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22 November, 1984.

WW= Mr W. b 1912

MW = Mrs W. b 1920

SR = Sara Randall (Interviewer)

SR. Were you both born in Dalmeny?

WW. I was born in Dalmeny Rows.

SR. Dalmeny Rows are the ones down down there?

MW. That's right. They're all demolished now.

SR. Were they all for housing miners and oil workers?

WW. Miners and oil workers.

SR. Which was your father?

WW. Miner. He's been a miner all his days.

MW. And he (WW) was a miner too. Until he was about 40

something. Then the mine shut down. No, you left.

WW. I left because the Poles came in.

MW. The Ukrainians - after the war. The foreigners came in.

SR. And they started working in the mines?

WW. Aye.

MW. And he left them.

SR. Was that because you didn't like them?

WW. No, because they wouldna work!

MW. They wouldn't do the standard of work that was expected of them. What they (WL miners) were used to doing.

WW. Some of them was all right, but this one I got was pathetic and my pit was always coming doon. I had to go 24 times. I had to draw hutches, to get three of us a wage. There was the faceman, me and the Ukrainian but every time I was coming up the hutch wasnae full. It was always half full,

but it should've been full ready for me to take away. I was a drawer, and he was a drawer an' all. But he wouldna run up and down the cuddies. I had an old patch. Full of rubbish and I had to take an empty hutch up to pull you down, steady . . .

SR. So you left because you couldn't get enough money for the three of you to live.

WW. No, because he wouldnae work. I told the faceman "I'm packin' in. I told them. I'm not here to fill that hutch along with him, he should hae that hutch ready for me". I was the runner, he was for to fill them.

SR. So what did you do then?

WW. I packed in.

SR. And what job did you go to?

WW. The quarries. Craigie Quarry.

SR. What are they quarrying there?

WW. Big stones, out the ground and that. And it goes to the crusher and it all breaks up these small pieces and all that. You see for the roads. For asphaelt and that.

SR. Were you doing that until you retired?

WW. No. I stopped in the Royal Elizabeth yard, up there. I was on housing schemes.

MW. He was never idle. Put it that way. And then his back sort of troubled him a bit and that.

...

MW. He was up there (Royal Elizabeth Yard) 25 years until he retired ... If he was off he was ill. He was never on strike. He's 51 years without being on strike.

SR. Were you not working in the 1926 strike?

MW. Aye. You must have been. He was in a market garden to start off his life with.

WW. When I left school I worked a market garden. I used

to walk from here to Barn. Do you know where Barn is? On the Edinburgh Road.

MW. That's about the length he walked every morning, rain fair or shine.

WW. And we got tuppence for our bus fare coming back. I didnae start the mines until I were 16 years old. You had to be 16 before you could get on the back shift. There was a day shift and a back shift . . . And I worked up the pit head.

SR. Which mine were you in?

WW. I was in Duddingston - Number 1. I was taking off hutches with a cage. It comes up with a cage, it's a wire rope. And there's a long cage, and it thingmies onto the rope. And you're to hook it off and let the next one in. And they weigh in. They take off a pin, the men have pins, like a number or something like that. That's how you'll ken who that belongs to like. And the way that - it goes down to the tumbler, and the tumbler goes round, cowps the hutch up, and turns back and comes back to go doon the road again.

MW Your dad worked in Dalmeny. And so did his mother - in the first World War.

SR Your mother worked down the mine?

MW. Not down the mine but on the hutches at the top of the mine - at the oil work down here. And they had to work the mine hutches while the men were away to the first World War.

SR. So there was a lot of women working then were there?

WW. Oh aye.

MW. Down there, there was. Not down the mine. She's doing pretty heavy work. And she lived till she was 89. And she'd 8 of a family.

SR. But she just did it during, the war, she didn't do it afterwards?

MW. No

SR. Did you have brothers and sisters down the mines?

WW. They're all miners.

SR. How many brothers?

WW. 5 of us. All of us here.

SR. Here in Dalmeny? Still?

MW. No. There's 2 in Dalmeny. But his young brother, wasn't long in the mines. But his other brother ... he was in the mines, he was at the war and back to the mines. Then he finished at the mines and went over to Rosyth to work. Well the mines closed down by that time you know.

SR. What were the conditions like down the mines? Was it okay.?

WW. Well at Duddingston - you went out in a ... (inaudible) you couldn't see.

SR. Because of what - dust?

