

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Ed Fulmer

INTERVIEWER: David Finch

DATE: March 27, 2000

DF: Today is the 27th day of March, in the year 2000 and we are with Mr. Ed Fulmer at the offices of the Canadian Society of Exploration Geophysicists in Calgary. My name is David Finch. Could you start by telling us where and when you were born?

EF: Yes, I was born in Guelph, Ontario, in 1920, which was just about 80 years ago I guess, and grew up in Guelph, took my public and high school there and thought I=d like to become a chemist, probably because my father was a chemist. He was a Chemistry Professor at the University of Guelph and I had a little chemistry lab at home and fiddled around at home and fiddled around with that and thought that would be a great life. So I went off to Toronto to take chemistry, I thought it would be better to go there rather than to go to Guelph, where I would be under the thumb of my father. Not so much that as fellow students who might say, oh yeah, sure, he gets a little extra help from the old man. And it was time for me to get away from home anyway. So I took two years of chemistry and began to think, this is not really what I want to do. So I took a couple of years off and went to work as a chemist in an explosive plant up north of Parry Sound, at Nobel, the Defense Ministries Ltd., which was the war time branch of Canadian Industries Ltd. I worked in the gun cotton lab, where we tested all the raw products and the finished products. We never did manage to blow anything up, but there again, it was shift work and indoors and so that finally persuaded me that maybe I should do something different. So I went back to Toronto for a summer and worked as a chemist for the Goodyear Rubber Company in New Toronto. I thought that way I would be closer to the university and get everything set to re-register in a new course. In the process for working for Goodyear, my work was in the power house, which was separate from the tire manufacturing operation. It was a huge power house, huge power generators and I was standing one day, talking to the Chief Engineer, in front of a great panel of controls, like a bunch of side by side metal lockers. Inside each locker were various controls for the big steam boilers and the generation equipment and so on. I=m a bit AR and one of the panel doors was open slightly so I closed it, while I was talking to the Engineer and everything went crazy. Bells started to ring and whistles went, it shut down the whole power house, the boilers went down and that meant there was no steam going over to the rubber plant. I had to rip up all the rubber from the forming molds. I probably shouldn=t be saying this. If anybody from Goodyear ever comes across this, they=ll probably sue me. So that was my final experience as a chemist. I went back and transferred into chemistry, mineralogy and geology and never have, certainly not regretted it. After my third year. . . .

Video #07:04.43:10

#038 DF: What year did you go into that program?

EF: I graduated in '45, so I went into that in '43. After my third year, or during the tail end of the third year, there were notices posted on the bulletin board in the geology building about summer jobs. One was from a company out here in Calgary called Dominion Oil, they were looking for summer students for field work. So I wrote them a letter and a letter came back and said, fine we'd like you to come out for the summer and they sent me a one-way train ticket. So when school finished, I hoped on a train in Toronto. The whole idea of me taking this job, or a good part of it, was here was a chance to see the west, which I'd never been to. And it was a great trip out, it's what. . about 3 days and 2 nights or that equivalent, by train in those days. I don't think there was even Air Canada at that time, if so, it was very fledgling. Anyhow I think what really turned me on to the west was that the last day, coming into Calgary, probably from about Bassano, I was in a top bunk and I raised the curtain and looked out, a beautiful day and there was a grand sweep of the Rocky Mountains. I fell in love with the west right then and there. So anyway I arrived in Calgary and went around to the offices of Dominion Oil Company, which were in 600 Lancaster Building, the Lancaster Building is still there. And I went to 600, looking for Dominion Oil Company and there was no Dominion Oil Company on this door, the door said, California Standard Company. I said, oh boy, here I'm out here, the company that hired me has disappeared, I just had a one way ticket, no money. Anyway I went inside and it turned out they had just changed the name from Dominion Oil to California Standard. Dominion Oil had been a handy name for the company to come into Canada with. It was a name of a company they had in Trinidad. So they came up here in '38 and this was '44, so it took them that length of time to get the name changed over. So anyway I went to work for California Standard. They said, do you drive, do you have a license, I said, no. Go over to the courthouse, get yourself a drivers license. So I went over there, I think I'd probably driven a farm truck about 10 miles on my uncle's farm, in my life. Anyway you fill out a form and you lie about how many miles you've driven and pay them \$2.50 and you've got a license. So I went back to the office and they said, you're going down to Foremost, down in southern Alberta and we have a vehicle for you to take down and you can pick it up over at such and such a garage over on, I think it was 5th Avenue. It turned out to be a British personnel carrier left over, it probably came up from Suffield. Right hand drive, no top on it and here's this little guy from Ontario, never driven before, driving this thing out of Calgary, down Highway #2. I made it. To do it today through all the traffic, of course, would be almost impossible. So I wound up in Foremost for the summer, working on a structure drilling operation. We had 3 or 4 rigs that would go around and drill holes down to the Milk River-Pakowki contact, which was a good electro-log marker. That way you can map the structure over a broad area, fairly accurately, of shallow formations, then project that to deeper horizons for possible structures potential for oil and gas. So that was a nice summer and I got to drive all over a good part of southeastern Alberta. Incidentally that was a great area to work the sort of work we were doing, because we had to survey in every location and thanks to the land surveyors that had gone through there years before, they set up that grid system of east-

