. It was a great ship. I went onboard. I was on an ocean ship before that when I was selling newspapers, so I knew what to expect, in a way. The ships that I was on were rather ill-kept, but this one, I was quite impressed. It was clean, the captain was really polite, and he welcomed us into his boardroom. In those days, ships that were built in the early ‘70s, mid ‘70s. They were really impressive. The captain really had a great office—lot of wood, huge desk, nice board table, and very hospitable.

He snapped his fingers, and a steward would come and offer you coffee. He’d say, “American coffee or Greek coffee?” I didn’t know what Greek coffee was, and so I said, “Okay, Greek coffee.” Greek coffee comes in a little cup. It’s sweet. He said, “Do you want a little bit of ouzo with that?” [Laughs] It’s 10:00 in the morning, and Charlie says, “Yes we’ll have some ouzo.” [Laughs] I said, “Okay.” I was sort of in glee. What are we doing? We’re doing business. We’re having a cup of coffee. We’re on a foreign ship. This is amazing. Surroundings are great, captain’s good, we’re drinking coffee, and I’m having a little ouzo. [Laughs] So Charlie cleared the ship. He was really cautious with me, and that was my first experience. It was at Cargill Elevator. Then, that year, the second ship, I was on my own. It’s called the *Welsh Voyageur*. We had ships from all over the place.

NP: Where would the ships come from? Or where have they come from, in your career?

WH: They would come from Greece. In those days, the Greek Merchant Marine were the top people in the world. Onassis. They were Olympic ships, Onassis. They had just a fleet of ships. Russian ships. Soviet Union ships. They were kind of strange because every Russian ship, or a Soviet-Union type country like Bulgaria, would have a commissar on board. Every time you would go on a ship, it was the captain and this guy who wouldn’t introduce himself. He’d be sitting there with the captain. I remember one time

asking the captain, after this guy had to go someplace outside the cabin, I said, “Excuse me, captain.” I was very polite. I said, “Excuse me. I really don’t want to interfere, but this fellow here really didn’t introduce himself. I’d like to say hello.” And he said, “No, no. He’s commissar. You don’t talk to the commissar.” I said, “Okay, the commissar.”

Of course, the commissar is the political boss. He’s telling the captain, politically, what to do on the ship. If you’ve got some dignitaries on the ship who want to offer a plaque to the ship, captain asks the commissar. Commissar gives him the permission and the commissar—. I was amazed the power he had because every time the captain had different people at the table, he would measure what he would be saying by sort of glancing over to the commissar, be looking at him like this, and then continuing. If the commissar was smiling, then he knew he was on the right track. But that was kind of strange or different.

We used to have Cuban ships come up here with the same type of situation, but they were more stringent. They would tell the captain to sit down or stand up. They were pretty sharp. I mean, sharp in terms of negative. So that was different. We had ships from England. Oh, ships from England, they used to bring in the greatest beer you could imagine. Of course, by this time I’m in my late twenties. When you’re a kid, beer was a great thing to be a part of. [Laughs] Those days, they used to give you beer. Used to take beer off the ships. I remember Charlie saying to me, “You get caught with a case of beer, you’re going to get in trouble.” But I was pretty ingenious. I used to get one of the guys to carry it off for me. [Laughs]

I measured my season by the number of cases I got. I remember one season I got 86 cases of beer. My basement was stocked with every imaginable beer from around the world—Brazil, Argentina. I always used to amaze my friends. They’d say, “Hey Willie, what do you got today?” “Well, what would you like? Chinese beer? You want some Russian beer?” I used to have this stash of beer.

NP: So, Chinese ships were coming in here too?

WH: Chinese ships were here, yes. They used to come in here. Not until I’d say the mid ‘80s, early ‘80s, mid ‘80s. But in the ‘70s mainly, they were the Russians or the Soviets. The Soviet flag, I always remember those. The Greeks. The English. Bolton Line, I remember. I remember this one captain, Captain William Williams, this guy—and they called him Captain Johnnie Walker, and for good reason—I met him for the first time. They came into Keefer Terminal. They had to clean the holds because the bug men went out to anchor. The bug men in those days were the Department of Agriculture, like Vic Bel and those guys. They’d check for cleanliness, for bug infestation, for rust.

