

WG SIDE ONE

WG How it came about that my family, the Getty's, was amy grandfather and my granny.....my granny's father was.....and he came from Oakbank, they were in the Oilwork. My grandfather was a foreman on the retorts in Winchburgh and retired from the Oilworks. I can remember as a wee laddie, that I used to take his piece down, when I came home from the school.

GC What was his name?

WG WG as well! My father is WG, I'm WG, and I've got a son called WG! My oldest son! So, as I say, my granny's father worked in the Oilworks up in Winchburgh, and he died with cancer of the throat. That was that side of my father's family, my grandfather as I say, was a foreman on the retorts. He eventually retired, but he came over from Belfast, from Ballymena, in Ulster, along with a lot of other people that are still.....names that are still there in Winchburgh, and he started in the Oilworks, and he was there till the day that he retired! Don't ask, how many years, but it was quite a few! As I say, when he finished, he was a foreman on the retorts, well, when I....was at school, obviously it was the done thing, I suppose, to.....in those days it was.... plenty of jobs going about....but you were in a sort of mining community, or an Oilwork Community, as you would put it, then the done thing was that you were going to work, if possible.....I can't remember exactly, but I think myself, that my father had approached me and asked me what I was wanting to do, did I fancy having a job, in the Work?.....But I obviously wouldn't have a trade, because he didn't have one, but in his day, it wasn't so easy to get a trade. So at the start, I said "Aye", and he had said,.... well, what happened was.....I was leaving school on the Friday....I'm almost positive that this happened....and I was leaving the school on the Friday and I got told by my father that day, that I had to go and see the Manager in the Work, which....his name was Alec Frame....he originally came from the Camps..... the Roman Camps, to Winchburgh as Manager.

GC That was in 1954?

WG That was in 1954! And I went down to see Alec Frame on the Friday, believe it or not, and I fancied being a plumber.... that's what I fancied being! In that day and age, you left school at fifteen, but you couldn't start your trade till you were sixteen, because you had to do a year labouring within the Work, and the.....reason being, with me wanting to be a plumber, he had said to me that he would see what he could do for me, but I would have to do a year's labouring first! So, as a laddie, when I was in Winchburgh, I just didn't stay far away from the Work, in the rows, the miner's rows, and we used to play over at the green shale, where the hutches used to come up from the mine, up to the benches where my father worked, and there were quite a few accidents! Believe it or not! For the Getty family had a trait of accidents in the Oilworks! When I was ten years old, one Sunday... you know what like you are as a laddie, ten.....I think it was ten years old.....and we landed in the Work, which you weren't allowed to do, because you got murdered from your father, if you got caught! They had been all away there was about a dozen of us, and we landed down at the loading bank where the big wagons came up from the main line, and this...going in this....railway....what we cried....not a carriage.....

GC A wagon?

WG A wagon...was open....and there was this big box, I always mind, a big tea chest....and it was...the loading bank was above...the door to the...wagon, and we all started as laddies, jumping from the.... loading bank into the wagon, to get into this box, and I jumped too high, and I caught the big bar at the top of the thing, like, split my head right back, lifted the scalp right back, and there was maybe about half a dozen of us, at my age of ten, and there were two or three older laddies there. It was Georgie Rutherford, whose father worked in the Work as a miner. Old "Pinch" He was a character, as well! A great old guy! A great bowler within the Scottish Oils. Lucky enough, they all ran away, because my head was like la....burst tomato, and it lifted the scalp right back, and the...he actually stayed, and what he done was....I can't mind much about it! Even if you asked me a year after it, I couldn't have minded much about it! It all went kind of.....I never flaked out, but I must have been dazed!

GC You would see a lot of your father then, would you?

WG No, I was lucky, because it was that bad! But what happened actually..... was.....that the took the scalp and lifted it back over the top of my head, and held it. Of course, then, in those days, it was famous that the baths attendant was a First Aid man....and they were first class men, make no.... mistake about that, as far as First Aid goes! And there was a boy from the Newton Village, called Willie Low, and there was Tarn Crawford, and there was somebody else, who I can't just mind right now, they were always first class First Aid men, and even with anybody that got hurt in the Rows! If it was a wee thing we were always running to the baths attendants. So.....we run over.....he had managed to....he practically carried me over to the baths and the baths attendant got me, and they sent for Doctor Campbell, actually, from Broxburn. He was the Winchburgh Doctor then! And I think that I can mind right....my father was telling me that, he took seven minutes to come from Uphall...he was at an emergency.... to me in the baths, and I was lying in the baths, and he came in, and whenever he saw me, he said "Hospital!"

GC Were you conscious?

WG Aye, I was still conscious, and I got twenty three stitches in my head, I was from one side of my ear to the other! A pretty gruesome thought, you can still see the scar yet! So that's the kind of experiences we had, because we were involved in the Oilworks. My brother, Rab, worked in the Oilworks, he used to work up at the green shale, that I was telling you about, and he was jumping up between two hutches, and you know how the hutches buffer together.....his "bl.....y" heel was hanging down, and he got sandwiched....his heel got sandwiched between two hutches! My other youngest brother. Tam...they were playing again, when the Work was working, and they landed in the chutes.....what they used to do...when the shale used to go into the retorts, for to get.... through to the....to get the crude oil taken out of it, but every so often the chutes..under the big thingummy, the gavy, and they dropped the shale in there, for to do them on a Sunday, because there was no shale came from the Sunday, from the Mine, because the

Mine didn't work, and they were away down at this big chute, it was maybe about thirty foot down. What they used to do was....there was a hole going up the thing where the hutches went up, and this used to take the handle of the hutch away, and drop the shale, into the chute, you see! And that filled up for a Sunday. So, it came the Sunday, because they worked seven days...the retorts and that. you just filled the hutches from down the..under the chutes, like under the thingummy, and...that's how they actually worked on the Sunday, and....my old man, I think it was my father, I'm not sure, and this...and he was just going to thingummy this hutch to open it to drop the shale into the chutes, when he heard this cry! And he stopped, and he heard no more, and he tried to open the door again, and the hutch door jammed, it must have been providence, so he tried to get the door open, of the hutch, you know, just a wee bit that you shoved down and it just..... brings a slider over the bottom of...and the shale comes down, and it jammed again.....and he heard this cry again, so he stopped and looked over the bannister, and there was the two laddies, one was my brother, my youngest brother. Tam, along with this other wee boy, Hutchison, I think.....no, Glendinning! But if he had opened that door, they were dead! I mean, that hutchful of shale going down on top of them, but even if they had survived that, by the time that all the rest of the shale was piled up, they wouldn't have found them till the weekend, because (inaudible), it was unbelievable, you know! So, we all had a wee accident during the work! So that's where I went to work, when I started to labour, was over in the green shale. I'll tell you, it was happy.....it was a happy time, really, for all you were fifteen years old, and by the way, you were working out in rain, snow, anything.....you had to put up with, but was good, because you had six o'clock to two, sometimes maybe, well, it would depend on when you got finished! And the backshift was two, but sometimes you got, well, most of the time you got finished by six or seven and you got all the stuff out, you know, but it was a happy time, it really was! And it never did you any harm, you know!