west, north-south roads a mile apart and in the northeast corner of every section, there was a little metal pin driven in the ground, surrounded by 4 pits about so big around and square, so they were easy to find, even out on bald prairie. Each corner pin had the identification number on it that told you just where you were and the elevation of that. So it made the surveying fairly simple. So I spent a summer at that and we went back and finished up my final year at Toronto and fortunately, they invited me to come back again, as a graduate.

#093 DF: So that work you were doing that summer, that was taking cores, or was that seismic work you were doing?

EF: Neither. They would drill about a 3 2" hole and bring in a logging truck and run an electrode down.

DF: Okay. And how deep were you running?

EF: Anywhere from 400' to maybe 2,000', depending on the surface elevation and the dip of the formation.

DF: And what were your specific duties, other than driving a truck?

EF: I wasn't driving a truck, we had a car and I was the official surveyor and I had a driver. So we would drive out to the rig when the word came that they were just about down to the formation and we'd survey it in and make sure that the logging truck got there and would stand by while the log was taken and make sure we got our markers and then move the rig off to the next location and then take the information back to the office in Foremost and plot it on a map. In those days that part of the country, the roads weren't paved as they are now and the back roads were great when things were dry, the roads were just like a paved highway, but then came the occasional rain, and it was all gumbo mud. So you spent a lot of your time just winching yourself out of one mud hole and then the next. By and large there was nothing to winch to, there were no fence posts, no telephone posts. So we carried a great long iron bar, called a dead man, and we'd drive that into the ground and then hook a hand winch onto that and the other end onto the car and crank it out. In those days too, the inner tubes all synthetic rubber and they would last for maybe 50 miles before they went. So you'd stop and take the tire off and pull out the tubing and do a hot patch on it and put it back together and pump it up again. That's why they send young guys out to do these things.

Video #07:13.03:29

#117 DF: So then you went back to school and how did things go after that?

EF: I went back to school and finished up and came back permanently. I went back down doing the same work at Foremost for awhile. During the summer it was one of the many downturns in the oil business and the company president wrote me and said my services would no longer be required at the end of the summer, because their budget had been cut off. So I said fine, so I wrote back to Toronto for an lectureship job, which I could do while I was taking my Masters. They accepted me and then just about the time I was ready to leave and head back to Toronto, word came from Calgary that they had got a budget increase and they wanted to keep on going and they asked me if I would stay. So

