

Q. When did you leave the school? What age were you?

A. Oh, I was barely fourteen, because they were kicking up a noise about it, me leaving school!

Q. Who was kicking up a noise?

A. The medical boys! The authorities with the school! It would be reported likely to the.....who is it that they reported to.....the.....

Q. And did they feel that you were leaving too early?

A. Aye, because you were supposed to wait until you were fourteen actually!

Q. And why did you leave the school then?

A. Because I got a job!

Q. And you wanted money?

A. Well, the old wife needed the money!

Q. How many of a family were there?

A. Four altogether! Four.....aye!

Q. And where did you start work?

A. A hammersman.....

Q. No, where did you start work before you went to.....

A. Oh.....on a farm!

Q. And how long were you on the farm?

A. Oh, about six months.....

Q. Six months on the farm! And you got the chance of a job....where about?

A. Hammering to the blacksmith in the Oilworks!

Q. Oakbank?

A. Oakbank Oilworks!

Q. Can you remember who the Manager was then?

A. Thompson!

Q. Was there an under-manager?

A. Laird.....! think that you called him! An engineering man, he was kind of under-manager!

Q. And was it the Manager who started you in the Works, when you left the farm? Or was it the cashier or somebody like that.....it doesn't matter!

A. ....! I'm not sure! It wasn't the Manager anyway!

Q. It wasn't! And did your father work in the.....?

A. Aye!

Q. .... In Oakbank?

A. Aye, he worked in Oakbank!

Q. And did he work in there when you started? In the Works?

A. Was he?.....Aye, I think he was.....I think he was!

Q. And you started as a hammersman?

A. A hammersman!

Q. Can you remember what year that would be?

A. I can't remember the year, but they tried to get me to take the trade up!

Q. And what trade did they try to get you to take up?

A. The blacksmith's trade!

Q. And did you not fancy that?

A. No, I didn't fancy it! I had always the notion that I was going to go abroad!

Q. I see! And why did you have this feeling that you wanted to go abroad?

A. I only wanted to see a bit of the world!

Q. That was a good reason! But you stayed.....and worked as a hammersman! Can you remember the name of the blacksmith that you worked to? What was his name?

A. Bill Thompson!

Q. And where did he come from?

A. Oakbank, at the time!

Q. And how many blacksmiths did they have at Oakbank?

A. .... One... two.... three....four...!

Q. Can you remember any of the other names?

A. There was Geordie Stenhouse, and I worked for a wee while with an apprentice who's time was nearly out.....Bob Henderson.

Q. From Mid Calder?

A. Aye, he bid in Mid Calder but he was in Oakbank at first, but he shifted to Mid Calder when he got married.

Q. So you were working as a hammersman. Was there any special thing that you can remember about when you were doing that job? Were you working a steam hammer?

A. Aye, I worked a steam hammer, and the blacksmith that I worked with, that.. Thompson....Bill Thompson, he made springs. He was a spring maker as well as a blacksmith! He made springs for the wagons, buffing springs, and bearing springs!

Q. This is for rail wagons?

A. This is for rail wagons! Locomotives!

Q. And how long did you do that job?

A. Maybe about two years! I went from that on to an American machine for box making. The boxes were used for packing wax that they made, up at the wax sheds! Miners wax! They had this machine for making the cakes of wax, and that's where they packed them into wooden boxes!

- Q. And what did you do in that job? Making the boxes?
- A. Well, we had the machine. The machine clinched the nails into the wood.....
- Q. And had they to be a certain size, these boxes?
- A. They were all the same size!
- Q. Can you remember roughly what size they were?
- A. Oh, I can't remember that....they were made for to suit the packets...the packets of wax!
- Q. And who packed the boxes before you sealed them up?
- A. Oh, I didn't seal them up, they went from the joiners shop to the wax shed, this is where this machine was, for producing the cakes of wax.
- Q. This was for miner's wax? And where was this wax sent off to?
- A. Oh, all the mines round the surrounding district!
- Q. Would it be coal mines as well as shale mines?
- A. At that time it would be! I don't know really, where it went!
- Q. What did you do after that?
- A. I went up the stair. I was a sawyer, with one of those travelling saws, with the travelling bench on it, and I was there for a couple of years.
- Q. And what did you do upstairs on the travelling saw bench?
- A. I cut trees, sawed trees, and made the trams for wagons, and tracks, they were wooden trams at that time. Eventually there were steel trams.

Q. Can you remember what kind of wood it was?

A. It was oak!

Q. It was mostly oak! Hardwood! That you used! That would be for strength, was it?

A. Aye!

Q. And had you to have any knowledge of shaping these trams, that you were making? Had they to be a certain shape?

A. They had to be a certain Length, and a certain size, and a certain breadth, and a certain width. Of course, there were sets on the saw for the breadth that you were wanting, and the depth that you were wanting.

