

JM SIDE ONE

JM .....Fourteen and.....I was born in '22, so that would be about '36, and I managed to get a job in a piggery in Humble, which is along past.....just before you go into Wilkieston, and I was there for a few months till I was roughly fifteen, and I suppose with my father being in the Scottish Oils, I got the chance of a job in the Scottish Oils, and I started in 1937 in the brickworks, and I think that it must have just started about 1935, before I.....before I started, and.....

Q. Can you remember who the Manager was?

JM Mr. Gray.....Mr. Gray was the Manager at that time!

Q. Did he start you in the.....brickworks?

JM Aye.....well.....he got sent for and (inaudible) started and as I say, there wasn't much choice in those days, you know, so I got started in the brickworks, and there were two brickworks, I started say, in the one job, where the bricks came off the machine, and then if they needed somebody say, in the pan mill, ken, they usually started them on the brick press, and if a job, ken, a dirty job, which, ken, maybe dirty work, or in the pan mill, or the lime section you got shifted to there, you see! And somebody else got your job on the brick press, and I mean, it wasn't very clean work and all that, you know, so.....but the brickwork....you know, we finished up on the pan mill, and the crusher, where the shale came from the actual tip, and got tipped in there, and you had a big drum, and it was full of big inch, or inch and a half bars of metal, and it went into there, and it.....oh, this thing kept turning and it smashed it all up into small..... like sand, you would say, and it came out of the bottom of that, and it went into the pan mill, and it went into..... the pan mill.....had those wheels, and the drum

turning you know, and it went there so much.....you could drop so much in, and then you had to measure so much of the liquid lime, to make a mixture, and then it came out of that.....you opened the door and it went on to.....a belt.....a slanting belt, and it went from there up to the brick press, into the brick press, and then it.....as the brick press went round, and this thing kept turning and it dropped all the stuff into the mould, and then the bricks came off, and then as you pulled the bogey away, I think that there were eight hundred on a bogey at that time.....and I think that there still is.....they got pulled along the line, and left there and then the claves.....you had claves..where you heat.....and it was done with steam, it had a great big open end, and it was just like a big long boiler and you had rails, you put a set of rails on, where you could shut the door, and then you fitted these set..... this bit of rail in, where you could run across that, and load that up, so that you put about sixteen or twenty bogeys of bricks into the clave.....

Q. This clave was like an oven?

JM Aye.....that's what it would be, an oven! And then you put the big door on and put all the big bolts and tightened up all the bolts and tightened up all the bolts and then you opened up the steam, and they got steam for so long, and then you had to open both ends of it, to let the heat get out a bit, and then you put a chain on it, and pulled it out through, to the other end and then that's where you started. You know, your (inaudible). And the days when I started, it was all hand.....all hand loading, and they had maybe a couple of a million bricks at that time, in storage, and they were all wet and heavy, you know! You could put a couple of these bricks, when they were dry, into a two gallon bucket of water, and it would suck all the water into them, and they were about a ton weight, when you tried to handle them. Now, we were standing there with bits of rubber for.....to strap on to your fingers and all that, and you were standing there heaving

them up on to, not just a flat board, but these ones with a side... you know, these ones with a side.....you know, these ones with the side, to heave them up on to that motor and hand load it. Before they had a crane, and it finished up that they had a big crane thing and you dropped.....

