

Miss Cavanaugh, age 71

Interviewed June 26th, 1972

Born 1902

C: ...this house 125 years ago.

: He was the first, uh, Grand Trunk engineer...

C: Engineer. For the Grand Trunk railroad, when they built the railroad out here...from Detroit. The station was across the river.

: Oh, yes, we're aware of that, but that, that's pulling a lot of history together.

C: And he bought this house then. Sit down now and make yourself comfortable.

: Okay.

C: Go wherever you want. Uh, there was no road, just a sand hill. This was on top, this hill was much higher. It's been graded three different times. So the house stood higher. And, um, he went back to Detroit and married my grandmother and brought her back here as a bride and she, when they came up the hill to come to this house, she thought he was playing a joke on her, because she thought, "Well, there must be a sidewalk somewhere." She had come from Detroit and that was a big city, you know, in those days. And, uh, but she found out afterwards. (laughs) Then they called it plank hill and piety hill and, uh...

: Yes, I've heard of piety hill.

C: Have you heard of piety hill?

: I live right up on piety hill, uh, right up on the top of the hill, on, in the house that, uh...Harry McGill, the blacksmith...

C: Well, but this, that wasn't piety hill. That was just pastureland.

: Oh, that was pastureland.

C: That was pastureland, for Bosman's cows. Bosman lived on north Second Street across Washington. Every morning he brought the cows up, put them in the pasture there. From that corner, over there, right, all the way over, where Mrs. Hatton's house is, you know where that is?

: Yes.

C: That was all pasture. And, we'd hear Bosman coming with his cows and this was just gravel and sand. So we'd run in, close the front door and windows, get, keep the dust out. And then in the afternoon, around 5 o'clock, he'd come and get the cows. And then we'd make another dash for the front of the house to close it up. (laughs) I can tell you a lot of history. Now, where do you want to sit?

: Well, where would you like to sit, cause then we can put this thing down, uh, somewhere near you.

C: Well...I don't know. Right here.

: Okay, if you sit there, we can put it right on the table there. Is it all right with you if we tape our conversation?

C: Why of course.

: And maybe use some of the information in the book we'd like to do?

C: I love to do this.

: Fine, that's wonderful.

: Last week who, whose total age would be 198, between the two of them.

C: Two people in Grand Haven.

: Well, one of them now is Mrs. Dubay.

C: Oh, yes, I know Mrs. Dubay.

: In Grand Rapids, in a nursing home.

C: Is she in a nursing home now?

: Yes.

C: She knows me every time she sees me.

: She doesn't like it in the nursing home.

C: No, I know she wouldn't like it there.

: She'd like to go home so badly.

C: She was my mother's age. And, uh, whenever I'd meet her in the stores downtown, she's so terribly deaf, hard of hearing, that you don't like to carry on a conversation. And, by golly, she'd spot me, as old as she was, and she'd come over and she'd come over, she'd, "Ann Hammerhan's daughter," that was my mother's maiden name. So she was a bright old lady, I'm telling you.

: Well, we'd like to have you, uh, talk a little bit about some of the, about your father and some of the other ship captains that, uh, he knew and you must have known then, you mentioned that your mother was a Hammerhan. Uh, there was also Captain Hammerhan, wasn't there, wasn't he a captain?

C: Captain Cavanaugh was my father.

: Cavanaugh, wasn't...

C: My grandfather, the engineer, David Hammerhan, he's the one that brought the Grand Trunk railroad out here.

: But there weren't any Hammerhans that were ship, ship...

C: Well, there was an uncle who was the purser on the Naoma when it...

: Oh, yeah, that's right, that's what...

C: That the one you want to know about?

: Well, any of these people, the Hammerhans, uh...Captain Robert McKay, you must have known him.

C: Captain McKay, he sailed with my father many, many years. Uh, he was from the Yorkney islands. Near Scotland.

: Scotland.

C: And, uh, he came here with an uncle, John Budge, who was a partner to Mr. Loutit, the first Mr. Loutit, who had the shipyard. And, uh, Captain John Budge brought Captain McKay to this country. And, um, course he went on the lakes, cause that's all those people knew, was sailing. And he worked on the boats for quite, the Crosby boats, the Goodrich liners; we didn't have car ferries in those days. And, um, he had worked his way up to the first mates position. And then he didn't want to go any farther. He didn't want to be a captain.

: Captain McKay.

C: Captain McKay. He was a very talented sailor and my father kept pushing him, trying to get him to get his license. Because he could have such a...much better position. And he was very capable. But he never wanted the responsibility. And he was my father's first mate for years. On the car ferries, after the car ferries came. And he, finally, my father got him to get his license. And I did all the typing. I fancied myself as quite a typist, I was all of 15. Did all the work, all the paperwork right here in this room. So, he did get the license and then, of course, when, um, the new car ferry came out, my father who was the...head captain of the fleet, got the new boat and Captain McKay got the Milwaukee, which was a very beautiful boat, it had been built, uh, for another steamship line and they couldn't pay for it. It was over a million dollars...investment and they couldn't pay for it, so they sold it to the Grand Trunk railroad. And it was beautifully constructed and the gorgeous hand-carved woodwork and all the appointments were just super. It was my father's favorite boat, of all the boats he ever sailed. But he, as commodore, he had to take the new boat coming out, the Grand Rapids, And, uh, course, you know the story about the Milwaukee going down and Captain McKay. And all the crew and they were all men my father had sailed with and some of them he had brought up...as youngsters, they came on to work and they went on up, you know. And, of course, it was a terrible tragedy to him because he knew them all. And, um, the company set them ashore and I had to help him and he had to take care of all those funerals...of the boys that came ashore, were washed ashore. It was quite an experience. And, um...the night that it happened...they had a supervisor who, he was an ocean mate, he didn't know much about

the Great Lakes and he, he didn't want to be told. And boats came in and, um...he ordered the Milwaukee and the Grand Rapids to make the return trip to Grand Haven.

: The supervisor did?

C: Yes.

: Ordered...

C: I hope this doesn't get recorded because, I mean this is quite a, and I don't want to get anybody in trouble, but, of course, he's been gone many, many years. But, uh...the, um, the Milwaukee was loaded first, 48 cars it carried. And...he came down the river while my father was backing into the slip.

: This is the Milwaukee.