WW. No reek - explosives. And you worked with a battery lamp. And if that went out, you had about 3 or 4 hours after

you'd finished.

SR. Was it hot down there?

WW. Sometimes. That was the worst of it. That was the backshift in Duddingston.
You couldna see.

SR. Was working, in the gravel pits a better job? Were the conditions better?

WW. Oh, the conditions was all right. Wasn't bad. Wasn't a bad height about 5-6 feet.
(Shale Mines)

MW. She means the other job, at the quarry.

WW. Oh, that was hard work. That was great big explosives.

SR. Do you have any sons?

MW. Yes

SR. Did they go down the mines?

MW.

No

WW.

MW. My uncles and my father were coal miners. On the Fife side . . . (miner's strike)
Our uncles, we'd wash their backs and everything before we could go out to school in the morning.

SR. After they'd done the night shift?

WW. Yes and walked home 4 miles with their wet clothes on them. That was part of my life.

SR. From your opinion then were the shale mines better than the coal?

MW. Oh yes. He wouldn't go down a coal mine because he used to go up - this was after they put the baths in the coal pits then, but my uncles were old then - and he used to go up and meet my uncle and maybe have a pint before he came home, and he said he wouldn't go down there for love nor money. So what I mean, he preferred the shale mines because when he saw the coal ... (inaudible). Aye if you had to, you would've went down but you said you

wouldn't now.

SR. What was better about the shale mines - because the face was bigger?

MW. No, because you went down on a slope.

SR. What did your son do? Did he think of going down the mines?

MW. The mines were closed by that time, by the time my oldest son. He started learning as a motor mechanic . . . Then he joined the army. . . Then my second son, he always wanted to work on the farm, but then most of his life he's been a lorry driver.

SR. If they'd wanted to go down the mines, would you have stopped them?

WW. No. We never talked about it. And I never mentioned anything about mines to them

SR. So you were born in Fife?

MW. Yes.

SR. And you came over here when you got married?

MW. No, I came over and worked in that big house over there and I met him.

SR. And you were working there just as a sort of house maid?

MW. Yes, and I am still working.

SR. In the same house?

MW. No I work to another woman now. It was quite hard living in those days. He doesn't think to, but I think so, because even after he went up there, in the yard, we were getting £6 a week. And my sister, whose husband was a (coal) miner she used to say to me. "I don't know how you live on that" She was getting more money than I was getting.

SR. And when you got married did you carry on working?

MW. No I stopped with my eldest son. I've got 3 sons and a daughter. And my eldest son, he stays with us. He's been in Australia, things like that ... No I don't think my sons would've wanted to go down the mines ...

SR Did you come and live here, in this house, when you first got married?

MW No, I went to Queensferry, in Queensferry for a year. Just after we got married we got a wee house in Queensferry and then we came up to to rooms. A lot of us got missives to go out of houses in Queensferry in the block we were in, and we were the only ones that moved. And we got rooms, round the corner there, and we didn't like it and we managed to get another room in Queensferry and then, after Willie's father took a stroke - down the mine - he got worse and worse and one of his brothers asked us if we would come up to help Granny to look after him. So I moved in with my mother in law. Here.

My husband came up into this house when he was about 12 or 13 years old . . .

. . . living arrangements in house which belongs to Lord Roseberry . . .

SR When you first came here did it have electricity and water?

MW. No

WW. Dry lavvy, washhouse.

MW. When my mother-in-law moved out (about 30 years ago) dry lavvy outside, and there was 8 of them, the boys all slept through there.

. . . Granny and Grandfather slept in the living room.

SR. So there were 4 rooms.

...

SR. When you were all boys (to WW) did you each have your own bed?

MW. No, 2 or 3 in a bed.

WW. 3 in one bed and 2 in another.

SR. Until you were grown up?

MW. Until they got married. Till one went out the house and then the next . . .

SR. When you lived in Dalmeny Rows, did you have water? What did you have?

WW. Water outside

SR. For each house?

WW. Old fashioned wells with a handle. Just like a bull. A bulldog's face. That's what the water came through. You just turned the handle and the water came through.

MW. That had to do the row maybe.

WW. Nae washhouse or that doon there. There were only a room and kitchen in Dalmeny Rows.

SR. Just a room and kitchen for 8 children and 2 adults. So how did you arrange it then? Were the girls and boys separated or were they altogether.

WW. No, ken ye, bunk-beds. Ken partitions.