Anyway, the ship was at anchor. We went on board, and I met Captain Williams. He was ten sheets to the wind. Big time! What really amazed me with those ships in those days, you had crews of 45 to 48, and on the English ships in particular, they all looked

like pirates. The bosun maybe had two fingers missing on one hand, little fingers, no finger there, and they wore bandanas and smoked like crazy. People would be walking around with limps. [Laughs] I mean it was atrocious! English ships! Especially the bosun. And the swearing, oh, my God. Every flipping second word was “flip this, flap that.” I picked up a repertoire like you wouldn’t believe.

I was just amazed over this guy, Captain Williams. He’s long gone now, but I remember he invited me after the ship came into the Keefer Terminal. We had cleaning gangs in those days. Cleaning gangs would go in there and these long stage ladders, and they would chip, or they would spray for bugs, whatever. But I remember, as the port agent, as the representative, you were the guy who was the representative, and everybody looked up to you. Really. You were greeted at the gangway like a very important person, and I liked that. [Laughs] I recognized that there was a lot of perks in this job.

NP: You mentioned one.

WH: Yes, that was one. And of course, they would give you cigarettes and things like this. You were able to sit with them and discuss world politics, one-on-one, because they had been all over the world. You get this unique perspective of what’s happening, which was really, for me as a political—I study political science in school and I really enjoy world politics—and I really peppered these guys with questions. We used to drink on board! Charlie, my boss, it was not uncommon to get on the ship at noon for lunch and have three or four scotch or beer and go back to the office and do your work. I mean, it was a culture itself. Drinking and doing that sort of stuff. That type of behaviour. This captain, I mean, he wasn’t shy in showing that he could drink and boy, did he drink! But I assumed you could get into trouble with this sort of stuff.

I mean, that type of high life that I really wanted to get caught with. There were times on ships, you would have your session with the captain, and you’d be talking. You’d be there for an hour, and then all of a sudden, it’s seven hours because you’d have your libations and the steward. The stewards in those days, they were dressed really nice, tunics, and you had a lot of crew to work with. Like today on an ocean ship, if you’ve got 18 crew, you’re lucky. And now, too, you’ve got smaller ships. We’ve got less crew. You’ve got these niche-type ships that come in. But in those days, you had a lot of crew.

Indian ships used to come up with huge 55 to 60 crew! They were kind of very different because the culture was so different, and the food was so unique. I love Indian food because of that experience in those days. And you talk about-- You sit at a captain’s table on an Indian ship, you not only had one steward, you had about four! Each would come in with different curry and very polite. They would stand back, and when you’re finished something, they would come really quickly. They would treat you like you’re the maharaja. They really treated you well. It was quite different.

NP: Was there any shipping out of Africa or South America?

WH: Yes, there was. There were African ships that used to come up here but usually for bagged cargo. They would come here and load bagged cargo. Some would come up here with cargo of cocoa or that sort of stuff, and they would discharge it either at Shed 7, Shed 6, or they'd come to the Keefer Terminal. Those ships were kind of different because, in those days, you didn't see a black man, and you had a whole ship with black men. It was different. It was sort of something you didn't see. But there wasn't any racism involved. Maybe there was some longshoreman would say something stupid or whatever but--.

NP: South America?

WH: South America. There was some Columbian ships that would come in to load grain, barley. They would come up here. I remember in the '80s, mid '80s, ships would come. They'd fly the Columbian. They'd be registered in Barranquilla or Cartagena. They'd come up, and these ships were chartered by millers. The miller would meet the ship here. He would travel and meet the ship here. Depending on the master's performance going up the Seaway, whatever, and he'd personally give the master some sort of monetary bonus. Always on the sly, never to let the crew know. These millers looked like they were, they wielded a lot of power. And they would buy the grain direct! They'd hand over the cheque here because Captain Mann used to deal with that, and they'd pay for the grain, hundreds of thousands of dollars. So that was the extent of the South American traffic.

