

purchased UHLMANN BROTHERS from Fraser Shipyards Inc. With the assistance of the British consul in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the ship was moved from American to British to Canadian registry in one action, and the vessel was enrolled at Toronto as (d) MANITOBA (C.325772). Possibly involved in facilitating the sale were Boland & Cornelius, of Buffalo, who were Norlake's agents in the United States. On the Canadian register, MANITOBA was shown as 487.7 x 52.2 x 25.9, 6127 Gross and 4065 Net Tons. What was the origin of the name MANITOBA? It may have been the Canadian prairie province of Manitoba, a major grain producing area, or the name may have recalled the famous C.P.R. passenger steamer, which was scrapped a decade and a half earlier.

After MANITOBA was readied for service for Norlake, she steamed down to Toledo, Ohio, where she loaded a cargo of soya beans consigned to Victory Mills at Toronto. By the time she got to Port Colborne, however, the Welland Canal had closed for the season. Accordingly, MANITOBA was laid up along the west side of the Government House elevator at Port Colborne, and there she spent the winter. Early in the 1966 navigation season, MANITOBA was fitted out and steamed down the canal, and by April 7th, she was being unloaded at the Victory Soya Mills elevator at the foot of Parliament Street, Toronto. At this time, MANITOBA had no name on her bows; she still had the Steinbrenner red hull and her stack was all black. Soon, however, she was painted up in Norlake colours, with a black hull, white forecastle and cabins, and a black stack with a silver diamond, on which was a red letter 'N'.

T.M.H.S. member Capt. John Tackaberry recalls that MANITOBA was a good handling boat, and that the government inspector at Collingwood told him that she was in the best shape he had ever seen for a ship of her age. There was not an inch of her that wasn't sitting fair on the blocks when she was dry-docked.

John recalls: "Late in the fall of 1966, we were sent to Havre St. Pierre to load ore. It was always a problem having enough boiler feedwater in those ships that didn't have closed systems. We needed water in the worst way, so with the help of the dock people and people from the town, they gathered up, I think, every length of fire hose in town and hooked onto a connection near the Hudson's Bay Company store. It was a long way from the ship to the store, but we got our water."

John Tackaberry has another interesting memory of his time sailing the MANITOBA. "While downbound on Lake St. Francis (Coteau Lake to sailors) in 1966 or 1967 (I forget which year), we ran into a fog bank about 6 in the morning at the worst possible place, at Lancaster Bar where you cross from one side of the lake to the other, with the current right on the beam. Naturally, we were going very slow at the time. The MANITOBA had a Raytheon radar set, as did all of the Pickands Mather boats just after the war. They had enormous scanners, about 12 feet wide, and rotated at the incredibly slow rate of seven revolutions per minute. Also, our shortest range was one mile, which wasn't good in a tight spot. When you can't see and the scanner takes almost nine seconds to go around, the targets disappear until it comes around again, and nine seconds seems like half an hour.

"At that point, there was a red stake on our port side with no radar reflector. We couldn't pick it up and slid aground forward. The bottom is soft there, so I knew that there was no damage. In fact, the mate didn't believe me when I told him we were aground. With the current on the beam, I knew that I couldn't attempt to back off without her full length going aground. The fog cleared shortly after it happened.

"We sounded all around with the lead line, which confirmed that she was only on forward, so we filled the forepeak tank to hold her from swinging and called for a tug. Naturally, the Seaway knows more than captains, and sent two tugs and a lighter. When they got around St. Anicet, the stern tug let go of the lighter and came rushing up to us. We slid off as easy as pie, full forepeak and all, before the other tug and lighter got there. We pro-