

**Narrator:** Edd Groening (EG)

**Company Affiliations:** N/A

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**Summary:** Lifelong farmer Edd Groening discusses his and his family's extensive careers in the Canadian grain industry. He begins by describing his family's immigration to Canada from Ukraine, his grandfather starting the farm, and his father, himself, and his sons living on and taking over the farm. He shares early memories as a child hauling grain to an elevator by horse, then eventually loading producer cars with a portable elevator system. He recalls the switch from horses to tractors, his father hiring extra help during harvest season, sales almost exclusively to Paterson Grain, and the difficulties of farming during the Great Depression. Groening describes major changes to farming, like the introduction of fertilizer and chemical herbicides and pesticides, and the improvements to farm machinery. He also describes changes to the grain industry, like the introduction of the Canadian Wheat Board system in the 1930s, rail line rationalization, and the closure of small country elevators. Other topics discussed include his work in other industries in the farming off-season, his interactions with farm input dealers, the financial risks of farming, and his enjoyment of farming's freedom.

**Keywords:** Grain farmers/producers; Farming—equipment and supplies; Country grain elevators; Grain transportation—rail; Producer cars; The Great Depression; Paterson Grain; Tractors; Combines; Fertilizer; Herbicides; Pesticides; Grain varieties; Rail line rationalization; Consolidation; Canadian Wheat Board; Grain marketing

Time, Speaker, Narrative
BC: All right I'm starting over. Today is July the 20th, 2010 and I'm interviewing Mr. Edd Groening who farmed at--.
EG: At Kane in the Morris municipality.
BC: Okay, that's good. All right, we have everything going here, so that is good. We are going to start the interview by Mr. Groening is going to describe an object that he has on the table here. Would you tell us about your tractor?

EG: It's a two-cylinder John Deere 830. One of the last of the two cylinders and then they tend to be six cylinder or four cylinder. This tractor was made by John Deere. This type of tractor was made for about 40 years. It has a peculiar, unique sound. Should I put that on?

BC: Yes, please do. [Tractor sounds] That's good. That's the sound of a John Deere tractor. Mr. Groening made this replica himself. It's a very nice piece of memorabilia. I have a series of questions, but we will just basically be talking, okay?

EG: I want to hear you talk. [Laughing]

BC: Oh well, I want to hear what you have to tell us. How did you come to be a farmer?

EG: Well, my grandfather was a farmer, and my father was a farmer, and naturally it had something to do with that.

BC: Yes. And how long did you farm? How old were you when you started? You grew up on a farm?

EG: Yes, I grew up on the farm. And because my father was ailing—had an ailment—so his sons of course had to do the work on the farm. He gave the advice, until he passed away in 1940.

BC: How many children were there? Do you have brothers, sisters?

EG: Yes. I have six brothers, and two of them have passed away.

BC: Did you all work on the farm and stay on the farm?

EG: For a period of time, yes, and then they migrated into something else.

BC: And you stayed on the farm. You carried on?

EG: For the most part, yes. There was a time where we were off the farm, let's say, in the war years. I did alternative service in the off-season. But I always came back to take care of the farm. It was a fairly big farm and needed a lot of attention.

BC: What kind of farm was it?

EG: It was a grain farm and cattle too. By the way, that's the house I grew up in.

BC: Oh, very nice.

EG: My father built it.

BC: Is it still standing?

EG: Pardon?

BC: Is it still standing?

EG: Yes, it's still standing, very much like it.

BC: Is there someone--.

EG: There's a great-grandson living in there. One boy alone.

BC: Is he farming? Has he carried on the farm?

EG: Yes. He has cattle and a farm. He's a part of that.

BC: My goodness. I'll have to take a picture of that for our archives.

EG: My grandfather came to Kane in 1897.

BC: Whereabouts is Kane located in relation to Winnipeg?

EG: You know where Morris is? Thirteen miles west of Morris and south, where that place is. but I find 13 miles west of Morris.

BC: So your father came or your grandfather came?

EG: Grandfather came to Canada in 1874.

