

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Bill Allen

INTERVIEWER: Nadine Mackenzie

DATE: March 14, 1984

Nadine: This is Nadine Mackenzie speaking. Today is Wednesday, March 14, 1984. I am at the house of Mr. Bill Allen, 4543 Standard Drive in Calgary S.W. Mr. Allen thank you very much for having accepted to participate in our project. Can you tell me, when and where were you born.

Bill: Certainly, I was born in a little town north of Regina, a little town called Imperial, with a population of about 500.

Nadine: What did your father do?

Bill: Well, he was the postmaster and the local Imperial Oil bulk agent. He passed away when I was very young and then my mother took over as the postmistress in Imperial Saskatchewan.

#009 Nadine: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

Bill: I have one sister who passed away about ten years ago.

Nadine: Were your parents Canadian?

Bill: Yes, they were Canadian. Both of them were born and brought up at Belleville, Ontario, not far from Kingston.

Nadine: So where were you educated?

Bill: Well, I took my grade 12, all twelve years of school in Imperial. And then upon graduation, of course, the war was on and I was destined for the Air Force, I wanted to get into the Air Force. But I had an old aunt in Belleville who insisted that I become a mining engineer so she enrolled me in Queens University. And I went to Queens and put in one year and in the summer, of course, I needed a job and I was offered a job at Sudbury in the mines there, Creighton Mine. And when I got to Sudbury they took an X-ray of me and told me I had tuberculosis, so I wound up in the sanitarium in Saskatoon.

#018 Nadine: Did you feel sick or did it come as a shock?

Bill: It came as a shock because I'd already had X-rays upon entering university and they missed it. Either that or they neglected to read the X-rays. So I wound up in the san for a year in Saskatoon. And then after I got out of the san, I had an army rejection, because I couldn't get in the army so I thought I'd become a Mountie. So I went to Regina and I wrote the exams and passed and they said, well kid, if you're no good for the army, you're no good for us. So that was the end of that. And I don't know who the Mounties were recruiting in those days. They wouldn't take anybody that had an army rejection and

they wouldn't take anybody that was eligible for the army so apparently they weren't taking anybody.

#025 Nadine: But you were cured.

Bill: I was cured but in those days TB had a stigma on it. My god, nobody would even shake your hand, they thought you were going to infect the world. Today it's just about disappeared.

Nadine: Absolutely, it's no problem today.

Bill: So after the Mounties rejected me, I thought now what am I going to do. A friend of mine lived in Moose Jaw and the Moose Jaw fair was on, that was a big deal. And so I went to visit him and I thought well, the government has an agency called Selective Service which is similar to our today's Manpower. So I went and asked the Selective Service for a job and they said sure, we've got a job right today if you want it driving a fire engine. Well that took me by surprise but when they found out that I was twenty-one years old and had never driven a car that was the end of that. Because we never had a car, this was the Depression days, or just after the Depression.

#035 Nadine: That's right. So they are not going to give you a truck.

Bill: No they certainly weren't. But they did say, go downtown and there's a fellow there from Imperial Oil. He's recruiting a few people and we don't know what he does but go and see him. So I went down and it happened to be Dr. Cam Sproule. And of course, able-bodied men were hard to come by in 1943, they were all in the army. And he may have been a little bit impressed by my having one year of university. So he hired me at \$80 a month which. . ., I say he may have been impressed because of one year university, \$80 a month he gave me and the other boys doing the same work were only getting \$60.

#042 Nadine: So he was impressed.

Bill: So having come from Imperial Saskatchewan and my father being an Imperial Oil bulk agent and now me working for Imperial Oil, I should have had the Esso oval tattooed right on my rear end.

Nadine: What was your work then?

Bill: Well I started out on a geophysical crew as what they called a judhusker???, just laying out cables and hooking up geophones to cables. It was outdoor work and it was just what I needed, mild exercise and outdoor work, fresh air.

Nadine: Was it hard work or. . .

Bill: No, it wasn't. It was all brand new to me, as a matter of fact it was brand new to most of. . ., there were only two crews in all of Canada in those days. One in Saskatchewan and one in Alberta.

#050 Nadine: So for how long did you keep this job?

Bill: Well that job went on until winter. And I say that because in those days, the seismic crews, geophysical crews, came into Canada in the summer and went back to Louisiana and Texas in the winter. They didn't think they could work this country in the wintertime.

So after when the winter arrived, I went into the office as a draftsman, I'd had drafting in university so they made me a draftsman. Until the following spring and then I went back on what they call the core drills. And learned a little bit about surveying and core drilling of course. And they don't do any core drilling any more. Core drilling is just drilling a hole, maybe 2,000 feet, and taking the samples of earth and inspecting them for micro-forams ??? or bugs as we used to call them, fossils.

Nadine: So did they put you through training programs?

Bill: Yes.

Nadine: That was very good.

Bill: Training programs, all kinds of the. As a matter of fact, everybody learned by doing, just like the kids at university. Show and tell, or learn by doing because nobody had any training of any consequence. '43, the oil industry was very young and so yes, there were lots of training program.

#063 Nadine: Did you come to know Cam Sproule well?

Bill: Yes, fairly well. I worked with him for about a year. He was a tremendous man. Maybe Cam Sproule was one of the better geologists in Canada, perhaps even North America. And the trouble with Cam, he was perhaps twenty years ahead of his time. When he left Imperial, he opened up the Arctic. He sent survey crews and geological crews in to the Arctic Islands and they he realized it was such a huge area that one company couldn't possible cope with it. So he was instrumental in forming a consortium of other companies to explore the Arctic. But what Cam Sproule did, I think, he cemented Canada's sovereignty over some of those islands because the Canadian government had done nothing. And who do they really belong to, they were coloured red on our Canadian map like Canada but did Canada have any sovereignty over those islands. And it was questionable in some cases. So Cam Sproule did more than anybody else, I believe, and I've read this, to cement Canada's sovereignty over some of those Arctic Islands. And I just thoroughly believe that he was twenty years ahead of his time.

#075 Nadine: Was he a difficult person to work under?

Bill: No.

Nadine: Because some people say he had a bad temper and he could be obstinate?

Bill: Oh, he certainly was obstinate but he had a tremendous sense of humour.

Nadine: That's very important.