Q. And where did these trees come from?

A. That Calderhall Estate!

Q. So, the trees were cut down? Who cut them down?

A. It was a contractor that cut them down!

Q. And were they transported to Oakbank?

A. Transported to Oakbank!

Q. That would be the joiner's shop?

A. The joiner's shop! And they rigged up a....this joiner's shop was upstairs and they rigged up a pulley system with a winch over the top of a building, and it drew them up with a winch. We pulled them into the top door,.....

Q. And was this a hand operated winch? And they would be quite heavy to handle would they not?

A. Oh, they were heavy!

Q. And of course, it would be green timber that you were handling?

A. It was green timber!

Q. After you cut them did they not go all different shapes or wrong shapes, when they were drying out, or were the logs.... the trees dried out before you got them....seasoned?

A. No.....they weren't actually seasoned! They don't season them till they are cut! They were actually in a kind of green state at that time. There was a wagon builder down the stair, he got these, and he put all the fittings on the side of them, he had a template, for marking off, and he gouged out the log, and all these different fittings were placed.....

Q. Did they actually build wagons at Oakbank? Or did they just repair them?

A. Repaired! It was all repair work at that time!

Q. Can you remember the foreman's name in the joiners shop? At that time?

A. It was Wattie Miller! Miller was his name. Wattie Miller! But the old boy, that actually did the building of these was Purdie...his name was Purdie, Joe Purdie.....

Q. That was in the wagon shop, was it?

A. Aye!

Q. Now, you went from there, where did you go then?

A. I went on the shunting of the locomotives!

Q. So, that's when you started on the pugs?

A. That's when I started on the pugs!

Q. And how did you get that job? Were you asked to go on it, or did you volunteer to go on it?

A. I was asked to go on it! And it was more money!

Q. Another good reason!

A. Another good reason!

Q. And who had the say as to whether you got the job or not?

A. I think that the engineering gaffer had something to do with it!

Q. Can you remember his name?

A. I don't know whether it was Spittal or not, that was on it at the time!  
Jimmy Spittal! I'm trying to mind who was on before that! I can't remember!

Q. And was this a job that you liked doing, pug driving?

A. No, I was shunting! I was going about with the coupling sticks! And we used to supply the shale. The shale at that time came from Westwood, with the railway company, and we took that shale at the exchange down to the breakers where it was broken up into smaller pieces, before it went up on to the retorts. It went up a scaffold up into the retorts.

Q. Did you get shale from any other places other than Westwood?

A. Well, the first that I can mind of, was Dedridge, and that was an aerial

railway, it was a German....it was a German there installing it, I was at the school at that time. I used to ask him what the time was, for just to hear him talking, "Ja, Ja, Ja!" He got a bit of tormenting! Well, that thing went alright for a long while, because they had a cavity in the tip, about three quarters of the way up the spent shale bin, and this was directly opposite the top of the retorts, that was maybe fifty feet high from ground level. With the result that was coming in there was actually on a level with the top of the retorts. But they had some problems with that aerial railway too. It worked on a two way system. Loads coming one way, and the empties going back the other! But when the loads come on to this framework of the aerial railway there, there was a knocker on it that knocked the thing off! It kept the hatches level with the result that they tumbled upside down and they emptied on to this cavity, that they had in the tip. With the result, that when they went back they were swinging loose at the bottom, and when they got a gusty wet night, they used to meet, and of course, trouble! But that didn't happen very often!

Q. So, on the whole it was quite a successful way of transporting?

A. Aye, as long as the weather was okay, aye! It was the high wind that gave them the problems!

Q. And were there any other places that you can remember that supplied the....?

A. During the slack times, I used to help the boys on the top of the retorts putting in these hoppers, these big castings where the shale went into.

Q. Can you remember anything about that? Was that hard work? How did they go about that job?

A. Well, you rigged up a.....what do you call it, they rigged up a kind of scaffolding, there was legs, with a top on it, and you got up on top of them and that beam across the thingummy and pulled the other ones up, and lowered the smaller ones down.