GC So there was two shifts?

WG Two shifts, aye! Two shifts!

GC And at that age, were you allowed to work two shifts?

WG Aye! Aye! And I worked a Sunday too! And I worked a Saturday backshift, which was starting at two in the afternoon, and you were finished by about four.

GC And your actual job was doing what?

WG I was just labouring! I was just....only snibbling the hutches coming off the chain, coming back down from the retorts, or you were snibbling the rake coming in.....from the pit! When the boy who brought it in, then you brought that rake in and fed it through the thingummy to the chain, that's where as a boy, my father, worked. He wasn't on the chain when I was there, he worked up the top, but he came to the chain eventually, before he retired, before he got finished, and you shoved the hutch through the wee iron bridge, and then, the man, which was a man, it wasn't a laddie. It was all laddies that worked the snibble of the hutches, but when it came to the chain, you had to throw the chain, the hutch was built as such, that there was a thing on the back of it, shaped like that, and you just pulled the chain on to that, and of course the chain caught on to it, it drew, the haulage drew it up the.....up to the top of the retorts.

GC Just like a grab?

WG That's it, well, it was just a chain, well, it was just a thing that was shaped like that, with a "V" in it with.....it was thingummied so it would when the chain went in, it caught, you know! Well, that's where I worked, the chain was put that way, on the way up, and there were a lot of good days, alright, there were some, my father still talks about it yet, a shift I had, that I had to shove every hutch from the gavy when it came off the chain, coming back down, to the other end of the lag in the snow. That's what I was talking about, through Winter and everything, you had to shove them, every hutch! You see, normally, when they came off the chain, they got that bit....momentum.... to start with! It wasn't a big hill, but

you....used to have to snibble them and you piled them up, and coupled them up. And the loci' came, when so many hutches were there and took it away to the pit! Right! Well, that was your job, but it was in all weathers, it was good, Saturday and Sunday, you know, you worked.....you had weekends off for that, you know, the odd weekend off. But it was a good job!

GC You would be making quite a bit of money then?

WG Aye! You were making quite a good bit of money! You were making about three pounds odds a week, some were like, maybe even more, it would be about four pounds a week, they were making! That was quite good money in 1954, for a laddie of fifteen years old! So then, the next thing that I found out was, that I got the summons from Mr. Frame, to say that he had got a job for me. He was sorry it couldn't be Winchburgh, but would I like to start at the Broxburn the next morning. Sorry, what I meant to say.....when I went to see Frame the first time, when I started in the labouring job....I left the school on the Friday, I went to see him when I left the school at ten to four, I started on the Monday morning, that's when I started! I had no holidays, I just started right away! So, anyway, the second time that the sent for me, it was Broxburn Acid Works! So that was me finished, and I think, maybe, I didn't.....it maybe was a couple of weeks before I was sixteen. I'm sure, and it goes through my mind that I wasn't....it wasn't the complete year that I done, it was maybe fifty, forty eight weeks, but that doesn't matter! So I then started in Broxburn Acid Works, as an apprentice plumber, and well, if you worked in Winchburgh, you knew everybody there, whereas when you went to Broxburn, you didn't know anybody! Well, there was only one really, that I didn't know, and he came from Winchburgh, the two people that came from Winchburgh was the joiner, was Wullie Thompson, was, he always had a bike, went about everywhere on a bike. I didn't know the man, but I would know him to see, if you know what I mean. And the other man that was there was the man, another joiner, Tam Lyons, and I didn't really know Tam, but I mean, I knew he came from Winchburgh! So you were among a lot of strangers, but I must admit that they were a good crowd, at Broxburn Acid Works, they really were! There were a lot of characters! I mean a lot of characters! And I still say...

say to this day, and I spoke about it not that long ago, that in my whole life, in sport, especially, but even in normal life, the characters that were involved in life then, were..... they're just not the same now! You've not got the same people that could make you....entertain you without, any television or whatever, you know, it's the same....I still say that to this day, that the characters that were in that place, and probably other places that were within the Scottish Oils like Middleton, Pumpherston and all over, had the same amount of characters. You've not got that now, you know! Anyway.....

GC Did you always want to become a plumber?

WG No, I can't....I think it just came on me.....I think it just came on me, that I wanted to become a plumber, that was the.....

GC And did you feel that there was a difference between a leadburner and a plumber?

WG I didn't know that at the time! I didn't know till he came to me and said I was to go to Broxburn Acid Works, and explained that it was a chemical... I didn't ken till I got there, it was a chemical plumber!

GC That was in 1955?

WG 1955! That's right! The Manager was a boy called Alex Corstorphine, he was a character as well! And the plumbing gaffer was a boy called Hughie Stewart, he came from Alexander Street in Uphall. But the trend, in the.... and they were both ex-plumbers by the way....ex chemical plumbers, both of them, and the trend seemed to be at Broxburn Acid Works, the foreman and the Manager were always ex-plumbers, ex chemical plumbers, so the squad where I started, if I can mind now, the tradesman was, I would say, was Johnny Johnstone, and he stayed in Albyn Cottages. Now I saw Johnny, I'm sure, just a couple of weeks ago, Johnny stays.....his wife....he stays with his wife in Albyn Cottages just at the back of the Acid Works, and I'm sure his wife's mother came from St. John's Road, I think, was it called St. John's Road? Through the Station Road in Broxburn, I think that's what it