BC: Where did he immigrate from?

EG: From the Ukraine. Of course they lived in the Ukraine only for about 75 years. They came out of Holland first, then to west Prussia. Then from there to the Ukraine. Then when it got too crowded or whatever reason, when Canada was opening up, they came to Canada. They stayed here ever since.

BC: And they started farming.

EG: Yes. They started farming on the East Reserve. They came to Grünthal at about 1880, and they lived there for about 17 years. Then they moved to Kane district. That's where the family settled. One of the corners is still the same farm that my grandfather broke up. That was 1897 and it is now '10. That's 113 years. This year has canola. Not a very good crop, but it's good land though. There's too much rain, big time. That's one of the sections Grandfather had.

BC: What happened to the other sections?

EG: Most of it is in the family—some kind of a nephew or whatever.

BC: Well, you've got a long history on that land, so that's one of the things we'll have to talk about. You pulled out a book that you were going to show me something in?

EG: This is pictures that my wife drew, a number of pictures, and somebody took pictures of them and put them in the book. That's one of them.

BC: She's a very good artist.

EG: Yeah. This is the farm where I farmed, myself. That's where I grew up.

BC: There it is, the same picture. When you were farming this farm, did you go off and buy this piece of land separate from your family farm?

EG: No, it was part of the land that my father had.

BC: Okay.

EG: There was nothing there. It was a plain prairie.

BC: I guess with all the sons, you kept expanding and going out onto more land.

EG: I wanted them to farm, too. I really wanted them to farm because farming was not very attractive for a long period of time.

BC: Economically it wasn't good, or you were talking about your sons?

EG: My sons, yes. Otherwise, it might be better for them, but they're still farming. Two of them are farming, half farmers.

BC: Half farmers. [Laughing]

EG Half the time, you know? They farm. They have seven quarters, I think. They used to do a lot more, but they reduced it to this because they quit maybe next year. They've been wanting to quit farming for several years already.

BC: Do they have children that will take over do you think?

EG: There's no farmers in the family.

BC: Just the one grandson.

EG: There's one grandson, but he's not into farming. He's in Grade 12 now.

BC: Oh, okay. So who's in the house?

EG: That's a great-nephew of some sort.

BC: Okay.

EG: My brother's grandson.

BC: I know you worked on the family farm when you were young. How old were you when you became a full-fledged farmer, as you say? You took over the farm and that's how you made your living.

EG: I was always self-employed, except during the war years and then did some alternative service.

BC: What would alternative service be?

EG: Forestry and the coal mine.

BC: So that would be on the off seasons?

EG: This is the wintertime, when it wasn't too busy.

BC: Were you in your early twenties when you started farming all the time?

EG: I grew up on the farm all the time, and in between I would go to school and stuff like that because we had enough to change off. We had consolidated school there—secondary education—what do you call it to Grade 12?

BC: What was a typical day like for you on the farm?

EG: Lots of fun. At least until the age of 14, I didn't notice any problems or difficulties because I wasn't responsible for it. We had to do work early. We had 14 horses at the most. Of course, we drove them at the age of 10 or 12 to take them down to the Kane elevator to ship the grain to Fort William. A little later we loaded the cars ourselves. Ordered a boxcar, a grain car, and then there was a siding, and the farm had enough wheat to ship a carload. We could order a car, and they would spot it there. We'd put it up our elevator and load it. I remember doing that when I was 14.

BC: Shoveled it all into the car?

EG: No, no. We had a huge elevator about 20 feet high. It lifted. It was portable. It lifted up and a spout went into the car and then there was an auger there you could just push it off the back of the truck or wagon. I remember doing that when I was 12 years old. That was the responsibility of the younger people in the family. We took it to the elevator, too—the grain to the elevator—and the elevators were very accommodating. The horses knew everything. You'd drive in there, and they'd lift up that wagon and dump it out, and you'd jump back on and go back to the farm.

BC: Was there a time when you were young where you would use horses to plow and everything? When did these--.