MW. Sort of in the walls. Box beds you used to cry them in those days. Cos that's what we had in our house at

horse too, what we cried box-beds.

WW. There were bigger families than us! The Beveridges they had 15.

SR. In a room and kitchen?

WW. Aye.

MW. Aye we'd big families then.

SR. Did you always have enough to eat?

WW. Plenty.

MW. That's what I say - we were well fed in our days. But we'd nothing else - to let you understand – wages were enough to feed you but not to get you very much clothes, because, as we grew up we came to about 14, 13 the girls especially they wanted nice shoes, things like that, so we really had to depend on these uncles, one of them – especially, to give us a backhand to get a pair of shoes when you came to that age when you wanted to look smart and that.

SR. Did you go barefoot when you were a child?

WW. No. Oh aye, yes, to go to school. But it was summer weather then. Oh aye, I used to go to school with bare feet. Of course it was the right summer weather then.

MW. But you didnae go with your bare feet in the winter time you had shoes then.

WW. Oh no ...

MW. where my mother-in-laws concerned, you never heard them grumbling and she always had good meals.

. . . about 1st World War . . .

SR. But you can remember the 1926 strike. Was your Dad on strike?

WW. No.

SR. So you didn't have to go to the soup kitchens?

WW. No. But we had a soup kitchen doon in the Rows.

SR. So there were shale miners on strike?

WW. There must have been. Aye we had a soup kitchen

. . . coping with illness . . .

... diphtheria •••

SR. Did you have to pay to go to hospital?

MW. Well, when my husband was a miner he paid thro' the mines for our doctor and things like that.

WW. 2 pennies

MW. You paid for the doctor and you paid for the hospital. It was taken off your pay every week.

SR. And that covered you and your children?

MW. Well actually, the Doctor we had, was a batchelor and I think he let quite a lot of people off at that time. But some of us had to pay bills sometime.

. . . about health . . .

SR. Did you smoke all the time when you were down the mines?

MW. We were not allowed to smoke.

SR. But you were a smoker when you weren't working?

WW. Aye.

SR. When did you start smoking?

MW. It was after I left the school. Tuppence for 5 Woodbine

...

SR. How old were you when you got married?

MW. He was 26 and I was 18.

SR. How big was your house in Queensferry?

MW. Just a little room and living room. In fact there were no room in the room for a bed, our bed was in the living room and it was a large sort of thing to cook on. And the room was used just for a wardrobe to hang our clothes in and for his bicycle for he cycled to the mine.

SR. Did you have electricity and water?

WW. We'd electricity and water in a sink in the living room. Or was it a gas light. It was gas that we had in Clerk Place, it wasna electric. And we used to just cook on the range. You had no room for a cooker anyway. Because by the time you got your double bed in and William's cradle and the pram, that's all you'd room for. And a couple of chairs to sit on.

SR. And when you came back here, had this place got electricity?

WW. No, no, it was still a big range, and a lamp sitting up on the mantleshelf - paraffin lamp. There was paraffin cookers through there. It was after my mother in law went to the pensioner's house that we took the range out and put the fire in and put the electricity in ourselves. We'd to pay for all that. We'd to scrounge and scrape till we got enough money to pay for all that.

SR. Was that after the 2nd World War.

MW. Yes . . .

. . . current water heating system . .

SR. When did you get water in the house?

WW. Oh the water was in by that time. 1936 - just before I got married to him the men were working on the house

...

SR. Did the landlord pay to have the water put in?

MW. He did that for to renovate the house. I suppose it was compulsory for them.

... stone floors ...

SR. Was the rent here very high compared with the oil company houses or was it about the same?

MW. It was a cheap rent. But now we're up to Council Standard now. He's kept putting it up and putting it up until were nearly paying as much as a council house. He does nothing for us. Even, we had frozen pipes and we'd to pay for to get them defrosted.

...

SR. When your husband was working, did you have enough to pay the rent, feed the family and still have some over for clothes?

WW. Yes.

MW. Well, not very much.

WW. £6 a week. That's what I got for working in the mines as a drawer.

MW. And when you were off ill with your back you just had your insurance money, and that's when I had my son who's 30 now. He was off his work 13 weeks. I was cleaning a school before I had that boy. I started working again and that gave us the extra for clothes and that for the children.

...

SR. Did a lot of women work when they still had youngish children?

MW. Quite a lot.

SR. Doing jobs like clearing?

