

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Fred Kidd

INTERVIEWER: Susan Birley

DATE: June 1983

Note on Tape 1 says "Completed Jun 16/92"

SB: We're at the home of Fred Kidd in Cochrane, Susan Birley interviewing and it's May 13th, 1983. I wonder if we can just begin with you telling us where you were raised and how you first started out in the industry?

Tape illegible.

SB: Could we start again, when you were talking about the horses and the Indians. Just talking about how you were growing up and your father owned a store.

FK: Sure. Well, my recollections of the early days there were of course, the Indians coming and tying up their horses behind the store. There was a regular place and all tied to trees and there would be lots of them there. Then they'd come in and trade their furs for groceries. Sampson Beaver was a great friend of my dad's and quite often in the summer he'd bring in some rainbow trout that he'd caught in a creek that's actually called Kidd Creek, on the south side of the Saskatchewan River. Of course, our recreation then, in those days, with no road or anything, was riding horses and going out in the hills and fishing and hunting in the fall. Everybody had horses. During those times, which were in '35, '36, '37 and so on, it was during the Depression and the miners were, everybody was out in the hills. The miners lived on fresh meat too, as well as the Indians. Everybody looked the other way, the Forest Rangers knew that in those hard times they weren't going to get anywhere trying to prosecute any of the miners.

SB: Would the Indians be living a fairly traditional lifestyle then too?

FK: Oh, the Indians were living an absolute traditional lifestyle, except that they were getting flour and some of the groceries that they I guess originally weren't used to, but their diet was basically meat and they were hunting. There was no welfare at all. And it was sad in a way, because they weren't getting the medical care that they get these days either. I can see now that there was deaths from consumption and some unnecessary deaths from pneumonia and so on, that wouldn't have occurred now. So there's pluses and minuses in the way things were. So it wasn't all that great. That was sort of the background of my early life then and as you can understand, horses and packing and so on were second nature to me. But in about 1937, I guess when I was 15 or 16, a little earlier than that, I guess it was '37, the oil industry came to Nordegg in the form of. . there had always been a lot of geologists in there because the rocks were exposed. I remember Pete Sanderson came up, he was a well known geologist, an old time geologist.

#060 SB: Was he working for any. .? .?

FK: Yes, he was working for Home Oil Company when he came up there. And Jim Lowry was the President of Home Oil Company at that time. They explored and commenced drilling a well in 1937 out in Chungo??? Creek, which is about 30 miles north of Nordegg. They built a road up there. I don't know what the road would cost now but it cost \$25,000 then for 30 miles of road. Jim Lowry was a character, I was always astounded, he drove a pretty big car that he moved in by, I guess in those days, the road wasn't built, people had cars in Nordegg but they came in by train. They took them out to Rocky Mountain House on a flat car on the railway. They had equipment of course, for drilling they had to bring in that way. And Lowry had a big car and he'd get in it and race the motor, I remember that. There's lots of stories about Jim Lowry, as the man who started the Home Oil Company and I'm sure you'll encounter a lot of those. My dad was great friends with the old Indians, he used to go hunting with them and of course, in the early days, travelled with them and so on. He was a great friend of Silas Abraham and Sampson Beaver. I remember Wednesday afternoon the store was closed. I don't know how old I was but I came back up the hill and here's two saddle horses running around loose, right by the house there, we lived up on the top of the hill. I went in and here's my dad and the two old Indians sitting there drinking whiskey. Of course, this was strictly forbidden, but old Sampson said, all right for old fellow, no good for young fellow.

SB: You worked with some of these Indians later on, packing, did you?

FK: No, I didn't work with any of the Stony Indians, that was Iroquois, actually up in Entrance???, later on I worked with. The Plants outfitted us for one and they'd been Iroquois originally but they'd come with the Hudson Bay people but then they'd married Cree women.

SB: So you felt that Pete Sanderson influenced you to begin with did you?

FK: Yes, Pete Sanderson and Jack Webb was another geologist there. It seemed to come to be the thing to do. When I finished high school, well actually the year I finished high school in Nordegg. . .

SB: What year was that?

FK: That was 1938. I was born in July so I was still 16 when I finished high school. That summer they were doing topographical surveying around Nordegg, Topographical Surveys of Canada and I guess they lost one of their men, he quit or something and I went to work for Topographical Survey, for Fred Duverney???. Topographical Survey of Canada should have a history written of it, because they're the toughest men I've ever seen. They were used to climbing mountains and some of their exploits, really. . .I've never read a history of it but it should be written. Anyway I'd been riding horses all the time and I was pretty hard but I hadn't been doing much climbing. The first day on the job, I can remember that, I was the rod man, and they surveyed then with plane tables and alidades and rods. I guess I don't need to explain the technical aspects of that.

#107 SB: There was a lot of equipment to carry around was there?

FK: The fellow that ran the plane table, he carried a plane table. It was a table set on three legs that you drew maps on and the alidade was in his arm and then the rod man, he carried a

long rod. And you sighted to the rod and you could measure by the difference between the hairs on the alidade as to how far it was away. And then you drew the line, the correct direction and then you marked it off and you made a map as you went. So we were right in the mountains then and the first day out we were up and down hills all day. By golly, I figured, this wasn't like riding horses at all. I spent all summer doing that with Fred Duverney. And he prided himself on how little it cost to feed us so we shot all the wild meat we ate and old Don Ebson told me at the end of the year, it had cost 36 cents a day to feed each one of us. Now this meant that in the morning when you got up and we always got up about 6:00, we were out in the field by 7:00 in the morning, it didn't matter what time you got back as long as it was late. I'm not exaggerating this, it may sound like an exaggeration. But when you got up for breakfast you'd take a quick look and see how many prunes there were and you knew how many you were going to get. That's all you were going to get too. No such thing as the fancy grub now. But we had plenty to eat. But everything was dry. The cook made all the bread of course, and everything like that. No such thing as having jam on the table, you had some jam on your sandwiches. You had dessert but there was no, well, to explain it and I'll carry on and tell you what next happened. Went that year to the University of Alberta. My plan was to graduate in Mining Engineering and to take further geology, which I never did, I just never seemed to get around to anymore than the Mining Engineering degree. That was '38 and the total enrollment in the University of Alberta was 1,800 people. And I noticed that the total enrollment in many of the high schools in Calgary is 2,000 or something. Viscount Bennett I know has 2,000 or more, or was.

SB: Was Calgary much of a town then?

FK: Calgary in those days was about 90,000 I think, in '38 and there was maybe. . it had a different flavour than it does now somehow, but I guess that changes with time. But Edmonton was about 100,000. That's where I went to university of course, in Edmonton. Dr. John Allen, he was a friend of my father's, there was another man that influenced me to take geology. He was the head of the Geological Department in the University of Alberta and I'd had him out in the bush on some jaunt where I packed for him for a trip. I remember we got lost coming up on a big swamp and had to back track and the old man was pretty tired when we got into camp that night. That's maybe a little disjointed but. .

SB: How many people were usually on these survey crews.

FK: On the Topographical Survey we'd have a cook and a packer and the Chief and about 4 or 5 assistants. And we got paid \$2.50 a day, which was big wages, everybody was happy to get it. The next year, I'd worked for Duverney that year and the next year was 1939 and times weren't any better, really. That fall the war started but still in the spring of '38 we were still deep in the Depression. I learned about politics then because Fred Duverney wrote me and said that he'd really be happy to have me working for him again but everybody was using political pressure and that my name was at the bottom of the list and if I didn't have any pull I wasn't going to get a job that year. So my dad was still a friend of Martin Nordegg, who was now living in Ottawa and was an advisor to, I guess it was to the federal government and knew all the big bugs there. I got a letter about a week later from Duverney saying, I wonder what happened, your name is now at the top of the list.