NP: So the millers would go to Richardson's or Cargill?

WH: The millers would set up--. Would probably do a trip to come up to North America or various places, go to Winnipeg because they knew they could get a good deal there. They would do their research, and they would go to Richardson's or go to Cargill and say, "Hey, we need some--." Or Canada Malt, "We need some barley. I need 12,000 tonnes. I have a ship in position for this particular date, timeframe." They would make that arrangement, that deal, and they could come up. They would make sure the ship was here on time. They would time it accordingly.

Also, South Africa, too. We used to have a lot of ships coming that were chartered from breweries in South Africa coming in to take malting barley for their breweries down there. As you know, they have per capita, a lot of breweries, a lot of beer production. The brewmasters used to come and examine the cargo as it was being loaded. They would really be hovering over the inspection staff. These brewmasters are really fastidious. They'd come in and make sure--. And they were sort of a pain in the butt for a lot of the inspectors because they were just looking over them, making sure, going into the ship making sure, or making sure what was coming out of the spout is what they bought. They were always very clever, clever people.

NP: How's our time? That was then, what about now?

WH: Okay.

NP: You've been talking to us about what it was like in the earlier days of your career, related to the ships that were coming in, what the crews were like, what your interaction with them was, where they were coming from. If we skip to present day then, what has changed?

WH: What has changed is, as I mentioned before, crews have become smaller. Captains have become more responsible to the owners. In the 1970s, early '80s, masters were true masters. Over the course of the last 20 years, you can see an evolution where ship owners or operators want to have control. There's a lot of complaints by masters that I hear today that, well, 30 years ago was different. The master was really the master. He was in control of the ship. You didn't have the instant communication that you have today. A ship owner could get on the line, or you could through email, through those communication methods, you could virtually operate the ship from your office in Copenhagen, much to the chagrin of ship masters.

You have a lot of ship masters who, if they had to retrace their lives, some would say, "No, I wouldn't choose the field if I knew what was happening today." You see a lot of masters today that are planning their retirement a lot earlier, who want to leave the business because they know, and they realize, that the ship owner is really pulling the strings. So they're like a marionette in a way. It's still a very dignified profession, and it's still very respectful. But you could see for a fellow who has always wanted to be ship master, and he finds out that he is becoming the driver of the ship, it's demoralizing for a fellow like that who had the passion to become a mariner, true mariner. So you could see ship's personnel are difficult to get.

I think there's going to be a crisis one day in international shipping business where qualified masters will not be that abundant as they once were, because of the--. As I say, it's still a very respected profession, very different type of profession. You're away from home for months. Like in the '70s, you're away for seven to eight months. It's become a little more relaxed. You're on for three months, off for three months. Some ship owners, two months. Just to keep it attractive. Off for two, on for two. It's changing. It has really changed.

NP: What about the difference in experience and training over the time? I assume you went through the fellows who came as Merchant Marine.

WH: A lot of young men who studied maritime trade went to different levels of school. You became a, in those days, a fourth mate, a third or second mate. You had these different layers. Now, you're seeing masters who are 29 years old, who skipped all that stuff.

They're fast-tracking these young men into those positions. Of course, in those days, in the '70s, you had to have the skills to be a real mariner. Today, ships are automated. They're controlled by satellite. You could be on automatic pilot with some of these ships and have one guy on the bridge. I mean, it's changed. Technology has changed the whole business. Again, I have to emphasize, ship owners and operators have become the real masters. It's flipped around.

NP: The welcome committee you had, the lunches, still have cases of beer in your basement?

WH: No.

NP: When did that change and what caused that to change?

WH: Fright. [Laughs] That changed because a lot of these ships don't have liquor onboard anymore. That's changed. There are some that still have, and it's kept it in a bonded store. I guess the culture's changed because in those days, I guess, if you got caught drinking and driving, the conditions would be different in what the repercussions would be. So that's sort of changed that whole culture, too. And the captain's really mindful about onboard drinking because you've got a big sign that's this International Maritime Organization rule, "No drinking. No drugs." Big signs. In particular, when you're trading in the United States, you've got coastguards that come in and check on drinking. They do blood tests. So that's changed. When ships are in port, of course, the captain, that's his home, and if he wants to have a drink with the agent or his guests, that's okay. But you don't see an inebriated master anymore, like you did in the old days. There were times when you'd say, "My God." But that whole culture has disappeared.

