Narrator: Edward Landry (EL)

Company Affiliations: Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), McCabe Grain Company, Northland Machinery

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Interviewer: Nancy Perozzo (NP)

Recorder: Monika McNabb (MM)

Transcriber: Sarah Lorenowich

Summary: Retired yardmaster for the Canadian Pacific Railway Edward Landry discusses his railroading career in Thunder Bay's grain industry. He begins by discussing his father's career at McCabe Elevator, his own brief work as a boxcar shoveller in the same elevator, and his memories of elevators as a child. He then discusses his move to Northland Machinery as a sheet metal apprentice working mainly with grain elevator equipment before switching to work with the CPR as a switchman. He describes the duties of a switchman in the hump yard operation marshalling cars onto their appropriate tracks, and he explains how that system changed with the advent of grain pooling. Landry discusses his ascension to yardmaster, now in charge of creating the railcar marshalling plans in tandem with the grain coordinator, and describes the job before and after the introduction of computers. He describes the era he calls the "grain boom" in the 1970s, and he shares memories of rail accidents and incidents on the waterfront. He recounts the major changes to the railways during his career, like the government supplying new hopper cars, changes to freight rates, automation, computerization, downsizing, and the removal of cabooses. Landry discusses his brief time as a conductor for the final years of his career before taking an early retirement. Other topics discussed include the division of CPR and CNR railyards in Thunder Bay, memories of using hand signals on boxcars, stories of grain theft from railcars, the ease and difficulty of spotting cars and different elevators, alcohol use on the railways, women joining the workforce, and being part of a union.

Keywords: Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR); McCabe Grain Company; Northland Machinery; Grain transportation—rail; Terminal grain elevators—Thunder Bay; Boxcar shovelling; Sheet metal work; Grain elevators—equipment and supplies; Switchmen; Yardmaster; Hump yard; Railyards; Grain pooling; Canadian Wheat Board (CWB); Boxcars; Hopper cars; Computerization; Conductors; Grain doors; Crow's Nest Pass freight rate; Western Grain Transportation Act; Railway accidents; Alcohol use; Downsizing; Automation; Labour unions; Cabooses; UGG Elevator M; UGG Elevator A; Northwestern Elevator; Paterson Elevator; Western Grain By-Products; SWP Pool 4A & B; SWP Pool 7

Time, Speaker, Narrative

NP: Nancy Perozzo interviewing today, which is August 6, 2014, and Monika McNabb is operating our equipment today. I'm going to turn it over now to our narrator—or interviewee—for today to introduce himself and to describe briefly his connection to the grain trade. And we'll go on from there.

EL: Thank you. My name is Edward Landry. My career in Thunder Bay existed on the railroad. I was 36 years employed by the CPR [Canadian Pacific Railway], and during that time, of course, we did a lot of interaction with the elevators. That's where most of our business went. Prior to that, I worked at McCabe's Grain Elevator, where my father had been employed for most of his career. I got out of that business as quick as I could, and then I got into the sheet metal business. And there again, I discovered that no matter what you did in Thunder Bay, your connection to the grain elevators was inescapable. The sheet metal companies did all of their work in the grain elevators. The dust bothered me, and everything else, so happily I escaped that also and settled for a career on the railroad where I lived happily ever after.

NP: Okay great. Well, that's some background that, if the technology had worked better, I would have been able to read and just been grinning from ear to ear because I love to interview people whose fathers, usually, worked at the grain elevators as well—just in case they remember something about their dads' times at the elevators. Before we started recording, you said that you grew up in Port Arthur?

EL: No, I grew up in--. I was born at St. Joseph's, but we lived in Fort William all our lives. In fact, I was raised on Ross Street about 45 feet from the CPR mainline.

NP: Ah, okay. Now where is Ross?

EL: Ross Street runs directly from Arthur Street into the Thunder Bay Museum, which you should be familiar with.

NP: Yes, I am. Oh I know, I know, yeah, all right.

EL: It runs parallel to May.

NP: A little short street?

EL: That's right.

NP: Right, okay. Now, do you have any remembrances of the elevators? You would've been too young. Most of the CPR elevators that were along that stretch of the Kam were gone by the time you were--.

EL: That's correct, they were in demolition and some had already been taken down. The ones that were left were not in use. The Elevator D was the last CPR elevator that was in use, and it had been shut down for long periods of time, but it was rejuvenated when the big grain sales began in 1963 and so on up. They were actually operating in full swing again.

NP: Was your dad first generation in Canada? Or had his parents come over from wherever? Assuming that--.

EL: Parents came from France in 1650, or something like that, 16 generations ago. They immigrated to Quebec. He came up here because he worked on the boats during the Depression. He met my mother at a rooming house here in Thunder Bay, and they got married, and the family grew up here after that.