Q. Is that like a grab?

JM Aye.....a grab, and you dropped it over, the full bogey of bricks, and whenever it pulled, it just jammed it tight, and it lifted it, and put it straight on to the motor, and you just put four.....so many thousand.....it was.....I think it was eight hundred...eight hundred bricks to a bogey, for counting, you see, but I can mind when I started there, I've seen a line of boys my age, all there, and you would take two bricks off the pile, and I'm not kidding you, they were actually.....you had to hit them with another brick to get them to separate because they were frosted, with that damp, and there you were standing in a line, and I was standing from here to you, and I would heave two bricks to you, and you would grab them, and you heaved and then the last boy, he had to heave them up on to the motor. And that's how the motors were loaded in those days, and the gaffer, my gaffer was a boy.....a boy called Wullie Nichol, and I can mind of him standing there with his coat on like a drookit crow! And us....and us working in it, in rain.....and you had to toe the line, there was no.....whether it was tipping down with rain, and they were still heaving bricks up on to the lorry! But, the actual brickworks, you know, it started off, off the tips, I can mind there was Dan.....a man called Dan Pettigrew, and Tommy, Tommy Finlay, and my uncle, he actually got killed in the pit, and I don't think that I told you that, a boy called Tam McWilliams and Hunter.....from Mid Calder, and there was an overhang, you know, sometimes you had a job getting the.....the shale just didn't come running free, you got bits that was, you know, like as hard as rock, and you had to blast it, and you know, they had howked away and howked away, and this..... there was this kind of overhang and this bit must have came down, and flattened them you know (inaudible)

I can mind that at the time.....he was my uncle, and they wouldn't open the coffin, you know, he must have been crushed!

Q. Can you remember when that was?

JM Oh.....I can't mind....! I can't mind really, George! I was only in the brickwork.....(Wife talking) Oh, we were married!/See, that was after I would leave the brickwork, because I was going to come on to say, that in those days, there were two sets of brickworks, like, for making bricks, if you get what I mean, and when you were busy, you were getting them away no bother, and then as I said, I had these two million in stock, and this is what you were loading, often in the winter, and now, it came to the bit where, say I was only in it a year or so, I can't mind when.....but I went into the pit, into No.6., and I got the ultimatum, that they were cutting down at the brickworks, and there was me, Jock Armit, a boy called Jim Stewart, you know, the two of us and there.....we had to go to No.6. Mine, well, not being down a mine.....

Q. Now, before you leave the brickwork..... the men that actually got the shale from the shale bings, sent down to the brickworks, were they employed direct by the oil company, or were they like contractors?

JM No, I think that they were.....with B.P. and that?

Q. And did they get any bonus payments or.....how much they would bring out or .....

JM Oh aye, I think that they had a scheme, that they got extra money and that, .....because I think that it would go with what bricks they were putting out and all that carry on, you know, there must have been a system, like a bonus system, and they used..... and at one time, they wheeled it with a bogey, you know, like a pit bogey, and tipped it into this hopper thing, before they went into get crushed, but latterly they did it with a lorry, Hughie Logan, and Joe, latterly, they were in, they had the grab thing..... the digger!

Q. Joe Wylie?

JM Joe Wylie! They had the digger carry on, hadn't they? Latterly! Where they scooped it up with the digger, and loaded the motor, and the motor backed in, and tipped it up, latterly, but, as I say, it was after.....it must have been only a year.....a year and a half, because I was down the pit, and I was actually on the drawing before I was eighteen, I was drawing down the pit.

Q. And which pit was that?

JM No.6. Roman Camps! There was actually one. No.7., and this Charlie Hunter, he got killed, and he was another Pumpherston man.....got killed in No.7. Mine, away back there too, and that was over near the Drumshoreland Road, and the other one, it was over at what we called the Bone Mill, it was right next to the Bone Mill, No.6., Roman Camps, well, as I say, it was a mine, and it went down in a slant, and you had an endless rope, and when I started in the pit, it was what we called a clipper on, and a clipper off, it clipped on to a tow rope, that was say, maybe about an inch, and inch in diameter, and it went round an endless back weight, and it went down through a hole in the boards, well, before you went up the steps, up the wee slope a bit, and you had to get this, lift the safety catch, and clip this off, and let it run away and it went right round and round the bottom of the pit, ready for the boys to take away into the drawers, and it was the same when the full ones came round, the boy had these special clips and he lifted up a clip and hooked it on to the hook, and then you laid the.....you laid the....you laid the thing on the tow rope, and let it slide through the tow rope, and the minute that you done that you just jerked it down and it gripped, and pulled the hutch away, and then the safety catch dropped over and catch.....and that was it clipped on .....and it went away up the pit, but when it was coming down the way, you had to be awful careful that you got the safety catch

off and unclipped that, before it went down through, or you got a feedback off the big tow rope, you had a coil of it where you couldn't get to the bell, to bell the boy to stop it.