as I mentioned earlier, I had become quite enamoured of the west and so I gave up the opportunity to get my Masters. Which is probably just as well, because I was never a very good student. So I stayed with California Standard, which became Chevron for 21 years, I guess. As I indicated I started off as a geologist, doing sub-surface work, sitting on wells, I was transferred at one point up to Princess, which no longer exists, it was just a spot on a railroad. But the company had had a little success there and found some oil, so they built a camp with a geologic office and core house, an engineering office, a staff house and four company houses, staff houses, for the married personnel. It was quite a little place. So we bachelors lived in the staff house and did our work. From there I was transferred down to Medicine Hat, they were starting up another structure drilling program. Since I had previous experience with that. So I set up an office in Medicine Hat for the company and hired a couple of local lads, who since have become well known in the oil industry, George Prauling and Elgon Bell were my two helpers for the summer. Pauling, he's retired now but he was with one of the American companies up here and Bell, again, he's retired but they were both very active in the. . .at that time they were students at University in Montana, Montana School of Mines, so this was summer work for them.

#148 DF: What year was this?

EF: >46.

DF: So this was all just before Leduc?

EF: This was before Leduc and we carried on with that operation for about a year. As I tell people, the company left me there just a little bit too long, because I met Shirley and we got engaged and subsequently married. She was a Medicine Hat girl. But about the time Shirley and I started courting, there again, companies have a devious way of interfering with your life, so they transferred me to Calgary to work with Fred Lines in the sub-surface department. We did a lot of sub-surface mapping.

DF: How do you spell Mr. Lines last name?

EF: L-I-N-E-S. He unfortunately died a fairly early death many, many years ago. A very up and coming geologist with the company. So I spent the fall of >46 I guess it was, there. One day a long came Bill Farmilo, who was the Geophysical Supervisor for the company at that time. No, this would be in >47 I guess, because Leduc had just been discovered, and all of a sudden all of the companies wanted to put out seismic crews and they needed people to act as geophysicists to live on these crews and be what we called bird dogs, or client representatives. So Bill said, how would you like to go to Sylvan Lake just for the winter and sit on. . .we just moved a GSI crew in there, GSI part 225 I guess it was. So fine, I went up there, I couldn't even spell geophysicist at that time I think. Some of the guys were sent down to the States for a 6 week training course but I didn't get that lucky. So I immediately changed from a geologist to a geophysicist, which was fun. I lived in the Sylvan Lake Hotel for that winter. It was a pretty tough winter but I didn't have to get out in the field too much, we did all the interpretation right there.

DF: Okay, but tell me how you learned, in the field, to do the interpretation. You're bird dogging this crew, but how could you even know whether or not they were doing

anything?

EF: Well, you worked with the Party Chief and of course, he knows the whole operation, he=s supervising the whole crew, making sure everything runs smoothly. And the records when they=re developed and dried and so on, are turned over to the Party Chief and he and the client representative, me, sit down opposite each other, across a desk and he looks at the records and picks the various horizons and I would plot them on cross section paper. Then we would draw straight lines between each point and that way you would come up with some idea of the structure. There were a lot of bookkeeping that would need to be done too, keeping records of the costs and the drilling footage and the locations and so forth. So you gradually worked into it.

Video #07:19.57:10

#187 DF: Can you explain to us the technology that was being used at that time?

EF: Yes. The recording trucks were using string galvanometers rather than. . this was long before digital recording, it was called analogue recording. These galvanometers were rather sensitive little things and they kept breaking and they=d have to be re-strung out in the field, in the middle of winter and the poor observer, that=s what they called the guy who ran the recording truck, he=d be out there trying to keep his fingers warm and to work on this delicate stuff but it got done. And basically, the records are shot in the field, developed in the recording truck, brought into the crew office in town, which was invariably in a curling rink or a church basement or some such place and dried overnight and then worked on the next day. So it was pretty fast turn around even in those days. So the day following the shooting, you had the information off of the half dozen or a dozen holes that had been shot the previous day. And you edited them to your cross sections and your maps and gradually worked out the structure. And if anything interesting showed up, you went back and did more detailed work on that. Along about early, early May I guess it was, I phoned Bill Farmilo, my boss in Calgary and I said, you know, Bill, Shirley and I are getting married in June, don=t you. He said, yes I know that, I said, am I going to be here in Sylvan Lake at that time and afterwards, he said, oh yes, sure. So I said, is it okay if I look for a place to live, rent somewhere. Yes, rent yourself a little cottage, a place for you and Shirley to start off in. Fine, great Bill, so about May 24th I think it was, the first sort of official day of summer, it was quite memorable, the ice started to go out on Sylvan Lake, exposing nice sandy beaches and I got a call from Bill Farmilo saying Ed, you=re being transferred to Manitoba. Oh great. So in the meantime I had found a nice little cottage to live in so that went by the boards. So I went back to Calgary and got . . they were moving a new crew in from the States to Virden, Manitoba. So I was to go down and break the crew in, so to speak and spend at least the summer there. So I went to Virden, you went by train in those days, and met the crew. They had brought the key personnel and equipment up from the States, but they had to hire a lot of local people for the assistant type jobs, jug hustlers and so forth. So it was a pretty raw crew by the time they got set up, so I said to Burton McPherson, the Party Chief, let=s pick an easy location and run a few miles, just to get things broken in, get the crew worked up. So there was a nice gravel road going from Virden west to Maryfield, in Saskatchewan, with

