

JK TAPE ONE. SIDE ONE

Q. If you tell me when you first started?

JK Well, let's see, I can't just remember the exact date when I first started, I was only 14, that would be about 1921, I think it was. I think I'd be better able to tell you this way. I've got a reference in here.....

Q. How old were you when you started?

JK There's the date there when I got that (referring to reference), 1927. That's when I finished up, that's when I went and got my reference. I started when I was 14 years old.

Q. When were you born?

JK 1907, 1921 when I started, that would be. I finished in 1926. That would be my 4 ½ years up, wouldn't it?

Q. 5 years up.

JK I only did 4 ½ years.

Q. Where did you start?

JK Ingliston Pit, at the face, with my father. That's the first mine ever I started. I just left school and went down and I was working at the face with like filling hutches.

Q. As a drawer?

JK As a drawer, that's right, I was drawing stuff. I was filling it and drawing it, and my father was.....When I started first I was boring holes at the face, and then I started filling, as I got older I started drawing, and that's all I was doing for my 4 ½ years. It was a miner's job.

Q. When you started at 14, did you go straight down the mine, or did you firstly work at the pit head?

JK No, no, I went straight down. Lucky if I was 14. But I just went straight down the mine, went down in a cage, at Newbridge. It wasn't a mine, it was a pit, so I went down in a cage, and I was at the face all the time with my father till I started drawing the hutches. Drawing the hutches from there right to the top of the brae, and they went from there to the pit bottom, and they went from the bottom up to the hill, up to the surface, we called it the hill, the surface, then it was taken away in wagons to the - I think it was Pumpherstons Oil Works, then, where the big refinery was.

Q. Can you remember how far the face was from the pit bottom?

JK Oh, it was a good bit, two miles anyway, or more. It would be about two miles from the pit bottom to the face, maybe a wee bit more.

Q. How many hutches did you fill in a day?

JK Fourteen at that time.

Q. What weight were they?

JK Well, they averaged from maybe eighteen hundredweight to a ton. It all depends you know on what the stuff was like and how big your hutches were filled. If it was small stuff it was heavier, but if it was thrown in in lumps it didn't weigh as good.

Q. What seam did you work in?

JK Just my father's team. My father had the place, the contract for the face you see. He worked the face, and we'd another fellow working with us.

Q. Can you remember the fellow's name?

JK Yes, but I think he's dead now. Jackie Nisbet from Ratho. He worked with my father, he was with my father a long time before I started, and he was at the face helping my father, and filling along with me. He was with my father for years. But that's as far as ever I went.

Q. Can you remember who the faceman was on the other side of your shift?

JK Yes, Pat Hughes, he was on the other side with us.

Q. What made you go down the mine?

JK Well, I'd no other option, I had to go down. I was forced to. I didn't want to go, but I had to go.

Q. How were you forced?

JK There was a big family of us, there was about 12 or 13 in the family, and my father was the only one who was bringing in wages. So I had to leave school and start straight away, I couldn't go to another job. I didn't want to go down the mine you see, but it was the only thing that was for me. There was nothing else in those days you know. They couldn't afford to put me to a trade.

Q. Had your father not been employed in the mines, do you think you would have got a job in the mines?

JK Oh yes, yes, but I wouldn't have went right down below. I'd have got a job on the surface. I'd have tried for a job on the surface. Failing that then I'd maybe had to go down the mine as a pony driver, hanging on at the foot of a brae, something like that, that's the only thing I could have got until I was old enough to fill the hutches and run them, you know, until I got a bit stronger, for any sake, until I grew up, but I didn't

grow very much!

Q. You never got the chance!

Q. Can you remember how deep Ingliston Pit was?

JK It was 66 fathoms, I think it was 66 fathoms.

Q. About 200 odd feet down?

JK Aye.

Q. In what seam did you work?

JK I think it would be the Broxburn seam, I believe. I don't know for sure mind you, it could only have been the Broxburn seam, I think, mind you, I wouldn't swear to it, you know. Where we were taking the stuff out, but in the other section of the mine they were driving, you know, driving bore shale. But that's about all I can tell you, that's about all there was to tell.

Q. You mentioned your brother in law being in the Scottish trade union, can you remember the strike of 1925?

JK Aye, that's when we were put out, 1925, when we were put out. The mine closed between 1925 and 1926, it closed. That's when I finished up, you see.

Q. Do you know the reason why that was?

JK Well, they said it was it didn't pay them at the finish up because it was.. The railway had to come in with the engine and take the wagons out, and transport it away up to Pumpherston, and it was costing a lot of money, and then they were getting oil from abroad at that time seemingly, and that's what finished us. They didn't want the shale then. It wasn't worked out,

the mine, it closed because it wasn't paying.

Q. How old was the mine at the time, Ingliston Mine, how long had it been opened?

JK Oh, it had been opened a good while before I started, years and years, it opened long before I was born. Definitely long before I was born.

Q. Do you think when they shut it, it was near exhaustion?

JK No, it wasn't near exhaustion, no,no,no, they were still driving. They were still getting the shale in the dooks, driving away in the Corstorphine road. it was the longest road there was on it you know, it was driving further every day. That's about all there is to tell about it, you know, no' really nothing of value to you.

Q. It is valuable, little details, you're the first one I've had who had worked in Ingliston mine. For example, you get a lot of people working in different mines.

JK Aye oh yes, I worked in another one down here, Totlewells there, just down the road a bit. There were three mines down there, Duddingston, Old Duddingston and New Duddingston, and Totlewells, just the same workings, you see. I was just filling and drawing there just the same.

Q. Did you ever become a faceman?

JK No, no, I never became a faceman. I never had any inclination to go to it. Never. It was all right with my father, I knew everything to be done at the face, because I was at the face with my father for a long time before I went on to the drawing. I used to drill holes and fire the shots, and all that sort of thing. But I didn't like it. I wanted to get drawing, and get away out of the road, you know, away from my father! Along with the men, out on what they called the lie. You filled your hutch at the face and you run it out the road and you come to what they called the lie, and it was put on to an endless rope and taken away. You got the empty coming up and you filled that and you were away out again with another, in and out all day like that.