Bill: I remember one day. . . , Cam took up curling and anything he took up, he took up with a vengeance of course. And he wanted to curl every night and he had me on the night shift looking in the microscopes picking out fossils, micro-forams. But practically every night, he'd be one person short on his curling team so he'd phone me to leave the office and go down and curl. So we're down curling one night and he was drilling a well called Radville #1 and the phone rang, and Dr. Sproule, can you come to the front, there's an urgent message for you. And Doc, his moustache bristled and he said, my god, Radville has come in. So he went to the front and it wasn't a phone call at all, some lady had broken her leg and they thought Dr. Cam Sproule was a medical doctor and they wanted

him to set the leg right in the rink. He came back mumbling. [laughter]

#089 Nadine: He was a great man to work with.

Bill: Oh indeed he was, he certainly was. And it was a shame when he passed away because he had tremendous potential.

Nadine: Which year was it when you started working for Imperial?

Bill: 1943. My god, that's 41 years ago now.

Nadine: And you were working in Regina?

Bill: Yes indeed we went to Regina. But what happened in Saskatchewan in 1944 I believe, the CCF came into power. Now they were the forerunner of the NDP, Socialists. And they came into power, and one of their platform. . . , of course, the Socialists hated anything big, successful and multi-national, and they still do of course. So one of their platforms was to nationalize the CPR and Imperial Oil. So the night they came into power we got instructions via Calgary to Moose Jaw, to our crew in Saskatchewan, get out of there by midnight because we may be taken over. And so get all your trucks and equipment out that you can. Which we did, and we left Saskatchewan and moved into Alberta. The NDP relented a few years later and about 19, I'm guessing, 50, and the oil industry went back in and in the next fifteen years found most of the reserves which are now evident in Saskatchewan. And then of course, the NDP at that point, got a little greedy and started taxing the hell out of the oil industry and they moved back out again. Well now they're back in again, so it's cyclic in Saskatchewan. It's a boom or bust thing in Saskatchewan. Right now under a Conservative government, it's going full blast.

#111 Nadine: So when you moved to Alberta where did you live?

Bill: Well, we came into Alberta and eventually landed in Edmonton and we shot around Edmonton. And it just so happened we did some work south of Edmonton which eventually turned out to be the Leduc field. Now Leduc would have been discovered in time but had not that crew been run out of Saskatchewan it would have been years later. I'm sure it would have been years later before Leduc would have been discovered.

Nadine: Were you at Leduc at the time of the discovery?

Bill: Yes I was. And I'll never forget that. I think it was a Sunday morning and word had gone out, I guess Imperial announced it, Leduc was a discovery. And of course, Vern Hunter had blown off the well, a huge smoke ring went up in the air which people could see from Edmonton. And everybody wanted to come out and see this thing. And they did, they plugged every. . . , it was the middle of winter, bitterly cold, they plugged every road in that area with cars, stalled cars, cars in the ditch, nobody could pass, nobody could do anything. We were in Leduc and word got to us with our equipment, four wheel drive equipment. Well, it was time to change the drilling shift and they couldn't get out because all the roads were plugged. So they came to us and said, you've got four wheel equipment, can you get out crew to the rig for a shift change. So we cut fence wires, went through all the fields, with our four wheel equipment we could make it. And I was lucky enough to be there the day the well was dedicated.

#131 Nadine: With Turner, the minister?

Bill: Nathan Turner, what was his name Nathaniel Turner, no I'm thinking of someone else. I'm sure he was there. I didn't know the people, most of them because we'd had no connection with the drilling people themselves.

Nadine: He was the Minister of Mines at the time. The one who turned the valve or something like that. And then they had a big party.

Bill: Yes they had a big party. Which we didn't get invited to because we were just working stiffs on the seismic crew and had really nothing to do with the well itself but had been there and found the structure on which they drilled. So we had a little piece of the Leduc action.

#139 Nadine: I remember Doug Lair telling me he was hurt too, because he was not invited.

Bill: Well I think Douggie should have been because. . ., well he was the geologist.

Nadine: That's right but he wasn't invited. And then what happened after that?

Bill: After Leduc. Well I had a chance to go to Norman Wells and work on a crew up in the Arctic, well the sub-Arctic, below the Arctic Circle, Norman Wells as a dynamiter for a year, for a winter. We spent a winter up there.

Nadine: That was after the Canol project?

Bill: It was during.

Nadine: During the Canol project?

Bill: During and after. Now that Canol project was a great feat really. They started this pipeline from Norman Wells to Whitehorse, six hundred miles and completed in two years. And the pipeline was in operation for a year and abandoned in 1945, after they put about a million barrels through. But at the time, and there's been a lot of discussions whether it was a crazy thing to do, but the Japs were coming up the Aleutians and they thought they were going to take over Alaska. There was no road connection to Alaska from the United States so the Alaska highway was pushed through in a hurry. And there was certainly no fossil fuel in Alaska. And the didn't know what was going to happen so they started Norman Wells and put in the line to get oil as far as Whitehorse and then it could be refined there and trucked into Alaska.

#160 Nadine: People really were frightened the Japanese were going to invade?

Bill: You bet they were. And the Japs, there was not very much that the Americans could have done to stop them I don't think because everything was supplied by ship and of course the ships were vulnerable.

Nadine: So how long did you spend in Norman Wells?

Bill: Just not quite a year.

Nadine: And what were you doing there?

Bill: I was a shooter on a crew, they were looking for new places to drill, for new oil fields.

Nadine: Did you find a lot of oil?

Bill: No, as a matter of fact, Norman Wells is the only field in that whole area right now. And it's being expanded at the moment and they're going to ship the oil south into Alberta but there's never been another drop of oil in that whole general area.

#171 Nadine: They had a refinery nearby.

Bill: There was a little refinery at Norman Wells, you bet there was. It wasn't a very big one, about fifteen hundred barrels a day or something like that.

Nadine: How were the conditions of living in Norman Wells.

Bill: Oh, I tell you, they were primitive, really primitive. The camp itself, Norman Wells was fine, everything steam heated, but our crews, my god, they were just old wooden shacks on sleighs and they were heated by wood burning stoves made out of barrels. And you chopped your own wood and put the wood in the stove and that was your heat. And it would be forty below on the floor and a hundred above at the top of the bunk. Everything was double bunked of course, so if you had a lower bunk you froze, if you had an upper bunk, you cooked to death. The toilet facilities amounted to nothing, outside.

#183 Nadine: And it was minus forty.