- Q. And is that what you did when you weren't pug driving?
- A. Well, it was very occasionally.....very, very, seldom that I did that! Just periodically I.....if there was a slack time at all, we were sent anywhere!
- Q. And did anybody teach you about the pug, how to drive them or.....
- A. Aye, the driver used to!
- Q. Can you remember who that was?
- A. There was one....Dick Garth! He was an old man!
- Q. And where did he come from?
- A. He came from Oakbank!
- Q. And he was the pug driver! How many pugs did they have in Oakbank, or did they just have one!
- A. Two!
- Q. Two?
- A. They worked a dayshift and a backshift! And there was one pug took shale from the exchange to the railway down to the breaker for breaking up and the other one worked inside the Work, feeding boilers, taking the products of the oil away, paraffin and gas oil, petrol, sulphate, wax.....
- Q. And the idea of that was the Companies..... local....would take these down to the main line, for the Railway Company to take away....was it?
- A. The products!
- Q. The end products?

- A. But they collected all the crude oil from all these different outlying....  
this is what.... there was no refinery in....the likes...of Niddry Castle and  
Addiewell, Roman Camps, Tarbrax, they took the raw crude there and refined  
it at Pumpherston. All that came off the Railway Company at the exchange  
and was brought down into the Work.
- Q. And was any of that crude brought down into Oakbank when you were there?
- A. Aye, that's what I'm telling you!
- Q. Aye, you said Pumpherston!
- A. Oh dear.....
- Q. Well, it would also happen to Pumpherston!
- A. It happened latterly at Pumpherston!
- Q. But you were at Oakbank, and this all came into Oakbank, from all these  
various places, and it went through the process that meant for it, and how  
long were you on the pug drivers at Oakbank?
- A. I wasn't on the pug driving at Oakbank, because the man said that I was too  
reckless! They kept me off it!
- Q. What gave them the reason to thing that?
- A. I don't know! Listening to other talk!
- Q. And he was listening to others, was he? Did you feel that you were too  
reckless?
- A. Not really, no!

Q. And who attended to the lines, like linesmen?

A. A man by the name of John Laid law!

Q. Did he walk the lines every morning?

A. He repaired the lines, him and his....two men with him. They did all the repair work about the companies lines. There was a certain part of that Railway came under the authority of the signalman at the exchange for the Railway Company.

Q. If there was any, were you ever asked to help in the repairs of any of the lines?

A. No!

Q. He always had a....the linesman had a squad of his own, pertaining to that! Had you ever any complaints about his work?

A. Oh, sometimes, if you got a derailment, you blamed the railway, you didn't blame yourselves, for splitting the pipes.....

Q. Did you think that would be right?

A. Well, it was political at the time. So, you felt that it was mostly the linesman that was at fault for a derailment?

A. Oh no, I wouldn't say that!

Q. You wouldn't agree to that?

A. No! About fifty-fifty I would say!

Q. Okay! Now, when you were in Oakbank, was it coming near a close...or..... did you have any inclinations that this would happen?

A. Well, the railway company was taking..... taking, and we were putting further charges on driving the coal from Westwood to....Oakbank, to the exchange there.

Q. Was this for the boilers? The coal.....

A. The shale!

Q. Oh.....you said.....the shale?

A. I think that's what killed it as much as anything and then maybe the poor quality of shale that they were getting from Westwood. I don't think that the yield was very big! I reckon sometimes that there was a very good quality of shale, they were maybe getting twenty to twenty five gallons to the ton! And they weren't actually at that time! Of course, this is just hearsay, it was in about fifteen, fifteen gallons to the ton!

Q. So you felt that it was uneconomical as far as the Company was concerned?

A. Aye, with the railway charges going up to about eight pence a ton! Bringing it from Westwood to Oakbank. Well, they didn't bring it to Oakbank, they brought it to the exchange point between the two!