C: The Milwaukee. And, of course, the lake was very, very wild. My father had planned...when he was loaded, to go down and lay back at the breakwater...outside of Milwaukee harbor...and wait until he thought it was time to go. So, as the Milwaukee passed the Grand Rapids, my father called, you see they had no, in those days no ship-to-shore telephones, no wireless, or anything, you just had a megaphone. And, uh, he called to Captain McKay and said, "Bob, go back of the breakwater." And he thought McKay heard him, but he didn't evidently, or if he did, he was afraid to go against the other man's orders. And he went right out into Lake Michigan. And when Dad got loaded and got back of the breakwater, he wasn't there. And so my father said, "Well, he's such a good sailor, he probably went north on the lake to get up back of the islands." Which they did lots of times. If they came out of the Chicago or the Milwaukee and the sea got too much for them, uh, they would go up back of the islands. And then come back down when the sea, you see, Lake Michigan is a lot different than the ocean and the other lakes. It has the most terrific sea. Very bad currents. And, of course, the storm went down and my dad came out, it was about maybe four, five hours, came over the same...way the Milwaukee had come out and there was no sign or anything of them. So, he just simply thought they were north, back of the islands. But, next day, they found out they weren't. And...that was the year so many boats went down. The Andasity. What was the other one?

: It was 1929, wasn't it?

C: Was it?

: Yes. It was October; it was October, wasn't it?

C: It was in the fall.

: Yes.

C: Cause we've had some terrific storms.

: I, I've been reading, uh, uh, that after that went down, of course, they had an investigation, led by, or headed up by a brother of Hoover, the FBI man.

: J. Edgar Hoover?

: Yeah, his brother was the...

C: Did he have a brother in that, uh...

: Yes, and, in fact, I have the book in the car.

C: They had a big time in Milwaukee. They had all kinds of trials and investigations and my father was over there months in the court rooms. Um, they had, uh, the Milwaukee attorney was a great friend of ours and his father was a big, his name was McCauley, his father was from Beaver Island, they were all sailors. He was a Marine lawyer. And they really had a scrap over there about it. You see, several years before that, um...my dad and some of the other men on the boats, thought they should have a wireless. If they'd had a wireless on that boat, they could have saved those men. And, they went to Washington...to see about it. Dad made the trip, Captain Verdine(?) and I don't know who all. But anyhow, they talked to these men in Washington, they said, "Well, we'll surely send you something...as protection." And then when, after months, as the government does those things, months, and months, they, we'll, they couldn't put up a wireless station out here because that would mean they had to have, it would have to be manned. And, uh, on the boats they would have to have an extra man as a wireless operator. So, between the companies and the government, they did not get their wireless. But, some few years later, they got the Escanaba, which wouldn't be worth a tinker's damn in a storm out there, (laughing) because those boys were all greenhorns when they, when that Escanaba came here. They ended up pretty good sailors. But they were trained...by the Navy and they were trained on the ocean. And I don't think they could have done much in the storm out there.

: The big question in the investigations, as I read it, was whether or not McKay himself made the decision...

C: No.

: ...to go or whether he was ordered to.

C: He was ordered to.

: Aside from the legal question, uh, I imagine that your father then, uh, here in Grand Haven had to defend, uh, McKay too, wasn't there some...

C: Well, the people in Grand Haven all knew Captain McKay well enough to know he wouldn't risk the lives of all those men.

: I see. But he did have, didn't have somewhat of a reputation, they called him "Heavy Weather McKay," uh...

C: No, they called my father "Stormy Jack." (laughs)

: (laughing) "Stormy Jack." Didn't he have some reputation for being fearless and going out in the...

C: No, not Captain McKay. He was very cautious.

: Oh, he was?

C: Yes. Yeah.

: Where did you read that about him?

C: That was my father that got that awful name of "Stormy Jack" and it was because he wasn't a bit afraid of the lake. But, of course, he wouldn't have taken those men out in that storm because he'd know darn well he'd go right to the bottom. But, uh, I'll tell you, you know Ray Mieris(?), city policeman?

: No, I know the name, but I don't know him.

C: Well, he had a home out here on Harbor as you just turn to come up Grand, on the corner there, facing the lake, and has the name "Stormy Jack" on the front of it.

: Oh.

C: And he called it after my dad and he's got all my boat pictures and everything out there, he's got quite an interesting collection.

: Oh.

C: And, uh, my sister and brother-in-law own a cruiser over at the Northshore Marina. And it's called the "Stormy Jack." And, uh, but they're from Battle Creek. I, um, think they're selling it. Do you know Mr. VanKyllen from Grand Rapids, he's a lumberman? He also has a place out...

: Oh, VanKyllen's Lumber.

C: Um-hum. He's negotiating to buy this boat. But to go back to my father...I was thinking before you came, he came here, uh, in the late 1899 or early 1900. Uh, he came on the government boat, the Williams. Now, up to that time, there had never been any charting of the Great Lakes. They had no maps of the shores at all. So, the government wanted the shore, the lakes charted. And they sent out this government boat. And my father was the captain. And, uh, I don't know how many years he had been a captain, but not many. He was the youngest captain on the lakes when he got his first license. He was only 21 years old. And he sailed from then on. He, um, the Williams came in here and of course, it was moored down at the end of the street down here. And, as I say, he was the captain, and then he immediately got acquainted with a lot of the younger people in town. And, along with my mother. And they got married and, um, I spent the first year of my life on a boat. On the Williams. But, I hate boats and I hate water. I'm scared to death of them. I have never been out on my sister's boat and it's a 51 foot cruiser. I said, "Even the Queen Mary is too small for me." (laughs)

: And you have the sea in your blood.

C: Well, I crossed the ocean twice, but I don't like it. But anyhow, that's how he started. Well, then he went with the, uh, Crosby company. He was for years with the Crosby Company. Never sailed with the

Goodrich line, but he knew a lot of the captains. And that's, we got acquainted with them too. Uh, Mr. Crosby, the owner of the, E.G. Crosby, he went down on the Titanic. He was visiting in Europe...with his wife and daughter. They were living there, his daughter, and, uh, being in the shipping business, he had an invitation to make the maiden trip on the Titanic. So, of course, that was something, that was supposed to be the most wonderful boat that was ever constructed. So, Mr. Crosby came on the maiden trip and, um, he was quite an elderly man. He, uh, had a place in a lifeboat. He was already in the boat. And there was a lady standing on the deck. And he got out of the lifeboat and gave her his place. And he went down with the Titanic. And, of course, the Crosby line failed after that. He was a wonderful person, Mr. Crosby, we knew him very well. Then, my father went with the Grand Trunk railroad, on the car ferries. And he was on the car ferries until he died.