Bill: Yes, it got to the point where nobody even took a bath up there. Everybody smelled of diesel oil and I tried taking a bath one night and heated some water and put the tub on a table because the floor was freezing. A couple of fellows walked in and saw me and they picked up the tub and myself and deposited me outside in the snow bank and I thought, that's the end of that. So nobody even bathed for weeks and weeks and weeks. There was no recreation at all and we worked seven days a week. The whole winter we only took off one day, Christmas. But we had fun, everybody enjoyed it, it was all a new experience for everyone.

Nadine: And everybody was in the same boat.

Bill: Everybody was in the same boat. We were a hundred and some miles out of Norman Wells and we'd move camp maybe once every week or ten days to a new location. But it was just out in the bush and it was dark all day long of course, the sun never came up.

#198 Nadine: There were a few black men who were sent to Norman Wells.

Bill: Oh many, many from the American army. And the Alaska highway too.

Nadine: That's right. Was there a big problem with them. I suppose they were freezing to death, they could not work.

Bill: Most of them were from the southern states and my god, what a terrible thing to put them up where it's 40 and 50 below. I never ran into many of them but they were a problem in some of the settled areas like Waterways. That's what I've heard anyhow, I'm not sure. It was a cruel thing to send them up into that country.

Nadine: Did they keep them a long time there or send them back.

Bill: Well, when the Alaska highway was finished of course, they went back. I really don't know the history, they were army people but I don't know how many there were. I've just heard stories that they had problems and I can understand why.

#212 Nadine: That's right, it was so cold. And after Norman Wells, what did you do?

Bill: Well after Norman Wells, I went back to a seismic crew in Edmonton and there was an opening in the land department at Imperial. And I was successful at getting the job and they trained me as a landman and for two years I did mineral leasing and surface leasing

and pipeline easement leasing which I enjoyed very much. And then I had an offer to go back to Saskatchewan as a scout and a landman and I was a one man operation in Saskatchewan. This was about 1950. I was the only person in Saskatchewan because the industry had pulled out after the CCF got raunchy. But they sent me down there to do a little bit of scouting and land work because they were starting to look at Saskatchewan again.

#229 Nadine: What is exactly the work of a landman?

Bill: A landman? Well, he's responsible for securing the mineral rights and in Canada most of the mineral rights are held by the government. But in Alberta maybe 3, 4 or 5% are held by the farmers, in Saskatchewan maybe 15% of the mineral rights are held by the farmers and in Manitoba maybe 50%. See if you settled on the land prior to, I think it was 1905, you got the surface and the minerals but after the provinces became provinces and you homesteaded a parcel of land, the government kept the minerals. So you have to lease the minerals either from the land holder or the government, in most cases the government. But if you want to drill a well you have to go and lease the surface too, so you can put your equipment on and build a road and what have you. But after 6 or 8 months in Saskatchewan, the company sent me to scout a well in Manitoba. This was the first significant well to be drilled in Manitoba.

#246 Nadine: And what is exactly the work of a scout?

Bill: Well, I'll tell you. Cal Standard, it was called Cal Standard in those days, it's now called Chevron was drilling this well in Verdin, Manitoba and I was to go out and scout it. And we found in getting to Verdin that Cal Standard was shipping the testing crews out at midnight to test this well which is illegal, it was in those days anyway, I think it still is, because in order to test a well you have to shut off the lights. Because if something goes wrong, you're going to have a fire and explosion with light bulbs. Well we couldn't get out to see what they were doing because the roads were so bad so the next morning when the shift came in, we got in the beer parlor with one of the boys that had just come off shift. And we started buying him beer and talking to him and we got around to the point of talking about oil and he said, well, hell, I'll bet you fellows have never seen any oil. And we said, my partner and I said, no what do you mean. And he opened his lunch pail and brought out a quart of oil. What he'd done, they'd had a successful test, he'd never seen oil, so he filled this quart sealer and smuggled it off the lease in his lunch pail. Well we bought it from him for two cases of beer I think, and wrapped it up and shipped it to Calgary and it was analyzed in the Imperial Oil refinery and found to be crude oil. And that set off the biggest land play that Saskatchewan, southern Saskatchewan and Manitoba have ever seen. And the chief landman for Cal Standard in those days was Louis Labelle and he was out there, he didn't know us but we knew him and we knew if Louis Labelle was out there, then there's something to this. But anyhow the well was a discovery and immediately after, the fact that there was a confirmed discovery, I started leasing in around the well and we secured a few quarter sections. Of course we were leasing against the Cal Standard boys, we leased a few quarter sections which were

eventually drilled and proven to be productive. So that trip put quite a few dollars in the Imperial bank.

#281 Nadine: And was that because somebody kept some oil in a lunch box?

Bill: Yes, that's right.

Nadine: And what else were you doing when you were scouting?

Bill: Well, I was also a geophysical scout. And a geophysical scout, they don't have them anymore, to my knowledge, I don't think they do. He checked on every seismic crew, where it was working and what it was doing. Now if it was just shooting long lines, that's one thing, that's a reconnaissance seismic program, but if they started criss crossing fields, then they were getting ready to drill a well. They were trying to firm up an anomaly to drill a well. So our land people would look and say, well we can lease a little bit of land around here for protection. So we'll try and lease two or three quarters for protection. If they drill a well and it's successful, fine we can drill then too. If it's dry, well we've given it a try. But that was the thought, find out where they were going to drill if you could from their surface work and then buy up some protection nearby. And it worked in many, many cases.

#302 Nadine: Where did you get your contacts from to get information?

Bill: Oh, all over. Contacts in those days, they were all field contacts of course, I knew nobody in the offices, they were all field people with different companies and service companies and well, a good contact in the early days was the telephone operator in a little town. Because every time somebody phoned to their head office, they had to go through the switch board. Not like today, it wasn't automatic, and the telephone operator knew everything.

Nadine: So you had to make friends with. . . .

Bill: Make friends with the telephone operator in the little towns

Nadine: Did it work all the time?

Bill: Not all the time, no.

Nadine: I was wondering how many scouts would go up to the telephone operator?

Bill: Let me see, this was 1950 and there may have been 50 scouts at that time. Perhaps 15 or 20 in Saskatchewan and the rest in Alberta. But that was a good source of information. The testers on a well, and the core people and the logging people, they're all commercial companies not connected with the oil company of course that was drilling the well. They were service people, service companies, they were usually pretty good information. Although in many cases they would give you incomplete or inaccurate information to send you in the wrong direction.

Nadine: This is the end of the tape.