Q. How far was the lie from the face?

JK You go by stoop lengths. It would be about 10 or 12 stoop lengths. Then we had the brae besides, what they called a cuddy in those days. Your full hutch went down, and another one on the other side came up what they call the cuddy and yours went down and brought them on to the level road again.

Q. Was there a man employed at the cuddy, or did you have to operate it by yourself?

JK You operated it by yourself.

Q. So that would take a lot of time?

JK No, you just ran out to the top of a brae, level like this, plates on it, you ran out with your hutch and slewed it round on the plates, and hung it on to the endless rope, on this tow, coupled on to the back of your hutch. You shoved it over, and when you shoved it over the one at the other side, the bottom came up and when it got up to the top you went down to the bottom. Then you had what they called a snibble, you pushed that in to brake it.

Q. From the cuddy did you have to push it still further away?

JK Aye, push it out to the lie, the next lie, then the horse, the pit pony, took it away then. You picked up your hutch there and the pony took it away.

Q. You mentioned when you were a drawer that you were firing shots. Can you remember the explosives you used?

JK Well, my father always used powder. You got it in packets, powder. And then some places, they used the gelatine, what they called the gelatine sticks you know, because you could put that in water, it didn't do any harm.

Q. That's blasting gelatine?

JK Blasting gelatine, that's right. But we used powder most of the time you know.

Q. What is the difference between, except for the use of water, the gelatine and the powder, explosion wise?

JK They said that the "jelly" was more powerful than what the powder was.

Q. Did it give you bigger pieces of shale?

JK Oh aye, big pieces of shale. You had a mash, what you call a mash, that's a big heavy hammer, and if it was too heavy for you to lift you broke it with the mash, just to the size that you could lift you know, then you set it to the hutch. You filled your hutch with small stuff first, as small as you could get it, because that's where the weight comes in, I mean, you got a big bit, set it all round about, filled that up again, then set it up another wee bit till you got maybe about a foot or two above the top of your hutch. Then you got a big heavy one you know, just put it on the top and made it lie. The more you got in the better.

Q. How high was your face?

JK About 7 or 8 foot, say about 7 to 8 foot you know to the shale, then after that it was blaes, and it wasn't any good. An 8 foot tree with plenty headroom.

Q. Now you yourself are not extremely tall, so how did you reach up the 8' or 7' roof to drill a hole?

JK Well, you've put a tree up, a tree, what they called a boring tree, then they put that tree up, you fix your machine on it, half way down you see, and your drill went up, your 3' drill, and it caught the top, if you were taking the top shale down, that's what they called your "tops", and you bored your hole on the tree, it was halfway up the tree, say about 6 or 7 foot up the tree, well you could always reach up 6 or 7 foot no bother, and then you came down and bore the hole further down, what they called a "breast". That was in the centre of the shale, then they bored a "bencher", that was on the pavement, they blew it up off the pavement.

There were three types of shale, bench, breast and tops. You couldn't go

any higher, if you went any higher you went up to the blaes and rock, I mean, - you took your - you always had to have the tree up to bore the holes, always. You kept the tree for boring holes, a nice light one. You shifted it about you see, to bore the holes. So you had about 6 or 7 holes to bore before you started - filling top? - the top, before you got to the shale. It wasn't all shale in Ingliston Pit, it was the clod in between the shale, what they called the clod, that was stone, dirt, you had to bore holes in this, what you called a Yankee, in this, maybe three or four holes, and blew all the dirt out, then you got a big cut maybe about 3' or 6' back, and that left your shale clean, ready to draw. When you blew that down, it was filthy, what you called stowed, the dirt to one side, then you started filling your shale. It was oil shale. But Ingliston face was the only one that had dirt, because the rest of the mines were all shale, Ingliston was dirt, dirt in between the shale. But it was a good shale, a very good shale it was.

Q. You know your drill, was it a ratchet drill you used, a hand boring machine?

JK A hand boring machine, aye.

Q. Can you remember how long it was, without the drill?

JK The longest one was 3'6" to 4'. That was your longest drill. And you'd one - You started off with one about a foot, you'd take another one about 2', you'd have another one about 3'. If you were going to make it any longer you'd go to about 4'. The longer the hole the better because the more stuff you got down, you see. After you'd done that you cleaned it out. What they called the cleaner would pull all the crumbs out and stemmed it up when they were putting in 3 or 4....maybe a couple pound of powder in it. Stemmed it up with dirt, wet muck, rammed it in. Put the fuse in of course, and light it. That was it, fired it and then you got your stuff.

Q. When you fired it with powder or gelatine, did you use the same system, clean the hole, stem it?

JK Aye, the very same way. Stemmed it just the very same, just the very same.

Q. The stemming, the muck you used for the stemming, was the scraping of

the holes?

JK That's right, that's right, we kept all that to one side, and wet it, and just threw it into the hole, stemmed it. Sometimes made paper bags you know, paper pokes, and filled the pokes with the borings and rammed it into the holes. And you got it all in the paper bag and just rammed it in, maybe 3 or 4 pokes at it, that's the hole filled now, you see.

Q. How wide is the hole?

JK Oh, just about 1 ½ "

Q. So the stemmer would be just about below 1 ½"?

JK Aye, that's right. Stemmer just fitted into it you see. That was..... stemmer was maybe about 4 or 5 foot long, so's it got plenty of room.....stemmer..

Q. The explosives, did you have a limited amount which you could buy?

JK No, you got a can, a can of powder, you got a can of powder.

Q. How much did the can hold?

JK Oh, about 4 or 5 lb easy.

Q. Would you use that in a shift?

JK Oh aye, because you'd have about 1,2,3, you'd have about 6 or 7 holes to bore and it all took powder, sometimes you brought two cans of powder down in the morning with you. You used all that.