Q. And when you were working on the pug, who were you responsible to? Directly? Who was the gaffer?

A. Well, the engineering head was the gaffer!

Q. The engineering foreman! Can you remember who he was?

A. I think it was Jimmy Finlay! Was it? I think so!

Q. Did he bother you much though? When he thought fit or not?

A. Oh, no, he never bothered us, oh no!

Q. If any repairs had to be done, to the engine, where did it go?

A. Oh, they had a skilled man for repairs in the engine shed. He was a time served man.

Q. Was he specially for the engine.....?

A. Aye!

Q. So, it wouldn't be..off the track very long, would it....unless it was a major repair?

A. Not really! There were actually three locos. When one was in for repair, the other two would be working!

Q. They always had a spare?

A. They always had a spare!

Q. Now, these engines would be oil fired, were they? At first?

A. No.....

Q. Coal fired?

A. Coal fired!

Q. So, you would have a stoker in the pugs as well? As well as the driver?

A. No....you stoked your own engine. The driver stoked his own.....

- Q. He stoked his own! And did you ever...when you went into other jobs, did you ever work an engine that wasn't solid fuel...coal fired?
- A. Aye, that was later.... that was when I worked in Pumpherstons!
- Q. Well....was there any comparison that you could make, which ones would you prefer driving or working on?
- A. Oh....the diesel...the diesel! The diesel locos were superior to the steam! the steam, you lost about ninety per cent of your efficiency with steam!
- Q. How was that?
- A. Because when it wasn't working, it was still.....it was still burning coal!
- Q. So, you felt that you were releasing the energy into the air, in to the fresh air?
- A. You were actually! Then you had all the overheads of kindling and washing out the boilers, and kindling in the morning, it would be about two hours before you got the steam up, or three hours, depending on the weather a lot!
- Q. Did you ever have any occasion when...say.... the housewives in the Rows would come and get some hot water off the engine?
- A. Aye....it did happen before my time, with the result that the engine blew up, and there were two men killed! At that time, they used to work from the old pit in Mid Calder up to Oakbank, and the engine used to stop there for the man going for his lunch or something to eat, or something to drink, and the wives used to get the hot water off the engine!
- Q. And what do think happened then, that it blew up?
- A. I don't know!

Q. Were they taking too much water out of it? Was it?

A. Of course, as I say, I don't know how that should have happened anyway, because there were safety plugs in all these steam engines. Once they reached a certain level, there was a lead plug inserted in the top of the boiler, and whenever it came down to that thingummy it used to melt! It should melt.... the lead plug....and the water should come through that (inaudible). I don't know what happened there!

Q. So they had a reserve of water above the.....

A. That's where you had.....

Q. ....Other tank?

A. That's where your water tank was! Just on the top of the boiler! That was the water that you were using! Was on the top of that boiler! Directly on the top of the boiler!

Q. So, when you started, you had to wait about two hours before you got moving?

A. Well..... there was.....

Q. While you were building up steam.....?

A. The nightshift man used to tube them...tube these engines at night, and clean them, and clean all in below, all the movements in below, with gas oil and paraffin oil, and kindle them up maybe about two hours or two and a half hours before starting time, for the men coming out! That was a nightshift man's job! I was on it for a while too!

Q. So, did you work shifts? In Oakbank?

A. Aye, but the nightshift man didn't usually work in the pug! That was his job all the time!

Q. Was that....you mean, getting the engine ready for the.....

A. For them coming out?

Q. ....For the dayshift men?

A. In the morning for the shift.....aye!

Q. And you worked on that for....till Oakbank closed, did you?

A. I did, aye! And with us being....Peter Adams was driving that pug that I was running at the finish up, and we were the first to go, with being the producers of the shale that was coming in, that was the first job that went!

Q. So, you were made redundant in Oakbank.....one of the first workmen to.....

A. Aye!

Q. And what happened to you then! Were you offered alternative employment with the Oil Company?

A. No. No. No! Till they brought out that scheme when it was three weeks on, and a week off. (Talking to wife) Was I working in between that time that I left those works.....

Q. Did you leave the Scottish Oils for a wee while?

A. I didn't leave! I was redundant! (Wife talking) He worked with....at Balgreen with Grove and Watson and them! Grove and Watson the building trade in Edinburgh, and I did not work at the quarries? (Wife talking) You did.. (Wife talking)..... later on! Torphin Quarry, I was in it for a wee while, and we did some improvement there, brought a big crane thing in that shifted the rock, instead of the men, and then that scheme came on, for three weeks on and a week off at Pumpherston, for to give everybody in the district a

chance of work.

Q. So, that 's when you came back to Scottish Oils? And how long were you away from the Scottish Oils.....from when you left Oakbank till you started in Pumpherston?

A. (Wife talking) About a year and a half! About a year and a half, aye!

Q. And were you quite pleased to come back?

A. Aye, I was..... there weren't many jobs going at the time, and I was quite pleased to get started!

Q. And where were you staying then?

A. (Wife talking) Elm Cottages! Elm Cottages, East Calder!

Q. So, you had to travel from East Calder to Pumpherston to your job? Did you get the Works bus?

A. No.....because I started at five o'clock in the morning, when I was on the early shift at Pumpherston.....five o'clock in the morning wasn't it?  
(Talking to wife)

Q. Did you walk.....up the railway?

A. Up the railway! I sometimes went on the bike too.....the bike!

Q. That was a pushbike?

A. A pushbike at that time (inaudible). That was when I retired. (Wife talking)  
After he retired.

Q. And what job did you start in Pumpherston?

A. Shunter!

Q. Now, that was coupling and uncoupling wagons and tankers? And how did you find that job.....was it.....?

A. Well, it was much the same, much the same as Oakbank? They had begun to get the crude in there too from the different places, with Oakbank shutting down and went to Pumpherston. Was there any danger, any accidents that happened with the pugs, or when you were shunting?