EG: Yes, early on it was only the horses. Tractors came later in the '20s. There's one of the later ones, of the two-cylinder. We did have a number of tractors on the farm over the years.

BC: So when your dad was farming, he would have a tractor?

EG: He had one tractor, a Fortune tractor. I remember driving it, pulling a binder, and I can't have been more than 12, maybe 11. My older brother was sitting on the binder, and I would drive this Fortune tractor. We thought it was great fun.

BC: You grew up on the farm, and then you farmed your own piece of property with your own family.

EG: Yes, eventually.

BC: With your wife because she was the one that took the pictures.

EG: We had a co-op farm, not a really co-op farm, but three of us brothers were farming together, took over when my father passed away. We did it together. Then, finally, we divided it up and each became our own individual farm.

BC: Did your farm have a name?

EG: No. [Laughs]

BC: Just your name on the mailbox.

EG: I don't know what kind of name you would call it. Never thought about it so much as a name, but that's the farm that I started.

BC: I know I'm asking you to go backwards in our memory, but can you think of the chunk of time that you actively farmed but 19--. What to what year did you quit? How many years was that?

EG: Well, I retired when I was 68 years of age because two of the boys were interested in farming. For two years I worked together with them, but then I said, "No, you better go on your own". For ten years I always came back and ran one of the combines and whatever was needed, but they did the fixing, and they still do it. They've been very good.

BC: That's good.

EG: The five boys right now are all properly educated and have their own private jobs. Two of them are on the farm. One of them is a councillor on a lot of committees. The other one is the bookkeeper, and he's good at making instruments.

BC: And you taught them those things?

EG: I didn't. They took the course and carried on with that. Mostly repairing when someone wants an instrument repaired, they will fix it.

BC: Now are you talking about farm or musical instruments?

EG: That's one of the farmers, half-farmer, as I call him.

BC: So he does musical instrument repairs or does he repair farm equipment?

EG: Oh yes, he's also the farm mechanic. The oldest one, he is a part of it. Tim, who is the younger one, he is the one who was assistant teaching at the university for a number of years and knows a lot about mechanics and soils and stuff like that. It's more or less the ideal farm now. I think that this year they have so many chemicals, they've knocked out all the weeds and they've got only the crop left. A lot of that was damaged by water and excessive rain.

BC: So if you had to put a number on the number of years that you were a farmer, you farmed for, what, 40 years, 50 years?

EG: That's pretty hard to say but you could say--.

BC: 78 years because you grew up on a farm, right?

EG: [Laughs] Maybe 40 years I was a part of the farm. I didn't check it out. I wasn't prepared for that. You should have given me a list of questions you wanted.

BC: It's okay. We can come back to questions. We just want to make sure.

EG: When you said you were coming, and you were Beatrice, I had a lot of questions myself about this Beatrice. Beatrice is a great name. Did you know that Dante wrote about Beatrice?

BC: Yes.

EG: That was his sweetheart, or whatever, that took him through his whole palace or underworld to the seventh heaven. You're all about that.

BC: I have a few questions.

EG: Is that about it?

BC: No, we're just getting started. You told me how you came to work in the grain industry because you grew up on a farm, and you carried on farming. You talked about maybe 40 years that you were very active as a farmer, running the farm. Did you ever have any other job besides a farmer? You talked about your sons being half-farmers, but you were a full-time farmer?

EG: I was involved in community affairs as far as that goes—church and school. I was a trustee as we had the school. We had a consolidated school as long as anybody else, which took up time.

BC: For sure, yes.

EG: You know what a consolidated school was?

BC: That's when they took all the little schools and put them together into a bigger one.

EG: Yes. That was before. Now they have the unitary division, you know, the bigger ones. But at the time there were maybe 130 or something like that in Manitoba. Consolidated farmers. I never went to a one-room school as most of the others. We were a little bit out of the district. We were right at the border of the non-Mennonite territory. We had a lot of American boys and girls in the school. Scottish, English—you got integrated with those. You got to know them. They were just fine people.

BC: Yes. I'm sure they were. That's true. A typical day on a job for you as a farmer, what time would you get up?