shallow borrow ditches, which would be easy for the rigs to get into to do their work. What I'm leading up to is a bit of serendipity that happens in this industry every once in awhile. We started a crew down this nice easy, shooting road and about the third day, we got the records in and looked at them and there was some east dip. We were working on the east flank of the Williston Basin. So everything was dipping to the west, so if you found where the dip was to the east, then that indicated the possibility of a little structure. So great. So I thought well, we were being scouted by guys from Shell and guys from Rio Bravo, so you had to be careful about doing any detail work, otherwise they jumped in and beat you to the leases. Incidentally the company had acquired, through the province of Manitoba, Department of Mines, a very substantial lease pattern of Crown lands and that's what we were working on at that time. So anyhow, when things quietened down a little bit, the crew kept going to the west. So I brought them back and had them shoot a line north from where this reversal had been and sure enough, there was a little bit of north dip. So I got on the blower to Calgary and said, we have what looks like an interesting structure here, maybe you should get a land man down and pick up any loose leases. So in due course, they got the land man down and acquired some more leases that eventually turned out to be the Daly field, which was the first significant oil discovery in Manitoba. There were a couple of minor ones prior to that. Whether it's still a producing field or not, I don't know, but there was a case of serendipity, we could have worked in that general area for months without actually doing that particular line. So these are the things that kind of make life interesting and rewarding.

Video #07:26.02:16

#253 DF: You said you were being scouted, what did they do to scout you?

EF: Most companies at that time, had personnel that they called scouts and their whole job was to follow around the big company seismic crews and see if they could find any indication of the crews having turned up something of interest, which they would denote by doing some detailed shooting for example. So you had to be careful, you had to kind of jump your crews around back and forth and not spend too much time in any one area. But if they thought that you had anything of interest, and they would snoop around and talk to personnel too, on your crew. Mind you most of the crew people didn't know what was going on, but you had to be careful. In many cases they would pick up leases in areas where you were working and sometimes they were worthless, occasionally, I think in the case of that Daly field, I think they got a few parcels there that we might have had but didn't get. That summer went along quite nicely. Our office at that time was in an old abandoned air hanger, left over from the war, it had been part of the training program for pilots. So that made a useful place to base the crew. Then they decided to bring another crew in further south, down around. . I can't remember the name of the town. So I was transferred down to that other crew and we worked the southwestern part of Manitoba, around Minnedosa. . I'm having trouble remembering the name of the town we were based in. Anyhow Shirley and I found a rooming house, where we were allowed to have one small bedroom and share kitchen facilities with Mrs. McCullough, a dear old soul. She would do her cooking and then she'd adjourn to her sitting room, while we took over