A. Well, previous to that I think that there were (inaudible) eventually! Marr, it was....I think they cried him, Marr....it was,same drivers that were running when I went there!

Q. Can you remember the driver's name?

A. Geordie Wark was one of them, Wull Anderson was the other one!

Q. And where did they come from?

A. Oh, they belonged locally, I think!

Q. Pumpherston?

A. Pumpherston!

Q. So, you were shunting and you were doing a similar job, to what you were doing in Oakbank?

A. Aye, much the same!

Q. Then did you progress from there.....

A. To driver!

Q. ....You became a driver? Is this the first time that you became a..driver

with the Scottish Oils.....a pug driver?

A. Well.....officially!

Q. Oh.....officially! So you wouldn't need as much tuition on how to drive the pug?

A. No!

Q. And it was still steam?

A. It was still steam at that time?

Q. So you would know all the gauges and levers and everything, how to operate them?

A. Aye! I had a knowledge of the working of it!

Q. Were there any special things that you had to look out for? As a pug driver that could be dangerous....or.....

A. Well.....I worked in the blackout there, and you were only working with men with lamps!

Q. This was during the war? And you felt that was more difficult?

A. Well, you had to concentrate more, I believe! I remember one occasion one of the shunters....he was sitting on the buffers.....

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Q. And you were saying that this fella was sitting on the buffers? What was his name? Can you mind?

A. ....Rogers.....

Q. From Pumpherston?

A. From Pumpherston!

Q. And what actually happened?

A. Well, there were two shunters and there was one standing at points for to divert this wagon that the lad was sitting on, to divert it into another road, but here he was at the wrong point...the wrong points, with the result that this wagon went into a dead end! So, the next thing that I saw was the lamp disappearing down on to the side of the thing that the boy had jumped off.....he had twigged what was going to...going to happen!

Q. So, you think that was what he did, that probably avoided an accident?

A. He certainly did!

Q. It could have resulted in some injury to himself!

A. I got that same boy one snowy morning, with his feet stuck in one of the rods of the rails!

Q. Was that the points?

A. No, the brake rod, that goes in between the rails! He had on Wellingtons, and his foot was stuck in between the weldings and a sleeper that was there! I was driving at the time, and I was ready to come up, and it was a dark morning! But there was something told me that there was something wrong! So, I came off the pug, and walked away forward and here he was stuck! I

says, "If you're ever here in that position again, shout like hell!" Because I could have just turned and went away, because I got the signal for to go, but when he was crossing over his foot had went into this, and he was actually stuck!

Q. And he couldn't get his foot out of his Wellington?

A. Aye! He was awful lucky! It was telepathy....!

Q. You must have had an intuition.... that something was wrong ahead of you? When you said that you got a clear signal to go ahead...who...how did you.. ....get that, or who gave you that?

A. Well.....

Q. There was a lamp, and how did they operate this?

A. Well....the lamp had different....different coloured glasses in it. It had a clear....a clear light, it had a green light, and it had a red light, and you could rotate it round about! And when you got the clear light that was alright! If it was a green light, it was caution, you had to be very careful! If it was a red light, it was a stop!

Q. Was this an old paraffin lamp, was it?

A. No....it was a railway signal lamp! I saw them in a museum in Australia, the same lamp! (Wife talking) Aye! And that's what we were using!

Q. And how were they operated? Battery?

A. No! They were oil!

Q. Oh....they were oil!

A. Aye! With a rotating top, one side you had clear, and then you turned it, and you got a green, and you turned it right round and it was a red! You

would switch them round with your knee!

Q. And where were they situated? Were they quite big things or.....

A. The lamps?

Q. Yes!

A. They were carrying lamps, hand lamps! You used them when you were coupling in the dark, you held the lamp with one hand, and coupled with the other!

Q. So, that would be the clear side, that you were using to get light!

A. Aye! If there was any obstruction or anything the man sitting on the buffers could jump off and switch on the red light!

Q. So, the man that gave you the signal that it was all clear wouldn't know about that incident.... like the man that had his foot stuck!

A. Say that again.....!

Q. He didn't know....he didn't know, when he gave you the all clear to go ahead, the signal to go ahead, he didn't know that there was going to be any trouble for you ahead?

A. That's right, aye! It was clear as far as he was....as far as I was concerned and as far as he was concerned, but he had his feet stuck in between the rod and the sleeper.

Q. It wasn't the same man that was giving the all clear signal that got his foot stuck was it?

A. Aye! The same man!

Q. And couldn't he give you a red signal from there, from where he was?

A. He couldn't move! He was stuck in between the rails!

Q. And had he dropped his lamp, or anything or.....?

A. Oh.....the lamp....I didn't see the lamp... No, he was actually stuck! It was only pure luck that I had got the feeling that there was something wrong! Pure luck!