Q. On average, how much would you say, what tonnage of shale would, say, ½ lb to 1 lb explosive bring down?

JK Not very much, shale's very light, very light, very light it is. But maybe get as much stuff down with what they called a breaking, see, the faceman took off a breaking, that would be his bencher, breast and tops. If they took that down you might get your day's stuff out of it, maybe fill 14 hutches, at an

average of 18 cwt. a hutch. Maybe more, or a bit less most of the time, it all depends, what happened when they went to the top.

Q. When the faceman had drilled the holes and had made his place safe and everything what did he then do? Did he help you to fill the hutches?

JK No. He'd start on the other side of the place, bore holes for the next day. He never had time for to fill them, because the time he put up the wood and made the place safe you were working away and you were cleaning it up, well, he had to start on the other side, and take off what they called a breaking, start boring three or four holes there, maybe two or three there before lousing time, and that would give him a start for the morning so's we could start straight away.

Q. How long, on average again,...How long did it take to drill a hole?

JK Say about half an hour, or more. It was hard, very hard, very hard. About $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ hour easy to bore a hole, maybe more.

Q. Yet again on average, how many holes would you drill say, in a day?

JK It depends on what sort of good faceman he was. Maybe 6,7,8, maybe 8 or 9, if he was boring 8 or 9 holes in a day, he was doing a great day's work. And that was putting up wood in between, making the place safe, and laying rails, so you could always get your hutch in nearer the face, because you were travelling away all the time, you see, you were cutting ground all the time.

Q. That was the faceman's job, to lay the rails?

JK Aye, he laid the rails. He'd lay them maybe when you were with your hutch out on the lie getting your empty, he'd got the chance of the place cleaned up and quiet, and slip away, get maybe a couple of 6' or a couple of 12' rails to keep you going. We were busy, we were kept going.

Q. Water and gas in the mine, did you experience that?

JK Aye well we were very lucky, we had naked lights. We didn't have the safety light, but you had a safety lamp at the face, hanging on a tree, you know, and if the gas comes, it plays on the lamp, and you know whether it is time to get out. But that was the Glennie lamps, what they called the Glennie lamps, in those days. But now at the latter end there we didn't have them at Ingliston, but the last mine I worked in it was all electric lights, electric.

Q. Helmets?

JK We had no helmets in those days, it was just the caps and the small tallow lamps. Bum tallow lamps you see and it hung on the front of your cap with a.. like on a leather ear, the lamp hung on to it.

Q. That's the one that looked like a small teapot?

JK A small, small lamp.

Q. It looks like a teapot?

JK Like a teapot, that's right, that's right.

Q. Copper?

JK Copper, that's correct, aye, that's right.

Q. How much tallow would you put in that? Can you remember? How long would it last?

JK Maybe...You wouldn't put a lot in at once you know, because it melts but it would maybe take about as much as that, the size of my pinkie, about half way down. You got a cake of it about this length and just kept chipping it into your lamp until your lamp was filled with it. And then it lit, it went into oil, you see, it all melted down, and it kept burning. Either that or you

could use what they called pit oil, just ordinary oil, and you carried it in a flask, and filled your lamp.

Q. And where did you get such oil? Pit oil, where did you get it?

JK Well, you used to get it from the shops, or from the oil man when he came round.

Q. Can you remember how much it cost you?

JK It didn't cost very much. Of course it was a lot in those days. It didn't cost very much. But I've no idea the price of it. I've no idea of what it would cost. But it wouldn't cost very much. Even in those days I mean it was only 6d for a gill. It was a lot of money in those days. A wee flask of about that size would do you a day. That would burn for about a day, that would burn for about a day and of course you had the wick on top of that, you had the wick to buy as well. Put that in the spout, fumed it down, and put it in the lamp, and filled it up, and that kept you going all day.

Q. That was an eight hour shift?

JK That was an eight hour shift, that's right, aye. Then we got the acetylene lamps, they were the best of the lot.

Q. Oh, yes, carbide?

JK Carbide mineral light, that's right, that was the best light, cleaner, good light too, much cleaner. Only a couple of fills of that with carbide would do you a day. It was a rare clear light.

Q. You could adjust the flame?

JK You could adjust the flame, you could put a high flame or a low flame, you know, but the highestyou wanted a searchlight if you could get it!

Q. The higher the flame, the less your carbide would last?

JK That's right, aye. Carbide was cheap enough at that time, the carbide was cheap enough.

Q. And where did you buy the lamp?

JK At the ironmonger's, a shop in Broxbum, the ironmonger's there, it was all miner's stuff that was in it, picks and shovels and drills and machines and lamps and caps.

Q. Is that Johnstone?

JK Johnstone, he had that place, that's right, aye. Johnstone was the ironmongers then.

Q. Is he related to the present Johnstone who also has an ironmonger's shop? Are they family?

JK I don't know what you mean.

Q. Well, the people who now have the ironmongers in Greendykes Road who are also Johnstone, were they related to the Johnstone you were talking about?

JK I couldn't tell you, you know. I don't know whether.....no, I think that Johnstone's still in Uphall, is he not?

Q. A different Johnstone?

JK The bicycle shop, it's a different Johnstone, is it not?

Q. Is that the Johnstone who had the petrol station as well?

JK You know the bicycle shop? There was a big ironmongers across the road. Coulters, that was the main one, That was a big ironmongers, it was all mining stuff in there practically. They had a place in Bathgate as well. I don't know if that Johnstone in Greendykes Road now....no, that's not Tam Johnstone, I don't think so.

Q. What about gas? Did you experience gas in the mine?

JK Ah, well, we experienced it right enough, just once or twice, once or twice that's all. We were always very safe you know, never any of it went off, never any of it went off.

Q. How about water?

JK Plenty water, oh dear aye, plenty water. Not coming from the roof, but in your legs and knees, I've seen me up to here in it, you know, to my knees, but nothing from the roof, because the only time you got it coming from the roof was when you were down the dook, driving down the dook you used to get it coming from the roof then when you were driving down the dook, but otherwise..... it was very wet.