: Do you remember hearing of the Captain Charles Moore? He came to the rescue of a ship just outside of Muskegon called "Our Son." That happened in 1930. "Our Son" was about the last sailing...

: Schooner on the lakes.

C: Oh, it was a sailboat.

: And they had no radio or anything either and, and, uh, through some kind of mental telepathy...

: That's a weird story.

: Yes.

: That's a very strange story, because there was an old man, Joseph Sedony, who lived up near Montague...

C: I know that name.

: ...who was supposedly involved in this thing. He had told his captain that, uh, sometime in the near future, he would get a hunch when he was on the lake and if he got a hunch, he got this...it seems something was telling him to do something, he ought to go ahead and do it, no matter how crazy it seemed. He was a captain of a steamer. And he just turned the thing around and there was a bad storm and, uh, he sailed it out, he was, it wasn't right outside of Muskegon, it was out in the lake somewhere.

: Well, yes, he, uh, Captain Moore, was that his name, was coming out of the straits, coming down and in bad weather you're supposed to go to the other side of the lake.

C: Well, now, was he working for a company or was he on a private boat?

: He was working for a company. Yes.

: Yes. And the "our, Our Son" had a load of pulp wood in it, bound for Muskegon, for the Central Mill, yeah. And, instead of, he followed his hunch and even though the weather was bad, he came along the east side of the lake, which, I guess, you're not supposed to do. And, uh, then he found that floundering

sailboat and, uh, managed to get his boat right next to it and they all jumped, jumped aboard and everybody was saved.

: Saved the whole crew.

: Saved the whole crew.

: They were, most of the men were in the 60's and 70's, the crew on the sailing ship.

C: Have you any information on the Naoma when it burned?

: Not much. We've read a little bit about it. Now, maybe you can tell us about it.

C: Yes. Uh, that was a Crosby boat. There was the Naoma and the Niak. My father, uh, sailed the Niak. Captain Huff sailed the Naoma. And, um, the Niak went into dry dock. So, they sent a boat out with my dad, the Cur. It was a wooden boat. And an old boat. It's a wonder it didn't fall apart out in the lake, but, anyhow, he had to sail that while the Niak was in dry dock. And, it was, um, the spring of the year and the, um, lake had been terribly, terribly rough up to that time. It was the only calm night...that they'd had on the lake in months. And, you see, in those days, people would come in on the train, Grand Trunk train, and then transfer to the passenger boats to go to Wisconsin. They had no automobiles or anything like that. And, so these trains that came in at night would be just filled with passengers. And among the passengers, was a wedding party from Grand Rapids going to a wedding in Milwaukee. Dr. Haike(?), he was a well-known doctor in Grand Rapids. And his whole family...were going to a wedding in Wisconsin. And, the boat was completely filled with passengers. My uncle, Bill Hammerhan, was the purser. Phil Rosbeck, who lived up here on Lake Avenue in late years, was the steward. And, um, one boat would leave Grand Haven and one Milwaukee and they would pass in the lake. So, along about midnight, my, the first mate came to my dad's room and knocked on the door. And he said, "Captain, there's a fire." And mentioned the location. I can't tell you how they do it, but they, they know which is west and east and all (chuckles) and dad said, "Oh, that's the Cur." Made for her right away. She's a wooden, or the Naoma, she's a wooden boat. And the mate said, "So is the Cur." That'd be nice to get them, (laughs) to get them together. But there were other boats saw the blaze too. There were two other boats came. And, uh, they got lines on her, on the Naoma...and got the lifeboats out and got as many people as they could. Uh, they saved all passengers and almost all the crew except the fellows who were down in the engine room. And that's what caused the government to put in port holes on the boats, big enough for a man to go through. Those port holes weren't big enough. And the fellows couldn't get up from down there. They're buried out here in Lake Forest Cemetery. And...my uncle never forgot those boys yelling down there. And they got, men got all passengers out and off the boat...with the exception of one travelling man from Grand Rapids. And he was set out and in the lifeboat and he got back on the deck, because he'd forgotten his wallet. And one of the boys called my uncle and he said, "Bill, that fella's gone back in the cabin. He'll never find his way out." So, this uncle of mine crawled on his hands and knees, with the carpet burning under him, and hauled that man out. He, my uncle had, he was burned, all his fingers on both hands, right to the bone. Saved the fellow, got him out and they took him to the hospital, but he only lived a few days. But if he hadn't gone back in, he never would have been killed.

That was one of the things that was one of the worst tragedies we've ever had...with a boat. But then, I guess if you're going to sail, you have to face those things, don't you?

: That's an interesting story about the man going back to get his money. Same thing happened when the city of Pompeii was, uh, covered by the, uh, by the lava from Mount Vesuvius.

C: Yes.

: The only people who died, they had plenty of notice, they knew it was coming, they had two or three days' notice, but the people who were caught were the ones who went back to get their possessions. And then didn't get out in time, so...the greedy ones, the ones who can't stand to leave their earthly possessions behind...

C: Yes, my goodness, what was a billfold when they had all that water and that lake around them and had a chance to get away and, heavens, I wouldn't have cared what I left behind. (laughs)

: Not if I were once in the lifeboat, I wouldn't go back. I was so interested in your comment about Captain McKay. Uh, the book I'm talking about is "Ghost Stories of the Great Lakes."

C: Who wrote it?

: Ships, ghost ships.

C: This man from, uh,...

: William Ratigan?

: No, no.

C: What's the fella that wrote about the Goodrich boats, um, Red, Red, uh...well, I haven't my copy of it, I lent it to somebody and of course, I never got it back. Just like my "History of Grand Haven."

: Lillie's book?

C: Yeah.

: Those are quite scarce now, you can't, uh...can't come by them.

C: Well, I had...one of the children from high school borrowed it and then they moved east and they took it with them...amongst a lot of other books I had that were autographed by the authors. But who's going to fight with somebody way out of the...in New Jersey at Cay Bay. Red, what is this man, he lived here, works in Muskegon and he wrote about the Goodrich boats, Captain Stufflebeam...

: He must be that man that we met at the historical society meeting that...is writing a book about Grand Haven shipping.