Q. Were there any other incidents that you can remember....on the pug?

A. Aye! I remember one in Oakbank, it was a dark night too! Pitch dark, and this train was late in coming in, but there were three boys had done something in about the Works and got the sack out of the works, but they shifted their points where I was to come down with the engine....with the....with this load of crude. They had shifted the points into a full road, where there was other stuff (inaudible), and I was....I went on the engine along with the man, and let the wagons go on in front, and the next thing I knew, both our heads hit the top of the.....

Q. Cab.....?

A. These boys had shifted the points!

Q. Was this after they were.....?

A. Sacked! After they were sacked!

Q. After they were..sacked aye!

A. They were meaning to some damage!

Q. And you can't remember why they were sacked? Was it pilfering or something?

A. That's right, I think it was at Pumpherston.....

Q. And who would sack them....the Manager?

A. Oh, I don't know!

Q. And when you were at Pumpherston, did you graduate from the steam to the diesel.....engine?

A. Engine.....aye!

Q. And you felt that was an awful lot better?

A. Aye!

Q. With the diesel....did you do, say, more work, or did you find it easier to do more work? With the diesels than the steam?

A. It was actually like a motor car, you could start it up in the morning, just like a motor car, you had no overheads with it!

Q. How many engines did you have in Pumpherston?

A. There were two, there were two working, two steamers when I went there at first, and it gradually tailed off to that....diesel, till they brought that diesel there.....

Q. And did you find that there was much maintenance required on the diesel, as there was on the steam, or.....was there more?

A. No, there wasn't actually much maintenance, all the time I was....of course it was practically.....if it was a new engine, so we didn't expect to get much trouble with a new engine, for a year or two!

Q. And you had engineers that knew all about it....the new diesel..... that would be?

- A. There was a handbook..... there was a handbook along with it, they got all their instructions off of that!
- Q. Can you remember anybody that worked on the engines, in Pumpherston, any engineers?
- A. Aye, the wee boy that bid across the road, there,....wee Tammy, wee Tammy... what did you call him. Tammy.....he married a friend of yours.....
- Q. It doesn't matter.....who was the foreman in the engineering shop?
- A. The foreman would be McDowell.....
- Q. Willie McDowell?
- A. Willie McDowell.....would it? Geordie Anderson was the first man, then it would be McDowell that got his job.
- Q. He was the first foreman. Can you remember?
- A. Of course, they had nothing to do with the supervision on the pug. I was responsible....I was the foreman at the finish up, and I was responsible to the Manager.
- Q. And can you remember the Manager's name, when you went to Pumpherston?
- A. Gray! Gray was his name.....
- Q. Wullie Gray?
- A. Wullie Gray! Aye!
- Q. And was there an under-manager then?
- A. Georgie Anderson....wee Geordie....do you know him? That's the old story!

- Q. And of course, you had your pug shed and what not....what kind of hours did you work on the pug?
- A. Well.....I left Oakbank....when....about four o'clock, and I used to start up there at five, and you never saw me till dark some nights! It depends on what the weather was like and what kind of trouble they were getting up above in the Works!
- Q. Were you asked to do much overtime?
- A. There was always overtime in these jobs!
- Q. But you would be paid for that?
- A. Oh, aye! I went out on a Sunday for to wash out the boiler!
- Q. That would be extra money as well?
- A. Aye!
- Q. Did you get double time then, or not?
- A. Was it double time or not? (Talking to wife). (Wife talking) I don't know! You were getting the money? (Wife talking) I just took what you gave me!
- Q. (Talking to wife) You didn't dispute what the....money that he gave you for .....?
- A. (Wife talking) No....if I got extra that week, all to the good. Well, that was the finish of the story, I finished up at Oakbank.....
- Q. Now, were you a member of the Union when you were there with the Scottish Oils?

A. Aye, aye, but I had a disagreement with them, at one time.....at that time that she's talking about!

Q. And what was that for? What was the reason?

A. Well, there was a strike in the Oilworks....with the Railway Company!

Q. With the railway company?

A. The railway company was employed with that shale for bringing it across to it, .....or was there a strike on the railway,.....and they wanted me to go along with the thingummy for to howk the shale from Westwood to Pumpherston. Well, I was to be one of them anyway! But I said that it was an insult to us.. ....to my principles, maybe wrongly.....I said I wouldn't be a blackleg. So, he told the Manager.... this was the foreman engineer....and he said, "Send the "b.....r" up to the coal mine!" So, that's where I got....shovelling the coal!