So I got another job at \$2.50 a day that summer with Duverney. And we had it pretty tough, the first part of the summer was pretty tough. One of the things we did was we climbed mountains and took photographs of mountains and we had glass plates for the photographic equipment and that equipment weighed about 40 pounds. So Duverney was the Chief, he carried the lunches and I carried the 40 pounds. And he was a little short guy and I remember being scared to death climbing some of those damn hills and one day it was hot and there was a shale bank coming down, there was a 2,000' drop below it, you had to scramble across that shale bank so you wouldn't slip. My god, the adrenaline really flows when you get that. I've never really enjoy heights. I didn't enjoy heights then and I don't enjoy them any more, I'd avoid that if I could. But that was the way it was. So we put cairns up all along the big horn range there and it was pretty tough. In the latter part of the season I remember Duverney saying, well boys, you worked pretty hard the first part of the season, now we're coming to the last half of the season, things are going to be better. We're going to have jam and honey on the table all the time and you can eat as much as you want.

#180 SB: What made him change his mind?

FK: Well, he figured we'd had it pretty tough and I guess he figured some of the other Chiefs on some of the other Topographical Surveys were feeding a little better than he was, so he was going to loosen up and go to 40 cents a day or so. So that was '39. That fall of course, the war started. I worked in '49 for Brian Dingle, I don't know, you'll maybe interview him, he got to be a pretty big bug in Imperial Oil. Same sort of work along the Saskatchewan River that year. We worked south of the Saskatchewan, south of Saunders Creek. I remember, Brian was about 6'4" and very tall and very thin and not too wide. And of course, I tell you, he carried the alidade and the plane table and in the fall that year, I remember we were coming back along a trail and it was all trees, very narrow trail, all trees, going straight ahead. I was walking along behind, kind of late in the afternoon, 6 or 7 I guess, and I looked up and there was big bull moose coming down the trail towards us. I said, look out Brian. He looked up and he threw his alidade one way and he went one side and I went the other side and I looked over and he's got a great big tree he can't get his arms around, trying to climb it and I've got a little thin one I'm trying to climb up. The moose just kept on going right between us.

SB: Were there any other people that worked with you on those early surveys, that carried on in the petroleum industry.

FK: Well, I'm thinking of that year with Brian. One of my very good friends, he carried on I guess, was a fellow called Rod Phipps. I don't think he carried on much in the petroleum industry but he was a flier in the Air Force and he died of a heart attack at 38 but he was a tremendous guy. He won several decorations as a flier, that was '40. Who else? No, I don't think of anybody. My brother Jim packed that year, in 1940, he packed for Dingle. We had a cook called Ken Thompson, the world's worst cook. [sounds like the tape stopped for a little here and some stuff was missed] Did we skip it, did we miss it?

SB: No, go ahead.

FK: Well, that's all right. Anyway, he got the mail and he came out and his face was red and

he said, this goddam wife of mine, you know what she's done, she's taken these damn kids to this damn dude ranch and she's paying to ride these goddamn horses.

SB: I guess it must have been difficult on the Survey, if you didn't like to ride.

FK: Well, he just put up with it. But as far as help was concerned, the calibre of field geologists, maybe my view is a little bit narrow but people that worked on the Geological Survey of Canada for years were far better field geologists, in my view, than people that I worked with from the United States. One of the finest field geologists that I knew, that I ever worked was Con Hague. He was a man that could walk along an outcrop and see more than anybody I know. And one thing, he was colour blind and it didn't seem to bother him too much. Of course, one of the indicators of marine sediments is glauconite and glauconite is generally green but it could be any colour. So he could pick that out just by its shape.

#240 SB: Pretty amazing. So you carried on working in the foothills area, up until what time?

FK: We carried on working in the foothills are til 1947. Well, this is through '46 and I guess I told you, well, not on this record, but I worked in '46 out of Fort St. John and that was quite a summer. I enjoyed it but I ended up by cutting my big toe off.

SB: Would you like to recount that episode?

FK: Okay. We started out at Fort St. John and we were outfitted by McKusker, who was well known up there. He was a surveyor to start with. And I think he was on the Topographical Survey, or I'm not sure whether it was Geological, it was Survey of Canada anyway. But he'd settled in Fort St. John and he outfitted us and our packer was an old fellow called Elmer Grey and Sam Nelson was his helper. And the man I worked with was a man called Austin Cliskey??? and we worked, went up the Halfway and then went north, across the Siganey??? Chief, on to the Prophet and on up the Musquaw, but on the Teshodi, we came into a forest fire and it really burned and the top had been burned off so that the horses were up to their belly, where there was no footing, in this burned over country. But there was grass along the creek. We camped along the creek and I remember the next day we decided we'd all go out and see how we were going to get out of this mess. And I took my ax, which I always kept sharp, I was very proud of my ability as an axeman. Anyway, I was out all day and coming home that night, I was coming down a dry wash and there was a small tree in the dry wash and I remember looking at that and saying, well, shall I jump over it or cut it. Hell, no, I'll just cut it. So I just kerchunked down through the tree and right through my big toe, slipped her off quick.

SB: You managed to get medical attention for it though?

FK: Yes. I got back to camp and we had sulfa powder there but what I did, there was moss there that I could find. I couldn't find a puffball because a dry puffball is the thing that will stop bleeding faster than anything. You put it right on the cut and it will stop the blood, it will coagulate and stop the blood immediately. Pretty near any kind of a flow I think, it's great stuff. But I found dry moss and put on it and wrapped my handkerchief around it. But we had sulfa powder in the camp but they figured they better take me out and get better medical attention, which they did. One of the boys rode out to the Fort

Nelson and they brought a plane in to Teshodi Lake and flew me out of there. The guy I worked with Austin Cliskey, I don't know where Austin is now. He worked for Chevron for years, all his life as a field geologist. He's retired now and I was trying to look him up, I don't know where he is. He's got his name still in the phone book in Calgary. He was a character, he was an extremist. I remember we were camped on the Prophet River and it was kind of a cool evening, we had a little tin stove in our tent. We stayed in one tent, both of us, and Austin had the stove going and when Austin had the stove going that meant it was white hot. I had pulled up my sleeping bag and I said, Austin, don't you think we've got too much fire. He said, too much fire, he went out and went down to the creek and got water and put it right out. That was Austin, he was famous for that. So that was the last summer and the next spring, Shell, after the discovery of Leduc, Shell moved and started working in New Brunswick. We all went, well, not all of us, some of us, Con Hague quit the company and Les Clark, who was the Chief Geologist then, quit the company. But I went east and Jim Scott went east and Austin Cliskey went east and Ian Crawford, I should have mentioned him too. We worked together, he was another geologist I worked with when we were working north of Entrance. We all went to New Brunswick, I guess to give the competition a two year head start.

#317 SB: Had they sort of given up on Alberta at that time?

FK: Well, their theory was that inland oil wasn't going to make them any money. They needed to be offshore, they needed to be near water transportation. And I guess, the other thing was that they'd spend less money in New Brunswick than they would have in Alberta. And this was the end of the war and Shell had great holdings in Venezuela, which they knew the oil was there and they needed money to exploit it. So they thought the thing to do was exploit the oil they knew they already had, so to heck with Alberta if necessary. But it was . . . that's the best explanation I can give for it.

SB: And how did things go in New Brunswick?

FK: Well, it was a wonderful place to do geology, just terrific. I thoroughly enjoyed it, lots of interesting geology, varied stratigraphy, lots of different structures, diapiric structures, salt, oil shales of course. So we worked, actually, we took our wives down there and most of us went to Ottawa first. We lived in Ottawa in the winter and went down to New Brunswick in the summer the first year and the second year I stayed all year down in New Brunswick, in Sussex and in Moncton. But I remember it was a real experience, travelling through all these old abandoned farms where there was fruit trees all over the place. But old apple trees don't give you very good apples if they haven't been cared for. But in '47, New Brunswick hadn't changed since 1929. Because in 1929 the Depression came along and then after the Depression was the war so from '29 to '47 nothing changed. We drilled five holes in New Brunswick. I remember one of the wells we were drilling, I lived in Sussex and I drove out to the well every day. I drove by about a 7 or 8 acre field, maybe even more, that's conservative to say it was 7 acre field, and one day a man came out with a scythe and started cutting that field by hand. And I used to stop and watch him in amazement. He cut the whole damn thing by hand with his scythe. So things were pretty . . . and horses and buggies still then. But it changed quickly after that. I liked the people, a

great place to work, but we didn't find any oil.