was! I think that there used to be, it runs in my mind that they must have died, and Johnny stays there now! I mean Johnny must be....he must be well past retiring age, and there was Charlie Duffy from Stewartfield, in Broxburn, was a chemical plumber, and there was Cliff Simpson was the other chemical plumber. I started and there was old Spence King, the labourer, he came from the Rows in Broxburn, he was the plumber's labourer, and all the characters, when I started it was a wee bit strange, but I used to find, I used to get a wee bit of comfort, that, sometimes when they were busy, they brought Jimmy White, the plumber over from Winchburgh, to give them a hand out, although Jimmy was a domestic plumber, he could still do leadburning. Well, Jimmy,I knew Jimmy well, and I used to feel a wee bit easier, you know! Early on! But once you got to know them, they were good lads, and sometimes you felt that...especially with Johnny being older and maybe Charlie trying to keep you in your bit, you would say, och, they were terrible, but when you think about it afterwards, they were only doing it for your own good, ken, they were a good influence! And you learned the right things! Well, when you started, you worked with old Spence, you had to fill up the....what they used to use then...at the finals, before....they broke up like, they used to get cylinders, we used to get gas in the cylinders, which was hydrogen they used, and oxygen mixed for the leadburning, but when I went, it was an old machine, a long wooden machine, it was lead lined with a pipe connected between the two of them, and there was a big manhole at the bottom of it, a cover, with four bolts in it, a flange, and it was lined, and you took that off, well, what you done was, it got filled up with zinc, I'm sure it was zinc, and there was a pipe came..... this was just like a fume chamber on the bottom, with a connecting pipe, between the top chamber and the bottom chamber, with a wee lead pipe, that came off the bottom, and what happened was, that you put the zinc in, and you filled that bottom chamber up, and you bolted the thing back up again, and covered it! Then you put water in the machine, and you filled it up till the top chamber was maybe about three or four inches from the top, no sorry, a foot from the top, and what you done then, was, put the two pails of acid in among that, so that the acid and the water mixing with the zinc, believe it or not, gave you hydrogen! It came out of this lead pipe, and all that was stuck on the end of it, was a hose, a

rubber hose, a half inch hose, just like the hose you use in the.....no, not a half inch one that you use in a lab, only heavier, still very pliable but heavier, and that was stuck into the top of the machine, that was on the ground and if you were up in the chambers, that was that feed to maybe about three or four leadburners that were working!

GC What height would that be?

WG Well, you're talking about, if you're working on floor level, from the ground to the floor of the chamber, you're talking about twenty five feet, roughly, twenty, twenty five feet! Now that tube went up there, if you can imagine, and there were T pieces on that tube, and every piece had a set of tubes, and they just hung round their necks with wee gas coks, and you had a burner on the end of it, and say there was four T. pieces it wasall branches off that one tube, and that's what fed your supply of hydrogen to burn with, mixed with oxygen. The oxygen came out of a bottle right! Actually, they worked in.....see if somebody stood on the tubes, the "bl.....y" thing started a fire, just about, the fright that you got, you know! And.... that's the kind of thing that you did to start with, you had to help old Spence to run the tubes and cut lead patches. If you were patching the chambers, re-patching them, there was a big table, where you rolled the lead, and you cut the patches with the labourer to start with, you know, you cleaned them all, and handed them all, they marked them and sized them and we cut them and cleaned them.....

GC What roughly was the size of these chambers?

WG The size of the chambers....was I would say....approximately.....one hundred and twenty five feet long, they were, twenty feet high, twenty feet wide, and when you came to do ayou're talking about the lead chambers, I think it was about seven pounds to the square foot, that was the thickness of the lead that you used, which was quite light lead, really, but it had to be light for.....obviously, for a chamber that size, you couldn't hang heavy lead, now you would need to have the Forth Bridge girders hanging like, to hold it up, see! But you also moved them to the Kessler House, and the

big other chambers, not other chambers, it was a..... like a tower, aye, it was a tower, with the same lead in the Kessler House, this was with the heavier acid! That was sulphuric acid, that they used in that, particularly for the big chambers, but the other ones, you're talking about forty pounds to the square foot! So you can imagine the thickness that you're talking about, maybe the thickness of that, three quarters of an inch thick, and you had to form that and make it! You used to have to get the big burner up, and heat it and bend it up with big batons and big hammers, that's true! That didn't happen very often, because, once they were done, they lasted for years like, years and years, but the likes of the other chambers, used to be.....I can't remember the now, used to be shut down nearly every year, because you had one, two, three, four....you had four chambers that size, with what they called two half chambers in between them, right! So you take one, two, three, four and the two halves, you could say, once every five years. If I can mind right, I can't say that they were done that way, but I'm just assuming that they were done that way, because it's that long ago! Once every five years, you were doing a shut down in the summer time in one of those chambers. The good thing about them was that they used to be done.....by the way, the wood....the supports that the lead was wrapped on, was the best of stuff, it was the best of stuff, it was pitch pine, and it was great firewood, you know, you couldn't get better! When they done those shutdowns, they got boys down from Middleton to give them a hand out, because obviously, they didn't have the labour to do that, and maybe half the time they spent working from eight in the morning till eight at night, and working Saturdays and Sundays.

GC So, even as an apprentice, you were doing overtime?

WG Aye! You had to! Well.....you didn't have to, but well, you were making money! I always remember my first wage, as I said....at Winchburgh, you were earning about....I would say, I think that it was about three pounds odds a week, or four pound a week, sometimes more, I can't remember, but I always remember my first wage....I always remember my first wage as an apprentice, I couldn't believe it, it was two pounds...I think it was two pounds and one shilling that's what I got! My first wage....and that was

at the top of the line, that wasn't.....that was your wage, for a bare week....two pounds one shilling.

GC So, you dropped money to serve your apprenticeship?

WG Aye! Oh aye, you did aye! Two pounds, one shilling, was my first wage, I can always remember that, as an apprentice! I never forgot it! For byewhat was I saying?

GC Did you do any other type of plumbing work? Or was it all leadburning? That you did, in the Acid Works?