NP: Did he work for one particular shipping group? Or, like many people, did he just take the jobs, go where the jobs were?

EL: Oh, he took whatever. You took whatever job you could in those days. I forget--. I've got pictures of some of the ships he worked on, the older ships. But he finally, after he got married, they needed a job where he could stay in Thunder Bay, so he got a job with McCabe Grain Company. It was taken over by United Grain Growers [UGG] in the '70s, I believe.

NP: So, what's your earliest memory of elevators?

EL: My earliest memory of the elevator is something I'm very fond of when I think back about it. I recall when I was about 8 or 9 years old, somewhere in that area, my father was working on the 4:00 to 12:00 shift at McCabe Grain. He took me to work with him one day on his bicycle. It must have been during the summer holidays because I wasn't in school. But anyway, it was quite an experience. We got to the grain elevator and here's this huge mammoth building—it was kind of frightening to look at it. And he brought me in the office, and then we went up this little--. We got into this little steel cage, about five by four, and elevated up to the different floors where he finally stopped. I think he was on the distribution floor, which is right near the top I believe. They had a little office up there, and I spent the entire eight-hour shift with him.

[0:05:03]

So, in the meantime he took me around and showed me some of the operations that were going on. And we descended down to the garner floors, and weigh floors, and all of those types of things. He was explaining to me all the functions that these things did at

the same time—the cleaner deck and--. These are things I'd never heard of before. I was really impressed by that. And the view from the elevator looking out at the harbour and back at the city, it was just something I never got out of my mind.

So anyway, we went back to school, and it was either later in that week—it might have been during the summer holidays and it was when we first got back to school, I don't recall exactly—but the teacher asked us to do some artwork, and I drew a picture of a grain elevator, so that you could see all the different floors on them. And I had them all named. The teacher was so fond of this drawing that I made—and I'm not an artist—but she had never seen anything like this before and wanted to know if she could keep it. I've never seen it since, but she showed it to all the other teachers, and they were all very impressed. It occurred to me later that not only had the teacher never seen any of the functions of the grain elevators, but nobody else had either. I don't think anybody had any idea of all the things that went on in those places. I always remember that.

NP: What did your dad do, do you know?

EL: Yeah, he was a foreman of some kind. He just--. Mostly when they were loading ships, making sure the right type of grain and the right quantity. They used to have to mix the grains to keep the status at No. 1 or No. 2, or whatever it was they were shipping. So they'd have to throw in other grains to bring up the grade or down. Whatever it was, stuff like that. All I remember is he came home awful dusty all the time. Big pair of overalls.

NP: What was his name?

EL: Gerard.

NP: Was he a long-time employee, then, of McCabe's?

EL: Yeah, he worked at McCabe's all the time that I was growing up and until he retired, actually. And then after he retired—it was during the time of what I call "The Great Grain Boom"—and by then some of the old elevators along the Kam River were opening up again. And I think at Elevator F, which was I think a CPR elevator at one time, it was opening too. They were selling specialty grains that the main grain elevators didn't have room to handle any more. They were selling screenings and dust that they were compounding into pellets, and all kinds of different things like that. So, he worked over there for about a year and a half, sort of part-time, just to help out.

NP: Approximately when would that have been? Do you know when he retired?

EL: Yeah, it would have been in the late ‘70s--. In the ‘80s, during the ‘80s. Mid-’80s, somewhere like that.

NP: Right. So, Maurice Mailhot or Maurice Mailhot’s dad would have been operating.

EL: Yeah, my father worked for him. That’s right.

NP: For Maurice or for his dad?

EL: I don’t know which. I didn’t meet them. I don’t know which one he worked for. But an interesting thing that happened to me when I actually worked in the grain elevators, I wasn’t intending to this particular summer—I guess I was 18 or 17 years old. I’d gotten a job, my dad got me a job there in the summertime working shovelling grain, which is a whole other story. I don’t know if you’re familiar with how they shovel grain out of boxcars, but it’s something to behold. But anyway, he got me a job there for the summer--.

NP At McCabe’s?

EL: At McCabe’s, yeah. And during that time, just around the end of August, he fell off a ladder and broke his back, so I stayed at the grain elevator. If you want to pause that machine.

[Audio pauses]

NP: Oh yeah, he broke his back.

EL: So, getting back to the story there, my father had fallen off a ladder and broken his back. There wasn’t any compensation available, and he was going to be out of work for three or four months, so I stayed at the elevator and worked there until Christmastime, until when I got laid off. That was long enough to convince me that I didn’t want to work there. It’s a dirty, dusty, cold, miserable job. I was allergic to the dust as well, so I was scratching and itching like a cat with fleas all the time.