Tape 1 Side 2

Nadine: Mr. Allen, has anything terrible happened to you when you were scouting?

Bill: Well, terrible, embarrassing you mean. Well nothing terrible has happened to me, no. I've had a few embarrassing things happen to me and one I can recall is in Edmonton, in the early days, when we were the only seismic crew in the Edmonton area and I was the shooter. And every day we had to drive down Jasper Ave., go from one side of the city to the other to get our dynamite in the morning and deposit it at night because you never left dynamite in your truck overnight. You had a magazine. But the second day we were in Edmonton, coming down Jasper Ave. I ran out of gas in front of the Bay, at about 5:00 in the afternoon. And of course, the truck was all covered with flags, danger, explosives and most of the people in Edmonton had never seen a dynamite truck before. And in order to get gas in the thing I had to get underneath and drain it into the coffee pot from the auxiliary tank and put it into the main tank. So while I was doing this, there must have been 15 cop cars and 2 or 3,000 people gathered around to watch this performance. And of course, the cops didn't know, the police didn't know what a dynamite truck was either and certainly the people didn't. And there I was draining this damn gas in the auxiliary tank into the coffee pot which took about 15 or 20 minutes and that was one of the most embarrassing that ever happened to me. Of course, it all worked out all right, the cops never said anything because it was perfectly legal, we could drive that truck anywhere.

#020 Nadine: Do you think people around though you were about to commit a holdup or something like that?

Bill: I don't know what the people thought. Of course, a few months later, they became accustomed to it and other crews started moving in and it was a common, common sight. But the very first one. . . , and another thing I remember very vividly, the Low Level Bridge in Edmonton, below the Macdonald Hotel was very narrow and streetcars ran across it and there was barely room for a truck and a streetcar to pass. And of course, if you had an ordinary truck the streetcars never stopped, they just. . . , you had to watch out for them, but with that dynamite truck they always stopped and let me by. I had a couple of other experiences with dynamite, one time scared me of course. When you put dynamite into a hole, in theory it's down there 30, 40, 50 feet. But in this particular case it was a flowing hole, in other words it was a little spring, and the water was coming up. So by the time we get ready to shoot the charge, it had floated to the surface and of course, I let it go and it caved in the back of the truck and sucked out the windshield and sent me flying into the snow bank.

#034 Nadine: You were not hurt?

Bill: I was not hurt, I didn't hear very well for two or three days. But that was embarrassing because it shouldn't have happened. I should have prevented that from happening by foreseeing that the thing, the dynamite was indeed at the bottom of the hole. But those

things do happen periodically. And another time we had a bunch of our managers out from Calgary to check on our crew, we were shooting a hole. And something went wrong in this case too, half the powder went off and half went into the air, maybe a hundred feet and when the manager saw this dynamite going into the air, they all jumped underneath the truck for protection. Well that shouldn't have happened, and that was embarrassing and I heard about that. But it's just one of those things. Of course, when it hit, it didn't go off at all, but they didn't know it wasn't going to go off. I was fairly sure it wasn't going to go off, but not positive.

#045 Nadine: Let us go back to your career. You were trained as a landman and a scout for Imperial. Then what happened after they sent you to Saskatchewan?

Bill: After Saskatchewan I went back to Edmonton as a scout with a scouting staff. That's where I first met Jack Armstrong, worked for him for a year there or two years I guess. Later on, about 1955 I guess, I got moved to Calgary, and spent the rest of my career in the Calgary office here.

Nadine: Did Imperial have many scouts?

Bill: Well, we had a staff at one time numbered ninety. Now they weren't all scouts. The scouting department was in effect a service department and we did a lot of work which normally would have been done by technical people. As a matter of fact we took over the well files of the library and statistics and a dozen other chores to relieve technical people to do their technical work. So we were a service company and as well we did the scouting. But we had as many as ninety people at one time on the payroll in scouting.

#059 Nadine: That's a lot.

Bill: That's a lot. It was certainly the biggest scouting organization in Canada and one of the bigger one in North America. But while they were called scouts, they weren't all scouts per se.

Nadine: What about the scouts from other companies?

Bill: Oh, everybody got along fine. Every scout knew the other scouts.

Nadine: So did you exchange information. . . .?

Bill: We exchanged information all the time.

Nadine: What about a conflict of interest between companies?

Bill: No, there wasn't. In the early days, after Leduc, what evolved was a scout check system which had been operating in the States for many, many years. And the scout check system is nothing but a meeting, usually once a week, of all the scouts, of all the companies. They sit down at a table and exchange the information on their wells for the information on the other wells.

Nadine: So it was like a club.

Bill: It was like a club. Now if you had some information you didn't want to release you didn't. But the basic information was released. So every scout had an up to date report on every well being drilled once a week because one scout, or one company couldn't possible do that by themselves.

#072 Nadine: So it was a pool of information?

Bill: It was a pool of information. There were three scout checks in Canada and one started right after Leduc. I started, I shouldn't say I, four of us sat down one night in Regina in 1951 and started the Saskatchewan scout check and that was '51, that was thirty some years ago. There are three scout checks in Canada and perhaps twenty in the States.

Nadine: Why are there so many in the States compared to Canada?

Bill: Well, the oil industry is much, much, much larger of course, and much, much older. And scouting in the United States is a career job. Most of the scouts in the States in the big companies I know, Exxon for instance, they hire a geologist out of university and train him as a scout and that's his career. He spends his whole career in the scouting profession. And he's equivalent to a geologist in the office. In Canada it never really gained the prestige that it did in the United States.

#083 Nadine: Why?

Bill: And this I don't understand, our system is different here. Information is more readily available through the governments than it is in the States, that's one thing. But in Canada the scouts consisted of non-technical people, 99% of them were non-technical and I was one of them. And nowadays it's got to the point where it's really a clerical operation and scouts have little. . . , few areas to advance, they may go into land. But in the States they remain as scouts usually. And the pay scale is far, far superior, of course they're all technical people. But nowadays you're even getting ladies, and of course they do in the States too, and always have. But it's a little difficult for a girl out in the bush, to scout.

#093 Nadine: But she's going to be spotted straight away.

Bill: Well yes, of course, the people on the rigs know if there are scouts in the area. And they can't do anything about it, although the scouts cannot trespass on the lease sight but they can certainly sit back there with binoculars and watch and talk to the people when they come off the rigs. But scouting nowadays is more of a clerical operation than it is a field operation, which is too bad.