WG It was nearly all.....it was nearly all leadburning that you did in the Acid Works, aye! See, before I went there, when the Rows, when the Candleworks were there, I can only talk about hearsay, what the journeyman told me, the Candleworks, where they done all the stuff down there as well which was....there was a lot of domestic plumbing down there, and they also covered the Rows houses, like cisterns, and more domestic plumbing, and W.C.'s and stuff that was in the houses, that would need fixed, you know.....but that was all done away with.....because when I started there, I think it was Middleton that done the Rows, and the Candleworks weren't there, they were finished! It was a great experience, I mean, some of the characters that I worked with,.....I mean, I'm not talking about.....I'm talking about outwith the trades, you had old Dod Mitchell and Bobby Whitelaw. Bobby's still living....Dod Mitchell's dead, big Tam Proudfoot, he was the fitter, big Tam was a big gentleman, he came from up Goshen way, and you had wee Davy Stewart, and you had Alec Corstorphine's brother, and his uncle, he was a production worker, I can't mind his name....he wasn't Jock Corstorphine's was he? I can't mind anyway! And Bert McGraw, and a boy called Archie Glendinning worked there, then, they were younger people! I'm talking about the production side like! Bert McGraw and....Archie Glendinning and boys like that! Well, after I started, after II can't remember, was it a year after I started, they started another apprentice called Jackie Rutherford, from the Rows in Broxburn. He stayed in the Rows in Broxburn, and Jackie has got a good job now.....I think that he's....he's with the

Water Board, the West Lothian Water Board, he's a sort of foreman! Jackie, aye! Jackie served his time, that was the only apprentices that there was.....and oh, sorry....when I started there, there was an apprentice there from Winchburgh there, called Jimmy Young, he was an engineering apprentice and there was another man....he works beside me down in Uniroyal, believe it or not! He started...Chick Toal came down from Pumpherston or UphallI think that it was Pumpherston that he came from, or the Roman Camps, and he started to serve his time, he was serving his time, I think, at the Roman Camps as a joiner, and he came down to finish his time down beside us. There was Tam Lyons and a boy called Thompson...worked then....in the big shops through the back beside the plumbing shop, which was called a wagon shop, that was when they brought the big railway wagons in.....I'm talking about the Scottish Oils wagons, it wasn't the British Rail Wagons, you know, for shifting the stuff. There was a repair shop, for that, and they used to bring them down there, and do all the things....oh, it was some big heavy stuff.....big heavy oak beams, you know, well, those big heavy wagons.....

GC And there was a repair shop down there for.....?

WG There was a repair shop....aye, when I started, but that eventually...I think within a year or so, that all fell away too, that stopped! Then TamTam Lyons, the joiner....I can't remember where that Bob Thompson went to, but Tam Lyons the joiner, then came into the other joiners shop and worked up in the Acid Work, you know, doing the work on lorries and that! That was the....oh, aye, there were only two apprentices, plumbing apprentices, plus another.... that's right...Murray Kane started, a boy from Broxburn...to serve his time. He works down beside me at Uniroyal, now, he's a foreman now!

GC And how many plumbers were there then?

WG That was the three plumbers, plus the two apprentices and a labourer. There was two joiners and two apprentices and there was Tam....I don't think that Tam was the tradesman. Tam Proudfoot, he was more of a handyman, but he was

very clever! A very clever man! And there was an apprentice engineer... if you want to put it...Jimmy ...Young. Jimmy's now in Canada, and I don't know where Tam Proudfoot is! At that particular time, that's how many were employed in the.....if you want to put it, on the trade side, and as I say, the rest of the characters, like old Davy, Davy Stewart who was our..."Shug" Stewart, our plumbing gaffer's brother, he worked with the production up there and there was old Jock Lacey from Winchburgh, an old character! A right old character! He worked in the....he started away...that used to be cried red oil, it was red oil! That's what they used to fire these furnaces with, but they changed....I think it was there....when I went...to sulphur, and I always mind of a character, a Doctor Stewart, used to come down.... do you mind of him, from Middleton?

GC I've heard the name!

WG Doctor Stewart!

GC A chemist?

WG He was a chemist! And I always said that....and at that particular time, a lot of laddies were bothered with plukes and they reckoned it was the feeding or....I can't mind what it was, and there were some boys used to get piles. There was an awful heavy epidemic at that time, of things like that, on different people, and when he used to come down from Middleton, he used to walk into the burners, and it was all stored like crystal, and I think it was....I can't remember where the stuff came from, it was green sulphur, like crystals like, and these people that worked these furnaces... there was a barrow, with a big....with a run there, and every...every quarter of an hour, they put a barrowful of.....it was weighed, I think, put in a barrow....and they just opened the bell, it was a big furnace, and they just put the stuff in....the sulphur I think it was one....you know, there were two burners, two of them on at the same time, one five minutes after the other, that's all they done, all shift. That was their job, and they just used to lift it up, and coup it in. Well...that sulphur...that's what fed the chambers, that's where you got the acid,you know, it went up

into the chambers, and it condensed, you know, well..... Well, he used to come down, that Doctor Stewart, and the first thing that he used to do was pick up a handful of sulphur, and put his mouth to it, and he reckoned that kept....that it was the greatest thing in the world for keeping your body free of.....likes of boils and plukes and I'm talking about a laddie that was anything like that, he reckoned that it was.....I imagine the man should know, he was a chemist, you know! But that's what he used to do, he used to pick up a wee handful of sulphur, and eat it! I always mind of that! I never saw him do it, but I got told that he done it! And there was no dubiety about it, he definitely done it! Because there were quite a few people that had seen him do it!

GC And did anybody do the same thing, when they heard that he done this?

WG Well, I didn't, and I don't know whether anybody else did it or not! But another great thing, that we were talking about not that long ago, funny enough, about the same thing.... talking about drum tea! You're bound to mind of drum tea, if you were a joiner! Thon was the greatest tea in the world.. we were talking about it at the work, there was no tea tasted better than drum tea! There was a wee bothy there, that they had, and a wee fire, just a fire, and that's what you drummed your tea up on! It was a great tea..all that....you never get that now! It was unbelievable!

GC You meant that....did you miss the smokey flavour when you left there?

WG Aye, that's it! You never got the same tea, like the tea that you got there! It was really good!....but I'll tell you the one good thing I always say about Scottish Oils, was the conditions that you worked in, you just wouldn't work in now! I mean, there's no.... there's no..... there's no way you would do these things! But one thing.... that they did provide was the Baths! Thon was the greatest! Thon was absolutely magic, you know! The fact that..both in Winchburgh....more in Winchburgh, than in Broxburn, because I worked outside, as I say, when I was doing that....that years labouring in rain and snow, and you came in saturated with water, boots, clothes and everything! But you would guarantee, that, next day, when you started your shift the

next morning, those clothes were bone dry! And the baths were always beautiful and warm, plenty of showers, plenty of hot water, that was one..one thing anyway.... that...I always remember that! The baths were famous! You know! Always spotless too! I mean, you had people, not so much Broxburn, but Winchburgh, you had miners as well as the Oilworkers, which were pit men! Every department.... there must have been hundreds and hundreds of men, and come from the pit as well, and those baths were spotless (inaudible), I always mind that too, that they had things for doing your boots. You just pressed the thing, and things like that! It was unreal! You know what I mean, the conditions were terrible in one way, in some of the things you done and worked in, and in other ways, they were absolutely perfect! You won't get any better in this day and age! Than what you had in those baths!