MW. Yes, school clearing and going out daily to people with money.

. . . took baby with her to clean houses . . .

MW. When I got the daily job, my sister and mother-in-law were here and they started keeping their eye to my boy. But that was only for 10 hours a week, so that wasn't too bad.

. . . working to get extra money . . .

WW. And it made all the difference the extra money.

SR. And before your older children grew up, did you get clothes out of your dividend from the co-op?

MW. Yes. That's how I worked. We were brought up on the cooperative and then you got everything from the cooperative, food, and hardware and things. The vans always used to come round here. Everything was cooperative and then you were getting a good 20 to 30 dividend so you could go in and buy your children winter

clothes and things like that.

...

SR. Did your husband give you his salary when he came in, when he was working down in the mines?

MW. He put in what he was going to give me in the drawer and what he wanted for his pocket went in his pocket. And that wasn't very much then.

... food ...

SR. Did you get time off (down the mines) during the day for eating?

WW. You got your usual break. Half past nine to 10 o'clock.

SR. Would you come out of the mines then or just sit?

WW. Just sit amongst the rats, and fed the rats.

SR. Were there many rats down there?

WR. Rats! Aye there were mare rats than there were men!

MW. So they just had to sit and eat it where they were, with their dirty hands and everything.

WW. Aye there were plenty rats.

SR. What hours of work did you do - down the mines?

WW. 8

SR. And how many days a week.

WW. 6. Worked on a Saturday. 12.00 to 6.00 A shorter shift.

MW. A shorter shift on a Saturday. 'Cos the day shift was out at 6.00 to 12.00 and then they went from 12.00 to 6.00. That was what we called the back shift.

SR. And did you get any holidays

WW. Very seldom. Very seldom

MW. He worked on Christmas Day and everything. Never knew what it was to have a Christmas day holiday because he was working. When I worked with the woman I worked with the now, I've worked for her on a Christmas Day. Because he was working. So the rich have their . . .

SR. Did you celebrate Christmas at all?

MW. No, it was always New Year. But now it's all Christmas and New Year just sort of slipping past.

. . . New Year celebrations . . .

SR. Was it very much a village community here? Did everyone know everyone else and pop into their houses?

WW. No. Not where I'm concerned here. It was always sort of, just your relations. But where I was brought up it was everybody come into your house, and people that worked on the farms and things like that We had a good sing song.

SR. Did you feel an outsider here when you came?

MW. Well - I do, I don't. No I used to walk for miles to tell you the truth, before I got to know people . . .

. . . neighbours and friends . . .

SR. When you first came here did you have a washhouse just for this house or did you have a communal washhouse?

MW. Where did your mother wash when she first came here? Just at the back door?

SR. You just have one for this house?

WW. A wooden hut. An old hut.

MW. A wooden hut, just with your old tubs in it and maybe an old pot to boil your clothes in.

WW. A fire underneath.

. . . about oil works discussion of when it closed . . .

SR. Were you working during the time when men were working 3 weeks out of 4 in the 1930's.

WW. Aye, I was in Duddingston then. 3 weeks work and a week idle.

MW. Well that's were we stayed in the Ferry before we came up here.

SR. What did you do in your idle week?

WW. Nothing

MW. Just sit around. Got a wee bit dole money for that week.

SR. How long did that go on for?

WW. Oh, a good wee while. That's when Philpstones shut down. That's when they put extra miners at our place. Too many miners so someone had to go.

...

MW. As I say we did not have carpets on our floors, or things like that . . .

... furnishings ••

. . . school in Dalmeny . .

SR. When you worked in the market garden, did you always

know that you'd leave when you were 16 and go down the mines.

WW. When I worked in the market garden, but the market garden was only the summer time . . .

And that was for 12/- a week. 2/- a day.

SR. And did you give some to your mother?

WW. I had to, I got something to keep.

MW. Not very much though for that.

. . . Drinking down the Ferry . . .

WW. Not every night - just a Saturday night. Oh you couldna afford.

MW. And we used to go to the pictures.

. . . picture houses in Queensferry . . .

... gala days ...

...

SR. When your children were born, the older ones, were they born in hospital or did you have them at home?

MW. Yes, no. I had my 2 eldest ones in the hospital in Edinburgh. Elsie Inglis. Which we had to pay for and I had my daughter here, in the house - through there, and I had my young son through there.

SR. When you had your daughter and son, was there a midwife came to help you?