SB: So when did they decide to go back in to Alberta?

FK: 1949 they decided to come back into Alberta. And the man that was in charge of things down in New Brunswick was W. C. Gussow. And Norm Morrison worked there and Bob Brown, a geologist and we had 4 imports from Holland . . .

End of tape.

Tape 1 Side 2

FK: . . . that was when I was working out of Entrance, I think it was the summer of '45. James was an Eton boy, from . . . Eton's just near Windsor Castle. I've been to Windsor Castle and seen the boys with their stiff collars on. He wrote a copper plate hand and I guess J. D. MacGregor wrote a book about him called, Taxile to Tete Jaune Cache. But he wasn't the worlds greatest cook, and although J. D. MacGregor built him up pretty good, my opinion was that old Shand was pretty much of a tenderfoot. For all the years he'd spent in the bush it was hell to see him use an ax. Anyway, Shand had got enough money and this was about the 1st of September and he was going to quit and big Emma Nickerson came to cook for us, up at the Black Cat Ranch. We were drinking coffee there and the first thing Emma did was to start to make a pie, a lemon pie and she got out the old lemon squeezers, those glass squeezers that are corrugated and started squeezing the lemons. Old Shand looked over and said, my word is that what that's for, I thought it was an ashtray.

SB: ???

FK: No, he trapped in the winter. He stayed in Entrance, he'd been there forever, he'd been there when they were building the railroad through it actually, the Grand Trunk. It's gone now, it was on the north side of the Athabasca River. One of the things we did of course, there was a bridge across the Athabasca River with no guards on it, just a flat bridge, an old railway bridge and we used to ride our horses across there, these pack horses. I rode across there and it's got fixed up pretty good afterwards and by golly, I guess when you're younger you don't think about those things. I would hardly walk across it anymore now. I guess Susan, one of the other things I was telling you about in recollecting some of these days, was when we went up to Fort St. John. I talked about that a little bit, but Con Hague took me up there, to sort of start me off in the field trip. Con was as I told you, a first class geologist, pretty careful with the company's equipment. And we got into Dawson Creek and I guess we'd hit quite a bit of mud, pretty slow going and we bought some new chains for this car. It wasn't a very good car either, Shell car. They didn't give us the best to go out in the field. We started off from Dawson Creek and it went pretty good and then for a few miles we weren't going very well and Con said, Fred, do you think we've lost the chain. And I said, well, I don't know maybe, he said, well, let's stop and see. So we looked and he said, by golly we have, do you think we should go back and look for it. I

said, my god Con, we'll never find it in that mud. Con was still worried about this though and he was thinking about it he looked up and here along came a Model A Ford, just rolling along, coming towards us and he jumped up in front of Model A Ford and stopped the guy and said, say, if you see a chain back there, keep it. Well, that's just a few of the stories I recollect, going back.

SB: That was the time the Alaska Highway had just been built a few years before, when you travelled on it with Con Hague.

FK: Well, that's right. The Alaska Highway had just been built during the war and they hadn't put much gravel on that part of the highway. I guess there was a little but it was awful mud.

#039 SB: Did you use any of the airports that were built on the North ???, did that help you at all in getting to any of the field locations?

FK: No, we didn't use aeroplanes at all. We just went along with horses up, except when the plane came in to Teshodi Lake and took me out when I cut off my toe. I'll recollect maybe some of those as we go along but I guess we were up to about '49 weren't we.

SB: Yes. You said that Shell was about to move back into Alberta.

FK: Yes. Shell moved back into Alberta in 1949 and the man they put in charge is a man called E. G. Robinson, who is an old explorationist with Shell. He came here from Illinois, fairly short, very, very stout man. I guess you'd call him a very firm man, some people called him a bloody dictator. But I got along pretty good with old E. G. but he was a character, no doubt about that. He was a great man for getting acreage and we got a lot of acreage pretty early. One of the theories was, rightly or wrongly, I guess wrongly now was that the reef trend would continue up north of Redwater and we went as far north as we could get, went up on the Musquaw, on the Robiscow??? area, the Musquaw are we called it and had several million acres in there and did a lot of drilling. We didn't do any good on it but we drilled in that area. And it was a new era now, we were into seismic work. Of course, I should have mentioned that the Jumping Pound field originally was located on seismic work. It was a surface structure but it was the seismic lines over it that guided our drilling there. That's going back a little bit. Anyway in '49 we built a bit staff right quickly. A great number of people came in from all parts of the United States to work for Shell. Bill Allen was one of them, Ted . . . gosh, I'm going to have to remember some of these names as I go along. Rex McGeehee??? I think I've already mentioned. I think I'll just have to sit down and think through some of these names of some of the guys who came in.

SB: How many different departments were there at Shell at that time?

FK: We had the Production Department and the Exploration Department. Really, those were the primary departments and then we had various smaller departments, the Financial Department and so on. But those were the two major departments.

SB: And how many people do you think were involved all together then?

FK: We built up to a staff of 100 pretty quickly.

SB: Were they all working along the foothills area still?

FK: No, we covered the whole area pretty well. We tried to have an exploration on all fronts. Looking at the foothills and we had division geologists who were organized to look after various areas. And we got involved in the Peace River area pretty quickly, the Peace River fringing reef and had a little acreage around there. In fact we thought we had the very best part of the acreage, on the updip part of the Peace River reef, but we never found anything on that reef, it's been dry. I'd have to sit down and I'm sure my memory would come back if I started to think of some of the names that were involved with those people.

SB: So by say, the end of 1949-1950, you had quite a big acreage, you'd acquired a lot of acreage?

FK: Yes, we'd acquired a lot of acreage very quickly. Got back into the play as fast as we could. But the choice of the acreage, some parts we were going around the fringes. But still there was lots of area to explore, we weren't too late. Of course, like a lot of other people, there was a lot of acreage sales, reservations sales. We missed some of the good acreage by a few cents, such as the acreage that the [Cay Bob??] field is on now. But we found fields like Simonette and then later on, Virginia Hills field. We got a gas field up north of Peace River that's still operating there. What the heck's the name of it, see my memory is getting bad. Some of these things I'll have to think through I think.

#090 SB: You were saying before that in 1952 you were working with George Cormack?

FK: Oh yes. Well, actually, I have to get back to '49-'50 really. We were exploring in the Peace River area and the first well we drilled there was a well called Shell, Runaway Lake. And that was out, a little bit north but mostly east of Peace River town. And we were drilling that with an American drilling crew that didn't know the first thing about drilling in cold weather and '49-'50 was one of the coldest winters on record in that area. I remember going out to the drill site and I was sent up there to hire some people to be radio operators so we could communicate back with the office in Calgary. And I went out to that drill site and the ice was built up on the drill floor about 3' thick and icicles were all dripping down from the rig legs. We had an old boiler in there and there was a fireman feeding green poplar logs to that boiler, it was a real terrible operation. Just down the road, Commonwealth was drilling with everything enclosed and everything going well. Anyway, that night I came back, wondering what kind of an outfit we were running. I went into the beer parlour and here's a great big guy sitting there, introduced to him, his name was George Cormack. He'd come up from Venezuela, working for Shell down there. His background was that originally, George had been a trapper up on the Mackenzie River. He'd trapped up there for several years. Anyway he started talking and said, well, I'll tell you what I'm going to do, you'll never know that place in two weeks, tomorrow I'm going to go out and do this and the next day I'm going to do that. He said, we'll get her whipped into shape, you'll never know it. And I thought my gosh, another one of these big blowhards. But he wasn't, he did exactly everything he said he was going to do. So I have a great respect for him. He worked for Shell for years and retired not too long ago. But a guy that really did things. So that was '49-'50, Runaway Lake. I could tell