Nadine: Would they use a helicopter?

Bill: Oh yes, still do.

Nadine: But it's not the same as it used to be?

Bill: No. Like the American scouts on the offshore rigs, they use helicopters, boats. And we've used them in the north country where you couldn't possibly get with wheeled vehicles, we've used helicopters. Just to see what's happening, if there's any oil laying around on the snow or what kind of testing equipments at the sight. Yes, helicopters are used quite frequently.

#104 Nadine: In your time, how were the people on the rigs reacting to the scouts?

Bill: Oh, not too friendly. They couldn't really or they'd be chastised by their management.

Nadine: That's right because they were caught between. . .

Bill: That's right, however in town at night, now the north country is different than the south country of course.

Nadine: Could you have a drink with them and get information?

Bill: Oh sure. But in the north country of course, they were living in camps so you couldn't talk to them. But if they're living in little towns, well you could talk to them and they may something or they may not.

Nadine: Or give you the wrong information maybe.

Bill: They could yes, and often did. And then you'd think, now why did they do that. They're doing this and that and everything else. You knew roughly what they were doing so if they gave you bad information you could usually spot it.

Nadine: But they were open to bribery too, were they not.

Bill: Oh, indeed they were.

Nadine: So did you have to give them money or. . .?

Bill: No, beer.

Nadine: Well that's cheaper.

Bill: Beer was a normal commodity.

#116 Nadine: When you moved to Calgary in 1955, how were the offices of Imperial, where were they?

Bill: They were on 9th Avenue, what was known as the old Albertan building, it's now torn down. On 2nd Street West. And there weren't very many people in Imperial in those days, maybe 2 or 300 as opposed to what now, a thousand or more in the big building. But it was a close knit organization. Everybody knew everybody and what they were doing and everybody had a work ethic in those days, and I presume they still have, but perhaps not the same. And it was very enjoyable. And a small company would be enjoyable to work in as compared to a big one anyhow. And I think if I was going back in the oil industry, if I was able to get back, I would go into a small company where you get a better overall training and grounding.

#129 Nadine: So what was your official title in 1955?

Bill: Well I became the Chief Scout for Imperial. And I had that position for about twenty years.

Nadine: So were you traveling a lot all over Canada or even the world?

Bill: No, not the world. I traveled a lot in Western Canada because we had offices in Regina and Edmonton and Dawson Creek in British Columbia. And I did travel Western Canada quite a bit, extensively. And I don't think there are many places in Western Canada I haven't been.

Nadine: Were you training also as a scout?

Bill: Well my background was really training for a scout, geology, geophysics. You have a talking knowledge on all phases of exploration, you may not know very much about any of them but you have a broad spectrum of all phases of exploration. Of course, my early training went well with scouting.

#142 Nadine: So how many scouts do you think you have trained?

Bill: When you speak of scouts, office scouts, field scouts, I don't know, I really don't know but many, many.

Nadine: Who were you reporting to?

Bill: Always the Exploration Manager.

Nadine: And who was it when you started in 1955?

Bill: Who was it, I think it was Jack Armstrong who had got moved from Edmonton back to Calgary as the Exploration Manager and I believe that he was my first boss in Calgary. He was a great fellow, he was tough but honest. Jack Armstrong taught me something, if you're going to make a presentation or talk about something, make damn sure you know what your ground rules are and know what you're saying because I've seen him cut people apart in meetings and they try to bluff or. . . . If you didn't know the answer the best thing to tell Jack Armstrong was to say, sorry Jack, I don't know but I'll find out. He wouldn't go for any of this guessing or. . .

#156 Nadine: Waffling

Bill: Waffling no. And I recall one day, our scouting department, we were in charge of all the well files and there were thousands and thousands and thousands, one file on every well drilled. And we had them in filing cabinets and every year we were expanding by 15 or 20%, we could see the time when the whole building was going to be full of filing cabinets. So we went to Jack and we said, Jack we'd like to have a meeting with you and the technical people. We want to present a microfilm review, he asked us why and we told him and he said okay. So we presented this microfilm review, how we were going to take these files and film them to reduce the volume because we just couldn't cope with all this paper. And of course, the technical people, the geologists, the geophysicists and some of the engineers said, oh, we're not going to use that, and I wouldn't use that. They were against it completely. Armstrong never said a word and after two hours, Armstrong got up and he said, if we've got geologists and geophysicists who won't use microfilm then we'll get geologists and geophysicists who will use microfilm and that was the end of it. But he would not condone negative thinking.

#172 Nadine: That was a positive attitude too.

Bill: Positive attitude, yes. As a matter of fact, we were the first company to go to microfilm, now everything everybody buys is on microfilm. But the breakthrough point was most difficult. It stands to reason, you can't fill a building up with time cans full of paper files.

Nadine: But people are always reluctant to trying new things, they want to . . .

Bill: To change, well yes. And then of course after the microfilm, then the computer age came in a few years later, now the whole damn thing is changed around, different.

Nadine: So Jack Armstrong was a very nice person to work with?

Bill: Indeed he was, indeed he was.

Nadine: How long did he stay with Imperial?

Bill: Oh, he had his whole career there. And then of course, he wound up as President of Imperial for many years and has since retired and is living in the Toronto area.

#182 Nadine: Can you give me other names of people you were working with?

Bill: Well, we've mentioned Cam Sproule. And in Moose Jaw, the head driller, his name was Charlie Visser and he had come from Turner Valley, they called him the big Dutchman. And he was a great diamond in the rough sort of fellow. But during the war, when the Nazis invaded Holland, Charlie Visser disappeared, they didn't know where he was, they couldn't find him.

Nadine: Was he hiding?

Bill: No, he had joined the Canadian army.

Nadine: He was a Canadian?

Bill: Well, yes he was a Canadian but he was of Dutch descent but when the Dutch were having trouble with the Nazis, he joined the Canadian army. Well Imperial found out he was in the army and they sent management over there and they pulled him out of the army because he was more important as the most knowledgeable driller in Canada than to the army. But apparently he did this two or three times, took off and joined the army, and every time they would go and pull him back.

Nadine: He must have liked the army life.

