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Transcript of a sound recording in MS 608, WLBZ Radio Station Records, Bangor, Maine, 1931-1973

Title: Eddie Owen Interviews Captain John Pyre About Boston Explosion of Oil Tanker Harold Reinauer

Date: September 21, 1951

Recording number: D 16.13; CD 5, track 14

Length of recording: 2:46

[transcript begins]

EDDIE OWEN: I'm talking with Captain John M. Pyre of 119 Washington Street in Brewer who on Wednesday of this week at Chelsea, Mass., was aboard the oil tanker... what's the name of that tanker, Captain?

JOHN PYRE: Uh, motor tanker Harold Reinauer. The Harold Reinauer.

OWEN: And why don't you tell us briefly, Captain, exactly what happened, at about the time you were, uh docked, on board the tanker?

PYRE: Well the only thing is the explosion hit me, knocked me down, the second one knocked me up again, the third one knocked me down. And, that's about all. I don't know what caused it, I don't know why it had to happen, a terrible thing.

OWEN: I understand it's still under investigation.

PYRE: That's right. I have to be back in Boston at 9:30 Monday morning for the Coast Guard investigation.

OWEN: And there were a number of men who were seriously injured when the craft blew up, that's right.

PYRE: Yes, three men were hurt badly and several others with minor scratches and lacerations.

OWEN: You're one of those who fortunately escaped with minor injuries, is that right?

PYRE: That's right. I was just blackened up by the smoke. I was fortunately to be, the blast went over me. I was just about, oh, fifteen feet away from one of the explosions but it went over my head.

OWEN: I imagine that your wife was very happy to have you come home and to find that you had been so fortunate compared with some of the others?

PYRE: Yes, she was very happy to see me home and thank God my office got ahold of her before she heard it on the radio.

OWEN: That's right.

PYRE: She heard it about ten minutes from my office before she heard it come on the radio.

OWEN: That was very prompt action on their part, wasn't it?

PYRE: That's right.

OWEN: Now after all these investigations I suppose you plan to go back to your same type of work, Captain?

PYRE: I've been doing it for 22 years.

OWEN: This is no time to stop now.

PYRE: That's right.

OWEN: That's the spirit. Tell me, does Mrs. Pyre do the average amount of worrying while you're at work?

PYRE: Oh, yes, she worries for me all the time. Never anything like this happened to me before.

OWEN: Always a first time for anything, Captain.

PYRE: That's right.

OWEN: And now in your case the investigation taken care of, a little more rest for you, perhaps and then back. Do you have any idea if it will be the same type of craft?

PYRE: As far as I know it will be the same type of craft.

OWEN: Well, we wish you a lot of luck, Captain, and we trust that such a tragedy won't happen again. I think you've had your share of one type of luck and we hope it will be the best from now on soon.

PYRE: Thanks very much.

OWEN: Thank you, Captain John Pyre.

PYRE: You bet.

[transcript ends]

For more information about this transcript, audio recording, or other materials in Special Collections at the University of Maine, contact:

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