Q. To warn the engineman?

JM Aye, you see, well, I was on that job and I was learning this boy, and I was only on it for a couple of days.....Stevens, they called him, from the Camps, stayed in the Camps actually, and then I was showing him how to do this, and you belled it and all this carry on and you let him see, you actually let him see it doing it, you know, where you let it go down through the.....you know, you didn't take the clip off, and you let this coil, coil up a wee bit, you see, and then you could actually just ease the safety catch, and ease the clip, because it was a shaped piece in the middle, when you jerked down the handle, when you put the light down into it, it opened it to it's.....it had it's tension on it, and the safety catch went in, and it wouldn't come out, bar you actually pressed down on it and lifted the wee safety catch and you were actually showing him how to do this, where you let it go down through the boards and coil it up a wee bit, and you had to stand, make sure that you stood to the side of that, because when you let that through, if you let it through too quick, it just.....whoof.....and it snapped back to just about a foot off the top, and it caught his leg, you know, where he was at the wrong side of it, and instead of doing what we had showed him to do, he just took the safety catch away, and all the coil that had.....it went.....whoof.....and it just snapped back like that, and it just snapped into his leg and broke his leg! He didn't know.....it was that quick! But....  
.....you know, after showing him that, and telling him that, that he would remember!

Q. Was this like a whiplash?

JM Aye, and it.....as I say, that travelled a foot.....a foot all

the way up the pit, and down the pit, you know, it went over the drum of the engine anyway, it wouldn't come down the bottom end, and it went round this back balance with it, it had to go down through the boards that we were walking on, the floor and there was a hole where the rope went down through, and you'd the back balance, and you had to make sure that you got this clip off, and clipped it off, and that's what he done, you know, instead of easing it the way that we showed him, you see, we guided it through and let it trail through and then it.....whenever it got through, you just clipped it off, and then you belled the boy and it started away again, you know! But when.....aye, go and have a shot! And he had the shot, the first time that he came down, and that was it! You know! Bang! It just caught him on the thingummy and instead of doing what we showed him, to ease the clip, and let it feed through he just whipped it straight back off.....

Q. How long were you on that job?

JM Oh.....just for, you were just on that, ken, a matter of weeks, or maybe a month, say, and then they maybe needed somebody away in..... and in the pit you had a.....you had different levels, you know, you went in so far, and then you went up (inaudible) where you could maybe take it with the diesel,.....with the diesel engine, a wee diesel engine and that, to keep the hutches up, but when it got too far you had these big slopes, and that worked on a back balance thing too, but you had a hutch full of stone, and muck, and you had a wheel, on to this and it sat there and it was sitting there on a flat bit, and it was a.....it was roughly the same weight or just more than the weight of a hutch would be, so that, when, when you pushed that over, it brought the empty hutch up, you had the weight of that, and you could have a stick in between the wheel and the rope, and you could control it, by putting a bit of pressure on the rope and the wheel, and you let that come down the one side of the slope, like a back balance, and it pulled your hutch up the slope, and then you done the same.....the same with the full one

at the top, you know, you pushed it over the slope, and you had snibbles, what you called snibbles, they were just bits of metal with a handle, and you put two of them in, and then that thing was at the bottom then, and then you pushed.....you pushed your hook .....your hook on to the hutch, and you put your two snibbles in and then you just pushed it over the lip of the hill, and whenever it tautened it just started pulling the back balance up, and it came battering up on to the flat sloping stop, and when it landed at the bottom, you just took the two snibbles out, and you took the pin out of it, and then that was your hutch on the way down to the bottom, and all this carry on, you see, and you had different laddies and you had different blokes on.....different braes.....