Bill: Well he wanted to help out his country. There's another man by the name of Ray Walters, he was the Exploration Manager. Just after Leduc I was asked to take some we call the V.I.P.'s, Very Important People, on tours of Leduc. Now this was coming up practically two or three times a week. Big shareholders and other people, who knows, where Imperial said yes, come on, we'll give you a tour of the Leduc field. Well I'd had all this experience and had worked Leduc so the public relations people asked me to take these tours and explain what was happening. And it was fun and I did. And I remember one of the very nice people that I took on a tour was Betty Crocker, the what, she makes cake mixes. Well there is a Betty Crocker at all times and when they get old they bring in a new Betty Crocker so there's always a Betty Crocker.

#211 Nadine: But what was she doing at Leduc?

Bill: Well her husband was a General in the American Navy and his name was Blinkenship, I remember that too. So she and her husband were up on a tour of the Leduc oilfield. Well, I had a chance to go into public relations full time and this Ray Walters called me into Calgary and he says, Bill, this job is yours if you want it but can I give you some advice. And I said please do Mr. Walters. And he said, all the people in public relations are either foreign correspondents or certainly newspaper reporters, CBC producers, announcers, whatever, they're all thoroughly trained in their own profession and individually they're the greatest people in the world, collectively they're the biggest bunch of ass kissers we have on the payroll. And he said, if you get into that group, they're going to kill you because you have no training at all really, except for some field experience, but these are professionals. And I said, you're trying to tell me I shouldn't take that job and he said yes. And I listened to him and it's likely the best advice I ever had in my life. Because after this business of touring Leduc was finished I'd have been high and dry as a nothing.

#225 Nadine: Absolutely yes, no job, nothing at all.

Bill: Nothing. I couldn't compete with these people. They're all pros, absolute pros. And they

still are today.

Nadine: So it was a good move not to take the job.

Bill: So I listened to that man and that was likely the best advice I ever had. And of course, I had another great friend, I call a friend, Duggie Lair, who was always great for helping people and giving advice and I enjoyed working for him very, very much. But there were also some turkeys. In a career in one company you're bound to find a bunch of turkeys. I guess it's the same in every company.

#235 Nadine: During these twenty years you were Chief Scout, were there any big events.

Bill: Scouting wise? I suppose so, I can't put my finger on it. One thing I feel nice about was having the Canadian scouts join the American scouts as a group.

Nadine: You mean like a North American Association?

Bill: Yes. There always was a big association in the States but that Canadian scouts had never joined. Now the 49th parallel, my god, there were oil fields on both sides of it. They were the same oil fields in some cases.

Nadine: That makes sense. . .

Bill: That makes sense to trade information across the line. But the 49th parallel was a bit of a barrier. So I had a little bit to do with having the Canadian scouts join the American scouts and in 1960 I became the President of the . . ., in those days it was called the National Oil Scouts and Landmans Association in the States. And when I became President I had the name changed to International Oil Scouts. And the Canadians are still a part of the International Oil Scouts, and a few scouts from Mexico, none from Europe but North America.

#254 Nadine: They were scouting in Europe?

Bill: I believe they are but. . .

Nadine: But you don't have an organization.

Bill: They may have little local ones in each country that have production but I know nothing about them.

Nadine: So they have not yet reached the international level.

Bill: Not really, not to my knowledge.

Nadine: And what else happened during these twenty years?

Bill: Well, we just helped build up the Imperial scouting department from maybe a dozen people to ninety as I mentioned earlier. And took on a lot of allied jobs close to scouting to relieve the technical people of mundane work. See we're all non-technical, every one of us. And towards the end we got into computers and part of our group was oriented completely to computer applications. So when something new came along or something we thought we could handle, we jumped on it, with managements approval of course. And built up the department.

#270 Nadine: So it was a challenge each time.

Bill: It was a challenge yes.

Nadine: The word or even the two words Scouts Department did not exist.

Bill: Well for many years the scouting department was indeed the scouting department which answered to the Exploration Manager. In subsequent years, some people in management didn't like the word scout. It had the connotation of being kind of a shady character.

Nadine: Like spy or something?

Bill: Spy and what have you and they changed the name of the department, as a matter of fact, they changed it several times. So indeed there is no scouting department left in Imperial, it's called something else but the scouting nucleus is still there. It's not called scouting.

Nadine: But what were the scouts calling themselves when they are introduced to. . .

Bill: Well they still call themselves scouts. No matter what management calls them, they call themselves scouts, other scouts call them scouts and vice versa.

Nadine: So everybody knows.

Bill: Everybody knows.

Nadine: But officially the. . . .

Bill: Officially it's something fancy like a data specialist or what have you.

Nadine: Which does not mean anything in fact.

Bill: No, it doesn't mean anything. And other companies haven't done this, they still call their scouts, scouts. But not Imperial.

#291 Nadine: 1975 you were in charge of the scouting department and then what happened?

Bill: Well the scouting department was swallowed up by a huge non-technical group which included the drafting department, the library, and building maintenance and other non-technical groups in the one organization. And while I was still in, what I like to call the old scouting group, I took out another job of buying and selling geophysics for Imperial. Geophysical data. And trading geophysical data with other companies. So if you've got some shooting in one area and you want to trade with another company, you get together and make a deal and physically swap the information. And you buy and you sell. And I did this until I retired. And I found it most interesting. Because I'd had geophysical training and I knew a little bit about it. Not technically but enough to buy and sell the data. And I did that the last few years until I retired.

#308 Nadine: So were you dealing with all types of oil companies?

Bill: Oh yes. All the oil companies and. . . .

Nadine: Also from the States or only with Canada?

Bill: No, just in Canada because Imperial only operated in Canada. Although we did have connections, sometimes, Americans who wanted to buy our data because they had an office up here. And then we'd deal with them of course, but no we never bought any information from the United States for Imperial Oil.

#316 Nadine: Were you staying mostly in Calgary?

Bill: Yes, the last few years, the last twenty-five years I guess, I was in Calgary. Which suited me fine, I liked Calgary and I'd lived in most of the other cities in the West so I was happy to stay here.

Nadine: Is it your favourite city?

Bill: It is indeed, although I liked everyone I lived in. I liked Regina and I liked Edmonton, and I like to visit there but I sure wouldn't want to live there, as the saying goes.

Nadine: When did you retire?

Bill: 1980.

Nadine: And then what did you do?

Bill: In 1980 when I retired I took some time off and then I got kind of bored and a company asked me to do a little consulting for them. In other words take their geophysical files and put them into shape, they were in terrible condition. They didn't know what they had or where it was or how they were going to get at it or who owned it. And I consulted for I think four companies now at various times.

Nadine: This is the end of the tape.