I’ll tell you a little bit about shovelling grain out of the boxcars, in case nobody has ever advised you before. But in the old days the boxcars of grain arrived in a boxcar. And you had to open the door and split open the wooden interior door with a fire axe and let the grain drain out. Then they had these 30-inch square hardwood shovels with a cable attached at one end. And you’d grab hold of the shovel, get into the boxcar and try to get as far into the corner of it as you could, and then drive this wooden shovel into the grain. Then the cable slack would run out and pull it back and drag the grain out of the side of the car. So, it was very dangerous

and extremely hard work. But that was the modem that they used in those days before automatic dumpers came in. Grain being hauled in hopper cars hadn't been invented yet, so it was very difficult.

[0:10:24]

But anyway, I'll tell you about my very first day that I worked there. I had a little bit of orientation time, and then they set me up with a little French guy since my history is French—my background is French, my parents were. This little French guy and I made a team. Each team had a boxcar to shovel, so there was several teams employed. And you're required to shovel about ten boxcars a day. So, you'd do three in the morning, stop for coffee, do two more, and then repeat the process again after lunch. So, in the morning after we got through the third boxcar, we were entitled to go into the anteroom and have a little cup of coffee. It turned out we were the last ones in there because I was a little bit awkward and slow because it was my first day. So, after lunch, that little French guy that I was working with took me aside and he said, "Ted," he said, "do you realise we were the last ones in that room to have coffee?" He says, "That's never going to happen again. We'll never let those Italians beat us in there."

And so, we pulled up our game a little bit and from then on in, we did as good or better than they did. But it just goes to show you how much competitiveness there was. They weren't shovelling grain for their own benefit, or for the sake of the employer, or anybody else. It was simply just pride, even at a job of that low of a level. So that impressed me for a long time. I've never forgotten that.

NP: Did you become good at shovelling grain?

EL: I became good after lunch that same day, yeah. That's right.

NP: So, what did you find was the technique to improve your efficiency?

EL: Oh, you had to put your foot around the front of the shovel and get your foot on the cable to keep the shovel going deeper into the grain. See at the beginning, I was just staying behind the shovel because I didn't want it to pick me up and throw me out the door, which would have been probably certain death or something. So, I got a little less timid and I learned the technique awfully quick. It didn't take a genius. It just took a little bit of courage. [Laughing]

NP: Yes. I love the stories of the grain shovellers because everybody who has done it remembers it, especially their first days.

EL: Oh, gosh, yeah.

NP: So, did you--. This was the summer job? No, this was the one--. Well, when you did the shovelling was that the summer job?

EL: Yeah, it was intended to be just for the summer, and I was going to go back to school, but I didn't go back to school because I stayed on and worked until Christmastime. Then I took on other various jobs.

NP: What else did you do in the elevator then up until Christmas?

EL: That's all. After Christmas I was laid off.

NP: You were shovelling for that whole time?

EL: Yeah, that's right.

NP: Okay. You must have built up some good muscles?

EL: Actually, it was the first year that I played junior hockey, and I was better than everybody else at 18 years old. My legs were like iron pins. They were so strong. The next year I lost some of that because I didn't shovel grain anymore. [Laughing]

NP: Yes, I understand that a number of elevators hired Junior A players for the summers to keep their fitness levels up.

EL: That's the first time I've heard of it. I didn't know that. I know a lot of them worked in the grain elevators, but they tried to migrate to softer jobs.

NP: Afterwards probably, yeah. [Laughing] Once they weren't interested in the physical workout. As an employee of the elevator, what comments would you make about working for--. It was still McCabe's at the time you worked?

EL: That's right.

NP: Yeah. Any comments on the operation itself? Characters who might have worked there, other than your dad?

EL: Well, most of the characters were foreign. They had foreign names, a lot of them which I couldn't pronounce. But there were many Italians there, and some Ukrainians, and a lot of other Slavic people. If you go back in the history of it, the foremen,

superintendents, and all these had Scottish names, and they were the ones that had most of the better jobs. And the immigrants were people that were--.

[Audio pauses]

NP: So, you were talking about a lot of the workers were Slavic or Italian. And the supervisors.

EL: Oh, yeah. Supervisors were either from Great Britain—mostly from Great Britain, I guess, originally—and so on.

NP: A lot of Scottish?

[0:15:01]

EL: In the people that were highly promoted, that's right. Yeah, they ran the elevators and so on. But McCabe's was an old elevator. I didn't realize it because I hadn't been to any other elevators, but it had open bins. The storage bins in the workhouse didn't have covers on them so the dust was phenomenal in those places. Very unsafe place just to work, and dusty all the time.

NP: Well, your father, where was he climbing on the ladder?

EL: Just outside the workhouse I think, on the deck or the dock. They were trying to set up some spouting to load a ship or something like that. I don't know exactly what it was he did.