Q. Did you always need two snibbles for that or did you just use one..?

JM Well, it depends if you had braes where the stuff was coming from.. .....you had different levels, you know, where the mine was going different...away at different tangents, and you know, and you had what you called Barratt's Brae, and this was this Wull Barratt from Pumpherston, him there at the chip shop.... that's Barratt the betting shop..... that's closed now, I don't know if you know that, but anyway, you had different levels with that, and you had a.... I've seen some awful smashes.....see, if that broke away, you see, if you didn't get your snibbles in, you see, there were braes too, George, you just.....enough, that when you pushed that over with two snibbles, that meant it just went down there with the gravitation, the wheels didn't turn, you see, and the slope was just enough, but see, if you missed, and you pushed that over, and somebody was coming walking in, with their head down pushing an empty hutch in, and you see that would just batter right through, through the line, you know, you had a line coming in and it merged into one line, and the boys coming in, with his one hutch, ken, an empty, and this thing coming thundering out, you know, where it had broken away, you'd missed, you see, when you pushed it over, you had to.....you just picked up the snibbles that were lying there,

and you were coming along and you just whipped a snibble in and then another snibble, just as it went over the brow of the slope, and if you missed, that just thundered over and you see, if it didn't take a bend, it just battered and it just.....it went and you had to fill all that hutch again, now I mean, you could have met.....you could have met somebody coming in with an empty hutch, and you were standing there, praying that the boy wasn't in far enough, telling the single line that it didn't go far enough to the single line.....it was dangerous, terrible, ken.....and then I got on to Peter Duffy.....was the contractor, you know, there were one or two contractors and then there was people that had a father and son and maybe a couple of them, one was the faceman and one was the drawer, or he bored..... the faceman blew the.....you had the top shots, and the middle shots and the bottom shots and you had to fire them, that the bottom shot came out first, and then the middle one and then the top one and then you had to fire them, with the different lengths of strum, for to make sure that the right ones blew first, you see, so that you could get the kick out! And then the rest of the stuff got kicked down at the top of it, you know, to blow the stuff off the face, and then you had to wood it all, and you put the cross member up, and the two legs, and howked it a bit,.....when the faceman was doing that, for to.... ..you know, as he was moving forward, you see, you blew the blast and then the drawer, he just got started.....well, you had a bottom that was black, it was black waste, where he was taking....he was just blasting the shale content, ken, so.....sometimes you had an awful bad fill if that got broken or that, then you were trying to dig it, and load your hutch, you know, so I got a job as a drawer and I wasn't eighteen!

Q. And how long were you doing that job as a drawer?

JM Oh, just about a year or so! And then I had this accident too, ken... because when.....you were coming in with the empty hutches... .as I say, George, you loaded your hutch and then, as I say, you brought

this down, so far, and then you had this slope to manouvere, and you had to whip in the snibbles, and then you maybe had a steeper one, and you had to.....use the two snibbles, and you got that out to the bottom and then you bring in an empty hutch, and started loading it.....and all that carry on, well, as I say, there was a branch on there, and you had a set of points, so with one hand you had to pick up the wee weighted bit of metal, it was just an arm with a wee weight on it, so that the way that it hung and the points kept closed, the one way, they always fell to the one way so that you had this straight road going out and in, and if you came in off the side, you see, you had to lift this.....you had to lift this wee arm with the one hand, and pull the hutch past the points, to get into a different line, and then you see, well, it was wet, and my hand must have slipped off the.....as I picked up the point thing, and pulled with the hutch, you know, to pull the hutch round the bend, and get it on to the other and then let the thingummy drop, my hand slipped and then I landed on my flat..... I landed on the flat of my hand on my full weight, and.....