that story about Ed Hunt eh. Well, I guess the exploration business in the early stages particularly, before there was much sophistication, and maybe even later on, there's a great deal of luck involved. The thing to do is to have acreage, you can't do anything if you don't have acreage. One of the stories of course, is that the best field that Texaco had was the Bonnie Glen field. In 19. . I guess, just before the Leduc discovery, Imperial had drilled in southern Alberta and they drilled 300 dry holes. They decided to move north, they took out a reservation which is now Leduc, in that area and Texaco moved with them. Sort of a gentleman's agreement, they'd both do the exploration up there. Texaco took some acreage to the south of them and there was a gap in between. Ed Hunt, who was Texaco's manager then, said well, gosh, no point leaving that so he took the acreage in between and that turned out to be the Bonnie Glen field. So that's the way things go. I guess Ted Link of course, was the Chief Geologist with Imperial in those days. And he'd had experience which very few of us had at Norman Wells, so he knew what a reef was. And when they discovered Leduc he knew immediately that it was a reef. And of course, some other people that were a little more hard headed took a little more convincing. Is this a reef, what is a reef. So that was the start of it, but Ted knew right away, which I think was quite a feather in his cap to figure out the geology. But his background at Norman Wells had provided that for him. But I guess that. . . talking about luck, a true story but maybe an interesting one, is that Royal Dutch Shell has a little oil field called the Delft Oil Field, which is just south of the Hague. Not a very important field but it is a little oil field. And what happened there was that, there was a big trade fair to be held in Delft and Shell were asked to put a display in that trade fair. They said, what we'll do is we'll put a rig there and we'll actually have it drilling to show people how a rig drills, that'll be our display. Which they did. Then of course, they had a geologist on the rig, everything was run proper and it was drilling away and the geologist called in and said, say, we've got some oil in this. That's how the Delft field was discovered.

#147 SB: So you never really know whether you're in the right place or not until you start drilling.

FK: No, that's right. I guess the other story about luck was in 1952, there was a group called the Northern Foothills Agreement. There was Texaco, Gulf, Mobil and Shell involved in that and originally there was 5, originally it was Imperial but in '52 I think Imperial had backed out. Yes they had. So the 4 of us, on the prompting of E. G. Robinson, who as I say, was a great guy to get acreage, decided that we should take a bunch of acreage in the northeastern British Columbia. The rule was then, where you could take 250,000 blocks, as long as they were separated by 9 miles. And also were that you had to go out and stake, put a corner post on the corner of your block. So George Cormack and I went up there, flew in an old Barclay Droll. . what was the name of the pilot, he was an Associated pilot. Gosh, I need a memory course here, I'll think of it after a while. Anyway, we landed and we had to have snowshoes, there was deep snow. And we'd land and we'd go and cut a tree down and put up a post and then take off again. But about March 25th, things had melted pretty much so that we were at Fort Nelson, that was our headquarters, and we couldn't land anymore. We were on skis, too wet. So I said, we haven't staked anything

here, we can be 9 miles away and stake a block around Fort Nelson. So I remember going out on the road, saying now, which way will I stake, shall I stake the block to the north or shall I stake it to the south. I thought, well hell, closer to home is better. I staked to the south. Turns out nothing has been discovered on it, if I'd staked to the north I'd have got the Coola Creek gas field. So there's another. . . . But when you don't know anything, luck plays a great part.

SB: I guess that now it's a little different, you don't take as much into chance when you're exploring do you?

FK: Well, I think there's a lot more information now. A lot more wells have been drilled and if the acreage is good it probably goes for a fair price. But I think that there's smaller plays now. But still there's lots of opportunity for luck still in Alberta. But there's been a lot of exploration in Alberta. But it's all comparative of course.

SB: So in the 50's, when seismic work was really becoming sophisticated. . .

FK: Well, it started, it wasn't all that sophisticated then. It was still in the 50's, I guess it was the 60's it started to become more sophisticated. But in the 50's we were still single coverage seismic work and you drilled a hole and shot off a charge. And then you looked at the records to see what kind of records you got. We'd have people come up from. . we had some advisors from California still and from New York now, because they moved to New York, called Willy Haffner was one, and some other people. They loved to go out in the field and say, well, try another hole at 50' and see what kind of records we get. Now that's all gone by the board because it's all laid out before you go out to shoot. Where they're shooting with this multiple coverage, you shoot so many holes and you just go ahead and shoot out the pattern. You're not going to change anything as you go. So it took some of the romance out of it for some of the early boys. But in the 60's I guess, in the late 60's you started shooting where you got multiple sub-surface coverage, what they called stacking. So that you shot over the same area a number of times and then stacked it and stacked it, using computers and visual methods of seeing it visually and stacking the data one on top of the other. The assumption being that the errors would cancel out. I guess that was the 60's development, it wasn't the 50's. But the 50's of course, there was a lot of seismic work done and a tremendous amount of lines. The big areas up north that were wooded, like in Musquaw as I talked about and in the north, it was a heck of a lot of work cutting these lines and shooting the lines and bulldozing lines. Just miles and miles and miles of them.

#211 SB: So in the 50's did you carry on working for Shell in the field?

FK: No, I was in the office then. I worked in Calgary from '49 to '52 and then I moved to Edmonton as the Edmonton division manager, Exploration Manager from '52 to '54. That was the time that we found the Simonette field and I guess the Virginia Hills field too. Then '54 to '55 I went to the Hague for a year, enjoyed that. Then I came back and I was in Regina from '55 to '58, along the Midale trend and it was a stratigraphic play pretty well. There, there was very little seismic being used, by us anyway and I don't think many other people. You were just on a stratigraphic play, a pinch out of the Mississippian carbonate updip. Regina was about 90,000 people then and I guess it's

grown quite considerably, but enjoyed it. Cold as hell in the winter, hot in the summer. I guess chronologically then, '58 to '65 I spent in Edmonton as the Edmonton Exploration Manager. Then we were getting more sophisticated with land department and people with more specialized jobs. Still the same thing, basic principle applied though, if you didn't have the acreage you weren't going to do much. So I guess in looking back, the mistakes we made were being out bid for acreage by other people. Then in '65 I came down to Calgary as the Exploration Manager for Shell for Canada. And I carried on in that til 1972. Then from '72 til '73 I was in charge of coal and minerals for Shell. That's kind of a quick synopsis.

SB: So what was happening with Shell during that period, was it expanding its operations? Like you mentioned coal and other mineral exploration, had that been going on for quite awhile?

FK: No. I initiated their entry into coal and minerals. I guess about '72 we were like a lot of other oil companies, we were making quite a lot of money and we had the money to spend and we were looking for new opportunities. Of course, there's lots of coal in Alberta and the thought then, maybe even more than it is now, was that our energy was going to run out and we were going to turn out. We looked at coal both from a steam coal point of view and from the metallurgical coal or the coal used to smelt iron, coking coal. We also thought there were opportunities in the mineral business. That was started in '72 and actually, the minerals business, they just closed it down in '82. But they'd been pretty successful. But that again, it was started because of having funds and it was closed because they were running short of funds. But we're still carrying on pretty successfully in the coal business. Shell is shipping coal to Korea from their Lime Creek mine down in the Fernie basin. That's a steam coal situation, they're developing a coking coal mine also down there. We had a lot of holdings, I expect they still have, through the plains of Alberta. We were hopeful that maybe even underground coal mining might be of value.

#270 SB: You stayed with the company until 1975. Did you notice any changes around '73-'74 when the OPEC crisis was going on?