Tape 2 Side 1

Bill: Well I found out that other companies think that if you've got grey hair and have spent a whole career with a major company, you must know something. So I've never gone looking for work but people have phoned me from word of mouth, to come and straighten up their files. Which I enjoy very much. Of course, every company is a complete challenge. I just finished a job with a small company and I hope now not to work again until next winter because I like to have the summers off.

#006 Nadine: What type of consulting work were you doing?

Bill: Well, I call it consulting, maybe I'm using the word consulting incorrectly but, just fixing up files, physical files, putting them in order, so that the people using them could find the information they're after. Because the big companies had so much data they had to have a system, where the little companies didn't. They had no system at all.

#012 Nadine: So the information was piling and piling. . . .

Bill: Just piling up all over and in boxes and across town and. . . , they didn't know where it was. And so the thing was to get the information together because there's resale value for it. If you're finished using it you might as well sell it to the next person.

Nadine: They can use it.

Bill: And use it, and it's a money maker. So that's what I've been doing.

#016 Nadine: Mr. Allen, can you compare the training of the oil people in your time to what it is nowadays.

Bill: Well I think the people of today are academically better equipped than the old timers, much more so. And nowadays of course, they're all computer oriented but they become specialists for their whole career in many cases and they're slotted which isn't a bad thing perhaps. In the old days you were a jack of all trades. You learned by doing, which I mentioned earlier. And the old timers of course, had seen the Depression and perhaps they were a little more work oriented than the new people today. That old Depression in

the background, if you had a job, you kept it.

#023 Nadine: That's right, where people now are jumping from job to . . .

Bill: Jumping from job to job. I had many offers to go to another company or another industry for a few dollars more, but I was frightened because I remembered the Depression. And that's why I stayed at Imperial for thirty-seven years. So I think they're academically much superior, but they're also becoming specialists and slotted.

Nadine: Was there also more loyalty towards a company in your time?

Bill: I think, perhaps.

Nadine: People were proud of working for a company?

Bill: Yes and it was a new adventure, it was a new industry in Canada. Just to sum it up, I think now, a B.A. today wasn't any better than a grade twelve was when I started. Perhaps a grade twelve when I started was even better than a B.A. today because a B.A. is not a great thing anymore. And in the early days there may have been five or six Ph.D.'s in the whole oil industry, now there's hundreds and hundreds of them.

Nadine: And a lot of them are in the streets in Calgary and cannot find work.

Bill: Yes, over-qualified perhaps. And that happens in many cases, especially in times of bust as opposed to boom.

#038 Nadine: You have seen the ups and down of the oil patch. Can we talk about that?

Bill: Well sure. The oil patch has been cyclic or boom and bust, since the day it started. Now the first well in North America of course, was called Williams 1 in Ontario in 1957, two years before the famous Drake well in the United States. Now the Americans say that their well was the first, it's not so. It was the first well drilled, I think Williams #1 was dug by hand to about thirty or forty feet. But in the early days, after Drake, every time a discovery came in, the price of oil fell, too much oil. And the main thing to use it for in those days was kerosene of course. And if the hole was dry, the price went up, if it was a discovery it went down. The law of supply and demand, in those days. It was a hair trigger on the industry at the time. Now Turner Valley had several cycles in the '20's, up and down, up and down. I wasn't there in the '20's, so I don't know about them. But I know of a political bust in 1944 in Saskatchewan, as I mentioned earlier, when the CCF came in and drove the oil industry out. That was a cycle. The oil industry went back in '50, back out again in '70, they're back in there now. Cycle as can be, and of course, there was a mild recession in the '60's, it was also the Suez Crisis at the same time. But that recession wasn't anything like today's because of the NEP regulations. So it is indeed cyclic and it will likely continue to be cyclic. Because of unforeseen things to happen, political, world crises, what have you.

#057 Nadine: How do you foresee the future of the oil patch here in Alberta?

Bill: Well, it's impossible to forecast, just like it had been in the past, with a slow to moderate growth. Unless there's a world crisis of course, and then anything can happen because when necessary, huge developments can take place very quickly. As I mentioned, the Alaska Highway and the Canol project. Now a huge development nowadays, I suppose

would be a Tarsand plant which would take years.

Nadine: And the cost . . .

Bill: And the cost would be astronomical, but Canada has. . . ., the reserves of oil in place in Canada are equal to that of the rest of the world put together but they're in the form of Tarsands and hard to get at reserves. And then the East Coast of course, and the North and the Arctic Islands. The future for Canada has a huge potential, the future looks tremendous.

Nadine: But the costs also will be tremendous.

Bill: The cost will be tremendous but if there's a crisis, people forget about cost.

Nadine: That's right. Because the reserves are here.

Bill: But the reserves are here which is comforting

#068 Nadine: What do you think of the National Energy Program?

Bill: Oh goodness, I'm not a student of it, but I think it's a political abomination perpetrated by the Feds to a) put Western Canada in it's place, and to grab some easy tax money from the oil industry. And by doing so, they're going to retain the financial and manufacturing centre in Central Canada. But I think the greatest Judas of them all was Bill Davis, the Premier of Ontario, who insisted on cheap oil, below the world price. And I can't for the life of me think of anything that ever came out of Ontario cheaper than the world price. But what really happened to Ontario, the ripple effect caught up to Central Canada. When the oil industry slowed down, of course, the purchasing power for manufactured goods in the East, all the steel, cars, tractors, everything's made in the East, the ripple effect caught up to the East, maybe a year after the NEP came in and hurt them severely. Now surely to god they could have foreseen this, but nevertheless they went ahead with it anyhow. So not being a student of the NEP, I haven't got much good to say about it, perhaps through ignorance.

#084 Nadine: Can we talk about the role of the oil patch of Alberta towards the development of the Canadian industry?

Bill: Well, Alberta was fortunate and most of the reserves in Western Canada are in Alberta, as opposed to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and the Territories, to this point anyhow. And the oil industry in Alberta was fortunate that all the headquarter offices are in Calgary, in one spot. In the States, they're scattered all over United States, the head offices. Perhaps the head offices shouldn't have even been in Calgary, they should have been in Edmonton, the seat of the government. But because of Turner Valley, they stated here.

Nadine: So more practical too.