the kitchen. Her sitting room was right next to our little bedroom and she had a habit of rocking back and forth in her chair and burped, half the night through it seemed. So poor Shirley was stuck in this one little room. I at least, was going to the office each day. Prior of that in Virden, where I had first taken her, we had an upstairs suite in a house, it consisted of a little kitchen and a bedroom, with a hot plate to cook on, running water, it ran if I ran down to the well out in the backyard and got the water and carried it upstairs and carried the dirty water down. An outdoor biffy and so on. This was kind of a change for a little girl from Medicine Hat. Mind you her father was a station agent for the railroad, so she had lived in small towns and knew about this sort of thing, so she handled it beautifully. And we made some good friends on those crews. In those days, Manitoba and Saskatchewan were deemed a little too difficult to work in the winter time because of the extended winter periods and a fair amount of snow. So the crews were shipped back to Alberta by rail in the fall and let's see, I wound up with a GSI crew up in Edmonton. There again, our offices were in the old number 1 hangar at the Edmonton Municipal Airport, which was quite convenient. That turned out to be one of the coldest winters for many a year and the crew spent half their time trying to get the truck started in the morning and keeping them going during the day. We worked over an area that turned out to be the Acheson oil field at that time, which we had trouble defining seismically because of near surface conditions. So we did a supplemental structure drilling program and firmed up the structure and it turned out to be a reef, which was quite prolific. That same winter we did a hot shot job over to Redwater. Redwater had just been discovered the year before, and the first Crown sale was coming up.

DF: We've got to stop there so when we start the next tape, we'll start with Redwater.

End of tape.

Side 2

DF: We'll start with Redwater, and if you could start by saying what year it is and why you were sent to Redwater. Go ahead.

EF: This would be the fall and winter of 1948-49. I think Redwater was discovered in '48 and as I started to mention, the first Crown sale was coming up over parts of the general Redwater area and very little was known by most companies about the structure, other than Imperial Oil, who discovered it. So various seismic crews were honing in on that area to shoot lines across the Crown parcels, to get some idea of what they would be worth in terms of bidding. So we were giving the word to hot shot over there, hot shot meaning you don't move your headquarters, you just go over on a day by day basis. You can sort of commute back and forth or live over there temporarily. So we did our shooting and mapped the thing and came up with a fairly decent understanding of what lay beneath these Crown lands that were coming up. But our head office, in Calgary, I guess they were a little dubious about whether we'd get the information in time or not, so in the meantime, a fellow by the name of Cec Cheshire, who had Canadian Exploration

Company, a small seismic outfit, had gone in there and shot what was probably the first speculation surveys ever run in Alberta, to my knowledge, over these same Crown lands and came up with a map or maps and a package, which he was selling for \$10,000 a pop to whatever oil companies were interested. I don't know how many he sold but I know my company spent \$10,000 on it, which was a lot of money in those days. You could run a seismic crew for a month on \$10,000. But anyhow, we were a little miffed because they went over our head and got this information for \$10,000, when we had already got it for them as part of our job. Anyhow I don't recall how it came out, whether our company acquired any of those lands or not. After . . . I guess it was in early '49. . . once again, after the winter was over in Edmonton, I got transferred to Calgary, where I became sort of a Geophysical Supervisor. I used to go out and visit various seismic crew, company seismic crews for a day or two at a time, but basically living in Calgary and doing mapping and interpretation in the Calgary office. About that time, the company decided to really go into Manitoba in a big way, to map all these Crown lands that they had acquired. So I wound up being transferred to Brandon, where we set up an interpretative office. We had five seismic crews working for the company, all in southwestern Manitoba and all reporting to our office in Brandon. So we had quite a substantial office force there, of, we called them computers in those day, these were people, not machines. The records would come into us the day after they were shot, from the various crews. They'd be driven in or come in by train or however. Our staff of interpreters would go to work on them and plot the data and put it on maps and we'd contour the maps and if there was anything interesting, we'd pass the word on to Calgary. Otherwise they pretty well left us alone and we did all the crew programming, decided where to send them. And the crews were based in different little towns in southern Manitoba. So we covered a lot of ground and did a lot of work there for . . . I was there for about five years I think. Then we gradually brought in geologists and started drilling wells on some of the structures that we had turned up. The Scallion field comes to mind as one that we worked on.

Video #08:05:20

#051 DF: What was the next major change in your career then, you were out on the field doing this supervisory work?