FK: Yes. That's an interesting one because about '73 was when they jumped the . . . about '71 we had one of the Directors from the Hague visited us and I remember this very clearly. He just had one message, he said, the Arabs are becoming more sophisticated and they're knowing what the score is. Exactly what's going to happen is they're going to see that they've got a great resource there, they can make it last a long time if they raise the price and that's exactly what they're going to do, they're going to raise the price. This was in 1971. I remember of people sitting back there and saying, oh what a pipe dream that is, but he was right on the money. It was logical wasn't it. Raise the price and reduce the supply and get the same income.

SB: In 1975 you took quite a change of occupation.

FK: Yes. I thought well, maybe I was getting a little. . . thought it was time for a change, to rejuvenate myself a little bit and I saw the opportunity to go into politics. It's hard to reconstruct precisely why I did it but I think the major reason was, I wanted a change and the opportunity was there. So I became the MLA for Banff-Cochrane. And it was a very

exciting time, I enjoyed it. But I just served one term. Following that term I thought, well, I'll go onto something also.

SB: And at what point did you become involved with AOSTRA???

FK: I became involved as soon as I went into politics. I was on the Board of ??? from '57 to '83, I've been on it for 8 years. The first as an MLA representative, which they have and then appointed after I'd stopped being an MLA as just a Board member.

SB: Could you just outline what you know of how they began and everything involved in it?

FK: AOSTRA was started in 1975. The provincial government thought that the development of our vast heavy oil resources and oil sands needed stimulus and that they were prepared to put funds into stimulating industry activity, primarily into further exploration of the oil sands. Both means of better exploiting the surface mining but really initially, primarily the ones that were too deep to surface mine, that you need to drill a well down and put steam down or a fire with combustion or whatever. Because only about 5% of the reserves, which is a respectable figure, can be strip mined down to a figure of about 150 ????. So you've got 90 or 95% of it that you have to recover in situ. And the provincial government put \$100 million into that, started us off with \$100 million budget. So we really were given \$100 million and said, go ahead and stimulate and we had to develop our own guidelines. One of the basic guidelines we thought was, we should be partners with industry. But we wanted to own the technology because we wanted to have that technology useable by anybody that wanted to use it. But we also wanted industry to run the thing. We didn't want to be in the business of managing it. We wanted to keep a small outfit, which we did. So we entered into agreements with Shell, with Amoco, Shell at Peace River, Amoco at Gregoir Lake, British Petroleum Company at Cold Lake, a number of other companies, smaller ventures. We also thought that we needed to stimulate pure research into better means of exploiting or developing our oil sands or heavy oils. So we provided funds for research by universities, at universities, which we're still doing and I think we've stimulated activity there to a large degree. We're still funding a lot of those and continuing. As time went on we saw that not only the oil sands, but the heavy oils, such as at Lloydminster, needed stimulus. So we went into arrangements with various companies to do steam flooding in those heavy oil fields, combustion tests. Combustion tests are where you pump air down in the simplest form and it either self-ignites or you ignite it, you'll burn off the heavy ends and drive the light end to heavy. There will be water in there too, it will form steam as it goes ahead. Those are long term projects. Just the other day though, at the Peace River insitu plant, Shell produced their millionth barrel of oil. I guess that BPO has produced 500,000 barrels of oil so far. It's long term and we need to improve them. We also got involved in . . .

End of tape.

Tape 2 Side 1

SB: It's June 16th, 1983 and I'm back interviewing Fred Kidd at his home in Cochrane. I was wondering if we could run back to a part that we missed in the first interview, when and

where you were born and raised?

FK: Sure Susan. I was born in Nordegg, Alberta, 1921, and finished high school there. In those days in Nordegg there was just the train came in 3 times a week, there was no road. So it was big excitement to see the train come in and pretty near everyone in town went up to see the train come in. That came in at 7:30 at night. Actually it left at 7:30 in the morning from Nordegg and it got into Red Deer and 2:00 in the afternoon. That was a total of about 110 miles or something like that. You had lunch at Eckville, the train stopped and everybody got out and had lunch. I remember we used to go out to Sylvan Lake, to my aunts cottage there. Once I went by myself and my aunt. . my mother died when I was 12 years old and I think maybe my mother was alive this time but anyway, either it was my mother or my aunt packed a lunch. As soon as I got on the train I got rid of that, I was going to go in and eat with the guys, walk in and not have that damn lunch. Anyway, everybody had horses. Actually during the Depression, the mines were only working 1 or 2 days a week, so everybody was out camping in the hills and shooting game for fresh meat. It was a great place to be raised. My dad had a whole bunch of horses, he'd brought in a bunch of horses in 1917. I think he bought them from a fellow near Sundre, called Dick Brown, they were branded L7 on the left shoulder anyway. These were mares, I think he had about 20 mares. Old Silas Abraham looked after them to get half the colts, he got half the colts for looking after them. And then he changed that arrangement and Sampson Beaver looked after them when I was growing up with the same arrangement. But by this time the hills were full of our horses. S over T on the left shoulder was our brand. So the great excitement in the spring was to go out and camp out on the Saskatchewan River, on the Kootenay plains and we had corrals along the banks, a high bank of one side and a big wing on the other and chase these horses into the corrals, they were wild as hell. I remember old Sampson Beaver, he'd had Indian hair in braids, they'd be flying out behind, and he had a little roan horse about 14 hands high, it was a stallion, little roan stallion, just tough as whalebone, he rode that horse. So that was great fun and fishing and camping. As I say, after my mother died when I was 12, I used to go out with an old fellow called Herb Clark, being an old Burns cowboy. He used to break a lot of horses with my dad. It seemed like we never had anything but colts that we were packing or riding. Oh it was a great time, I'd like to do it all over again.

#033 SB: Was your dad born in Nordegg?

FK: No, my dad was born near Carleton Place in Ontario. They farmed there on a farm just about 25 miles southwest of Ottawa, where they settled in 1818. I've got a second cousin still on the same farm. My dad came west the first time in 1902 I guess, to Saskatchewan on a farm excursion and then he came out in 1903 and he homesteaded just close to Calgary here, over in Simons Valley. He stayed there until 1907. He told me he was right in the Simons Valley Creek, but his land went up on the hill. He used to go up there and he could see the mountains from there and he said, that's where he wanted to go. So he went out and he ran the store at Morley from 1907 to 1911. My Uncle Fred had run it from 1903 til my dad took over. Mount Kidd is named after my Uncle Fred, Mount Kidd is down in the Kananaskis, right close to Mount Allen by the way. And then my dad, he

outfitted Martin Nordegg, I guess about 1911, went into Nordegg and discovered the coal seams with Martin Nordegg there. Martin Nordegg was a German Jew whose name was Martin Cohen. A great friend of my fathers and he got German capital and started the Brazeau??? Collieries, with German capital. I remember my dad telling the story that they'd found the coal and they were riding down the river, down towards, I guess Innisfail is where they came out through. And he said to Mr. Nordegg, well, I suppose you'll have to raise \$100,000 to start developing this mine and Martin Nordegg said, oh no, I could never raise \$100,000 but I can raise a million, that's what I'll ask for. Martin Nordegg as we were talking about did raise German capital and started the mine at Nordegg. It was a well designed town, it was designed in a half circle, well away from the coal mine, so it was kind of an attractive place in those days. It had plumbing in the houses and things that most people didn't have. It was a good town that way, running water and electricity and all that sort of thing. But during the war, because it was German capital, the mine was expropriated. I guess Martin Nordegg went and lived in the United States for awhile then and became quite influential in the U.S. government too, he was a pretty smart guy, a good financier. But after the war he got money back out of the mine, he got some of his holdings back and he lived in Ottawa and became quite influential there in the Ottawa government, well known and so on and so forth. I guess that's what I told you about Susan. I think that's recorded, we didn't miss that part did we.

SB: No, that's in the previous one. You said that your father was well respected by the Indian people as well.

FK: Oh yes, my dad of course, working in Morley, trading in Morley, learned Stony, he spoke Stony fluently. To my knowledge he was the first white Chief of the Stony's, he was made a white Chief in 1927, I could show you a picture of him. That was when he was made Chief, Chief Talloosa, moose killer.