MW. Yes, a nurse.

SR. And she was a trained nurse?

MW. She was a trained nurse, she was in Queensferry for years....

... childbirth - at home in old days . . .

MW. His mother had twins and then another son and then another son. These twins were only 2 years and 4 months and she had 4 children. And then he came next.

SR. She didn't have any that died?

MW. Her last one, it had to be her or the baby. And the doctor said her or the baby had to go, a little girl. She died during the birth and I think - as far as I can remember her telling us.

SR. So the doctor would come to help her?

MW. Oh yes, he was a good doctor. But it was either her or the baby.

SR. So there were a lot of problems having children.

MW. Oh yes, yes.

...

SR. Was there any TB around when you were kids?

MW. Yes. His sister died of TB when she was 29. She was married and she had a wee girl and her husband worked in a farm. And after she had her baby, her mother always

declared she didn't feed herself enough and she was giving all the meat to her big blooming husband. And she died in, what we cried East Fortune.

SR. But she was sick at home for some time before she went there?

MW. Oh yes, she was getting, I think she was getting thinner and thinner. I don't remember her, she died the year I married him.

SR. So there was TB in the village? If someone was known to have TB in a big family were they isolated, or did they just carry on sleeping in the same bed?

MW. Just carried on. I think they'd to just carry on. Through experience with my own brother when he took ill and he was in a bed and my mother was in the next bed, it was all open room. He was there so's we could look after him. Some of us were sleeping with my mother and we'd always to - everytime he had to spit, we'd always to watch. To see if there was any blood came up or anything like that. And if we saw the blood we'd to tell the doctor, and he was swept away to hospital.

SR. Did he get better?

MW. He's better . . .

SR. Do you think it was unhealthy working, down the shale mines? Did you get bronchitis or problems with your skin or anything?

WW. No

MW. He's been quite lucky that way.

SR. And the problems you have with your back, was that to do with the shale mines.

WW. Aye hitches.

MW. If they run off the rails. They had to put their, onto the rails themselves you see.
It was a strain.

WW. The face man was too far away to shout to help.

MW. They just had to struggle.

SR. And that was how you hurt your back?

WW. Strain.

SR. When the Poles, the Ukrainians came, did they live in the village or did they live somewhere else?

WW. They lived in digs.

MW. Camps and sort of things like that.

SR. Were there any actually lived in Dalmeny?

MW. No. The camps were all sort of ...

SR. Are they still here?

MW. Some, there's some married and stayed and things like that.

WW. Some of them went away home.

SR. But they didn't mix much with the....

WW. No, no.

SR. Because people didn't like them?

WW. Yes

MW. No, I would not say they didn't like them. Because, what I mean, the ones along at Roseberry's place, a big lot of them used to come along to the dances, in the hall. And never found ought wrong with them .

..

SR. Were there any Irish people come to work here before the Second World War.

MW. Well you always got the potato squads coming over.

SR. They'd just come for the harvest?

WW. Aye they'd come for the harvest and the tatties. After the tatties was finished they just went on to the harvest.

MW. Some of the didn't go away. Bridget didn't go away. His (WW) brother married one of the girls.

WW. Aye there were some of them kept over for the winter. Because the tatties was all in the pits. They used to live in a bothy.

MW. Just a sort of shed place. There were a place for the girls and a place for the men. They were to keep themselves. They were treated as they were, you know what I mean. They were call the Irish Squads and they were treated as that.

SR. And did they ever stay and start working in the mines and oil works - the men.

WW. Aye, some did. A lot of them did that. That's why they came back from Ireland. For the tattie picking but they were looking for a job.

MW. There's a lot of them in the Ferry.

...

SR. And did children come over with them too or was it just young adults.

MW. No, there was just sort of young men I think I don't think they were like, come as a family, know what I mean. I think they were all just single persons that come over. Like all related but they didn't come as a mother, father and family. Maybe as their children grew up they came that way. They didna bring toddlers that they had to sit at the roadside with, or anything like that.

SR. Were they obviously really poor? Did they dress really badly?

MW. No.

WW. No, they were well dressed.

MW. At one time they were a bit . . .

WW. Aye, some of them were scraggy.

MW. But as the years went on they got better and better. They looked better than us by the time they were finished . . . But didna grudge them that. I like to see people getting on.

SR. Was there anyone else came here to work. The Irish came and the poles came.
Were there any other people came?

MW. No, I don't think so.