Q. Was that your left hand?

JM Aye! I landed.....I am left handed too actually, funnily enough and I landed.....and it just jerked my wrist back, you see, and I was off for about four or five weeks, ken, and they never found nothing when they x-rayed it, so I got.....I got started, because money was..... there was only my dad and I at the.....and there was another six following me, and it was a catch.....you see, when I went to the pit I got the ultimatum that I got.....either got your books at the brickworks, or you had to go down No.6. and I went home and I says, "No, I've to go down No.6.Pit", and you were saying to yourself, going down in the dark and all this carry on, you know, but you know.....your mother was needing the money and she couldn't very well say.....you know, it was awful hard, a lot of boys would tell you that they wouldn't go down a pit for a thousand pounds, you've heard that story, well, it's true! It's no

joke, going down in the dark, and working in the bowels, but these are things that happen, ken! So, I got this and after I worked..... I went back to work, and I said, "Oh, I'll need to do something!", so I got a leather strap and I strapped it on to my wrist, and all that, and I had this for about six or eight weeks, and I thought, oh, I can't put up with this, and.....it keeps.....every time that you took this off, your wrist hung, it was like a severely staved wrist, sprained wrist.....you know, so I went back in and I went to the Doctor again, and I went back in, and I got another x-ray, and here they must have looked at the other x-rays and as I say, that wee bone, it must have been about as big as one of your nails, you know, how you have all the wee small bones in your wrist, and it was just like as if you had seen a hair, a hair on the white of the bone, you know!

Q. A hairline fracture?

JM It must have been a hairline fracture! And this was what was causing the trouble because.....because of all this carry on, I..... I think, it wouldn't heal, and I was in plaster for two years! And even in the Army.....sent for me about three or four times, and I don't know if they thought that I was trying to play a dodge or something, but anyway, you were reserves, anyway! You know, anybody that went away from Pumpherston, in the Scottish Oils and all that, was..... they went themselves sort of thing, you know, because you were kind of reserves for war..... through the war and that you know! Well, anyway, I went in for my first medical and that .....I had a bad ear, I had had a mastoid when I was fourteen, and I was slightly deaf, so I was Grade Three anyway, but I don't know if they thought that I had this wrist.....and all this carry on, and they sent for me two or three times, for to see what the score was, you know, but I don't know whether they thought that I was trying to..... trying to pull a fast one, you see! You know, with having this bad wrist.....

Q. And did you get any form of compensation or.....?

JM Aye, well, in those days, it was Joe Heaney that was the Union Rep and see the bother.....well, you can imagine.....wages..... they weren't big, but it finished up that I got an offer of sixty pounds, but it didn't even cover.....I mean, you're talking about .....nowadays you get money for pain and all this, this carry on, you know, it's amazing what you get money for nowadays!

Q. Can you remember what your wages were?

JM In those days, what would I be getting down the pit?.....(Wife talking) (Inaudible)

Q. Anyway, did they end up with giving you sixty pounds?

JM Sixty pounds!

Q. For being two years off your work? And did you get no money at all from the Company? Other than that?

JM Oh, you got the compensation! You got the compensation!

Q. And how much was that?

JM Oh, well, you're talking about 35/-, I'm talking about latterly.... but I can't mind in those days.....

Q. Thirty five shillings?

JM Thirty five shillings! I can't mind if that's what it was then or not.....! What kind of money had I when I was in the pit.... you see.....I just.....you see.....after that two years as I say, I had to get a light job and all that.....(Wife talking) It was exactly about four fifths (inaudible)/So, you're talking about maybe thirty five bob, you know, for compensation! And we had to put up with that for two years.....we got married and all that, the rest of it, just after I was.....just after I was two years idle.....

(inaudible), so anyway that was the pit disaster, you know.....