SB: You said that your first job within the oil patch was drilling with Home Oil at Chungo Creek. . . ?

FK: When they were drilling that summer, they were drilling there but I was working for Pete Sanderson, as a horse wrangler when he was out there. He was the geologist that was working for Home Oil.

#080 SB: So that went on for quite awhile I guess.

FK: They started drilling in 1937 there, the first well and I guess that drilled for about two years or so I think.

SB: It was dry.

FK: It was a dry hole, right. And then Shell and another group, including Home, drilled another well and that well was a failure too, although it did hit the Mississippi lime. We faulted out of it just very shortly after we penetrated it, about 100' of it and then faulted out I guess. There was a little gas in the Mississippi lime but there was a poor reservoir. I sat on that well for Shell, that was drilled quite a bit later, that was 1946 I guess that well was drilled.

SB: Do you know what the . . . is it the National Topographic Service. . . ?

FK: Dominion.

- SB: Dominion Topographic Service, do you know what their interest was in the west at the time that you were working for them?
- FK: Sure, they were doing topographical mapping all along the foothills, that's contour mapping. We did that with a plane table and alidade and then with a whoop and holler system. Did I tell you what the whoop and holler system was?
- SB: No, you didn't tell me.
- FK: Well, the whoop and holler system is where you have a chain, what was it, a 300' chain, it wasn't really a chain, it was steel tape, 300' long. And there were two of you and you had a plane table with an open sight, what they called just an open sight apparatus that you could sight along and then draw a straight line. One fellow would take the chain and he'd go off, and this was through dense bush, and he'd head off, let's say we were going straight north. And he'd go along there and he had a barometer and the man on the plane table had a barometer too, that was for elevations. But when he got out through the bush there he'd just holler, whoop, whoop, whoop, then you'd line up, sight your plane open sight alidade and draw a straight line. But you didn't mark the distance. Then you walked along the line to see how twisted it was, how many twists he'd made through all the bush and you'd estimate, well, that was about 200' and you'd mark off 200'. That's how you did it, barometers. I remember one fellow had a dog and he used to follow the dog and once he went right around in a circle and I heard him whoop, whoop, he was about 50' away from me, he'd made a complete circle. That's the whoop and holler system. I don't think that's ever been used very much lately. But it was topographical surveying, contour maps. Of course, you used some transits and the plane table surveys to tie in the whoop and holler, so you could adjust it. That was the first year. I guess the second year we had aerial photographs, a great breakthrough. That was just when aerial photographs were coming in. That changed everything. Terrific. What you did then was just run control from hills, distances between points and you found those points on the aerial photographs and you corrected the distances and used the aerial photographs for a great deal of your mapping. You could map contours with aerial photographs and everything else. So things changed from the original old days.

#119 SB: And then you worked the Geological survey as well did you?

FK: Yes, I worked for the Topographical Survey for 3 years I guess and then I worked for Birdie McKay, on the Geological Survey. And I worked with my brother on that. On that party Oscar Erdman was on that party and Bill Farmelow and who else. . . Wilf Helmer packed for us. I can't remember who else was on that party. Oscar and Bill and my brother and I . . . I can't remember who else.

SB: At that time were they looking for oil and gas or were they looking for anything specific?

FK: Well, what Birdie was interested in was mapping the. . . we were just going from place to place, trying to confirm his regional ideas on folded faults. To confirm the folded faults, actually the first paper on folded faults was written by Webb and Hirtline, in that area, on. . . what was the name of the creek, Crooked Creek I guess. It ran into the Brazeau River anyway. Of course, this is a phenomenon that's well known now, that you had a fault and

then the fault was folded later. Moose Mountain is a big series of plates that include folded faults. Jim Scott did a lot of work on that. . what was the name of the mountain down there west of Nanton. . So that was what we were doing, he was just floating around, confirming his ideas about folded faults that year mostly. So we covered quite a lot of area. But a lot of the mapping that was done by the Geological Survey was just mapping of the geology. A lot of it could be related to oil . . I guess a lot of it was for structure that could be used for oil drilling.

SB: When you were mentioning, you graduated in, what year was it?

FK: I graduated in '42 and went to work for Shell in '42. Went to work at Entrance.

SB: What were the interests in the Entrance area?

FK: We were looking for structures, for anticlines that we could drill on, mapping, trying to find some oil of course. I guess one of our earlier features that we were interested in was the Solomon Creek anticline that's just west and a little north of Entrance. We eventually drilled that one and it was a dry hole. But we were mapping structure. The muskeg anticline was one up near, south of the Smoky River, it was a great big feature that we found, a beautiful anticline. That was an exciting thing to find. There were several companies kind of scouting around the country. Hugh Beach for Texaco, he discovered this anticline too. And Art Feldmeyer, working for Canadian Superior, he found the thing, but he was a little late, we got the land before Art. But Art got very excited. I was just talking to a fellow about this the other day, that when they saw this thing, Are just took right off on his horse into town to go and see if he could file on the land but he missed it. We drilled it and it was a dry hole too. Beautiful anticline though.

SB: At that time you were just looking for surface. . ?

FK: Surface anticlines yes.

SB: And there wasn't any seismic used at all at that time.

FK: Yes, we did seismic, we shot seismic over the muskeg anticline before we drilled it. Oh yes. But at Solomon Creek there was no seismic, it was purely surface structure.

SB: I think you described some of the people around Entrance. . .

FK: Oh yes, Tom Monahan, Bert Davies. Tom Monahan owned the store there and Bert Davies ran the store, a great guy. And I think you were mentioning. . .who was it up at Entrance that. . .

#177 SB: Charlie Matheson.

FK: Charlie Matheson. Yes, Charlie Matheson, he had worked for the federal parks for years, out of Jasper. That's the first time I met Charlie, I guess it was when we got out of high school, in '37 I guess, maybe '36 even, two other fellows and I took off from Nordegg and we went to Maline Lake with pack horses. He was the Ranger at Maline Lake and we didn't have a whole lot of grub and he gave us some grub then. I remember that we were gone for 3 weeks and we had \$27 worth of grub for the 3 of us for 3 weeks. We could have made out all right. But you couldn't buy very much grub for \$27 now. So that's when I met him and then Charlie Matheson actually packed for . . I was on a . . packed for Shell and I guess that was in about '45 in the Entrance area again, south of Entrance. Red

Thompson was our cook. Charlie is dead and so is Red Thompson, died of cancer. I guess I was working with a Swiss geologist that came from California, an old Shell geologist called Max Berchowser??? when we were with Charlie Matheson. There were a lot of guys around Entrance, Mark Truxler, he cooked for us, he's still there at Entrance. The Moberly boys, I guess one of them is still there. Oh gosh, old Coyote Falk, he was there. And of course, that's where James Shand Harvey lived, yes, old James Shand Harvey. These guys all trapped in the winter mostly.

SB: And then when the oil business came in I guess they were able to get jobs with them?

FK: Yes, as I say, Shand cooked for us one year, I think I told you about that. And the Moberly boys packed or cooked whatever. Frank Moberly, I guess Frank's still alive, he must be getting pretty old.

SB: That was during the Second World War, did you notice much of a problem due to a shortage of men or materials when you were working?

FK: Well, we had a high priority on. . sugar and rationing and so on but we had a priority because we were supposed to be finding oil to help the effort I guess. That was what it was all about. I think I told you that, I joined the army, didn't I tell you that. But there was rationing of course, the sugar and so on, but we had enough. Max Berchowser as I said, was Swiss and had quite a heavy Swiss accent. There was Prairie Creek east of entrance and we were doing surveying up Prairie Creek, doing the geology. They had guards on the bridges and so Max went up around to go over to the end of the bridge, he didn't want to cross the creek so he went around to the end of the bridge, came up the top and just when he got up to the top, here's this guard with his gun sighted right on him. Old Max dropped whatever, his pick and said, now 'vait' a minute and that really made the guard tighten down on him, now 'vait' a minute in a very heavy Swiss-German accent. But we got it sorted out after awhile.