EF: Yes. After that 4 or 5 years in Brandon, that took us up to 1955, I was transferred back to Calgary and became the Administrative Supervisor for the Geophysical Department. We had a Chief Geophysicist and an Administrative Geophysicist, myself and a Technical Supervisor, both of us reporting to the Chief Geophysicist. So I stayed at that for a number of years and that involved, mostly administrative work rather than technical, which was a bit of a change, not necessarily unpleasant. And worked under a couple of different Chief Geophysicists and along about 1966, I think it was, Roger Angus, who had been a Party Chief on one of the seismic that I had supervised in Manitoba, had gone off and left Western Geophysical and started up a program of speculative shooting, over the recently discovered area of. . . there goes the memory again. . . it was the Rainbow Lake area. One of the relatively minor companies in town had discovered a reef in this Redwater [Rainbow] area, which was quite prolific, so everybody started honing in on

that area. So Roger Angus came out with the idea of putting out a couple of seismic crews, sort of on spec and shooting over again, Crown lands, which would subsequently come up for bid in due course. So this became quite popular. It meant that a lot of the major companies didn't have to send their own crews in to do it, they'd just buy the data that we had acquired. So we had quite a staff there doing the shooting and interpretation. Roger persuaded me to come over and do the selling of the program. I was there on an independent basis, I set up my own little company but supervised the selling of the data for the group. And it went very well for about a year and then. . .more and more other companies got into it and the majors started doing more of their own work and we moved off to another area and worked there for awhile, but it gradually faded out, so I thought that would be a good time to get back into interpretation of geophysics. So I hung out my shingle as a consultant.

#084 DF: What year?

EF: That was 1967 I think, >67 or >68. >67 was actually the year that I was CSEG President. Anyhow I worked at that for several years. During that time we started up a company called, CDP, Computer Data Processors. Roy Lindseth and Bud Coutt were principals in it and they came around to some of us and got us to invest in this new company, which we did and set up the first digital data processing system in Calgary. I continued my consulting at that time, but I was on the Board of Directors of CDP and the company was fairly successful for awhile. At one point they were having trouble with the processing part of the operation, so they asked me to come over as Manager of the Data Processing Centre. Of course, I knew nothing about the intricacies of computers and all the equipment. In those days the main computer we had took up probably a room about this size and we had several smaller satellite computers. Something was always going wrong, breaking down or the photographic end of it would go sour, so you spent half your time appeasing clients as to why the data wasn't being cranked out as quickly as it was supposed to be. So that was rather hairy there for awhile. I don't know how long I was involved in that. That was >67, >68 and at one point, Bow Valley Industries was one of our shareholders and they had taken on an operation in Sumatra. They were sending in a seismic crew and they wanted somebody to go over and be based in Jakarta and supervise the crew in Sumatra and so on and do a few other things for them. They had a number of different industries that they wanted to promote over there so they asked me if I'd like to take it on. I said, sure, why not, I've never been to Indonesia. So I headed off over there. A seismic crew in that part of the world consisted of about 400 people. They had all these little brown bodies, each one would carry a geophone, another would carry a drill bit and pieces of drilling rigs. Everything was in swamps. So I visited the crew several times but I wasn't very good at walking. . . they set up little bridges that consisted of a pole, maybe that big around, across a ravine and you had to kind of. . . I was younger then, I could do it, but I wouldn't want to try it now. The crew office was in southern Sumatra in a little town called Suban Riggi, which I won't bother spelling for you. I would fly from Jakarta to Powenbang in Sumatra and they'd pick me up in a jeep there and drive out to the crew office, which was quite a decent little set up. They had a cook and all the rest of it and

spent a few days and make sure everything was going okay then back to Jakarta to do other things.