: Oh.

: Just about Grand Haven, just about the port of Grand Haven.

C: And, and just the Goodrich line.

: Well, yeah, I guess he was interested in that. He's the same one that, uh, Harold...

C: Kind of a tall man, middle-aged.

: Yeah, Harold Schwartz told us about him.

C: I wish I could think what his name is.

: You know Harold Schwartz, don't you?

C: Oh, Harold and I were on the cemetery board together. Gol, for years.

: He has quite a collection of, uh, photographs of ships.

C: Oh, does he?

: Oh, yes, he's very interested in that. He was, he was a high school boy when the Milwaukee went down and he remembers those things.

C: Now, you speak about the museum...uh, they have quite a few boat pictures down there. Lots of them. I've got a bunch of postcards and stuff, that I've got to find, I don't know where they are. I'm running into a little eye problem and I'm spending most of my time with Dr. Smith. Cataracts. And so I don't do much around here, but I'll have to find those pictures.

: Uh, you, what was it like being, uh, being ship captain's daughter back in those days when Grand Haven was much more of a, uh, much more active port. There must have been a lot of officers and captains that your father knew.

C: All of the families lived, most of them lived on this side of the lake, it was better living then in the city. And, uh, course, when they took the car ferries out of here, that moved a lot of people...out of Grand Haven. Uh...we used to always try to keep track of when the boat would be coming. Uh, when my father was on the passenger boats, of course, they would be in port longer than the car ferries. When the car ferries would come in they'd get those cars off and the other ones on as fast as they could and away they'd go back. But many, many nights we walked the floor, wondering...all that weather was out there. Be perfectly terrible on shore, you know. And we'd think, "Oh boy, wish that boat'd get in." And sometimes they'd have a rough trip and sometimes my father would say, "Well, that was a land storm." But, we spent a lot of anxious hours. And, of course, there wasn't too much, uh, boat people and railroad people really stick together in a pinch, if something comes up. If one of them is in difficulties, they'll all be there. But there wasn't much fraternizing as I remember socially. There was no special group that got together. We all went to the same schools and, you know, mixed in with all the kids...in town. There were no organizations that really had a name or anything.

: According to this book, it's written by a man of the name Dwight Boyer, McKay used to hang around the, the, uh, Grotz cigar store?

C: Gruntz cigar store.

: Gruntz cigar store, is that...

C: Oh, that was the Club. (laughs)

: That's, that's where the, uh,...

C: Captain McKay was always in there. And my father used to be a close second. They all met in there. There were a lot of fellows in town had been fishermen. The O'Becks and those people. And, uh,...

: Verduins.

C: Verduins. Not so many of the Verduins, the O'Becks were more with this other crowd. Uh, they used to meet down at Bill Gruntz' cigar store...every night. If you ever wanted any of them all you had to do is go to Bill Gruntz', they'd be there. He was a cigar maker. Was right near where Fortinos is there.

: Oh.

C: And, um, sure, that was the meeting place and they were all sailors and Captain McKay, uh, yeah, he lived up here...you know, um, where that great, big house is...

: 411, isn't it?

C: Where do you live?

: On this same side of the street. I live at 632 which is the house that the blacksmith, Harry McGill...

C: Harry McGill, that's on the other side. Well, right in this next block, it's the big square house that needs painting badly.

: Yes, I know which one it is.

C: Well, that's where Captain McKay, uh...lived when I knew him. He had two sons, Robert and Henry. Henry's living in California right now. Robert died a few years ago. But, uh...he...before that, he was a widower for a good many years. And, um...lived downtown...over that store there, on the corner, the drugstore, across from Steketees.

: Oh, yes.

C: He and his two sons lived there. But, then they bought this big place after he married a second time. And, uh, but when, when he was drowned, he lived on Franklin Street, you know, where the armory is.

: Um-hum.

C: And there's a vacant parking lot...back of the armory.

: Back of it.

C: And right next is the house that McKay lived in when he was drowned. They built it...

: Next to the parking lot.

C: On Franklin.

: The house is still there.

C: Um-hum. Yeah.

: So, he was no longer living in this...

C: Not up here, no.

: ...house on Lake, uh, at the time the Milwaukee went down.

C: (laughs) We had a chimney here, an old chimney and it started burning out, do you, are you familiar with chimneys that burn out?

: No.

C: They catch fire and the sparks fly all over and, well, sometimes it catch your house afire. Soot accumulates, you know. And it catches fire. And my little sister, it was just twilight...and she went out to play, she was going to hide from me. And I went out looking for her and this chimney was starting to burn, I didn't see it; the next thing I saw was my sister running down the street towards the house. And this great big man, Captain McKay was a big man, and he was dressed to go somewhere, cause he had his black suit on and his black hat and here he was right at her heels and they came in the front door, (laughing) and he says, "Where is it?" He wanted to see where the chimney was burning out to see if it was coming through the roof, see. And Mary had gone to hide up at the corner when he happened to see it. And, of course, the two of them came running, cause we were home alone, we two kids...came running to see what they could do about it. And I didn't, all I could think was some terrible man was chasing her. And here it was Bob McKay and he wouldn't hurt anything. But he was a great person, Bob was.

: Well, I think that, that what you say about him, there's error here.

C: What does it say?

: Okay, let me read. All right, "Captain Robert McKay was somewhat unusual individual. Captain Bob or 'Heavy Weather McKay,' as he was known in Grand Haven, had arrived..." and then they go on. Have you ever heard that expression, have you ever heard him referred to as "Heavy Weather McKay?" I think you would have.

: That could be a confusion if your father was known as "Stormy Jack." They could have made this up for some reason.

C: He was very cautious, he was, now, that doesn't mean he wouldn't go out in heavy weather, he would, but, uh, he, uh, he was a very gentle person.

: And then the article is called "A matter of professional pride." And that's based a statement by Hoover. Namely that, uh, it may well have been a matter of professional pride that caused...

C: Well, now, where did you get this copy?

: This book? I borrowed it from John Waanders. I think it's available at, at; uh...what's this bookstore on, not Hostettters, on the other side of the street?

: They don't handle books anymore. Coopers it used to be.

C: No, I can't find copies of books around Grand Haven.

: No. There is no bookstore here anymore.

C: I should take that name and see if my sister can get it for me.

: Well, here, it's published by Erdmans, isn't it? The book.