SB: You mentioned later on that Shell went down east and Con Hague and Les Clark left at that time.

FK: Well, we moved, when we went to New Brunswick, yes.

SB: Do you know what companies they started with afterwards?

FK: I think Les went to Seaboard Oil Company. I think Con worked for Seaboard first too, then later on he went to work, I guess Con worked for Dome. And then later on Les Clark worked for Pacific Petroleums, after.

SB: I guess there's a few stories about crossing the Smoky River are there?

FK: I guess the story you're thinking about building the raft, I wasn't on that one. Is this recorded, we had a collapsable boat?

#250 SB: No, that's not recorded.

FK: Well, I guess that was when Ian Crawford and Don Curry and I were working together. Don Curry was an American from California, he was the Chief of the party. I guess that's when Tommy Plant was packing for us and Mark Truxler was cooking. I was sent into town with a pack horse, 85 miles, we were at the mouth of the Muskeg River, into Entrance to get this collapsable boat, which I got. While I was in there, my tent burned up, the tent with my stuff in it, burned all up. We got a message I guess through the

forestry telephone, so I picked up what I needed, boots and stuff that had been burned up. We got out and the collapsable boat worked fine for going across the river, the river when it was high, it was kind of a miserable river to cross. We did ford it though in the fall, it wasn't too bad. But we left there that year we left the boat with old Daniel Wanneande, who lived at the mouth of the Muskeg. He was one of local Grande Cache Indians. There are a lot of Indians at Grande Cache who are half breeds, Iroquois but mostly Cree I guess there. They're still there at Grande Cache of course. And they had been moved there, they originally were at Jasper. When them made a park at Jasper these people were given sort of a choice where they wanted to go and they went to Grande Cache, which is a beautiful spot really. Of course, that's where the mine is now. They fouled up the country with the damn mine.

SB: You were saying in 1949 to 1952 you worked out of the Calgary office.

FK: I worked out of the Calgary office, that's right.

SB: Were there any major discoveries during that time that you worked with or any major plays?

FK: The play then of course, in '49 was still trying to find D3 reefs. What we did was the boss then was E. G. Robinson, who was a great man for getting acreage and that's a great thing to do. His theory was the Redwater trend may continue straight north, so we got about 2 million acres in the Musquaw area, north of Redwater. And there's a reef there, it isn't a biohermal??? reef, but we found the reef, full of very heavy oil. In fact it may have commercial possibilities now, the amount of oil that's in there. I mean, not to be produced in primary fashion but with some secondary means. So that was where we sort of concentrated for those years but we got acreage all over the place. We played the Peace River reef, got acreage on the updip side of the Peace River reef. Perfectly located, where it should have had oil in it, the reef was there but no oil. So we didn't make any major discoveries then. What we did was I guess we activated, during that time, Jumping Pound was brought into production and the gas plant was built and it provided Calgary with gas. But the reef plays were what were playing, the reef trend. The reef south from along Bonnie Glen was and it was a matter of doing seismic and then putting land up for sale and bidding on it, Crown sales. So that was very active really.

SB: And then you became the Exploration Manager, so were there any other things that you were overseeing then, was there much of a change in your . . . ?

FK: I was Division Exploration Manager, I went to Edmonton as Division Exploration Manager from '52 to '54. During that time we found Simonette field and I guess Virginia Hills came on and a gas field in the Peace River area. And then I went over to the Hague from '54 to '55. I came back and went to Regina in '55 and the play there was the Midale trend, stratigraphic trap and a Mississippian stratigraphic trap. And there again, it was a matter of trying to get acreage and to pay enough money to get. . . The whole play was to get enough money than the other guy and make sure you have the acreage along a trend. But we succeeded in. . the Midale field was in production then, which was a Shell field and we had acreage along that trend. That was a pretty interesting area. We drilled a lot of other areas but really that Midale trend was the main production and still pretty well is, in Saskatchewan.

#364 SB: When you were in the Hague, did you bring any experience back from there that .?

FK: Well, I think the main objective of that was to be exposed to the activities of the Shell group worldwide and see what they were doing and seeing what methods they were using and so on and hopefully applying those as you come home. It was a good trip, I enjoyed the experience. Whether there's anything specific that I would use to find any oil, I'm not quite sure, no.

SB: Did the Royal Dutch Shell group exert much influence over the Canadian branch of Shell?

FK: No, we were pretty much on our own. Actually during those days, we were working out of the New York office, they were in control pretty well. Until, I guess we were pretty well on our own from '55 on. But no, we had a pretty free hand to do as we wished. Except that we wrote too many long winded recommendations.

End of tape.

Tape 2 Side 2

FK: In the early days, well early days, I'm talking from '49 on until I suppose, I'm not quite sure, maybe even as long as '60, not only Shell's but most other American companies that is, and we were mostly multi-nationals that were very active, Imperial, I'm not sure about Imperial but Texaco for instance, Mobil, Chevron, Gulf and so on, seismic records were processed in the United States quite often. That is, when we got sophisticated seismic methods we sent our records down there to go through the computer and be processed. I guess it was later than that too maybe, maybe it's not quite that early. The point I wanted to make was that we suggested a number of times that maybe the records could very well be processed, we could get our own computer and process them in Canada, in Alberta. The argument always, in most oil companies was that, they had all the equipment and the experts there and it would be just too expensive and so on. But then there was a lot of lobbying done by some of the computer people to the federal government and the federal government decided that they would put a value-added tax on the records. That is, after they'd been processed their value was considerably more than when they went down. That was a substantial tax and overnight we found that all the computing record work could be . . . interpretation using computers and so on could be done in Canada. In fact it resulted in Calgary being sort of a worldwide centre for computer usage and still is. Just an interesting point on what can be done and so on.

SB: You mentioned that Will Haffner was. . .

FK: Oh Will Haffner was a Swiss seismologist. He used to come up from the States and take a look at all our records. A great guy and kind of see whether we'd been doing things right. Of course, that was in the early days, that was '42, '43, '44, I guess he kept coming for years. He was still coming in '54 when I was in Edmonton. Willy Haffner, right. We had a number of sort of seismic experts that came out, a lot of them were Swiss, some Dutch. They were mostly naturalized Americans by now, they'd lived in the States for years. Van Melle was another one. I remember when we were in New Brunswick, I guess the last

year we were there we were doing refraction work and I was put in charge of this refraction work and Van Melle came up to show me how to do it and I hadn't the slightest idea about refraction work. He gave me a two week intensive course and he was very active mentally and he just about wore me down telling me how to do this thing. I don't think I was ever so exhausted in my life but I had a very intensive course to be an expert in refraction in two weeks.

#041 SB: I was wondering if you could mention a bit about your brother Jim, who recently passed away. He was working packing with you in the early days too. At what point did he branch off, did he go to university as well?

FK: Yes, Jim was five years older than I was and I guess he finished high school in Nordegg in about '34. And then he went to normal school and got his teachers certificate and he taught school in Nordegg for a couple of years. Then in I guess the summer of '37, that would be about right, he packed for B. R. McKay, our horses, we outfitted them. No, they were government horses actually, that's right, we sold them some horses, but Jim packed for them. Then in '38 I guess he packed. . . maybe it was '38 he packed for B. R. McKay, that would be right. And in '39 he went to university and got his BA. in geology and then packed for Brian Dingle one year, the year I was out with Brian Dingle. Then in '42 he packed for Brian Dingle, in '42 he was on the Geological Survey with me and Oscar Erdman that I've mentioned before and Bill Farmelow. In '42 I guess the fall of '42, he was up in the Peace River District, on a Geological Survey part. Who was he with up there, Hugh Beach. That's right. That fall, after that, he joined the Army, in the Royal Canadian Artillery. I guess he got back from the war in '46, he was a Captain in the Artillery and then he went back to university and got him M.Sc. in geology, Masters, and then he went to work for Amarata Oil Company and he worked for them for many years. In fact right through I guess, continually until 2 years ago, when he retired.