Q. Were you taken off the pug, at that time?

A. Aye! I was off it at that time! Aye! I wasn't long off it.....

Q. And where did you go to shovel coal?

A. I was still with the Company!

Q. Yes, but where though? Still at Uphall.....

A. Oh.....the coal bings! Of course, that strike being on the railway, they were taking off their reserves bing, the wagons.....

Q. So, they had a good stock in hand?

A. Oh aye!

Q. How long did that strike last?

A. That didn't last..... I can't mind.....!

Q. And were you ever involved in any strikes yourself with Scottish Oils? At any time?

A. No, I did not go to them about that....about that... I went to them about that, what they were going to do about it, with me being a Union Member, and asking me to blackleg. And you know, that boy came up from Broxburn, I said "The Union's no good to me, I put in a complaint in there! What did you do about it! He says, "Nothing!" "Well", I says, "What the hell good is it to me, there's no use....but if it's a tanner a week!" I said, "You can keep your tanner, but I never will really be a Union Member!" As far as that goes!

Q. And who was it you approached? Was it a Union official? When that happened?

A. Aye, it was Union official! That boy from Broxburn, was it McKinlay or something that you cried him!

Q. McKelvie?

A. McKelvie!

Q. Was there anybody in Pumpherston? That was associated with the Union! Joe Heaney!

A. Oh, Joe, aye! Aye, of course, I was in Oakbank at that time!

Q. You were in Oakbank?

A. Aye! Joe would have something to do with the local thing here!

Q. Did you feel that all that the Unions.....were prepared to help you, or go

to the Management with any of your complaints, or would they rather talk you out of it?

A. I don't think that the Union had any real pull anywhere at that time! I don't think so! In fact, the railwaymen were wanting us to join their Union, which would have been the sensible thing! But that never materialised!

Q. You wouldn't be encouraged to do that of course?

A. Aye! Aye!.....(Wife talking) You would not! Would not what? (Wife talking) The Company would not encourage you to join the Railwaymen's Union. Oh, no, the Company never.... (Wife talking) That's what you..... Aye..... the railway boys.....

Q. No.....because that might have complicated things! I think that they would prefer you, all the Oilworkers....to be in the one Union! In refineries, oil works and Pits and mines?

A. Aye, naturally!

Q. So, when you came back, once the main Railway union had solved whatever their dispute was, did you get back on the pug again?

A. Oh aye, back on again.....aye!

Q. Doing your normal job?

A. Aye! I was just a bit of a rebel, that was all!

Q. Did you feel that?

A. I feel that yet, sometimes!

Q. And why did you feel that you were a rebel when you were....say at Pumpherston or Oakbank? Did you feel that you were creating any disturbances among

your workmates?

- A. No, I got on fine.....I got on fine I liked Oakbank. At Pumpherston, of course, it was different there, there were strangers going in there doing these boys of out of jobs! They were doing them out of money, with employing us, when I think on it! They were actually losing, with the result that they weren't too friendly at times!
- Q. So, when you came....when you came back to Pumpherston, after being at Oakbank, you felt that your new workmates, that they didn't really accept you, as they probably should have done!
- A. Of course, you were among strangers!
- Q. Yes.....but they.....did...they feel that you were coming in and they would get less money?
- A. Aye, it's natural that they would feel that! It's natural that they would feel that.....
- Q. So there was.....was there any one in particular that you felt had that grudge against.....?
- A. Oh no, there was an undercurrent.....you could feel the undercurrent right enough, but that was all, there was nothing really serious!
- Q. And did that last for a long time, or did.....?
- A. Oh no.....it just gradually tailed off!
- Q. Then you became accepted? And who was your linesman at Pumpherston, can you remember any of these names?
- A. There was a boy from Uphall was the first one and then it was that Gordon.... Gordon, he was in that job! I don't think that he would do an awful long service though! Matty Gordon..... He didn't really have much....he didn't

really have much experience.....

Q. Of being a linesman?

A. He worked with the railway company, and their job usually was to.....knocking in.....

Q. That was tightening up the chairs for the rails sitting in, with the wooden

A. The wooden thingummies....well, I didn't get much chance, I got more chance or learning things over there, but it learned us...me....you had to learn it the hard way. Of course, McDowell helped, McDowell had a good idea of what was required!

Q. McDowell being the foreman...he had a good idea of what the job involved? And are you wanting to say anything further about when you were at Pumpherston? Before we finish? When did you finish in Pumpherston? Was Pumpherston closing down then?

A. Aye, Pumpherston was on the road out! You could see it coming a mile away! .....Before it actually happened! Shutting down this, and shutting down that, drawing back, there was a lot of stopping the shale!