WW. Italians at the end of the war.

MW. Aye, we got a lot of them.

SR. Prisoners of war? Were they made to work down the mines?

WW. No, no them, just them Poles.

MW. No, they just got on and made money and opened shops and things like that.

SR. When did they knock Dalmeny Rows down?

WW. When they built these houses round here. The Glebe. That's when most of them came up here from the Rows, and then some went to Kirkliston and then there were one Row left, which we called the Railway Row which they've just demolished since they took over the oil farm you see. Cos

that's where my son stayed. Cos that row of houses, most of the families had children, and they demolished all the houses and sent them up to Kirkliston and took the children away from our school.

SR. But by the time they demolished, had they water and electricity - the Railway Row.

MW. Yes, it had what. it had only a toilet though. No bathroom.

...

SR. Did they belong to Scottish Oils?

WW. Yes

MW. No, the Railway Row was Council after that. The Council bought it off Scottish Oils. Those were Scottish Oils too. That's how my mother-in-law got this house. Then Lord Roseberry, his father and his grandfather bought them over

SR. So the whole village was Scottish Oils at one stage.

MW. This row. These houses there and that big one at the

back these. That two storey one and this row was Scottish Oils. And the other one was Roseberry's farm. Do you see the farm plus the cottages. The same at the topside. That's Roseberry.

SR. So there was no shale miners living on that side?

MW. No it was all ploughmen and cart men and things like that, working on the farm. You see, the farmers have all to pay their rent to Roseberry. They're not their own farms. They're all lease.

SR. In the 1920s and 1930s were the farmers and the farmers' labourer more well off than the miners or were their salaries really bad as well?

WW. Ooh, their salaries were bad and all.

MW. Just much about the same.

WW. You worked 7 weeks at the farm during the harvest and you got a harvest pound. A pound.

SR. You did that?

WW. No. I didna do that. Worked for 7 weeks at the harvest and get the harvest pound.

MW. But that must have been years and years ago, for it wasnae as bad as that in your time. And they were getting their free potatoes and free houses and they could go to the field and take a turnip.

...

. . . comparative prices and wages then and now . . .

WW. My father was from Tarbrax

SR. When did he come to Dalmeny when he got married?

WW. My father was married before he came to Dalmeny. I was the first born in Dalmeny.

SR. So your brothers were all born in Tarbrax. Why did the leave Tarbrax?

WW. I think the works closed down.

MW. They came here to work in this mine.

WW. The mines was shut down. And they came to this one and this one shut down.
The old man went off to Duddingston.

... strikes ...

In 1931

SR. How much was the dole compared with your wage?

WW. Seventeen bob.

SR. And your wage was £6. And how did big families manage on 17/- a week.

WW. We had to. The wage we were getting - it was fourpence for double woodbine, and it was a tanner for a pint of beer and 7d for a half of whisky. Oh god. Look at the price of beer now. I don't go out on Saturday night now. Stopped it. Cant afford it.

...

SR. Did you work with the same facemen all the way through?

WW. No. But I liked working with my father. He as the best of the lot.

SR. So you started working with him did you?

WW. No, no. I started working with my brother first - Jimmy.

SR. But you worked as a faceman yourself?

WW. I used to - if the faceman didna turn up....

(inaudible)

SR. How did people choose who they were going to work with? Did the oil company say "okay. you'll work with him, and you'll work with him?"

WW. No. You just had to, if you'd to work wi' him. You werena told like, but you were asked. The faceman would say "I'd like so and so to come along with me". It was originally only fathers and sons that worked. Wasn't so much fighting if you

got fathers and sons to work together.

SR. So did fathers try and persuade their sons to go down the mines because then they could get a team going? And do you father say you must go down the mines, or did you choose it?

WW. Well I mean, I don't know. There wasn't much, no work. There wasna so much work then roundabout.

SR. Before you left school did you ever go and help out at the mines or help out at the oils works in the holidays?

WW. I used to help my brother Joe, in the sulphur house. Ken, it was all around, just dropped, and tipped into a pen. You shovelled it out. It was that hot, and it was left drying in a cooler, to cool off. That was sulphate.

SR. Did you get paid for that?

WW. No, I didn't. Me brother got paid.

SR. Did he give you anything?

WW. No.

SR. Where did you used to go and play when you were a kid? On the bings?

WW. No, just played on the road. Used to play in the football field. They'd a football field.

SR. Belonging to the oil works?