Bill: More practical to be here at the time. In the early days, most of the companies brought in all their technical people from the States, all their managers and all their technical, geologists, engineers and geophysicists. Imperial never did, they trained their own people. But in any event, today, the Canadian are as well trained as anybody in the world in the oil industry. And perhaps better than many of them. And expertise in Alberta, is as good as Texas or Oklahoma or what have you. And of course, the Canadian expertise is

available for any part of Canada, the Atlantic off shore, the Arctic Islands, you name it. So it's a self contained industry of it's own at this point. They don't have to rely on foreign experts. But I don't think that quite answered your question.

#103 Nadine: Well sort of. Training your own people for a company can be very good but that doesn't prevent the people of switching companies after they have been trained.

Bill: Oh no, indeed it doesn't. And that's been going on for years and years.

Nadine: That can be a big problem too.

Bill: A big problem, indeed it is. A company will pick up somebody with huge potential and train him and give him every course and opportunity that they can possibly give him, and he'll assume it and then a better offer comes along, he's gone. But this happens in the higher ranks too, the Presidents right down to the menial new technical people. Once they get a little training and they see something they like better down the road, they'll take off. But that's democracy I guess you can. . . .

#111 Nadine: Right. But Imperial was very well known for being a fantastic training ground.

Bill: Oh it was indeed. And Imperial could draw on the expertise of Standard Oil in New Jersey which later became Humboldt and Exxon of course. And even today much of the training Imperial people receive is in the States, from the parent company. And of course Exxon, being the biggest company in the world, they have tremendous facilities, but so does Canada for training.

#117 Nadine: Who were the most influential persons in you career?

Bill: Well, there have been many but I think perhaps I'd have to say, Dr. Cam Sproule, the man that hired me. Because when he hired me, I had very few qualifications, no training, and at that point I wasn't even healthy because I'd just come out of a san for treatment of TB. But Doc, he overlooked all of that and gave me a job that physically I could handle. And it was physical, it wasn't mental work, physical work. And sort of mother henned me for several years.

Nadine: So he believed in you?

Bill: Yes, he did. And in return, I like to think I did my job well. Like I say, the old work ethic from the Depression days, which was normal in those days. So he helped me tremendously and I like to think I repaid him by good work. But we were always friends and the start he gave me was a boost in my career all the way through. So I would have to say Doc Sproule was the most influential man. And of course, there have been others, I mentioned Ray Walters and Jack Armstrong and Duggie Lair and perhaps there were others I've forgotten at this point. You know when you look back forty years it's pretty tough to pick a name. . . .

#137 Nadine: What do you consider your achievements?

Bill: Well I think perhaps the biggest achievement was becoming the Chief Scout of Imperial Oil for twenty years and building up the group from a few people to many and assuming many, many duties that used to be performed, were performed by technical people. And

bringing these duties into our department which is completely non-technical. And I think I mentioned, earlier, helping to start the Saskatchewan Scout Check, which is still going, and later becoming President of the Canadian Oil Scouts, or correction, the International Oil Scouts Association. And I was fortunate enough to be the first Canadian to assume that title. There have been many since of course. I suppose those are the main achievements made, to my personal satisfaction anyhow. I don't know what the company thinks about any of these. But anything I've done in the line of scouting was completely backed by the company at the time.

#152 Nadine: That was very important.

Bill: Very important. If you had the backing of your company, good heavens. . .

Nadine: You could do anything.

Bill: You could do anything within reason of course. You always had to answer somewhere down the road so you were very careful as well you should be.

#155 Nadine: Looking back at your career, is there anything you would do differently nowadays?

Bill: Well, I was extremely fortunate. As I mentioned starting during the war years, when there weren't many able bodied people around and no real qualifications and poor health but having the Depression complex of hanging onto a job. If I had to do it over again, I wouldn't change much. I think I would have not gone into the scouting department but would have stayed in the land department.

Nadine: Why?

Bill: Because there's more scope in the land department. Very seldom does a landman get promoted to a scout. Because in the eyes of many a scouting job is of lesser importance than a land job. I guess I was one of the few people that ever got promoted from landman to a scout, which perhaps was a mistake. Many get promoted from a scout to a landman so eventually the land department is where many scouts end up and all hope to some day. So perhaps I would have forgotten about the scouting career and kept in land, because there's more opportunity and broader outlook and better pay. However that's hindsight, it's not worth a nickel so in retrospect perhaps I wouldn't have changed anything. But in hindsight I think perhaps I would have considered staying in the land department.

#174 Nadine: Would you have had more challenge in the land department?

Bill: Perhaps not. No. Maybe not at all, maybe not as many even. But it's in a higher plain than scouting basically and though of in the oil industry as a higher plain than scouting. Although many of the land people are non-technical. In my day, all of them were non-technical.

Nadine: Nowadays you can take a course in Mount Royal College for a few months and you become a landman.

Bill: Yes or you can get a degree in land management in the States. They didn't have those in the early days, so none of the land men were technical people or very few I might say.

Nadine: But now, are they all technical people?

Bill: No, they're not. Some of them develop by growing within the department. Many of the managers of course, are technical people and when this older generation retire, the new boys will all be technical I do believe or close to it. Many companies have lawyers as their Chief Landman and other degreed people. But I think perhaps, if my son went into the oil industry and had a choice between scouting and land, I would hope he would take land. So perhaps that answers your question.

#191 Nadine: And this is the last question, Mr. Allen, on the whole what do you think of the oil patch?

Bill: Well, I think it's the most exciting industry in Canada. It's broad and diverse and in effect, it's a hundred industries rolled into one. Name an industry and the oil patch either has it within it's confines or uses the expertise of that industry. It's tremendous, exciting. I think perhaps, it's not for non-technical people, per se, although I have a daughter working for an oil company, as a steno. Now she's not looking for a career of course. But for a young fellow, I think that you must have a degree. The oil companies have gone a little overboard with this business of sheepskin, a degree. They think and they're correct that a person with a degree has more potential somewhere down the road. And they're looking for middle management and senior management. Now they're not going to pick a non-technical person to put into middle management or senior management, likely are not. So I think it's imperative that people getting into the oil industry for a career have a degree. As a matter of fact, if I tried to join the oil industry today, and if I was twenty-one, trying to join the oil industry, I couldn't even get a job, I'm sure of that now.

#209 Nadine: Because the competition. . . .

Bill: The competition and the new thinking, without a degree you're dead. That's why I consider myself exceedingly fortunate.

Nadine: And you have enjoyed all your years in the oil patch?

Bill: Every one of them, I have indeed.

Nadine: That's great. Thank you very much for this very interesting interview, Mr. Allen. You are the first scout I have interviewed.