Q. You reckon that money was running out! As far as the Company was concerned?

A. Oh, they had a plan, they had a plan! It was a big swindle that, to start with, you know! So it was! All these Oil Companies, them getting caught up with these....what was that, Iranian, what did you call the.....

Q. The Anglo Iranian Oil Company?

A. They bought up all these Oilworks! Even their selling agents, there, they made a different Company out of their selling agents there! And when it came to tally up the books and that, the selling agents had the benefit of it, because they could make their price to suit them...the...anybody looking at the books!

- Q. So, you felt that....that wasn't a fair thing to do!
- A. It was business! They got all the market, and got it all shut down! Of course at that time, the Oil was coming out of the ground there, and there's quite a queer difference...oil coming out of the ground, and having to go away to Westwood, and bringing out the shale, and going through all the different processes there! It was bound to go!
- Q. And if you can go back to when you started work, that.....what...where did you live, what kind of houses...was it Oilworker's houses, miner's cottages, or anything like that?
- A. That oilman's cottage was a private house, wasn't it, that.....(Wife talking) But that wasn't when you started to work! That's.....(Wife talking) When you started to work. When I started to work! (Wife talking) You lived in Oakbank. Aye, aye, in an Oil Company house.
- Q. And what kind of conditions did you feel.....?
- A. Oh, you were only paying about four bob a week for rent or something like that weren't you?
- Q. And what had you.....a room and kitchen?
- A. (Wife talking) In your mother's time, yes, it was a room and kitchen! Aye, a but and ben!
- Q. A but and ben, yes! And you had running water in the houses?
- A. (Wife talking) Yes, cold water!
- Q. Cold water! And did you have an inside toilet then?
- A. (Wife talking) Yes! That was a good bit after that! That I came on, and then there was one of those (inaudible) additions..... they put water and electricity in, and that, into these houses.

Q. When you started off, was it paraffin lamps?

A. Aye, paraffin lamps!

Q. So, you wouldn't have very good lighting in the houses in these days?

A. (Wife talking) No, we just had the big lamp hanging from the ceiling!

Q. Was it one of these ones that you pulled down? The light?

A. (Wife talking) Aha!

Q. And of course, you would have the old range? Did you?

A. (Wife talking) Aye, the big black range!

Q. And you would have an oven?

A. (Wife talking) At the side of the range! And a wee tank with all the hot water that you got, you had to keep filling it up, if you used any at the sink!

Q. And had you to do a lot of blackleading and.....?

A. (Wife talking) Aye! Definitely!

Q. You wouldn't like to go back to that, now....would you?

A. Definitely not! (Wife talking) For the money that they were paying it was good, cheap coal....cheap coal and cheap paraffin. (Wife talking) Where did we get the cheap coal? From the Company at the time! (Wife talking) We never got cheap coal from the Company! We're talking about when I started work, aren't we! Well, there was coal that came down off the Work in a cart, and we filled up the coalhouse! And it was cheap coal! (Wife talking) We didn't get it, because we were married....we didn't get it! Till we got

to the Store. That was years before..... (Wife talking) But you didn't get it from the Work then!

Q. And what did you do in your social life....spare time? Did you play football or anything like that? When you were younger?

A. Aye, I played football!

Q. What team did you play with?

A. Oakbank.....Oakbank Thistle was it? Oakbank Thistle.....

Q. And did you win any.....?

A. We won four cups one year!

Q. Four?

A. Four cups!

Q. Now, what league would that be in?

A. Oh, I've no idea! I've no idea! Football was very rough at that time! It was a rough game at that time!

Q. Would it be amateur or juvenile...do you think?

A. Oh, it wasn't amateur, I don't think! I couldn't tell you! Really! And..

Q. And had you any other interests? Say, for instance, when you had your week off?

A. Going for sticks!

Q. Was that for the fire?

A. For the fire!

Q. Did you ever have any pitch and toss, quoiting...or any of these?

A. Oh.....I used to play the cards, oh aye, I used to play the cards down in the strip box!

Q. The football strip box?

A. We used to have a candle and it would go away down, and we used to have to keep building it up till it was yon time....till the candle...till the money was all done!

Q. So, you gambled on the cards?

A. Aye, it was pontoon usually!

Q. And was there much money involved in that?

A. There wasn't much money lying about at that time! You got skint awful easy!

Q. Okay! That's fine!

A. I liked Oakbank though! Oakbank was.....I liked Oakbank!

Q. Did you prefer staying Oakbank?

A. Aye! Aye, I believe I did!

Q. Than in Pumpherston?

A. You got more freedom! I would walk....across the road at night, you could go up yonder at midnight without anybody interfering with you! You could go anywhere, you could leave your door wide open! Altered days, now!

END OF TAPE

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