GC You had a feeling that they were quite advanced then?

WG Oh aye, without a doubt, but even, I get a shower where I work every day, and it's not the same....nothing like it...and I'm talking about..take Winchburgh where I worked, it was about 1954 first! You're talking about 1986 and all the advancement and everything that's went on, there's nothing that I can remember, compared with Winchburgh Baths, but some of the things that you done! I can remember, that you wouldn't do now either, what you done to work! I was telling you about that tower, the roof.....the roof of the chambers would be roughly.... taking...the floor of the chambers would be twenty feet off the ground, and then the chamber being twenty feet....forty feet off the ground, well above that again, there was a tower, at the sides of the chamber, which was the stuff that I was telling you about for the heavy acid, which was the thick lead! Now, the only.....if you got a burst pipe, there used to be pipes run up to tanks down stairs, and went right up to tanks up stairs, and they pumped it from there to there, and it was fed back down through the tower, this is how it worked! It pumped the acid, and don't ask me what was inside the tower! I was all covered in with lead, and all the rest of it, don't tell me, it was stones that it...it was some sort of chuckle stones, but it was a special stone anyway, that the acid had to seep, it was a process that it went through. Don't ask me what it is now, I couldn't tell you!

GC Was it like a filter?

WG Aye, I think that it acted like a filter, but there was a special stone that had to be in there. And it wasn't coke, you know, sometimes you get, it was a stone, I'm sure.....

END OF TAPE

WG SIDE TWO

WG That same tower, I always remember, we got a burst pipe, as I say, the pipes used to go from the tank at the bottom and up the front of the tower to the....right up to the top to go into the top of this.... these tanks upstairs were full(inaudible). And there was a burst pipe, just about at the top of it! Now, you can imagine this tower, just heavy lead, and it was crissed! The only way that we could get up it, is criss crossed like that so that the tails of each beam, you know, the top of your beams, nine inches square, or a foot square, just criss-crossed at the end. The tower would be, in breadth, you're talking about something like maybe what....ten, twelve feet by ten, twelve feet, so the beams just went that way with the woodwork. So they just criss-crossed, and that was the only way that you could get up that "bl.....y" tower, was up....you know there was one that way, on that side, and that side, and the other ones that came over that way. The only way that you could get up, was climbing up the outside of this. There were no scaffoldings or.....

GC No access ladder.....?

WG No access! There was no scaffolding! You just went up the front of it! And I don't know, if you know about acid, but if acid leaks on to wood, or anything like that, it goes slimy, it goes slippery, you know, really yon thingummy way. You used to....I always mind, I was hanging on by my toenails to sort this burst pipe, and you went up there and you had to put a rope down to the labourer and you pulled your pail.....your pail up, and he

....and used lime all the time. That's what you used for it! To clean the acid off the lead before you repaired it. And with the lime going into it as well, it goes that gooey way! I always mind, you were climbing up, you were talking about something like twenty feet, up that way, and that, just that....across the tail of the beam! That's what you were climbing up to get to! When you think about it after it, you say to yourself. God Almighty! I'm not talking about just the....I'm talking about the acid, that's leaked out of the pipe, lying along the wood! It wasn't real, some of the things that you done!

GC So, you feel that you were taking a lot of risks?

WG Not at that time! It was only when you thought about it after! It's talking about, after you left the place! It never dawned on you at the time, because,when you....that was the done thing! That's what they boys had done, that was your journeymen before you! So it was just a matter of...that was it, that's what you done!

GC I would assume that you would have protective clothing?

WG Oh aye, we had to....you had to have....a kind of white suit, it was a white...! couldn't tell you what it was made of, but it was a white suit, and you didn't get them as often as you should have gotten them, for you used to take them and get them patched! You know, they got burnt, you know yourself, acid burnt them! It just...it burnt them and that was it! You wore the clogs at the time! Obviously the clothes that you wore underneath were....you just patched them and patched them because there was no point in wearing good clothes, under the likes of the white suit, because when they got burnt, that was them, you couldn't wear them again!

GC And these suits would be resistant to a certain.....?

WG Aye, you could say, in the word "protective" and that's about the size of it! But many's a burn that you got, you know, through the...through the...

GC Through to your skin?

WG Aye, but you just dived for water, and you just dusted it down with water, and that was it! But.....they were good people! Good experiences!

GC When you were serving your time, were you asked to go to nightschool?

WG Aye, that was a condition, that was a condition! And you were warned to.. when you got the job, mind, you'll need to go to nightschool! You just didn't you wouldn't have had a job! You used to have to go three nights a week! We started going to Broxburn Nightschool, that's where I started going, and we were fortunate in a sense that...it was nearly all most of the guys from around about were Scottish Oils boys....like big...Tam Dutton, as well, another one that was an apprentice although he came from Cardross, he was an apprentice....and I think that Tam's over in America now! And his brother before him had been a chemical plumber, he had went and emigrated to America, and he had a job as a chemical plumber over there. And Tam Dutton, Tam was the same age as me, the apprentice joiner....he was the one that I couldn't mind! And his brother Ian Jenkin...his brother...I think it was his cousin, Ian Jenkins, and Ian's still about Broxburn yet! I mind of those two! They were the first two teddy boys in Broxburn, with the right long jackets, I can always mind of that! But when you went to nightschool, as I say, they were the boys, but you were fortunate that way, because a lot of these guys were going to.....from round about, from Middleton, and all the Scottish Oils places, for by people within the Broxburn Area itself like. Jake Boag, he was a plumber in the....I think it was...that was the same Boag that his brother has the (inaudible). George Boag! They people were all at night school! I always mind of one of the teachers that we got, he was actually a Winchburgh man, believe it not, originally, Robert Corbett. And Robert at that time. Bill Haley....that was when Bill Haley...the Rock and Roll years,when Bill Haley and the Comets were out! And believe it or not, we used to always think that Robert Corbett looked like Bill Haley! He definitely looked like him, and his hair always had that wee kiss curl at the front, andbut it was actually a drag going to nightschool, because....not a drag but....you had to go three nights a week, and at that time, you loved to go dancing and you were getting a wee bit older, and things like that! But, I went three nights a week, I think it was, for two years, and then believe it