SB: What was his position with Amarata?

FK: He was Chief Geologist for many years with Amarata and then in later years he was doing primarily just geology. He got out of administration.

SB: Amarata, is it American based?

FK: Yes, it's American based, very well known company, used to be. Very successful company in the early days. I think they're now called Amarata Hess. Hess took them over. But he was involved in the Sturgeon Lake fields, discovering the Sturgeon Lake fields. A heck of a lot of drilling out on the plains of Alberta, he did a lot of well site work in the early days, they drilled a whole bunch of wells.

SB: I guess while you were working for Shell there were quite a few people that you will never forget that were involved in ???

FK: Oh yes, Shell is a great training ground for the industry. I think they produced more graduates that went to work for various companies than any other company except maybe Imperial. A lot of the people are still in Calgary and very successful people were early day Shell people. Ted Rosza was Chief Geophysicist for instance. Wilf Baillie was a geophysicist with Shell, Harvey Robinson and Jack Brown, we called him Jerk Brown, I guess they still do. Ian Crawford is still with them, I guess he must have about his 40

years in by now. We had some excellent geologists I thought. There was a fine Swiss geologist, Bert Bollie, who is now a professor at Rice University in Texas. He was a fine geologist. I said that we had four Dutch geologists that worked with us in New Brunswick, they were [Pete Huckabard, Job Fauber, Ryan DeWitt and Bing Hitus????]. In Shell some of the people that I had a high regard for included Paul Kartski???, who was the Vice-President and then became President of Shell, he's now dead, he was a fine fellow I thought. And of course, when we were working under the U.S. sort of umbrella, Mac McAdams was the Chief Geologist, he's still down in Denver, still in the oil business, retired from Shell but quite a guy. Old Lloyd Lewis, George Lewis was division manager here when they discovered the Waterton gas field, and that's the best asset that Shell Canada has. It's an excellent gas field with a lot of liquids in it.

#103 SB: When was that discovered?

FK: I'm just trying to remember, I would guess it's about '51 or '52, something like that. Hell of fine gas field. Of course, I've mentioned Les Clark, I went to work for Alex Clark, Alex is dead and so is Les. Alex was the first I worked for and then Les replaced Alex Clark as Chief Geologist for Shell. Bob Wing was another Chief Geologist that I worked for, Exploration Manager, they changed the names around. They got more sophisticated and gave them fancier names. I don't know where Bob Wing is, in the States somewhere. Mel Irwin, he was a stratigrapher for Shell, he's dead too. Another man I really like was Jack Churchill, who was a geologist for Shell. A great fellow and had lots of stories. He died so tragically. By his own hand actually, a sad thing. But well liked by everybody and just a fine guy. Well, I could go on, there's thousands of people I guess still in the business, Tom Wittingham worked for Shell for years, he's now with West Coast Petroleums I guess. So those are some of the people.

SB: You worked for Shell for ??? years, did you ever consider going to another company?

FK: Oh sure. I had a number of offers in the time I was working for Shell and I didn't accept any of them. I guess the first offer I had was when I was down in New Brunswick, Canadian Superior, Art Feldmeyer wanted me to come work for him. And I had a number of offers, I remember one from Mr. Tanner, who was. . . what was the name of the company, I forget. He used to be the Minister of Energy for Alberta anyway. Nathan Tanner, he was a Mormon who went down to Salt Lake City and was one of the big chiefs, I don't know what you get to be there, master or something. Anyway he died not too long ago. Oh, I had several offers, I guess some of them were kind of nip and tuck whether I'd take them or not. But I didn't.

SB: Was it just that you like the way that Shell worked?

FK: Well, Shell treated me well. I guess I couldn't, at the time, see much advantage in changing. I guess maybe part of it too was, I was raised during the Depression and people just didn't hop around, if you had a job you stuck with it, that was part of that.

SB: Did you find that Shell's corporate structure easy to work in?

FK: Well, it depended a great deal on the local management. I think the corporate structure was all right, yes. But it depended on the local President or the Vice-President or maybe closer than that. There modus operandi. I think they had a pretty free hand to sort of set

the pattern as they wished. I remember Paul Kartski as I say, was an excellent fellow, he liked things in detail. The next man that replaced him was Harry Bridges as President of Shell. He changed things entirely around, he said, don't want any of these long recommendations, if you can't put it on one sheet of paper I won't read it, can't you pick up the phone and call me, which was a complete change you know. I think Shell's corporate structure was such that they left it up to the . . . it was a pretty free hand. And it was a matter of each man having individual authorities and responsibilities that you had as sort of an individual. Imperial's system is different than that, they sort of do it by committees and maybe share the blame and maybe share the mistakes too, or share the glory too. I'm not sure, maybe there's a half way in between system of management that's better I think. Two heads are better than one even if one's a cabbage head I believe. I think there's a tendency in Shell to be sort of make decisions on your own that might have been better shared. That's just my view now. But I think the corporate structure was good, but it was flexible, it changed. It was subject to the sort of way that the President sort of set the tone, the way he wanted to operate.

#162 SB: You mentioned that when you were Exploration Manager in Calgary and you sort of initiated their move into coal and mineral exploration, was that easily accepted?

FK: No, that was tough. It was very difficult. There was a lot of resistance, maybe logical resistance saying well, why do we want to get into something we don't know anything about. We're not so sure we're that smart in oil and we've been working at it for years. So it was a little difficult to get it started. The coal has done all right but minerals, they've folded that done and Shell has decided to retrench because of the recession and quit their mineral exploration.

SB: At one point you worked with Jack Webb as well?

FK: Well, I didn't work directly with Jack but I knew him so well over so many years. Of course, the earliest times I met him was when he used to come up to Nordegg and he'd be working there. I think he was working for Anglo Canadian to start with. A real fine gentleman and an excellent geologist. When I knew him I guess, later on when we were working up in the Smoky, oh yes, when we drilled the Muskeg anticline it was a joint venture and I guess at that time Jack Webb was the Chief Geologist for Imperial, he was Chief Geologist for Imperial for about 2 years. And as I say, for 2 years I think Jack didn't like that big corporation sort of thing. But Jack did a lot of field work, I guess his background was with Home and with Anglo Canadian, but just a first class geologist, a first class fellow.

SB: Were there any experiences, when you look back on your entire involvement with the oil industry that you can say stand out as being inspiring or really memorable.

FK: I guess the things that you remember are when you find some oil, it's kind of interesting. You never know how it's going to turn out though. I think one of the times I was most excited, we drilled a well at a place called Kimowan??? and we drilled a lot of dry holes. The engineer called in and he said, we drill stem tested this well and it's flowing at 200 barrels a day. I said, salt water of course, he said, no, oil. But that was interesting because that's the only good well we ever had in that thing. The next well was a dry hole. That's

some of the interesting things. I guess it was a busy time, there were so many things that were happening, never a dull moment sort of thing. The way you put in a day was meeting the crises as they came up. I guess, acquiring some good acreage at Crown sales was always exciting, Crown sales were always very exciting really. Bidding against other people and hoping that you'd acquire the acreage. I guess it was such a contrast in a way, between field geology and the busy office type administration and so on. I think I liked. . . well, I don't know, I enjoyed it all really. Maybe if I had to do it over again, I wouldn't be such a good company man, I'd spend more time with my family and to hell with the company.

#220 SB: Did you find that that period was more sort of adventurous for the people involved in it than the same type of activities are now.

FK: I don't know what they're like now but I suspect there were more new things. There's a lot more drilling done now. Yes, I think it was a lot more exciting because it was a virgin area, when you acquired some of those blocks of acreage that never had a hole drilled on them, it was a brand new thing, a brand new play. Maybe I'm biased but I tend to believe, yes those early exploration days were considerably more exciting than I think they are now because there was more opportunity to do things that were new.

SB: This is the end of the second interview with Fred Kidd.