EG: Depending on the emergency. When the business season was on, you got up as early as you could possibly get, worked as long as you could, day and night if necessary.

BC: And harvest I'm guessing were long, long hours, too.

EG: That's right. Get the job done. Because I was self-employed, you'd have to make sure your machinery was ready for the season.

BC: Would you do that in the winter?

EG: No. In the winter it was too cold. We didn't have a heated workshop.

BC: Were you one of those farmers who curled in the winter?

EG: Sometimes, but not very much. My sons, they curled a lot.

BC: Okay.

EG: I have one daughter too.

BC: Five sons and a daughter.

EG: Yes.

BC: Very nice. When you had the harvest, did you hire people to help you harvest or did different family members come? How did you handle that?

EG: Well, before the combines of course, the thresher, then it required extra help. We hired those. But other times, it was a family matter. My dad, when we were younger of course, he hired somebody to help. He built that house, and I presume he had somebody to help. He was the one who planned it.

BC: Looks like a beautiful house.

EG: He ordered two carloads of lumber from BC and several carloads of gravel and hauled it down by shoveling that stuff, poured the foundation, and built the house.

BC: Beautiful. It's a really beautiful house. One of the questions on here is, of your career as a farmer, what are you most proud of about your work?

EG: To make sure that you had the work done in time and the machinery was ready. Of course they weren't always good crops. Sometimes water was one of the main problems—sometimes droughts, sometimes grasshoppers, sometimes too much rain.

BC: Because you would have been farming through the Depression, weren't you?

EG: Yes.

BC: Can you tell me a bit about that?

EG: Everything was extremely scarce. You could hardly get anything in and very little money. Grain prices were very low. I remember that my father sold grain for 24 cents a bushel—low-grade wheat because it had been damaged by rust. The prices went down, very low, for all kinds.

BC: During that time, what grain elevator did you have in your town? Did you have a cooperative or did you have a grain company, the elevator?

EG: Where we sold the grain?

BC: The elevator that you brought your grain to be shipped out. Who owned that elevator in town?

EG: Oh Paterson. Paterson and the other one, I don't know what it was called, it changed different names. Canadian something. Paterson was the one we called the elevator. My grandfather shipped to the Paterson company, and my father did, and we did. The elevator is still standing there—not the original one but a Paterson elevator. And the grain went to Fort William.

BC: That's right. Have you ever been to Fort William?

EG: Yes.

BC: Why did you go to Fort William?

EG: Just to see the place.

BC: Did you see some of the elevators? Did you visit the elevators?

EG: Yes, at the lake there.

BC: And were you still farming when it started shifting the other way, the grain going the other way? But you still always sold to Paterson regardless.

EG: Oh yes. Even if we loaded the grain by ourselves, we'd sell it to the Paterson because it was a little bit of an advantage loading it yourself, some kind of commission or whatever it was. I don't know, but I had a dozen farmers that always did that.

BC: So in the time that you were farming, what were the big changes that happened? Obviously, the tractor came in. Is that when chemicals started coming, when you started? I don't imagine there are many chemicals used.

EG: Fertilizer came in only quite late, you know. I don't know exactly what year, but that changed the whole thing. That doubled the crops. And then the chemical to spray out. Right now, they have the satellite-guidance system, and they can spray pretty accurately and seed is straight. We used to do it by hand or flag it out, and then it was difficult to see. Sometimes you'd skip pieces or double over. Too much chemical on where you'd double over or where you didn't spray, you had too much weeds. Now they don't have that problem because of this guidance. It's so accurate, I don't know if any weeds can escape. [Laughs] I think that's a great advantage. Then of course, the fertilizer. Both of the boys that are farming now went to university to take those agriculture courses and know pretty well what to plant and so on.

BC: In that time period, what different crops did you grow?

EG: Cereal crops—wheat, oats, barely, and flax in the early years. We had rye sometimes, durum wheat. Now of course they have flax, canola, lentils, and they tried all of those different crops.

BC: Specialty crops at times, I guess.