or not, there was somebody, I think it was Jackie Rutherford, had noticed an advert in the paper for.....you know, an advert in the paper. There was something about nightschool in Edinburgh. It was either a poster that we saw, or an advert in the paper, and at Bellevue Nightschool in Edinburgh, there was a leadburning course, a leadburning and welding course. So, we applied because it was three nights a week. You were going to nightschool in Broxburn, and then eventually to Bathgate. I think that I went to Bathgate for a year, I can't be sure anyway! I think....the first three years...or the last two years.... that's right! The last two years I went to Edinburgh. So I must have went to Broxburn....I went to Broxburn for the first year, but you went to Bathgate for the next two years. I think that's right...or you went to Broxburn for the first two years, and you were supposed to go to Bathgate for the rest! Well, when the third year came about and this thing came up, we had went and seen, must have seen, somebody concerned with the Scottish Oils, obviously because you couldn't just go, change your nightschool or change your course. You had to go....we must have been sanctioned to do it, so we went and seen them, but the big attraction about the whole thing was, that it was only the two nights a week. The only bad thing about it was, one was a Friday night! But anyway, we got permission to go and we went to Bellevue Nightschool the last two years of our time, and I always remember that.....I'm not trying to be big headed or nothing but it was leadburners, that's what you were doing all the time, and we went in there and there was a boy from.... there was a boy from Ratho, I think that he was one of the teachers, believe it or not. Oh no...I'm sorry, my mistake, he wasn't one of the teachers, he was a boy that had his own business in Ratho, that was in there for the same course as us...it wasn't all apprentices....you found that it was nearly all ruddy well... tradesmen that were maybe in their own business, and had never had any experience of leadburning, because they were still lining tanks, in that day and age, you know! I'm talking about cisterns and things, and they were in to get a bit of experience in the leadburning. And we got off to go in there it was only two nights a week! That was the big benefit of the whole thing! But anyway, we attended for the two years, and I'm not being big-headed when I say this, but, it turned out that we knew more than the boys that were teaching us, because the boys that were teaching us, were only ordinary plumbers! Maybe foremen...the wee boy, Davy Downie, he was a foreman with Knox.....somebody Knox, a big firm in Edinburgh!

GC Paddy Knox!

WG Paddy Knox! That's right! And the other one was Jock Wells, Jock was a character! A great guy! Davy and Jock were good lads! They were foremen with firms in Edinburgh, and the boy that was in charge of that particular course was a boy called Barry, and I didn't like him at all. He worked withI think that he worked with Gibson Ayres, I'm sure he did, he was a lout of a foreman, but we turned out, we could show them how to leadburn really, because we were doing it every day. Because they were a plumber, they had learnt to leadburn, but they didn't do it that often! So, in actual fact, you were better at it than what they were! But it was the welding.... welding course...welding....it wasn't welding, I'll tell you what it was, it was braising, braising and leadburning course, so we got a wee bit more benefit out of the braising than what we done out of the leadburning. But it was a good experience really, I mean, I mind two or three times that we went to the Empire instead of going to the night school, you know, the Empire was on then, the old Empire in Edinburgh, to see Shirley Bassey and Matt Monroe. They were marvellous. Max Bygraves and people like that, it was good! We didn't do it that very often, but occasionally we went instead of going to night school! But it was a good experience! We were lucky in the fact that we didn't have to go three nights a week! It was usually Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or it was Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, if you went to Bathgate, and kept on doing what you were supposed to do! As I say, it turned out that, I think it was a Wednesday and Friday, that we went. That was the only bad thing, that it was a Friday night, but even at that.....

GC You would have a bit further to travel though?

WG Aye, but you only went two nights a week, that was the big benefit of it, you know! The thing, of course, as well, especially with Bathgate, and Broxburn, was that, you had to have a percentage, oh, you got your expenses by the way, from the Scottish Oils, but you had to have a certain percentage attendance, that was the..... there was no way that you could get out of it, and there's no way that those teachers would say that you were there when you weren't there, you know what I mean! It was strict, and if you fell below that attendance level, you didn't get a bit of expenses! In fact,

you got a "bolicking" for not being at nightschool.....

GC If anybody fell by the wayside, did the Manager send for them?

WG Oh well,..... there was a report came in every year! I mean, that at the end of the nightschool! It only happened in the winter as you know, but at the end of every....every session....every year, there was a report sent obviously to Scottish Oils on all their apprentices....what their marks were, what their attendance was, and if you fell below that attendance, you didn't get your money! For by that, you got a "bolicking" for not being there, but I think myself that if it continued, you were told that you would be without a job. So, I mean, that it was very strict like, it was strict, and yet....

GC Did you get any benefit, did you feel, through going to nightschool?

WG Oh....I think you got....oh, you got benefit from going to nightschool! But we would rather have went to dayschool obviously! I mean, most modern firms, at that particular time, like, plumbing firms and building firms and all the joiners and your mates went to a day release which was better than having to give up three nights a week! That was the only thing, that about it but! But definitely.....you benefited from it!

GC did you manage to get any certificates?

WG I did, aye! I've got them somewhere.... they are somewhere...but I mean, you're not talking about, what you've got now, you know, I'm talking about it's just your...oh, the obvious things when you went to school, it was your lower leaving certificate. That was the first thing, then when you went to nightschool, if you got to the....oh, I can't mind their names, but certain certificates, if you got the certificates, you were quite happy, but there was never any cheating done, mind, those boys were, these teachers were strict. There was no.....but it was a good experience! But, I think what happened with me, was, I had to go to the Army, that's right! I had to go to the Army! My time was out.....

GC Was this conscription?

WG Aye, I was one of the last to go! I was in the Army six weeks! If you see my feet, I've got a high instep and a broad foot, and at that particular time, when it was coming near the end, I mean, there wasn't many after me. I'm talking about maybe six months! I'm talking about after I went in, that would be the last! And at that particular time, they were getting more particular about your feet, and about....because it meant that they would need to pay your pension if anything happened to your feet! So, with it coming near to the end of the conscription, they weren't so fussy, it that had happened three or four years....I would have been in for two years! But with it coming near the end, within six weeks, I was out, so I went back to the Acid Work then, and I can't mind, I wasn't there that long, but I had to get paid off, because things were beginning to deteriorate! But it was an enjoyable experience, make no mistake about that, all the old characters, you could go back twenty years. It's not real, you know, there's still some of them there in Broxburn yet! And you've got the boys coming down from different places! It was good!

GC What did you do when you were working in the Works, as far as pleasure? Pastimes?