Q. Do you know if you received water money?

JK Aye, they got water money, but not a lot.

Q. Did you yourself receive water money?

JK No, we never got any water money, because it was only on the road, the road they were running you see.

Q. What about accidents in the mines?

JK One or two.

END OF SIDE ONE.

SIDE TWO

Q. Can you remember what happened in your accident?

JK Aye, it was a fall out of the roof, fall out the roof. What you called stooping then. You split it all up, they were stooping it. When you're stooping it you take all the wood out, and all the shale comes down at the back of you, you see, and they pull the best of it but just take the brush, a big boulder came flying down and caught me right jammed between the others, but I just knocked my shoulder out a bit. That was about the only accident I think I ever had.

Q. Were you badly hurt?

JK Not too bad, not too bad at all. I wasn't badly hurt you know, just went to Bangour and got it dressed.

Q. How long were you off?

JK I hurt my leg in Ingliston pit, under here, got it caught on a ragged tow, going down the cuddy. I was off a couple of months, I wasn't old then, about 15 at the time.

Q. Did you receive any compensation?

JK Aye, I got compensation.

Q. In order to receive your compensation did you have to go and see a special doctor?

JK No, my own doctor certified me.

Q. Obviously there was no problem?

JK No problem, no. My father got my compensation from the mine at the office. I didn't need to go you see because my father collected it. That was the only

accident I had at Ingliston pit.

Q. Do you remember who the Mine manager was at Ingliston?

JKFrame? Aye, there it is there, Charles Frame, Mining Manager, (referring to letter of reference).

Q. Can you remember the Under manager?

JK Mr. Burgess.

Q. And what about in Totlewells?

JK Oh, Totlewells. Mr. Gibb was the under manager there, Mr. Kitten was the manager.. That was when I finished up there, that's not that long ago. Well, I'm saying not that long ago, but 19.....what when I finished in Totle, about 20 years ago.

Q. That was when Scottish Oils shut?

JK No, Totle didn't close at that time when I left it. It closed just a wee while after it. I got transferred from there to Grangemouth.

Q. In the works at Grangemouth?

JK Aye, I got transferred from Totlewells. But Totlewells wasn't closed then, but it was just about closing. Se I couldn't go down it at the finish up, they wouldn't let me down, the doctor gave me....I don't know what it was... there was something wrong with my stomach and I hadn't to go back into it again. I know my work was in it but I never got down. I had a job on the surface for a wee while and they sent me away to Grangemouth.

Q. Did you prefer Grangemouth?

JK Yes, oh aye, that was better than the mine, better money.

Q. What was your job in Grangemouth?

JK I was a fitter's mate, fitter's mate at Grangemouth.

Q. You mentioned before you preferred the Oil Works at Grangemouth, for example. Could you not have got a job in the Oil Works when you were younger?

JK No. You couldn't get a job there.

Q. Why is that?

JK Well, I mean all of them that was in the Oil Works, their fathers were in it and then they went into it and their sons went into it. You had to be well in before you got a job, well, as far as I know anyway. But I never tried for a job in the Oil Works, because the money was no good to me. Better money in the mine than what there was in the works.

Q. Yes of course, because in the mines you made your own money more or less?

JK At the piece work you had to make your own wages.

Q. So you reckon you were better paid than the oil worker?

JK Aye, you got better money in the mine than the oil works, but you were working harder for it, working harder for it, and you'd shorter hours, you see.

Q. In the mines?

JK In the mines, aye.

Q. You had two shifts in the mines?

JK Aye, two shifts, sometimes three shifts, dayshift, backshift and nightshift. I was very lucky with the nightshift though, never gone very often on that,

special jobs, you know.

Q. During the War, the Second World War, did you have a lot of displaced persons and Bevin Boys?

JK A lot of Poles, they worked in the mine.

Q. How did they get on with the rest of the Community?

JK They got on well, they were good workers, worked well too, worked very hard they did. The few that I saw at Trolleywells anyway, they were quite good.

Q. They had a good reputation?

JK Yea, they were very good workers, there's no doubt about that. Yes, they were good workers, so there was one put with each faceman. Good workers. They were billeted up at the...not far up from the mine, you see. We never had any fault to find with them, they were always quite fair you know, good fellows to work with.

Q. What about Irish, did you have many Irish?

JK There was quite a few Irish. Of course it was the Irish that started the shale anyway. A lot of Irishmen in the mines, a lot of Irishmen in my experience. But they were good workers.

Q. You say it was Irish that started the shale. Why do you say that?

JK Well, they came over here and did all the jobs, went down the mines, and same in the retorts here, worked in all the retorts, it was all Irishmen that was in the retorts practically. Practically all Irishmen that started on there. They were working umpteen shifts, dayshift, nightshift and backshift.
.....Come over here as far as I know, I mean I'm only talking from what I know you know. My father worked in the retorts for a while and he worked at Tarbrax, he worked all over. He told me what like it was, it was really

bad you know, hard work, dirty work too, really dirty work. And then a lot of them went down the mine, and a lot of them on the tips, you know, the bing. A lot of them worked on that. It wasn't a nice job right enough. Dirty job.

Q. Dangerous as well?

JK It wasn't so much dangerous, but it was dirty and you were out in all weathers, out in all weathers, I never worked in the tips, the only place I worked was in the mine. I never done anything else.

Q. As a drawer, were you ever put on a make up?

JK Oh aye.

Q. What was the reason for that?

JK Well, it was too hard...you couldn't howk enough stuff to keep yourself going. I mean you had an average of 14-16 hutches a day, to make wages for the lot of you. If you were on a bad face, if the shale was low, and hard there'd be stone, and it wasn't good stuff. Maybe knock about only six hutches a day, well you had to get it made up.

Q. Was the difference between the made up wage and the wage which you made, how big was the difference?

JK There was no difference in my wage, the drawer's wage was never touched. The drawer got the same wage, because when they were getting stuff, the faceman had more than you had, but you were doing the work. You were doing the work, but you weren't getting the money. They were getting the money.