EG: Yes. Soybeans, they grow that tall, and I don't know why they stopped it, but for some reason or another it's too complicated to have too many varieties.

BC: I guess in your lifetime, there was a lot of—with the more mechanical equipment coming in—there'd be a huge investment in equipment. You'd have to put a lot of money into buying a tractor or a thresher or any of those equipment pieces. Nowadays, you're talking about satellites telling your sons where to plant seeds. That must all be a huge investment.

EG: About 1940, we had our first combine. That was a big help.

BC: What would a combine cost back in 1940?

EG: About \$3,000.

BC: That's a lot of money.

EG: With the swather together, I think the swather was \$400, and the rest was the combine—Massey Harris 21. It was the first one of the early self-propellers. We did up to as many as 900 acres with that machine.

BC: That's a pretty big farm.

EG: Oh, compared to the farms now, it isn't.

BC: Not now, no. One of the questions that they ask us is what were the connections that you had with—and we talked a bit about that—the carriers, the handlers, the Wheat Board, the Grain Commission, purchasers? Because as the producer, you must have had dealings with all of those groups.

EG: When you talked about the Depression, which was around the '29 or something like that, when the bottom dropped out of everything, and the grasshoppers came right after that, a lot of farmers went bankrupt, and that moved somewhere else to take a smaller farm. We never quite reached that stage though. I didn't do the books at that time, but my father was careful about that and did the best he could. I know.

BC: So as a farmer, you talked about you dealt with Paterson's where you took to their elevator. Who would you buy your fertilizer and your chemicals from?

EG: There was a chemical company, Kane Fertilizer Company.

BC: Was that a local little business?

EG: Yes, it was one mile out of town. It's still there, I think. There was a local John Deere dealer who had the machinery. [Phone rings] Shut it off?

BC: I don't know about shutting it off because I don't want to make it--. Here I'll put it on pause.

**[Audio pauses]**

EG: Turn it down today.

BC: We're back on record there. There that worked. Okay, so you had your Paterson grain, your Kane fertilizer, your John Deere dealer, everything was fairly close to you.

EG: John Toews was the dealer in Kane for the most part of it. Later on, Pete Harder had it. But the real businesses were all done by John Toews. He had agencies for the machinery and for cars, if you wanted to buy one. He had the store. He was the number one man and a very good mechanic. Totally reliable. Everybody relied on his skills.

BC: Now, up in 2010, you say that the Kane Fertilizer Company is still there, the Paterson elevator is still there.

EG: It's not operating.

BC: It's not operating, okay. Again, things I guess have consolidated and gone to bigger centres. You lived outside of Kane. Your farm was outside of Kane, right?

EG: Three miles out of Kane.

BC: Is the village of Kane still a village? Does it still have a store or anything?

EG: There's nothing doing because the railroad has been taken up, removed.

BC: When did that happen?

EG: The last ten years or so before that.

BC: Then you would have to take your grain further to an elevator.

EG: Now they haul it either to a big company like Morris Cargill or Pioneer in the Sperling/Brunkild area. They have a truck, and somebody comes and picks it up. They load the grain, and the trucker takes it to the different places. They have several trucks, but for shipping and long distances they have the bigger trucks, the semi-trucks.

BC: Do you go out to the farm very often? Does your family take you out for a ride out there?

EG: Not that often. I've been out, and I expect to go again before long. They can carry on very well without me.

BC: And you did mention at the beginning of the interview, before we turned the tape on, that you are 97 years old.

EG: That's correct.

BC: You have a very good memory.

EG: I think I can prove that because I'll show you--.

BC: Oh. Okay.

EG: [Laughs]

BC: He's shown me a lovely certificate that says, "Congratulations to Edd Groening on the occasion of his 97th Birthday." It's from the Rural Municipality of Morris, February the 5th, 1913 and February the 5th, 2010, from the mayor. That's very nice. And your name is spelled differently than I thought. I thought Edd would have one d.

EG: My son is one of the councillors and--. Who's signing it?