Video #08:13.51:03

#126 During that period I learned a little bit about Canadian government bureaucracy. I don't know if this is of interest or not but on my way over to Indonesia, I made plans to stop in Tokyo, to visit the Canadian embassy there and get the commercial commissar or whatever they call him and see if he would introduce me to several businesses that might be of interest to what Bow Valley had to sell. I arrived there and went to the embassy and asked for the chap looking after business opportunities. He wasn't available, he was showing a delegation of Canadian business people around Tokyo. Fine, that's what he was there for. So I went on to Jakarta and got settled there and a few days after arrival I went to the Canadian Embassy in Jakarta to see the commissioner there, I can't remember what the title was, and he was a young fellow, actually from Calgary, a very go hung type of guy. I told him what Bow Valley services were available and could he maybe, take me around to some of the people that were related to these kind of industries. Well, he was sorry, he couldn't do that for the next few days because he had this delegation of business people that he was showing around. It turned out to be the same group that had been in Tokyo. I think it was later that afternoon, I was sitting out in front, on the balcony of the hotel in Indonesia where I was living. Along comes our hero leading a group of delegates from Canada, who turned out to be Canadian government employees from Ottawa. A nice little boondoggle field trip. And he was carrying their luggage and getting them settled in the hotel and rushing back and forth. So I was a little miffed at this. I thought well, this guy is here to help Canadian businesses get contacts over there, not to show his fellow civil servants a good time. So in a bit of a huff, I went back to the embassy and talked to the embassy head, what are we going to call him, the Ambassador, who was a very fine gentleman. I told him my sad story of frustration and he was very sympathetic and he said, he'd see what he could do. So I went back to the hotel and Decker Stewart, who was another Calgarian, who was GSI's supervisor for the whole area, based in Singapore, GSI was the contractor we were using. He was in town so we got together and discussed the operation over in Sumatra, went into the bar for a bin tang baru, a local beer. You always ordered a satu bin tang baru, one beer without ice. You didn't dare take the ice because you didn't know where it came from. So anyway we're sitting there having a nice little visit, in comes this gung ho commissioner kid, practically on his hands and knees, and he came in apologizing profusely. He had obviously had his tail set on fire by the Ambassador. So he offered to do just about anything short of committing murder for us. He did eventually show me around a little bit but nothing too much came of it. But we got quite a kick out of how our government people spend part of their time at least, helping each other rather than the ones they are supposed to help. But I digress. Anyhow that operation carried on. I guess I was there about 6 months. Quite a different style of living and work. The heat was very oppressive, the heat and the humidity. It takes you quite awhile to adjust to that. Fortunately most places had air conditioning, except when you went to the field. We finished the job there and I brought

all the data back to Calgary and spent a few months here in Calgary as the consultant on the job, interpreting the data, and mapped it and turned out a report for Bow Valley and submitted it. They subsequently went into the area and drilled on one of the structures and found some oil, which was kind of gratifying. At that point, I went back to my own consulting operation, which I followed for several years and then a friend who was working over in Libya came back on leave. He was working for Occidental out of Bakersfield, California. They had several seismic crews in Libya and an office in Tripoli. He said, we're looking for geophysicists, would you be interested. I said, what the heck, things were kind of quiet in Calgary at that time, that was about 1975, a bit of a down turn. It was the first time that the Liberal government had started to interfere with things here. This was before the NEP but it was kind of a minor version of it. So a number of companies were leaving Calgary, going back to the States and people were leaving, so I thought, well this is a good time to try something different, so Shirley and I went over to. . . I went first and Shirley joined me later and set up housekeeping in Tripoli. I had always told her that someday I'll get you a very fine home on the Mediterranean, a villa, oh yeah, sure. But we did have a villa, it wasn't quite on the Mediterranean, it was a few blocks off. So we set up housekeeping there. It was quite nice for the ladies there, it wasn't like Saudi, where they had to wear veils and stay in the compounds. The women were free to drive and go pretty well anywhere. So she and several of the other wives, they had a pretty good time, lots of shopping and going down to the beach. Nice beaches there, beautiful beaches.

Video #08:21.41:18

#206 DF: We just have about five minutes left so if you could take us from Tripoli to Pan Canadian and then into your retirement fairly quickly?