WG Well, I played billiards, I played snooker, I played billiards, but when you came to that age, serving your time, you leave the school...before I left the school, I was right in at the billiards, I played in the Scottish Boys Championship..in the what do they call it...Institute...in the Scottish Oils in Winchburgh, which was a good thing, for laddies going on fourteen years old, and even before you were fourteen, you got in at Christmas time, for the fortnight's holiday, which was a good thing, too, because, I mean, there was nothing then, television and things, the things that they done to keep you off the streets, it was unreal! I mean, taking you into the Institute and you got to play, and by the way, when you were on holiday, you were there at ten o'clock in the morning, and that was you till ten o'clock at night, but it was great, a great experience! So anyway, that's what you got then, but when you started to work, you started to go to

the dancing. When you started to go to the dancing, you started chasing women! And you went to the pictures, you know, billiards went by the way a wee while, you know, but that's the kind of things....I played football, just the normal things that laddies do! But, oh, it was good, I liked the football, I wasn't much good like, but I enjoyed the game, a hundred percent effort, put it that way!

GC Were you ever a member of any Union?

WG That's what I've been trying to think! I don't think....I don't think, no..
....I wasn't a member....well, I think that you were a member of the Union..
....it was the Scottish Oilworkers Union, you weren't a member.... that was taken off your wages! That was taken off your wages! But you weren't a member of....likes of the plumbing Union, the P.T.U. or anything like that, it was just the Mineworkers Union!

GC And was that a condition of employment as well....to be a member of the Union?

WG I can't remember...but I think it was just the done things...maybe just...
I don't think that it was, mind, but it was just the done thing for..you're only talking about twopence a week or something, or a penny a week, which was nothing then!

GC You hadn't any dealings to do.....?

WG No, I never had any dealings with the Union, or anything like that....the only one thing that I do remember was....that Charlie Duffy that I told you about, we were doing a shutdown, believe it or not, we were building the roof. What you done was...you done the floor first...sorry, you hung the sheets first...done the (inaudible) round the outside first. That's what you done, then you fitted the floor, then you hung the sheets, and the roof was last, because the side sheets were flapped over the top of the top beam, and there was this big table came in, and it was twenty feet high,

you could adjust it up and down, you know, and it was built inside the chamber, the joiners.....obviously, but it was on wheels, and you shoved it. That got lifted up to the roof, and you rolled the sheets out on the roof, lead sheets, you know, level with the top of the chamber, then, because they were flapped over the thingummies at the side, they were leadburned on the side, right on the fourth side. There were three sides, because one was open, you came out it. Well, how the roof was held up, was these big..you're talking about either nine inches or a foot batons, by two inches! Standing up on end, and they were every....approximately two feet between them. What happens was, that you laid what they cried wings, which were flaps like brackets, one at the top of the sheet, and then the wing was lifted up like that, and flapped over the top of the joist, and nailed down, and that's what held all that big roof up, just these wings! Well, Charlie Duffy was cutting one out, we're actually taking....how you done it was, you knelt on top of the joist, and you cut the wings away, then you cut along with.... it's a chip knife and hammer and then.....actually, the wings were left to the last, and you cut a bit between one joist, and between that joist, then you went along and cut the wings with it, so the lead just dropped, you know, on to the ground....on to the bottom of the chamber. But where the joist must have been....it used to be nailed on either end on top, you know, nailed down through the top, it must have been slack or something, but when he was kneeling on it, it couped, and he went down through between the two and fell....about twenty feet. I can't remember whether he landed on his shoulder or his side, but he was off for....he wasn't off that long, believe it or not, for a thing like that, you know! It was quite a serious thing... I thought that he was really badly hurt! And he came back to his work, he was only off for a matter of a month or something, which to me, was very quick to come back! And he finished up with...three or four months after that, his hair started to fall out, in patches...you talk about patches, and that was shock.....delayed action! Delayed action shock, believe it or not! I'd never heard of that before!

GC Did you have a feeling that this was connected with.....?

WG Oh, it was, that's what it was! It was proved that was what it was, it was

delayed action shock! His hair started to fall out in holes, patches, you know, like....he had a head of hair like you, and then all of a sudden, you would get...just after it...it would just fall out. I mean, the man didn't have a heavy head of hair, anyway, but he looked terrible, you know! He used to wear a tammy all the time, and he used to come into the baths, wear a bonnet, and he could put one bonnet on.....he had a working bonnet and a tradesman bonnet, and he would take one off, and you could never...have you never see that before? Quick change....Charlie Duffy, and Charlie's still in Broxburn yet!

GC So he was conscious about.....?

WG Oh aye, I think that he was losing his hair anyway, so he was conscious of the fact that he was...even before that happened, you know, he was conscious of his hair, you know! That was one....the only thing that I can mind of... a bad accident! The only other thing was....sometimes if you got a leak in one of those chambers, well, you can imagine when I told you about the size of the chamber with the gas....it was all gas, when they charge...when they were working they were full of gas, condensing it all the time, so if you got a leak in the chamber, by the way, if it caught you, the gas, it was bad like, you know! Sometimes you got a leak on the floor of the chamber, or you got a leak....aye, it had to be on the floor, well, you can imagine what the residue of the lead and the gas and the condensation used to gather on the bottom of the chamber, what it was like, what was it called...was "white muck" It was just like muck, only it was pure white! But if you had to go in, say it was the middle, just for arguments sake, the middle of the chamber and take a point and draw it from corner to corner, shut it down, it sat for so long, you know, to let....I think it was, they had these big extractors between the chambers, because that's how they drew the gas out, through, you know, the half chambers, and the big chambers, that's how they drew the gas out and in the pans, you know big pans, we used to draw that out and it had to lie so long obviously to get the gas out. But there were never any risks or anything taken! You just cut a hole in the side, and if you thought it was alright you had to go in. Well, you had to, approximate, and there was no guarantee, if it's leaking, it obviously leaked from the floor, or if it's leaking along here, there's no guarantee that's where it is leaking! It

could be leaking along there and running along a board or whatever, you know, and coming down through. So you had to go and get a.....they made up a wee trough, to go inside the chamber, and you used to have to put it down approximately where you thought that it was, and take this "white muck" out and clean it all! You had to get some people in sometimes, to clean it out first, but they couldn't take...obviously, the size of the chamber...all the stuff out! You know, you're talking about a thing that size, about a foot high, and it had a wee turnip on the bottom of it, so that when you put it down, you sealed any...you used to use, what you called "puddle"clay, that would seal it, so that it stopped any of the acid or some stuffs seeping through, then you cleaned it all! Usually it was a seam, that's where you normally found, it was a seam, where it was, where there had been a wee fault, you know! And you always plumped for that first, or you would maybe have found it, but you couldn't guarantee to get it first time, you maybe had to look for a wee while till you got it, but that's what you were doing, a thing about two foot square and it, you just plunked it down, and sealed it with puddle clay, took the stuff out of it, you know, what was in it, and then cleaned out the line and tried to find the leak! Sometimes it was (inaudible) and we could (inaudible) in one. But that's the kind ofsometimes you got waxed as well, sometimes, where the baths were, as I say, you never thought about it then. It goes to show, you would never do anything like that now, you know what I'm talking about, you would never think of doing it! But you never thought twice about doing it then!