: Dodd, Mead and Company.

: Let me, of course, we all know that the Milwaukee should never have gone out, but it seems to us from his past experience, the criticism of eye-witnesses of the Milwaukee's departure, all experienced sailormen and the condition of the weather, that it was a fool-hardy thing to do and showed poor judgment on the part of Captain McKay.

C: He was ordered out.

: And then, he end out by saying, uh, he ends up by saying, "He may have been somewhat influenced by the Grand Trunk masters...it may have been a matter of professional pride." And then, so, there may have been something there that...

C: Well, I've often heard my father say that he called to him and said, "Go back of the breakwater."

: Sure.

C: ..."And wait." And then they'd come back together, see.

: Well, I'm glad that you told us those things because this is in black and white and, uh...

C: I wonder where he got all of his information, where he did his researching and...

: I've got a very similar book at home called "Great Lakes Shipwrecks and Survivals," written by William Ratigan that, a former sailor...

C: Red Stacks, Red Stacks in the sunset.

: Oh, yeah, that's, I've seen that title too.

C: He lives somewhere around here and he works in Muskegon, he's an executive and he used to travel on the Goodrich boats, his parents used to bring him over on the boat. He knew the Goodrich captains, the two captains, Stufflebeams and I can't remember all of them. Uh, but he is just entirely just Goodrich boats. There's not any mention of any of the other...

: Um-hum. A real specialist. Do you remember who the captain of the Andacity was, when...she went down?

C: He wasn't very old. And he hadn't sailed too long.

: I think his name was Anderson.

C: Was it Anderson?

: That sound right? I'll find out.

: You know, there were a lot of local men on that crew too...

C: Oh, yes. And then that, what was the one, the fellow from, from Ferrysburg was the engineer on...that his mother was drowned and then hit the pier. Oh, it was an excursion boat. I think his name was Johnson. City of...it was in Muskegon harbor that it happened.

: Oh, yes, I remember now, it got hung up on the breakwater.

C: Yeah.

: Was that the city of Muskegon?

C: Was it the city of Muskegon?

: I think it was.

C: And a fella from Ferrysburg was one of the engineers and his mother was making the trip, just for a, you know, vacation trip. And she was drowned. They were from Ferrysburg. I have a gold medal, I don't know just where to put my hands on it, but it was given to my father's brother by the city of Michigan City, Indiana. My father's people, my father was born in Michigan City. And, uh...this brother had a tug; he was always called "Tug Cavanaugh." And he had his own tug and this barge, lumber barge was floundering out in the lake. And so he and a man named Campbell, who was his crew, uh, went out and saved the men. And the city of Michigan City, Indiana gave them each a gold medal. And I have it now.

: You might enjoy borrowing this book...

C: Well, I would, but...

: ...and you're welcome to it. It belongs to John Waanders, but he...

C: Now, who is John Waanders?

: Oh, he's a friend of, of Bill's and mine.

C: Seems like the name is familiar to me.

: Oh, he just ran for school board, he got the...

C: Oh, that's where I met him, sure.

: But I'm sure he wouldn't mind...

C: Well, I'll read it. I'll tell you what I've been doing and I'm going to do it again Saturday, uh, being one of the hostesses at the museum.

: Oh, uh-huh.

C: The historical museum which was fun.

: Sure, you're welcome to read that book.

C: I'd love to. Now, uh, what do you fellas do? Other than interview these people.

: We're both teachers...

C: Oh, are you?

: ...I teach at Grand Valley College and Ron teaches at Robinson School.

C: Oh, sure.

: And I'm actually an English teacher, not a history teacher, but...

C: You're at Grand Valley?

: Yes.

C: Well, then, you must know the people who moved here, not too long ago, and bought the brick house across the street. They now own the castle on the lake.

: They own the castle...

C: The one up on the five mile hill, the sand hill. That brick place. They came here from, was it Toledo or Cleveland.

: They're at Grand Valley?

C: Jacobson...was it Jacobson...they told me he was a professor at Grand Valley. And they bought that old brick house across the street here, this one. They were only in it, uh, six weeks or so.

: Oh, that house right up there.

C: Yeah. And then they went and bought the castle as we call it. It's out at Highland Park.

: I think I know who these people are. They're not, uh...well, that house right across the street, yes, the woman applied for a job at Grand Valley, she wanted, she was, uh,...

C: She was a therapist.

: ...she'd come from Michigan State, Lansing.

C: No, no, no, these people came from Ohio. He was kind of a short, heavy-set man with glasses; they had one son...real young boy. Went to high school here. And she and her mother and her mother's sister, they were very, very old. They moved into the upstairs and this couple moved into the downstairs. And they were only there six weeks when they saw that place out at the lake and bought it.

: Well, these other people must have bought it since then.

C: Oh, yes, these people...

: Whose house was that, over there...

C: That's one of the oldest houses in town...

(End of Part I)

C: ...and then on the corner is another old, old house. It belonged to a Civil War veteran, Orson Vanderhouf. But Caroline Edmonds owns it now, she's his granddaughter. And, uh, she's about a year older than I am. She's in a nursing home. But her sister is visiting her now and she's in the house. But that's one of the oldest houses and then on the other corner, is an old, old house. And, um, I can remember when there were not any houses at all from this next corner up here until you got way out...

: Past the cemetery?

C: NO, before, uh, where the big, square house is, um, is it Williams Street that does, goes down...

: Yes, I think, uh...big, uh...

C: Square house. That was the Garnsey house.

: Garnsey house.

C: And, uh, that was the only house between here and the cemetery. And when you got to the cemetery, old man Walker's home...was the next one and he had the bath-house concession at Highland Park. Course, you didn't go to Highland Park like we can go now, you walked, you maybe went twice in

the summertime. And they had an ice cream parlor and, um, bath-houses. And then, later, oh, this Bossiker came in on the scene and he put up a pavilion with a dance floor. Oh, I wish I had time to find my pictures of those old places. That lake doesn't, isn't that shore terrible there at the Bil-Mar?

: Um-hum.

C: They're going to fall right in the lake.

: This was your father's house also.

C: No...this belonged to my grandfather who was the railroad man. Hammerhan grandfather.

: Hammerhan. Hammerhan house.