Q. So, you didn't go back after that?

JM No! It was a case of, you know, I went back to get a job, sort of..  
.....thing, oh, I've got to get a light job and all the patter, you  
see, oh well, we'll find you a better job in Pumpherston.....and I  
got into Pumpherston.....and I got into Pumpherston Works, and I  
was on the diesel..... that's what they called the blue oil so that  
was me started in the Refinery at Pumpherston and I went to what  
they called the blue oil, and it was two oils that they got, what  
came over from the wax after they had taken the wax out of it, and  
you treated it, and mixed the two together, you know, a percentage of  
blue oil and green oil, sort of thing, you know, and then you added  
sulphuric acid, and would give it a stir up, and that made a tar.....  
not like what you put on the roads, but they burned it as a fuel,  
instead of oil, for your furnaces, so it was.....it was full of acid,  
then, you see, when you took it off the (inaudible) and then you had  
to add.....soda, to kill the acid, then you had to run the soda off  
the diesel and all that carry on. Now, I can mind of them at that  
time, having traction engines out of buses, you know, for buses, and  
they had a place in Pumpherston at that time, where they ran a bus  
constantly.....ken, with diesel, and they must have been testing  
the diesel, and they must have done this and done that, added and  
subtracted and tried this.....and I can mind of them, they were  
running a bus and that for to see how it performed and that, you  
know, what it done, and then I got on to that, I was on that for  
maybe a year or so, now, I'm talking about, in those days, it was a  
seven day.....a seven day working week, and then..... they came  
and said to you, "You'll have to go on shift and they're needing  
somebody at the cracking plant....well,with.....from being  
constant dayshift, it's a bit of a bind, you know! Dayshift, night-  
shift and backshift, and all this carry on, you know! Oh, I'm  
not having that, but it finished up that you had to, so I went to  
the.....what they called the cracking plant, and that.....you

know, that's where you got your spirit and your burning oil, and your vapouriser bottoms that went in the stills, where they coked it off, they put a wee drop naphtha up it, but they coked that and coked that, till it came in to that coke that you burned, and it was sold as a fuel, you know, as a burning fuel, ken, well, I was what they called a dipper in the cracking plant, so you went every hour and you had to go and take samples of the vapouriser bottoms the wax content of it, and the spirit side of it and all that, and you had different.....well, we called them twaddles, it was for gravity, you see, and you had different ones to put in, and they had to run this plant, you know.....a certain..... to get these to a certain figure!

Q. Was this temperature?

JM Aye.....no.....gravity, you know!

Q. Aye, for gravity?

JM So, it meant that when you run the plant, you could actually feed your spirit in to the top of your tower, for to cool it back, for to make.....you could have a certain heat on, and if you had less going in the top, you would be taking more spirit off, so you naturally have less wax content of burning oil content, or you could pump up to the top of your tower, which would make you take less spirit off, and then you had a bigger content of wax and burning oil and all this, you could up it or down it you know, depending on what you.....well, the biggest majority was this vapouriser bottom stuff and it went down to the distillation plant and it finished up then, that they started a distillation plant, where they had a straight run diesel, so they didn't need this, and it was a.....it was a far better oil, you hadn't.....you see, this acid and soda, to get all this back off, this diesel....was a bit of a bind, you just used to wash it with water and all this .....and then you had this.....you had the.....

## END OF TAPE

Transcript	JM
Industrial Information	<p>I was born in 1922, and my first job was in a piggery in Humbie. With my father being with Scottish Oils, I got a chance of a job in the Brickworks where I must have been only a year and a half.</p>
Drawing At Roman Camps	<p>Before I was eighteen years old I went on the drawing at Roman Camps. I started on what they called the 'clipper on', and 'clipper off'. It clipped to a tow rope, that was maybe say about an inch in diameter, and it went round an endless back weight, which went down through a hole in the boards. Before you went up the steps you had to lift the safety catch, and clip this off and let it run away down a slope that went round and round to the bottom of the pit. This was</p>

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You had a coil of it where  
you couldn't get the bell  
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on this job, ken, a matter of  
weeks, or maybe a month at  
the most.

Pit

I was maybe needed in the pit.  
There were different levels,

which I had to take a wee diesel engine in for the hutches. When it got too far up the big slopes which worked on a back balance thing you had to watch the weight of the hutch. The hutch was full of stone and much, and you had a wheel on to this which sat on a flat bit. It was roughly the same weight, so just more than the hutch would be, so that when you pushed it over it brought the empty hutch up. You could have a stick in between the wheel and the rope, and you could control it by putting a bit of pressure on the rope and wheel. You let that come down the slope like a back balance. The same with the full one at the top you just pushed it over the slope.