GC Did you ever have any ill effects from any of these experiences?

WG Not really! I used to think that the gases would fill the stomach out, (inaudible) you ken, after I left, even when I was there, and I used to say it was the gas! But I've not had much bother with my stomach for a long time now! I never had any surgery or anything done to it! The simple reason..... too much drink or something! But at the time, I used to have a feeling that the gas was to blame..... I always remember, that I started, I think we started when I, wait a minute,.....we worked that standard week, five days, plus four hours on the Saturday, and it went from forty four hours to forty two hours, and you worked every second Saturday, and it went

from forty two hours....I always remember that, the change.....it must have been about 1957 or 1958.

GC Fine, that's it finished!

WG Well, I hope that I've helped you in some way!

END OF TAPE

Transcript	WG
Industrial Information	<p>My grandfather was foreman on the retorts in Winchburgh, and retired from the Oilworks.</p> <p>When I left the school on the Friday, I was told by my father to go and see the Manager of Winchburgh, Alec Frame.</p>
Labouring	I wanted to be a plumber, but you couldn't start a trade until I was sixteen.
Loading Bank	There was a dozen of us landed down at the loading bank where the big wagons came up from the main line. The wagons were open, and there was this big box below the loading bank.
Accident	<p>We all started as laddies, jumping from the loading bank into the wagon. I jumped too high, and caught the big bar at the top of the thing. I split my head right back and my scalp right back. I couldn't have minded much about it, and I never talked out. The baths attendant got me and sent for Doctor Campbell, from Broxburn. Whenever he saw me he said, 'Hospital.' I got twenty-three stitches in my head.</p>
Shale	When the shale used to go to the retorts to get the crude oil taken out of it the chutes under the gavy dropped the shale in there for them on the Sunday, because there was no

shale brought up on a Sunday. What they used to do was, there was a big hole going up where the hutches went up. They then used to take the handle of the hutch away and drop the shale into the chute, and that filled up for a Sunday. So when it came to the Sunday you just filled the hutches from under the chutes.

My Return To Work

When I returned to work after my accident, I was just snibbling the hutches coming off the chain from the retorts. When the boy brought the rake in and fed it through the chain. It was all laddies that worked the snibble of the hutches, but when it came to the chain, you had to throw the chain because the hutch was built as such, that there was a thing on the back of it with a 'V' in it and you just pulled the chain on to that. This drew the hutch to the top of the retorts. I had to shove every hutch from the gavvy when it came off the chain on the way down to the other end of the lag in the snow. Normally when they came off the chain they had gathered that bit of momentum to start with. It wasn't a big hill, but you used to have to snibble them and couple them up. The loco then came in and took the hutches to the pit.

Wages I was making about three pounds odd a week. Some were making about four pounds a week. It was quite good money for a laddie of fifteen in 1954.

Broxburn I got a summons from Mr. Frame to say he had a job for me at Broxburn to start the next morning. I got no holidays, I just started right away at Broxburn Acid Works as a plumber.

Wages I dropped in wages when I became plumber. I got two pounds one shilling for my first wage, and that was the top of the line.

Conditions At Scottish Oils The conditions at Scottish Oils weren't very good. I wouldn't work in them now. There is no way I would have gone back there. You came in saturated with water, boots, clothes and everything. But you would guarantee the next morning your clothes were bone dry.

Baths The pit baths were always beautiful and warm. Plenty of hot showers, plenty of hot water. I always remember that the baths were famous and spotless. You won't get any better in this day and age. I got a shower where I worked every day, but there is nothing to compare with the Winchburgh Baths.

Burst Pipes I was telling you about the

tower on the roof of the
the chambers which would be
roughly twenty feet off the
ground, and then the chamber
would be twenty to forty feet
off the ground. If you got a
burst pipe, which went right
up to the tanks up the stairs
and they pumped it back through
the tower, this is how it worked.

Unions

That's what I've been trying to
think. I think I was a member
of the Scottish Oils Union.
The Union fees were taken off
your wages, but I wasn't a
member of likes the Plumbing
Union, the P.T.U. or anything
like that, I just belonged to
the Mineworkers Union.

Disputes

I never had any dealings with
the Unions or anything like
that. The only thing I do
remember was we were doing a
shutdown and there was an
accident.

Accidents

Charlie Duffy was cutting one
of the flaps on the top of a
joist. He had to kneel on
top of the joist, and he had
to cut the wings away. The
lead just dropped to the
ground. There must have been
this joist that wasn't nailed
down properly, and he fell
twenty feet and landed on
his shoulder or his side. It
was quite a serious injury,
but he wasn't off work long,
but he finished up three or

four months after that,
because his hair started to
fall out. It was proved that
this was delayed shock
connected with the fall.

Army

I was one of the last to go
into the Army, because if you
see my feet, I've got a high
instep and a broad foot. At
that time they were getting
more particular about your
feet, because it meant they
would need to pay you a
pension if anything happened
to your feet. So with it coming
near to the end of conscription
they weren't so fussy. I would
have been in for two years,
but with it coming near the
end, within six weeks I was out.
Then I went back to the Acid
Works as a plumber.

Domestic Life
Housing

There is no mention of housing
in the script.

Leisure Activities
Billiards

Before I left school I played
billiards. I played in the
boys championships and in
what they call the Institute
in the Scottish Oils in
Winchburgh, which was a good
thing for the laddies going
on fourteen years old, and even
before you were fourteen you
got in at Christmas time for
the fortnight's holiday.

Television

There was no television or
anything like that in those
days. The things they did

in those days to keep of the streets, it was unreal.

Institute Hall When you were on holiday, and you had to play in the Institute Hall, you were there at ten o'clock in the morning, and you were there sometimes until ten o'clock at night.

Dancing When you started work, you started to go to the dancing. This was when you started to chase the women.

Pictures We also went to the pictures in those days.

Football I also played football, the normal things a laddie would do. I wasn't much good, but I enjoyed the game, a hundred percent effort, put it that way.

I left Scottish Oils in 1955 to become a plumber at the Acid Works.

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