EF: Okay. I spent >75-76 in Libya and then declined to renew a contract for another year. I thought two years was enough, came back and was uncertain what to do, whether to renew my consulting business or look for something else. At that point I ran into Lou Stevens on the street one day, Lou had been an ex-Shell geophysicist, was now Manager of the U.S. operation for Pan Canadian. He said, we're looking for geophysicists Ed, would you be interested, I said, sure, why not. So I went to work there as a geophysicist and became an Exploration Superintendent for what we called the U.S. Northern Division, which took in most of the western states. At that time Pan Canadian had a pretty big operation going in the States but we ran it from Calgary. We had a couple of satellite offices, one in Houston and one in Denver, but most of us stayed in Calgary and flew back and forth. I eventually became the Manger of the U.S. Northern Division. We made a lot of contacts down there, got into a lot of joint venture operations, had some success in the Sacramento Valley, with gas discoveries. Along about the early 80's, the company, in its wisdom, decided they would staff up the operation with Americans, which made sense, rather than having us travel back and forth. So that gradually came to be. I carried on as the Manager of the one division for awhile, until they got all their own people, all their ducks in a row. So I segued back into the Canadian operation and became Exploration Superintendent for central Alberta. That=s what I did for the last several

years, until I retired. At age 65, I was ready to go. After 40 odd years in the oil business. As I told people, they would say, are you still consulting Ed, I=d say, no, what are you doing, I=m not doing much of anything, I said, when I was little, my mother told me what to do, I went to school, the teachers told me what to do, then I went to university, the professors told me what to do. Then I got jobs, my bosses told me what to do, I consulted, my clients told me what to do, I said, now, the only one that can tell me what to do is my wife and I try to stay clear of her from time to time. So the retirement has worked out fine, I=ve not been very active in any do-gooder sense but I did a lot of that along the way. I was in Kinsmen and I was an elder at Riverview United Church and a Social Director of the Stampede Board for a few years, this was all before retirement. So it was my choice just to take life easy. We=ve done a fair amount of traveling and enjoy a nice, pleasant, quiet life.

#249 DF: Any regrets, things you wish you might have done along the way?

EF: Not really, in many ways I think I was quite fortunate in being in the right place at the right time. One regret I had, which turned out to be a good thing it didn=t come to pass, when I was in high school, I graduated from high school in >38, then went off to university and the war started. A number of my friends were signing up for the Air Force and so forth, coming back to the town in their smart little uniforms and looking quite sharp, oh boy this would be nice. So I thought well, maybe I should try for the Air Force, so I went down to the recruiting place and they checked me over and laughed and sent me on my way. I=d had polio when I was about a year and a half old, so I didn=t have much strength in my right side and I also wore glasses, so I wasn=t a prime choice for air crew. Which is probably just as well because a number of those friends never did come back. Later on, at university I managed to talk my way into Canadian Officer=s Training Core, as a private, just to sort of get the feel of it. The campus doctor didn=t think I should do it, but I said, I=m pretty healthy, okay, if you want, so I did and spent a couple of seasons at that, tromping around on route marches and taking Bren guns apart and putting them together again and freezing my ears off, walking from the armories on university avenue back to my rooming house. No, regrets. Switching over to geology as I did, from chemistry, that was I think a great leap forward, as far as I was concerned, rather than working in smelly labs. I=d had a fair amount of that. In fact, the summer that I graduated from high school, I went down to work in Sarnia for Imperial Oil in their research lab as a lab boy, washing test tubes and so on. Got another further taste of . . . but at that point I still thought I wanted to be a chemist. But then switching to geology as I did, at the time that I did, if it had been a few years later I=m sure I would never have had the opportunity to come west because they were filling all their hiring requirements from western universities by that time. So that got me out west and got me a nice bride and a lot of fine experiences, a lot of good friends. No, I can=t say I have any regrets.

DF: Wonderful. On behalf of the Petroleum Industry Oral History Project and the Canadian Society of Exploration Geophysicists, I=d like to thank you for talking to us about your career and we=ll end the interview at this time. Thank you very much.

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March 2000

Side 2

EF: My pleasure.