Q. It sounds a bit unfair?

JK It was unfair...what they wanted was half stuff, I mean to say half stuff,

see, you did all the hard work, all the running and filling them, and you just got your bare wage. Well when you weren't making wages you just got the same wage. If you only put out five or six hutches you just got the same, they didn't keep it off you. It was up to the faceman to see that you got the stuff. If you couldn't get it then that was just too bad.

Q. So what happened to the faceman in a case like that?

JK Well, I don't know. He would get his wages right enough but he wouldn't get as much as he was getting -when he was putting out the stuff.

Q. Would he go and see the Company and demand for a change or what would he do, because I mean if you had a bad face there's nothing you can do with it?

JK Ah well, he'd get made up to a certain amount I suppose, I suppose the faceman would get made up to a certain amount, but he wouldn't tell you what he was getting made up to, see what I mean?

Q. How long would you stay on the made-up rate?

JK Well that all depended how long the bad bit lasted. You see, you've got what they called splitting, driving ahead and up, it was hard work and it wasn't coming out the same. You didn't get the same, you didn't get so much stuff that way, but once you went through with it, you know, split it right through and you were bringing it back, you had as much as you could cope with. It came down easy then.

Q. So it was really the driving of the mine that was difficult?

JK The difficult bit was the driving, what you call driving headings, splitting. And then when you drove that, you brought it back, what you call stooping. It was easier then, you see, because it took more wood then, more wood, the faceman had a lot of timber to put up. But maybe a couple of hauls in the right place and then you got your day's stuff off it.

Q. How wide, how big, were your stoop?

JK It all depended. You see, it was only supposed to be 8' you see but sometimes it would be 9 or 10, sometimes 10 or 12 feet, you know, it all depended, it wasn't supposed to be, but mostly it was 10' or 9'. You couldn't avoid it you know when you were stooping because it used to all just come down. It was quite easy then for the faceman but harder on the drawer, he had more stuff to pull.

Q. How many stoops would you bring down in a day?

JK You didn't bring many stoops down in a day, stoops lasted a long time, stoops..... aye. I reckon that's about it. That will not go any further?

Q. Have you any funny incidents that happened in the mine, if anything funny ever happened in the mine?

JK Well, I mean, nothing really happened that - I mean you were always too busy getting on with your work for to have any carry on.

Q. What's the worst experience you've had?

JK Oh, I can't say I've any very bad experience really, no. I can't say I've had any bad experience at all in the mine, what you'd call very little as regards work, I mean, I worked hard enough, believe me!

Q. Did you play hard? How did you entertain yourself as a miner?

JK Oh well you didn't entertain yourself at all really, I mean, you just went down... Say I went down today about two o'clock, the first thing I would do when I went down is to sit down at what they call the lie, sit down and take a drink of tea, and maybe a bun or a cake or whatever, you know. Before I started, a cigarette.....

Q. Were you allowed to smoke?

JK Yes, oh you were allowed to smoke if you were in an open area, you know, a naked light area, and you were allowed to smoke. And I would smoke and then get the jacket off and get stripped off and that was you, and you never stopped until six o'clock because you had to keep going, you had to keep going, I mean, you couldn't loiter about. Maybe when you could you'd have a couple of quick draws right enough but you couldn't loiter about.

Q. It sounds like slave driving?

JK Well, the position I was in, this was when I was in Tootley, the position I was in, I was constant backshift, I was travelling from the town, because I didn't have a house out here, and I had to get away early at night to catch an early bus, not too early you know, but I went early. Ken, I mean, took the chance, and I had to keep going. Well, when I went down at two o'clock, I never stopped till six o'clock, then I used to take my tea and a slice of bread or that, and maybe an apple after it, and a cigarette, about 20 minute stop, and I'd be away again. That would be me until 10 o'clock. Wouldn't stop then, keep going right on, then I'd have to wash up to go and get a bus for Edinburgh, because the last bus was at half past ten in those days.

Q. So you lived in Edinburgh at the time?

JK Aye, we lived in Edinburgh then, aye, that's right, and then we got a house out here and it was better because I could take longer to my shift then, I had more time to myself, I mean, I didn't need to rush so much but I had to keep going just the same for to get my stuff out, as long as you got your stuff out you were all right.

Q. Was it a Scottish Oil house you got?

JK This is a Scottish Oil house.

Q. Was this the house to which you moved?

JK No. Broxburn. We moved to Broxburn first. That was the first house I got, was in Broxburn. But there was no toilet or bathroom in it then. But I wasn't long in it till I got the offer of this one. And I took this one,

you see, this was where I wanted at first, but I got offered everywhere bar here, and I've been in this one ever since. Well, I was in Broxburn for about ten years.

Q. That was in Greendykes Road?

JK In Greendykes Road, aye, before it was altered, like, that was before it was altered. I've been about 28 years here.

Q. What was the community life. what was the feeling, was it a good community?

JK Oh aye, very good, oh aye. I mean, there was a big town hall in Broxburn at that time, reading room, billiard room, all that sort of stuff. And dancing, there was dancing two or three times every week if you wanted to go. Concerts, there was plenty amusement. Then there was plenty pubs, you could go for a pint.

Q. Was that allowed, drinking? Were you allowed to drink, because was it not Robert Crichton, you know old Robert Crichton, did he not forbid drinks or something like that?

JK Oh, you could drink all right, as long as....but you couldn't drink before you went down the mine. Mustn't touch it before going down the mine, because the fireman - you had to pass a fireman before you got into your working, halfway down the mine there was what they called a fireman's box, and the fireman sat there and he examined the places before you went down. when you went down in the morning, as soon as you went down to this box you said to the fireman," is it all right?" and he'd say yes and you'd go right in, but if he smelled drink off you you wouldn't get down, he'd send you back you see. He used to go out in the morning and inspect all the places before you got out, the same in the afternoon, there was another lot down in the afternoon, he inspected them in the afternoon got the backshift going down. They had to see him before they got down and if he said it was all right to go then you went. Just went in and collected your safety lamp, lit your own lamp and went away.