## Snibbles

You had what they called snibbles, which were just bits of metal with a handle on, and you put your two snibbles on the hutch and

pushed it over the lip of the hill. Where ever it tautened it just started pulling the back balance up. Then it came battering up on to the flat sloping stop, and when it landed at the bottom you just took the two snibbles out as well as the pin, and that was your hutch on the way down to the bottom. It all depended on the braes where the stuff was coming from if you needed two snibbles. You had what they called 'Barrats Brae', named after Wull Barrat from Pumpherston, and if you didn't get the snibbles in the hutches went over the brae with the gravity. The wheels didn't turn, but the slope was just enough, and if somebody was coming walking in pushing an empty hutch that would just batter through the line. The line coming in merged into just the one line.

Contractor/Drawer

I got on with Peter Duffy, the contractor. There were two contractors, and there was people that had father and son. Maybe one was the faceman and one was the drawer, or he bored. The faceman blew the top shots and the middle shots and the bottom shots and you had to fire them with the different lengths of strum for the right ones to go off first, so that you could get the kick out. The rest of the stuff got kicked down at the top of it. I was a drawer for about a year or so.

Accident

I had this accident with this points thing, as I picked it up to pull the hutch round the bend I landed flat on my hand with my full weight. It just jerked my wrist back. I was off work for about four or five weeks, but they could find nothing wrong with my wrist. It must have been a hairline fracture, and it

wouldn't heal. I was in plaster for two years.

#### Compensation

I got compensation. It was thirty five shillings. That was all I got.

#### Light Job

After my accident I got a light job in the Refinery at Pumpherston. I went to what they called the 'blue oil'. It was two oils that they got from the wax. It was treated, a percentage of blue and green oil, then you added sulphuric acid and that made tar, but not the sort you put on the roads. It was burnt as a fuel instead of oil in the furnaces. Then you had to add soda to kill the acid, then run the soda off the diesel and carry that on.

#### Traction Engines

I can mind them at that time having traction engines out of buses. They had a place in Pumpherston at that time, where they tested the diesel and they must have done this and that. I can mind of them

running a bus for to see how it performed.

#### Conditions & Shifts

In those days I was working days a week. They could come to me and say 'You'll have to go on shift, because we are needing someone at cracking plant'. From being constant dayshift, it was a bit of a bind, dayshift, nightshift and backshift, and this carry on. I finished up.

#### Cracking Plant

I then went to what they called the 'cracking plant'. That was where you got spirit and burning oil, and your vapouriser bottoms that went in the stills where they coked it off. They then put a wee drop of naphtha up it. That was then coked and coked until it was the coke that you burned, and this was sold as fuel. I was what they called a 'dipper' in the cracking plant. You went every hour to take samples of the vapouriser bottoms to see the wax content of it, as

well as the spirit side of it.

You had to test the gravity  
with what we called 'twaddles'.

There were different ones to  
put in. This meant when you  
run the plant, you could actually  
feed your spirit in to the top  
of your tower, for to cool it  
back. You could have a certain  
heat on, and if you had less  
going in the top. you would  
be taking more spirit off  
so you would have less wax  
content. You could pump it up  
to the top of the tower, which  
would make you take less spirit  
off, but then you had a bigger  
wax content and burning oil.

You could up it or down it.

The biggest majority was this  
vapouriser bottom stuff, which  
went down to the distillation  
plant where they had straight  
run diesel. They didn't need  
this, as it was a better oil.

You didn't have this acid soda  
to get off the diesel, you  
just used to wash it with  
water and all this.

Wages In those early days they ended up giving me sixty pounds.

Unions In those days Joe Heaney was the Union rep.

Accident Charlie Hunter and another Pumpherson man were killed in number 7 Mine, at what we called the Bone Mill. It went down at a slant and there was a rope, and when I started it was called a 'clipper on' and a 'clipper off', which clipped on to a tow rope. It jerked, and pulled the hutch away and the engine man couldn't be warned in time. This was the cause of the two deaths.

Domestic Life & Social Life No mention of domestic or social life in the script.

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