C: And when my mother and father got married, when my dad came here on the government boat, my grandpa was by that time, he wasn't too old and he had retired. And he spent a lot of time on the pier, and around and while he was on the pier, this young man comes along in a uniform and they got to talking. So, my grandpa says, "You come home with me for dinner Sunday." We always kidded my mother and father. We said, "Yep, Grandpa knew what he was doing. He had a daughter to get rid of and he saw you on the pier and he just hauled you up here." (laughs) We used to kid the life out of them; there were just two of us, my sister and myself. And, um, but, uh, grandpa knew all of these men, you see, cause he had time go around and talk. And as I say, he bought this house when he came with the railroad. And my mother and her three brothers were born here and my sister and I were both born in this house. And it eventually came to me, I'm the last one. Everyone else is gone, except my sister, and myself. And her husband is, right now, the chairman of the board of the Kellogg Foundation. He was the president for a good many years. He retired a year ago and is now the chairman of the board. They live in Battle Creek. They have a home in Scottsdale, Arizona in the wintertime. They think Arizona is just wonderful. And they can't make me come out there, see. I don't leave my house.

: That's your father?

C: That's my father. And my mother is the one above there. And then, my sister is the other one with the little black dog. And my brother-in-law is just underneath.

: Who's that other picture of over there?

C: That's my sister.

: You're sister.

C: Yes. And, you know, this is funny, uh, lot of people think I'm her mother. She's only two years younger than I am. But she's very slender and lively and, uh, does all this yoga stuff, you know. And, uh, uh, we're entirely different. Altogether different. But that Kellogg Foundation, I don't know if you're familiar with it or not. It's quite a foundation; they do a lot of work in schools, colleges...

: I've heard of it. Maybe they'll give us some money to publish our book.

C: Well, it's worth trying. Uh, what's the name, the man's name, it's a Dutch name, down here in Holland, he's a writer. What was his name?

: DeKrief?

C: DeKrief, Dr. Paul DeKrief. Oh, boy, was he mad at my brother-in-law. Oh. I don't know what he had to publish...but they didn't feel it was something they could really...um, put anything into. And I'm telling you, he was a scrapper, Dr. DeKrief. Did you ever know him?

: I read some of his books...

C: Oh, I knew him...

: I wanted to go talk to him before he died, but he was in pretty bad shape...

C: Yeah, well, you know, he lived a hard life.

: Went through a number of divorces and...

C: Yeah. He was quite a drinker and...

: Yeah.

C: ...and I think he sort of punished himself, you know what I mean, he abused himself.

: He must have been a good match for Sinclair Lewis; he helped Sinclair Lewis write a lot...

C: Yes. I would say they'd be much alike.

: (laughs) They must have had things in common that way.

C: I would think they'd be very much alike.

: Another thing this book suggests is that after the Milwaukee went down, some people started saying that Captain McKay was a heavy drinker.

C: Oh, no.

: It was, it was spiked by his friends.

C: Oh, no, he was not. Now, he was from Scotland and he would take a drink. I mean, he wasn't a teetotaler. Now, I've seen him drink a beer...right in this room. But, he wasn't a drinking man, absolutely. And I could imagine he could be on that boat maybe for months at a time and never seen a drink. He, he wasn't that type of person. I wish my dad were here and he could talk to you. He had so many, uh, stories, you know, there used to be a lot of fishing out of this port...many years ago. And there was a man named Mulligan...Oney(?) Mulligan and he was a typical old country Irishman and, uh, tall and angular and he had the biggest nose I think I ever saw. And he had several sons. But he had this sailboat that he'd go out to get the fish. And it was a rather, uh, disreputable-looking thing, they didn't

take very good care of their boats. And, uh, so...he'd call down into the hole and they'd say, "Oney, put the sails up." "Which sail, Father?" "The one with the hole in it." "Well, they all have holes in them." (laughs) And then he called down one day and I think this was a true story. There were three of the boys down in the hold and he wanted them up on deck and he called down and he says, "How many of yas are down there?" "Three of us, Father." "Well, the half of yas come up." (laughs) And my father always swore that was a true story, that he heard him say that himself. So I don't know, but I always remembered "The half of yas come up.:" And we'd see old man Mulligan coming into church, my sister and I...we'd go to church with our grandfather and he was very strict and we'd see old man Mulligan and all we had to do was look at him and that nose and the two of us would, you know, (chuckles) just could hardly keep from laughing and grandpa had an old-fashioned pair of spectacles that he put them like this and he'd look at us in church, (laughing) oh, boy. But every time we saw Mr. Mulligan that tickled us. I just had my 71st birthday. So, I feel I'm an old-timer.

: You were born in 19...

C: Two. Yep.

: Well, we hope to emphasize the years from 1900 to the present.

C: Uh-huh.

: In what we do, because, uh, Lillie stopped his history in 1900.

C: Lillie made a few mistakes.

: Uh, we realize that too.

C: (laughing) He did. But, uh, you wouldn't, of course, you weren't around here when he was here, were you? When Leo Lillie was alive.

: No.

: No.

C: Well, then you couldn't appreciate Leo Lillie. He was, uh, he'd have made a first-class gangster. He was just a hoodlum. He, when he was a kid, he did everything, uh, unorthodox. His family didn't know what they was going to do with him. Came from a very fine family, but he was a very, uh, charitable man, did an awful lot of good. That people didn't know about. He'd go up to the school, he'd go up to the St. Patrick's school and he'd ask if there were any kids needed clothes. Or if they needed books. He used to pay for a lot of things for kids in town that people didn't hear about. But, uh, he was wild. And, uh, his widow still lives here. On, on Butler. Know where Butler is? The next street off Lake.

: Butler...

C: Well, let's see, you live in the McGill house.

: Yes.

C: You come down to Williams Street corner and turn that way. Butler is the first street that goes parallel to Lake.

: Oh, uh-huh.

C: And Mrs. Lillie still lives there.

: Oh, she lives right...very close to our house then.

C: Very close to you. Yep. Uh, who lived in the McGill house before you took it, or did you take it...

: No, some people were renting it, uh; we bought it then in '66. Uh, Betty Anderson, uh, McGill's daughter.

C: Yes.

: And Mrs. McGill had been a school teacher...

C: She was my first grade teacher.

: Oh, was she?

C: Emily Tietz.(?)

: We heard she was a fine teacher.

C: Oh, wonderful. Wonderful. And Harry was the blacksmith.

: Yeah.