Q. Did the fireman check your safety lamp, did he put a seal on it?

JK Aye, there was a lock on it. you couldn't open it. They were lit, like they were ready lit, you just went in and lifted it. your number was on it and you went in and lifted it. But it was locked, it was locked with lead, that was to keep you from opening it, you see, for safety.

Q. As a drawer, you had a pin?

JK Pin?

Q. What was your pin?

JK Screwtops!

Q. Screwtops on a bit of string?

JK On a bit of string, that's right.

Q. What about sports, what kind of sports did you have? Were you ever a sporting person?

JK Well, there was plenty sports, there was a bowling green, well that was all I bothered about was the bowling green then, and what else would there be?

Q. Quoits?

JK No, not in my time. Quoits was before that! Plenty dancing!

Q. You liked dancing?

JK Aye.

Q. You were a dancer?

JK I was a dancer, oh aye, I liked the dancing. The wife didn't dance.

But I went to the functions down there, you know. anything that was going on down there like socials or anything like that. She went with me but wouldn't go with any other body. But I loved the dancing, loved it.

Q. You have always loved dancing?

JK Oh aye, I lived in the dancing, before I went to London. I.....
After the pit shut down.....before the pit shut down I used to go to Broxburn public hall, that was where the town hall was you know, the used to have dancing there twice a week, Wednesday and Saturday. all round about there, I used to go over there. I loved it.

Q. Did you do it for pleasure or did you ever take it up in competition?

JK No, just for fun, for pleasure. I loved it, I loved the dancing. Great pastime it was.

Q. All sorts of dancing, or Scottish country dancing?

JK Scottish dancing, aye oh aye, I loved it. I don't go now, I haven't the breath now, you know. I'd like to go now, but..... I went a couple of times down there but.....I've no breath, and my legs are no'....

Q. Your legs are away?

JK My legs are away now, I mean, they're not away, but they are not as good as they were you know, they get tired.

Q. They're not as young as they were?

JK Not as young! Well, I'm 76 so I can't just jump about like that. Then I'd a bad heart attack, thrombosis. But otherwise, touch wood, I've been very lucky.

Q. Do you think the mines affected your health in any way?

JK I don't think they done me any harm to be honest with you. I was a fit man all the time I worked in them. It's a good job I was.

Q. It was just as well?

JK Otherwise I wouldn't have been able to do what I'd done. I used to go down that mine. I used to get a bus at Haymarket at quarter to one and I was never in the house till about eleven o'clock at night, and I was going all the time. I mean, it was a long walk from Topley there from Topley away down there at Duddingston practically right up to here, it was about half an hour's walk at the side of the wood. I'd to run up the side of them for the bus. I was going - I never stopped from I left the house at one o'clock till I came back in at night. That's no exaggerating, that's fact.

Q. Do you think it was a hard life?

JK It was hard, aye.

Q. Did you find it was?

JK It was hard work, but you were all right once you were home and got washed and changed, you were all right, quite all right. I never felt bad. I was always in good fettle. There was never nothing wrong with me.

Q. Given the same circumstances as in your day, would you go back again?

JK No. Definitely not, I would never do that again, because, I mean, it wasn't human really, not for the drawer it wasn't human, oh dearie dear.

Q. It was unfair?

JK Unfair, oh God's truth, aye. You see, it was all piecework, you had to work or you wouldn't be there. YOU were no good to your faceman if you couldn't work, if you couldn't pull the stuff and run it away from him. It was like you were no use.....you had to get - you had to do it.

But it wasn't human, it was just.....

Q. Slavery?

JK Slavery, that's the word for it, it was white slavery.

Q. Do you think the fact that you worked with your father made it worse?

JK It wasn't so bad with my father, wasn't so bad with my father, I mean, the roads weren't so bad. You see, when I worked with my father there was three men in the place, 3 men, that was my father, the faceman, the filler and the drawer. Well I was the drawer and the other guy was the filler. There was three men in it before I started but well when I was ready to start my father took me down straight away. Well he would be making men's wages for me you see because I was paid as a man, but I didn't get it, and when I came back, when I came out the army I went to Topley, and it was doubled. It was all different ways of working. There was more - it was all shale there. There was only two in the place, the faceman and the drawer. So that left the drawer to fill, and to draw his own stuff, and you had sixteen hutches to fill then.

Q. On your own?

JK On your own, 16 - an average of 18 cwt. per hutch, and that's no joking, and I done that. Sometimes 18. If the faceman was a greedy faceman at all, if he was stooping, he'd want 18 or 20. You couldn't satisfy him. But if he was on a close face and howking the stuff he would only want about 12 or 14 because he wasn't fit to howk any more. But that's what you were doing, no exaggeration, that's as true as I am sitting here, any drawer would tell you that worked at Topley. The darg was doubled, I got the shock of my life when I came back, when I met an old fellow I'd worked with in the mine when I was a boy. He told me, "Johnny" he said, "You're going to get an awful disappointment here boy", he said, "It's twice as hard here as what it was in Ingleston". He said "The dargue's twice as high". So it was. 16 hutches for two men, and that was an average

of 18 cwt. in a hutch.

Q. And that was one man filling 16 hutches?

JK That was myself every night.

Q. You must have been exhausted by the time you went home?

JK Aye, oh you were tired, you were finished by the time you went home, but you were going right to bed, so you weren't so bad. I was constant backshift you see. I was on dayshift for a while, I used to get up at half past four in the morning to catch the five o'clock bus at Haymarket, and it used to go to Broxbum, and I got the pit bus from Broxbum to Totle. But then the driver wouldn't wait in the mornings at the finish up, he said he had too long to wait. It was a matter of minutes, but he was one of those awkward fellows. So the mine manager told me, "I'll not let you down again" he said, "if you come late". So I was put on constant backshift.

Q. Was there any difficulty in your being put on constant backshift?

JK No, oh no. The worst of it was, I had a different man every week.