BC: The mayor, Herb Martens.

EG: The mayor, yes. My son, he's deputy mayor, and so together they take care of that.

BC: That's very, very nice. This one is just asking about your long career as a farmer, what was the biggest change you saw in farming? What was the biggest change?

EG: I think, over 70 years, the power with the horses, the tractors, and the combines.

BC: What would be the second biggest change in all those years?

EG: Well, you're talking about the Wheat Board. The Wheat Board came in after the Depression and all of that kind of stuff. There's no regulation on it. My father had granaries, and he would store the grain. Then he had more time to sell it when the price was more accommodating. But the smaller farmers, who didn't have granaries, they had to sell it because they had to make the payments. They couldn't store it at home, so they got short-changed as unfair as it may seem, but that was just the fact. Maybe in February when they least expected, grain prices would go up. See, the company would always buy as low as they could and sell it. That's why the Wheat Board came in. The Wheat Board averaged it out. I think they're still in there. But they may not stay in there, because things changed around.

Now the grain companies are more interested in handing it all. Whether it's going to be better or worse, I don't know. But in the last years the boys were making contracts, and they have some choice of what price they can choose ahead of time. Of course, nobody knows what it's going to be.

The disadvantage is, let's say you could sell your grain at a good price, but when the time came, you didn't have it because for some reason or another it didn't succeed—maybe from the rain or whatever. Then of course, you couldn't sell what you didn't have. They'd sell maybe half of it or expect that you'd have half a crop. Then the rest of it would have to go for the price that the grain was at the time. Now let's say they sold too much of it and couldn't deliver it. You'd have to pay the difference because the company expects that price in their bargaining. So they just had to make it up. I don't know if they've been caught very often in that kind of predicament because they knew for sure that you couldn't always sell, how much you would get. You never could tell, really.

BC: So what would they do if they had a lot of extra grain? If they had contracted they would sell X number of bushels, and then they had all this extra grain, what would they do? Would they go back to the company and say, “I have some more to sell to you”?

EG: I know when I was farming, we had the Wheat Board, and we’d sometimes hang onto that wheat for a couple of years. I know as much as three years one time, that I had bins full of oats, but there was no market for it. So the Wheat Board couldn’t buy it.

BC: But they did eventually.

EG: Well, eventually there was some tough luck, and they needed it, and they would buy it. But that’s different now. They’re more or less better regulated. Whether it’s going to be better without the Wheat Board remains to be seen. The Wheat Board is kind of insurance—little bit like a co-op, socialism, and that sometimes sounds bad.

BC: To some people.

EG: Yes. [Laughing]

BC: I have another--.

EG: I expected you were going to tell me a lot of things.

BC: Well, no, I’m the interviewer.

EG: I thought this was going to be yes or no.

BC: No! You’re the person we’re interested in.

EG: How much have you got to go there?

BC: Oh, not too much. This one, there’s a category called challenges. What was the major challenge that you faced being a farmer?

EG: Stay above. Sometimes I was often afraid I would come to a bankruptcy, too. You have a lot of responsibility. But it never happened.

BC: That's good. But it happened to a lot of people.

EG: It happened to a lot of people. I was very much afraid when the boys took over. I tried very hard to stay in there and be of as much help as I could. At first, I thought that they wouldn't have enough of this get-up-and-go to do the farming, but afterwards I found out that they have much more than I had.

BC: Well, that's because you taught them.

EG: [Laughs] No, they were prepared for it.

BC: It sounds like you mentored them. You worked with them for a couple of years to make sure.

EG: I did, yes. But that was just to help them out, and usually in harvest time.

BC: Sounds like you enjoyed it.

EG: Those were my holidays. I wasn't hired to do that, never took track of hours or anything like that. That was out of the question. But I didn't have to pay them either.

BC: If you looked back over your life as a farmer, what would be one of your more vivid memories?

EG: I would say the freedom, self-employment—so much freedom. I spent all the winters always reading and studying. That was my hobby and I still do that.

BC: And that's why you know about Dante and all these book things because you read all winter.