C: And, of course, they lived down this way, on north Second, the Teeks lived around the corner from Second, they had a great, big white house and they had 14 children. Mrs. McGill was one of fourteen.

: Oh.

C: And, uh, Harry, of course, worked in the blacksmith shop, just around the corner. And, we...

: DeGloppers(?), that was.

C: Well, yeah. And we lived, uh; we went to school at the old Columbus Street School. And Emily was the first grade teacher. I can remember just like yesterday. And I got scarlet fever and the room took up some money to buy some flowers...for me. And it was in March, so you know it was stormy. And, of course, in those days, when you had scarlet fever you had a red sign tacked on the front of the house, "Quarantine." Nobody could come in or out. And, uh, so, they, the kids that were sent up with the flowers, saw that sign and they threw the flowers on a little extra porch that we had over here. Nobody saw the flowers and they froze. All the flowers froze. And Emily was the one that bought, got the kids to buy the flowers. Um, a couple years ago, I had to go out to the, uh, Ferry School, you know where that is? Out on Pennoyer? Do you know where it is?

: Um-hum.

C: I had to talk to...I've forgotten, I'll show you the pictures, uh, letters that they sent me. Uh, three grades, they put them all together, there were about 75. They wanted to know about Rev. William Ferry...who started Grand Haven. I don't know how they happened to get onto me, but I was invited to talk. Well, I never had so much fun in all my life. We ended up with anything but the Rev. Ferry. They asked me about these different houses in Grand Haven, they'd explain what street they were on, "Who owned that house?" and "Now, tell us about them." So, I'd try and remember about them. (laughs) And even wanted to know where was Rix Robinson buried. Well, he's buried out in the township, I think. Out somewhere in a little township cemetery. Well, the next day or so, I got all these, I got three great, big envelopes with these thank-you letters. Well, I wouldn't part with those for anything; they're the cutest darn thing. Some of them drew pictures. One of them said, uh, "My mother said you didn't have to be so dressed up when you talked to us." Now, I don't know, mother, how she found out I was dressed up, I didn't think I was, but the kids probably went home and told her, see. Well, really, I, I enjoyed it so. And then, Gerald Cook, now, where you live, up here, where young Bill Wilds lives, across the street...

: Right.631.

C: ...that was built by Cook.

: John Cook.

C: John Cook, he was a grocer.

: Yeah.

C: And Gerald is the one who was on the program...

: Yes, I heard his program.

C: He was on first and then he and I were on together. Did you hear that?

: Oh, no, I didn't hear that, no.

C: Well, Gerald and I were on together. But, now, he is, he was the son of this old, of this old man, uh, Cook the grocer. He had what was called a mercantile company down on Third Street. I think there's a freight office or something in there now...uh, Bronsema's...

: Bronsema's Transfer?

C: Transfer.

: Yeah.

C: It was a big grocery store in there. And, they lived way on the other end of town. And finally, he got well off, but they wanted to live up on this, and so they built that house.

: That must have been one of the next houses built then, I know, that was built way before ours was.

C: Yes. But, still, it isn't a very old house. I mean, I imagine it would be, maybe, maybe 70 years old.

: Built around the turn of the century then.

C: Yes.

: The people who lived in our house between, uh, McGills and I forget the man's name, but he had been in the Coast Guard and retired very early, he worked for the city...

C: Yeah, uh-huh.

: ..and he drank himself to death, I don't, uh...

C: Yeah, his wife works...

: His wife still lives around here, Cleo.

C: Cleo, she lives around the corner in an apartment.

: Uh-huh.

C: Hamilton.

: Hamilton, that's right, yes, they had a couple daughters and...

C: Yeah, that's right.

: Well, they were renting the house, it's got, it's pretty well run down.

C: I can imagine they wouldn't take care of it too well.

: Terribly in need of paint on the outside. I painted it the first summer we moved in.

C: This Cleo was always working. And he wouldn't be pinned down to anything. I don't think it was well for him to retire.

: That's what I heard, uh, that sort of did him in.

C: Because then he had too much time.

: Didn't know what to do and he...

C: He was a terrible drinker.

: Just spent the time lifting a bottle.

C: We used to call him "Chief. Chief Hamilton." And I used to see him around. I retired nine years ago.

: Oh, then you were a...

C: I was in the Peoples' Bank for 44 years.

: Oh.

C: I thought I was going to be bored to death. I thought, "What'll I do with myself?" And, you know, it's Monday and then it's Friday. And I don't know what I do, but I'm busy. And...I keep going. You've probably heard about my antique car that I drive.

: You have an antique car.

C: Well, everybody wants to buy it from me.

: Oh.

C: 1956.

: Oh, '56.

C: And it only had 10,000 miles on it. And I have more people walk up to me when I park that car, "Do you ever consider selling that car?" Looks just like a new car. So I'm spotted around town wherever I go. Even the city manager's been here three times trying to buy that car from me.

: Hum, Darrel Tammen?

C: Yeah, do you know him?

: I, no, only of him.

C: Well, I had a little experience with him, uh, it was last winter. Um, you know, they kept changing the parking on Franklin Street. One time you'd go one way on it and next time you'd go the other way. And I had my favorite grocery store was Erickson's. And so, every once in a while, I'd have to take a different route to go to Erickson's, because Tammen would change the parking, (laughing) or the way to go down Franklin Street. So, one day, I was parking at the curb and this young man walked across the front of my car, like this, and he came over then. And, uh, I had to get out on the curb side and I wasn't parked, I didn't know how to step out of the thing. So, uh, he opened the door of the car and he said, uh, "That's a nice car you have there." Well, I looked at him and I said, "Come over here and get me out of it." (laughing) So, he came over and helped me out of the car. And, he started talking to me about it and, uh, "Did you ever think of selling it?" "Oh, no, I need it to get around." Then I started on the parking. "I wish this city manager of Grand Haven'd make up his mind about parking on these streets." And I really went to town on it and, uh, uh, he, in the mean time, had told me he had been in my garage and seen my car and the he lived on the corner of Sherman and Leggatt and even that didn't register with me. And, finally, I stopped talking, I said to him, "And just what do you do?" He said, "I'm Darrel Tammen, the city manager." Well, we both exploded. I said, "Well, I got the right man to talk to." (laughs) But since then, I've seen him several times. But that was really funny. I told him off before I knew who he was.

: What make is your car?

C: A Ford Fairline. I'll show it to you before you, everybody's crazy about my car.