Q. Of course, you would be.....

JK That was the worst of it. I'd get used to one man and I'd have to go along and work for the next man. But the next man didn't pay me, it was the man I'd started with paid me. He wanted a drawer and he got me. But he had to take me when he got me, he had to take me every other week. And the fellow that was backshift with me got constant dayshift, and I got constant backshift.

Q. Were the facemen just as greedy as one another, or did you get the odd one that was a bit..... ?

JK Och, they were all the same, well, they were out to make the money. I mean when they got it they didn't like parting with it. You got your bare wages, that was all you got. You were lucky if you got about £4 or £5, they got

double that.

Q. £10 ?

JK Aye, they'd have that, easy, they'd have big money you see, because that's when they were stooping like, making the money then.

Q. When you say stooping, that's taking the stoops out?

JK Aye, but you never got any extra for it. I never got any extra for it, you know.

Q. Do you think the Company was aware of that? That the drawers were getting such a poor wage?

JK The Company just turned round and told you that you were getting your wages, and you cannot do nothing about it.

Q. I see.

Transcript	JK
Industrial Information Ingliston Pit	<p>I was born in 1907 and I starting working when I was fourteen years old in 1921.</p> <p>My first job was on the drawing and I was filling it into the hutches.</p> <p>I went down in the cage and I was at the face all the time with my father until I started drawing the hutches.</p>
Drawing Hutches	I had to draw the hutches from the top of the brae and from there they went to the pit bottom. From there the hutches went up the surface hill to the surface.
Weight Of Hutches	The weight of the hutches varied between eighteen hundredweight to a ton, but it all depended on what the shale was like in size and how big the hutches were filled. If it was small stuff it was heavier but if it was small stuff it was heavier, but if it was thrown in in lumps it didn't weigh as much. I could fill fourteen hutches a day in those days.
Face	My father had a contract for the face, and he worked the face and we had

another fellow working with us.

Broxburn Seam

The seam that we were working was the Broxburn seam but I am not sure. We were taking the stuff out but in the other section of the mine they were driving bore shale.

Closure of Ingliston Pit

Ingliston Pit closed between 1925 and 1926. They said it didn't pay them at the finish because the railway had to come in with the engine and take the wagons out and transport it away up to Pumpherston. This cost a lot of money and when they were getting oil from abroad that is what finished us.

Ingliston Pit was opened long before I was born but it wasn't near exhaustion and they were still getting the shale in the docks, driving away in the Corstorphine road. It was the longest road there was and it was driving further every day.

Totleywells

I have worked in another mine down here, that was Totleywells just down the road a bit. There was three mines down here, Duddingston, Old Duddingston, New Duddingston and Totleywells.

I was still on the drawing at Totleywells and I had never any inclination to become a faceman but I knew everything that had

to be done at the face because I was at the face with my father for a long time before I went on to the drawing.

I used to drill holes and fire shots and all that sort of thing but I didn't like it and I wanted to get away out the road on to the drawing.

The hutches were filled at the face and it was run out the road to what we called the lie and then it was put on to an endless rope and taken away. The empty hutches then came back up again to be filled.

Distance of The Lie
To the Face

The distance of the lie to the face would be about ten or twelve stoop lengths. Then we had a brae beside it, what we called the cuddy in those days. The full hutch went down and an empty hutch came up on the other side.

Operation of
The Cuddy

You had to operate the cuddy by yourself and you had to run out to the top of the brae and level it, then put plates on it. It then slewed round on the plates and then it was put on an endless rope. You then had to

shove it over the one at the other side, then the bottom came up and when you got it up to the top you went down to the bottom.

Snibble

Then you had what they called a snibble and you pushed that in to brake it.

Lie

The hutches had then to be pushed out to the lie, then the pit pony took the hutches away.

Explosives

My Father always used powder which you got in packets.

They used gelignite sticks in some places because you could put them in water and it didn't do any harm.

They used to say that jelly was more powerful than what powder was because it gave you bigger pieces of shale which had to be smashed with a big heavy hammer and if it was too heavy for you to lift, you just broke it with the mash to the size that you could lift. You then filled the hutch with the small stuff first, as small as you could get it, because that was where the weight came in. You got a big bit,

set is all round about, filled that up
again, then set it and filled that up
again, then set it up another wee bit till
you got maybe about a foot or two above
the top of your hutch.

Then you got a big heavy piece of shale
to put on the top and made it lie. The
more you got in the better.

Height of The
Face

The face would be about seven to eight
of shale and then after that it was all
braes and it wasn't any good.

Drilling Holes

To drill the holes we put up what they
called a boring tree and the drill was
fixed to this half way down. The drills
went up and it caught the top. If you
were taking the top shale down, that's
what they called your "tops" and you
bored your hole on the tree which was
about six or seven foot up the tree.

Then you came down and bored the hole
further down, what they called a "breast"
That was in the centre of the shale,
then you bored a "bencher" that was on the
pavement.

You couldn't go any higher because,
if you did, you went up into the blaes and

rock.

It wasn't all shale in Ingliston Pit, it was "clod" in between the shale(that was stone, dirt).

The holes that were bored in this were what you called a "yankee". There was maybe three or four holes and then the dirt was blown out, then you got a big cut, maybe about 5' or 6' back and this left your shale clean and ready to draw.

Filling Shale

When you blew that down it was filthy, what we called "stowed", the dirt to one side. Then you started filling your oil shale.

But Ingliston face was the only one that had dirt because the rest of the mines were all shale. Ingliston was dirt in between the shale but it was very good shale.

Types of Shale

There were three types of shale bench, breast and tops.

Length of Drills

The longest one was 5'6" to 4', but you started off with one about a foot, then you would have one two foot and then one

about four foot.

The longer the hole the better because the more stuff you got down.

Cleaner

After this was done, it was cleaned out.

What they called the cleaner would pull out all the crumbs so that it could be stemmed up by putting in a couple of pounds of powder in it. Then the fuse was put in and then it was lit. That was it fired and then you got the stuff out.