RP: What about the Port Clearance? I remember reading stories about being able to clear in Singapore before you dock, with electronic communication and stuff like that.

WH: No. You have to clear the ship in the port that you're arriving from. You're on an international ship. You've got to clear that ship in with your local Customs. That's part of the agent's job. First thing he does is clear the ship in. Very seldom would a ship be traveling from say Singapore, that's about 54 days all the way through the Seaway, without stopping someplace. First of all, you have to stop at Montreal for a Seaway inspection. But the last official port of your overseas trip, that document has to be presented to the port that you're arriving at, like Thunder Bay. Say a ship is coming in from China. Sometimes you have project cargo, and they're at sea for 49-50 days.

It's so high-tech now they email you the document. You print it, and everything is done by--. In the old days it was physical. You had to go to Customs, knock on the door, bang on the door, and present your custom paper, physically. Today you fax it or email it.

Documentation is a lot easier. It's all done through email or tech stuff. For example, another very important function of an agent or a ship, or the master through the port agent, is to supply a document called the notice of readiness. The notice of readiness is a document that has the ship's name and its notice of readiness, and it's stamped or signed, normally by the captain with a ship stamp, or if he's not available, an agent could do that.

That notice of readiness in the old days had to be presented to Canadian Ports who represent the shipper. It just shows that the ship is ready to load in all respects. It has to be accompanied by the certificates that you need to get. Certificate of Fitness to Load from the port warden, Transport Canada. They give you that certificate and Canadian Food Inspection Agency give you another certificate. So you need those two certificates when you're loading grain on ocean ships. Lakers, you don't need that. But that's a different dynamic in the grain business for ocean ships.

NP: With the two certificates, what is the difference at the port?

WH: It just shows that--. See the ship has to prove that the ship is clean in all respects. Clean of any residues, clean of any insect infestation. That's where the CFIA comes in. In those days, it was called Agriculture Canada. They're euphemistically called the bug men, right. That's the first part of the equation. You get that. Then the Transport Canada, a part of the grain rules for North America is that the ship has to prove the integrity of the stability of the ship is within the parameters of Transport Canada rules. There's a stability calculation that has to be presented. If there's a very complicated calculation--. What the ship is doing is proving to the Transport Canada that if you've got some empty compartments here, you got grain here, it's not going to capsize the ship. Your stability issue has to be in check. The port warden diligently goes through the stability. Today, very, very diligently. In the old days you get a port warden--. You'd have guys, they'd look at it, "Okay, yes, that's good. Captain, I'll have another drink."  
[Laughs]

We had a notorious guy—God bless him—here, and part of the port warden's duty is to go into the holds, as the CFIA does, and look in behind the pipe casings and the different areas of the hold to examine it. One of the duties of the port warden of Transport Canada is to make sure the holds, the frames in the ship's hold—some of them still have frames—the integrity, that there are no cracks or whatever. Well, this poor warden, he'd look over the side and say, "Well, that's great. That's good." And he'd make a beeline up to the ship, up to the cabin where I was, and I'd say, "How's it going?" "Good." "Everything good?" "Yes, no problem." And it was notorious this way. Good thing there was not one ship as he signed anything ever went down or had a problem.

But that all changed about 20 years ago when the ship called *The Flame* went down. *The Flame*? I forget the name. Anyway, it went down in the St. Lawrence. Stability was an issue, they discovered. She loaded grain, and she went down. She sank. It was a big scandal, so it sort of hyped up Transport Canada to say, "Hey, these port wardens better be doing their jobs." It got to be a real

chore because they went through every numeral. Criss cross this, double check, you know. And when I started this business, stability calculation and inspection would be an hour and a half. Today it's about four, three hours, three-and-a-half hours. It's really much to the consternation of a lot of ship owners because as I mentioned, time is money. So anyway--.

**End of interview.**