WW. Yes. Used to have a football team called 'Dalmeny Primrose'. That was after Primrose-Lord Roseberry.

SR. Did you play all the teams in the area?

WW. Aye all round about: Broxburn, Queensferry, Kirkliston.

SR. Did you have a league?

WW. Aye, we had a league.

SR. And that was a team of schoolboys or of men?

WW. Men.

. . . list of men that played . . .

...

SR. Did your father work in the mines until he died, or did he retire first?

WW. No. he had a stroke after he left the mines.

MW. Hey. Your old man took his stroke doon the mines. And he was taken from the mine into the hospital and he in the hospital for 6 weeks before he got home. He took it down the mine.

SR. Did he get compensation?

MW. No. He got a wee bit pension while he was ill and the minute he died, his missus, his wife got nothing. Stopped like that.

SR. So what did she live off then?

MW. She was - he was 63 when he died - she'd get the widow's pension then and she had the rent all from us when

K46

we stayed with her, for the room.

SR. And when you left the mines you got no pension or anything.

WW. No, I came oot. Some of them got a wee lump sum but I was out before that.

Transcript Mr & Mrs W, Anon

Industrial Information I was born in Dalemny in 1912 and I started in Duddingston

No.1.

I was taking the hutches off and putting them into a cage.

The cage was on a wire rope with one of the thingmies on to the rope and then the next hutch was allowed in.

The hutches went down to the tumbler and it went round and coupled the hutch up then it turns back to go down the road again.

Weighing Hutches When the hutches came up to the surface they had to be weighed. The hutches had pins in them which belonged to the miner who had filled the hutch.

Tumbler The hutches then went down to the tumbler which went round and cowps the hutch up and turns back to go down the road again.

Conditions The conditions down the mine was alright. The height in the working area was about five to six feet.

People didn't choose who they were going to work. The face-man would just say 'I'd like so and so to come along with me.' It was originally only fathers and sons that worked.

There wasn't much work around other than the mines.

Before I left the school

I used to help my brother in the sulphur house. I just dropped and tipped into a pan

You had to shovel it out. It was hot and it was left to cool off and this was the sulphate.

Wages when I worked in the shale mines my wage was about £6

Strike I can't remember the 1926 strike and my dad wasn't on strike during the strike.

Closure of Shale Mines when they started to import crude oil from the Persian Gulf the shale mines closed down because it was no longer

profitable to extract oil
from shale.

Pension I didn't get a pension from
the shale mines. Some of the
men got a wee lump sum.

Domestic Life Our house in Dalmeny consisted
Housing of a room and a kitchen.
The house in Queensferry had
a little room and a living
room.

Sleeping Arrangements There was no room for a bed and
we had to put them in the living room

Room The room was just used for a
wardrobe to hang out clothes in.

Electricity In our first house we didn't
have electricity. When we
moved to Queensferry we had
electricity in the house

Water By 1936 we had water in the
houses. Before that time we
had to draw water from the
well outside.

RentThe rent was cheap in those
days but now, now we're up
to Council Standards. Our
landlord kept putting the rent
up and up.

Washhouse My mother washed our clothes in
a wooden hut just with old tubs
in it and maybe an old pot to
boil your clothes in.

Marriage I got married when I was twenty-
six and my wife was eighteen
years old.

Children Our two eldest children were
born in the Elsie Inglis
hospital which we had to pay
for. My daughter was born
in the house.

Illness My old man took a stroke down
the mine and he was taken into
the hospital where he was kept
for about six weeks.

Doctor When my husband was a miner he
paid through the mines for the
doctor. The doctor we had at
that time was a batchelor.

Fees Twopennies a week was taken of
my pay at the mine to cover the
doctor. This covered all my

children as well.

T.B. My sister died of T.B. When she was twenty-nine years old.

Smoking I started smoking after I left the school. It cost me tuppence for five Woodbine.

Leisure Activities When we were kids we just played in the road

Football We played football and we used to have a football team called 'Dalmeny Primrose'. We had a football league.

Pictures We used to go to the pictures in Queesferry on a Saturday night. We could only afford to go the one day.

Christmas & New Year We didn't celebrate Christmas. It was New Year we celebrated.

Village Community I did not know much of the community. It was just our relations that came to visit us. Where I was brought up everybody came into our house and the people that worked on the farms used to come and have a sing-song.

Walking When I first came here I used to walk for miles before I got to know people.