Firing with Powder
and Gelignite

When we used powder and gelignite it was stemmed the same way and the mulch that was used for the stemming was the scraping of the holes.

We kept all that to one side and wet it and then just threw it into a hole and stemmed it. Sometimes we made paper bags, paper pokes which were filled with the borings and rammed it into the holes.

The Stemmer

The stemmer was maybe about four to five feet long so it had plenty of room.

Powder Can

We had a can to hold the powder and this used to hold about four or five pounds which you could use in one shift because you'd have about six or seven holes to

bore and that took all the powder.

Sometimes you brought two cans of powder down in the morning.

Half a pound of powder would not bring down very much shale because shale was very light. Maybe you would get as much stuff down with what they called a breaking. The faceman took off a breaking . That would be his bench, breast and tops. If they took that down you might get your days stuff out of it.

Length of Time

It all depended on what sort of faceman

To Bore Holes

he was. Maybe six to nine holes. If he was boring eight or nine holes in a day he was doing a great days work. That was putting up the wood in between and making the place safe and also laying the rails so that you could get the hutch nearer the face.

Laying Rails

The faceman laid the rails when you were maybe trying to get your hutch in.

Naked Light

We had naked lights. We didn't have the safety light but we had a safety lamp at the face hanging on a tree, and if the gas comes, it plays on

the lamp. Then you would know it was time to get out. This was a Glennie Lamp.

But now at the latter end it was electric lamps.

Helmets

We had no helmets in those days, it was just caps and the small tallow lamps which hung on the front of your cap with a leather ear on it and the lamp hung on it.

Tallow

You wouldn't put a lot of tallow in at once because it melted, but it would maybe take about the size of my pinkie, about halfway down. We got a cake of it and just kept chipping it into your lamp until it was filled with it. When it was lit it went into oil and kept burning. Either that or you could use what they called pit oil which was just ordinary oil and you carried it in a flask and you filled your lamp.

We used to get this oil from the shops or the oil man came round.

Cost of The Oil

I think it cost about sixpence for a

gill which was a lot of money in those days.

Carbide Mineral
Light

The mineral carbide lamp gave the best light and it was cleaner. Only a couple of fills of carbide would do a whole day. Carbide was cheap enough at that time.

Lamps

We bought the lamps at the ironmongers shop in Broxburn. This shop sold all miners things such as picks and shovels, drills, machines, lamps and caps.

Water

There was plenty of water down the mine. I've seen me up to my knees in water. The only time there was water coming from the roof was when you were driving down the dock.

Water Money

We never got any water money because it was only on the road,

Closure of Mines

When the mines closed down I was transferred to Grangemouth as a fitter mate.

Accidents

I had an accident caused by a fall from the roof. What you called stooping then. A big boulder came

flying down and caught me and I hurt my shoulder a bit and I just went to Bangour Hospital to have it dressed. I also hurt my leg at Ingliston Pit. It got caught on a ragged tow going down the cuddy. I was off work a couple of months.

Compensation

My Father got my compensation from the office at the mine after I had been certified by a doctor.

Shifts

There was two shifts and sometimes three. That was dayshift, backshift and nightshift. I was very lucky with nightshift because I wasn't often put on this shift.

Strike

The 1925 strike was when we were all put out and the mine closed between 1925 and 1926.

Cause of Strike

They said it was because they didn't get paid enough because the railway had come in with the engine to take the wagons out and transport it away up to Pumpherston. This was costing a lot of money and when they were getting the oil from abroad at that

time, that's what finished us, as they didn't want shale then.

Domestic Life

There was a big family of us. We had

Family

twelve or thirteen in our family and my father was the only one who was bringing in wages.

Housing

At first we lived in Edinburgh, then we got a house in Broxburn.

Bathroom and Toilet

The first house had no toilet or bathroom in it then.

Broxburn

I then got a house in Greendykes Road, Broxburn and I was there for about twenty eight years.

Health

I am now seventy six and I can't jump around like I used to.

I had a bad heart attack and thrombosis but otherwise, touch wood, I've been very lucky.

Leisure Activities

There was plenty of sports and there was a bowling green which was all I was interested in.

Quoits

They didn't have quoits in my time.

Dancing

I was a dancer but my wife didn't dance at all. I went to all the functions down here. When the pit shut I used to go to Broxburn public hall and that was where we had the dancing twice a week, which was Wednesday and Saturday.

I used to love Scottish country dancing but I don't go now because I haven't the breath now.

PLACE INDEX.

Broxburn : 11,20,25.

Edinburgh : 19,20.

Grangemouth : 14.

Haymarket : 23.

London : 22.

Ratho : 2.

Uphall : 12.

CONTENTS.

Boring : 1,7,9.

Brae : 2,5.

Bencher : 6,7,8.

Breaking : 8.

Mash : 6.

Mines : 4.

Pin : 10.

Pit Pony : 5.

Breast : 6,7,8.

Cage : 1.

Clod : 7.

Compensation : 13.

Cuddy : 5,13.

Dancing : 22.

Books : 4,12.

Drawer/ing : 1 ,4,5,18,24.

Driving : 3,4,17,18.

Engine : 4.

Explosives : 5,6,7,8.

Faceman : 2,4,9,15,17,24.

Filler/ing : 1,2,14,24.

Fireman : 21.

Gas : 10,12.

Helmets : 10.

Hutches : 1,2,3,5,6,8,9,16,17,24,25.

Ironmonger : 11,12.

Lamp, Safety : 10,21.

Lamp, Tallow : 10.

Lie ; 5.

Mad up rate : 16,17.

Plates : 5.

Rails : 9.

Railway : 4.

Retorts : 16.

Seams ; 2,3.

Shale : 4,6,7,8,13,16,24.

Shifts : 10,15,16,21.

Snibble : 5.

Splitting ; 17.

Sports : 21,22.

Stoop/ing : 5,13,18,25.

Strike : 3.

Tips : 16.

Tops : 6,7,8.

Tree : 6,7.

Union : 3-

Wages : 26.

Water : 12.

Water money : 12.