EG: Well, it was a free time to read.

BC: Was there a little--.

EG: Never had to watch the clock or anything like that.

BC: Sounds like a good part of the job.

EG: That was your own job. You worked as long as you could, or you thought you had to.

BC: There's another question here about significant events during your time as a farmer. You mentioned a natural kind of disaster, which was the Depression, the Dust Bowl, that was a major one. Any other major--?

EG: There was the weather. Sometimes the weather was too dry and sometimes too wet. You had to take that—hail a few times, not very much, pretty hail-free. But we had a little bit of illnesses in the family. My daughter was bitten by a rabid cattle. That was scary. Very scary.

BC: How close was the hospital for you?

EG: You know what that means, being bit by a rabid animal? You go bad.

BC: Did they give her an antibody?

EG: Yes, everyday for two weeks, she got an injection. Fortunately, no ill-effects.

BC: Oh, good.

EG: Because if it was serious, a very serious bite, the doctors said they would have to give a very strong one and that could leave other defects. There's nothing of that happened. That's the good part.

BC: Yes. I would think of rabid skunks or something, not of a cattle. Hm. And you did talk a bit about advances in science with the fertilizer and the technology with the tractors, the working conditions. Well, because you were self-employed you did what you had to do.

EG: I would hire somebody occasionally to do tractor driving.

BC: Do you have a sense of where your grain ended up over the years?

EG: The what?

BC: Where the crops ended up over the years. Once it left your farm, I guess, it went all over the world, depending where Paterson sold it.

EG: That's right. That was out of our hands. It went to Fort William.

BC: Yes, and then on a boat somewhere.

EG: Yes.

BC: How would you decide which crop you were going to plant each year?

EG: What the prospects were. For a long time, I was planting two different crops alternately. My voice has got a little croak in it.

BC: That's okay.

EG: That's not good for recording. Well, it's something you could handle. Oats was light on the crop and there's a little bit of chance of the next year was a little bit better, than if you had wheat after wheat. Besides the same crop, year after year, it deteriorates. Now they always seed more or less registered stuff or certified.

BC: Did the grain company ever say we think there's going to be a market for this next year and suggest you plant things?

EG: Not that I've heard of. You could judge that by yourself, but I wonder what the reports said.

BC: Are there any other questions I should ask you about a farmer that has had a long history in Manitoba? Can you think of something that people should know?

EG: Bea, your people came from a corner of somewhere?

BC: From Port Arthur.

EG: From Port Arthur, oh I see. So you know all about that then.

BC: My dad worked in the grain industry all his life. That's why I'm interested in this project because I think it's important that people know about the history of the grain trade. We were a major player in the world as grain growers and crop growers. So that's why I do it. I'd like to take pictures of your pictures because those are wonderful. Do you have any memorabilia from the farm that you think is really significant for people to know about?

EG: I think everything. It is such a privilege to grow up on the farm. The freedom, the self-employment. Whether it's good or bad, you have to take it. In the good years you have to think about it won't always be good. Very often it isn't.

BC: When did you move into the city?

EG: When? I was 68 years of age when my wife and I moved to Winkler, and seven years ago she died of an aneurysm. Then I decided to move to Winnipeg. So I've been here for seven years.

BC: And have you lived in Bethel Place for the seven years?

EG: I've been right here. This is my home now.

BC: It's very nice. Very nice.

EG: I keep in touch with the family every day. Pretty well every day. I don't know what the score right now is in Minneapolis. Cleveland Indians, I think, and Minneapolis are playing.

BC: Okay. I noticed you have a computer. You work on the computer?

EG: Oh yes, I do a lot of that. That's my hobby—reading and the computer.

BC: That's fabulous. Well, I think we've covered everything in these questions, and if there's anything you think we should add you can tell me about it.

EG: No. I think I had a little bit too much air conditioning, and so I had a little bit of a croaky voice. Sorry about that.

BC: That's okay, we can understand it. It'll come out fine. So what I'll do now is I'll thank you and I will turn the machine off.

**End of interview.**