: Well, that's even older than your Ford.

: Yeah, I Have a '64.

C: Oh. Uh-huh. Well, uh, I was told yesterday by Dr. Smith that I'm not going to be driving it very much longer.

: Because of your eyesight.

C: Uh-huh. I'm still driving. But...

: We should go fairly soon too, I have to be home at 3 o'clock.

: That's right; you have to be home at three.

C: Where do you live?

: I live, do you know Harry Locke?

C: Yes.

: I live in Harry's old house. He lives next door to me now.

C: Out in, uh...Dermshire...

: Out on the river.

C: Yeah.

: Yeah, south of Dermshire.

: Right on the river.

C: Uh, last Sunday, I was with some friends and we drove all through there. I haven't been out there for years.

: I live in between Harry Locke and George Keeho.

C: Yeah, I know George too.

: Was Harry's father's name Chris?

C: Yep.

: Oh, well, then I ran across an item about his father in the paper, uh, yesterday. I was reading the 1900 Grand Haven Tribune.

C: Well, now if you have, you must have seen my mother and father's wedding, because, you know Betty Hickey, uh; she's got something to do with Photostatting the Tribune for the library? And she had a, she was going through this paper and she found my mother and father's wedding and she Photostatted it for me and gave it to me, but my sister took it to Battle Creek. But, uh, it's right through there...

: It was in the year 1900 they got married?

C: Yeah.

: Oh, I saw the name Hammerhan a couple times.

C: Well, yeah, that was my mother's name.

: I made some Photostats too.

C: Oh, did you?

: It took me about three hours yesterday to get through one month. The month of January.

C: Oh, boy, don't I know it. We, we, uh, made film records of all the things in the bank, all the checks and deposits, way back, for years. Boy, it took months. And time.

: Now, I know what happens to you. You get all carried away about reading about Ty Cobb and lots of items...

C: (laughs)

: Oh, they didn't even have a sports page...

C: Now, where do you go to do this? You go to the Tribune office?

: I'm doing this at the library.

C: Well, that's where Betty Hickey's been doing it. I wonder you don't know Betty.

: They have a big...

C: Children's story hour there, uh, on the radio.

: Is she the, the, uh, does she have long, dark hair or is she older?

C: No, Betty's hair is gray now.

: Oh, well, I know Elizabeth, uh, von Oettingen.

C: Oh, yes, well, she's more recent. She's, yeah.

: Maybe Betty is the one who works behind the desk.

C: Well, she isn't on the library staff; she's doing this for somebody.

: Oh. I see.

C: And her people were old timers. How am I going to get this book back to you now?

: Well, I'll stop by and pick it up.

: We'll pick it up sometime.

C: All right.

: You're home...

C: Oh, I'm home most of the time.

: Okay.

C: I, uh, wish you could meet my sister and brother-in-law...when they're here. They were supposed to come this weekend. He's getting very, he's only 67 or 68 years old and he's getting very feeble. And, that's the reason he retired from the Foundation, although he's, as I say, chairman of the board and he come to the meetings. They were there twice last winter, from Arizona, to board meetings. But he's a very interesting man; they've been all over the world. And met the crown heads of most of the countries and, uh, my sister's had many wonderful trips. And I know he'd be interested to talk to you. And you live out there near Dermshire and you're my neighbor.

: Just about, yeah, I guess, just up the hill here.

C: How long have you men been around?

: I've lived there since '66.

C: That long?

: Yes.

C: I'll be darned.

: Four years...for me.

C: Four for you. Where did you come from?

: Detroit and Holland, originally. I was raised in Holland, Michigan.

C: Yeah.

: And I lived in Detroit for seven years.

C: Well, Detroit, of course, is where all my people came from before the Grand Trunk came here. Grandma used, I can hear her say now, "The city of Detroit." Always, "The city of Detroit." They had horse cars. See, my grandma almost lived to be a hundred years old.

: Yes, she probably, she probably knew the, the old stage stop, the, uh...

C: Oh, yes.

: What's the big hotel, uh...

C: Pontchartrain Hotel?

: Oh, the Pontchartrain, yes, and I was talking about...

: Botsford Inn.

: ..Botsford Inn. 1836 on Grand River Avenue.

C: And Fort Street, Fort Street East. Now, I don't know why that sticks in my memory, but there must have been something on Fort Street East that was important.

: Now, that's downtown.

C: Is it?

: Um-hum.

C: And they had horse cars. And, uh, that was considered quite a sophisticated city. And then, she comes out here in the sand pile...

: Do you remember Dr. Aaron Vanderveen?

C: Very well, he was our doctor. I remember when I was a little girl, going into his office with my mother. His office was in the tower of the big house, you know, up, across from the city hall. They have his chair down at the museum...he had, in his office.

: Oh, they do have that?

C: Yeah. He was, uh, he was a Civil War doctor.

: Yes.

C: That's where he learned his surgery. And, my grandpa would tell about it, about him coming down to the Grand Trunk when there would be an injury. They'd run for him and he'd come. And, one day, they had to put a man on the table in the freight office to amputate his leg. And, no anesthetic, just a swig of whiskey. And, between the slicing and the times he was tying the, uh...whatever they tie, he'd have the bloody knife sticking his mouth. Like that. It almost killed my grandpa. (laughing) He couldn't take that, that was a little too much of a...well, I've enjoyed it. I wish you gentlemen would come back.

: Well, I think we will come back. I'll think about some other questions I'd like to ask...

C: I wish you would. Cause, they, there's probably a lot of things I spot all the time.

: Well, you enjoy reading that too.

C: Well, I'll hurry and read it, so I won't hold you up on it.

: No, I'm sure Waanders won't mind.

C: Well, I enjoy having people like you around.

: This is a very interesting house.

C: Well, it's just like it was when I was a little girl. I've got a real nice porch here that I practically live on. Here's my kitchen.

: Oh, yes, it's very nice. Such a pleasant house, oh, goodness.

C: This is an old house, but there wasn't all this pavement around it in my day.

: That's, now, you have a pretty new house and you have a screened in porch but the people with new houses don't know the joys of a screened in porch.

C: No.

: Always patios, open patios with the bugs all over...

C: We live out here.

: Yeah.

C: Have you time to see my car?

: What time is it?

: It's, uh, 20 to.

: Yes, um-hum. We can be home by...

: Turned out to be a rather nice day.

(End of Tape)