NP: And when he went back? I mean, breaking his back is a pretty major injury.

EL: Yeah, he was in a cast for several months. He was home with the cast on. He was functioning pretty good with that, and when he took the cast off, he went back to work. And he might have been on light duties for a while, but he managed pretty good after that.

NP: Did your father like working at the elevators?

EL: Yeah, I think so. He made a lot of friends there. Didn't bring them home too often, but I met some of them at picnics and different things like that—family picnics that they put on. I don't know what else to say about the grain elevators except that the farther away you could stay from them the better off you were in my opinion. [Laughing]

NP: In those days, they hadn't gotten the new dust control systems in.

EL: No, that came when I started working for Northland Machinery. That's exactly what we did was install dust control systems and loading spouts and all that kind of stuff. So, I went right back in the grain elevators again. I worked at the United Grain Growers when they were putting in the new annex after the old one fell into the slip, and then after that at Pool 1 when they built their new annex. I had a lot of experience in the elevators working for the sheet metal companies.

NP: Now how did you get into sheet metal?

EL: Well, when I was laid off, and after that first year that I had worked for the grain elevator, the junior hockey team that I played for our coach was employed by Northland Machinery. He got me a job there. Actually, he started me off as an apprentice, a sheet metal worker, where I stayed for almost four years.

NP: Did you enjoy the sheet metal work?

EL: No, that was the second job I would not recommend to anybody for the same reason—no matter what happened, you always ended up in a grain elevator or on top of one in someplace. And it was either 40 below or hot and dusty. Either way you could never win. And you always went there because there was a need for either dust control or to fix something that makes somebody else's life better. But as soon as the job was done you got out of there.

NP: Did you learn anything about the physical structure of the elevators as a result of that work that you didn't know when you were actually working in the elevators?

EL: Yeah, I did go on different floors and repair different things, spouts for loading, for example, on the distribution floor. We built spouts that moved around on rollers, if you wanted to distribute the grain from a certain bin to another bin—to either top it off or fill it up for loading a boat and things like that. Then there was the cleaner deck where they had these big screens and they shook the grain and separated it, got rid of the chaff and the dust, had the grain cleaned to put in the storage and so on like that. It was all transported around on belts. Everywhere you went there was a belt doing something—pulling grain or lifting grain. A lot of things like that.

NP: You would have worked in several different elevators then?

EL: Yeah, I did. I went to, let's see now, Pool 7 I think we did some work in there. We were installing these blowout windows that in case there was an explosion or something the windows would blow out and absorb the concussion rather than knock the walls apart and stuff like that. Then I worked at a couple of old elevators on Mission Island—Searle I think we went to—and that had to be the dustiest one I'd ever been in. It was another elevator with open-top bins. And I remember working in there until noon, I put some wrenches down on the floor, went for lunch, when I come back, I couldn't find the wrenches. They were all covered with dust. That's how much it accumulated and how fast. None of them were pleasant experiences, by the way. [Laughing]

NP: What would you say would be the skill of a metal worker working on elevator jobs? What made the good ones versus the ones that just sort of did what they had to?

EL: Well, I don't know that there was that much skill involved. The skill was done in the shop where the fabricators worked, and the layout men. And then once the stuff was fabricated and put together, you just took it out in the field and put it on, applied it. Really the guys that worked in the field, where I spent most of my time, you just adapted everything. If the hole wasn't big enough to put the bolt in, you just made it bigger; if it was in the wrong place, you just moved it over until it worked.

NP: So, the designers and the fabricators were the--?

EL: They were the more skilled people, that's correct.

NP: Who owned, was it, Northland did you say?

EL: Northland Machinery.

NP: Was that a Paterson operation?

EL: Pause. **[Audio pauses]** I just don't remember right now.

NP: That's okay.

[0:20:36]

NP: Then you moved onto the railway. How did that opportunity arise?

EL: Oh, yes, after the sheet metal days. Actually, I was still working in sheet metal, but prior to starting with the sheet metal company I got hired by the CPR in 1960 in June right after school ended, first year out of high school. Things were very slow on the railroad in those days, and I only worked several weeks—I think three or four or five weeks—that year, a couple of months the next year, and two or three months the year after that. We were laid off most of the time. And it was during that time that I got started on the sheet metal job, which took up a majority of my time. I went to trade school down east in Toronto. I came back and I was working for Simon-Day Company in Thunder Bay in the last year of my apprenticeship when things began getting busy on the railroad. And then they required me to work, either take a full-time job, because I could work holding a steady position now, or resign. So, I worked 8:00 to 4:00 at the Simon-Day Company, and then I'd come home, have a quick bite to eat, change my boots, then go to work on the railway for 17:00.

Usually on the railway if you got your job done on time, they'd let you go home before the eight hours was up. So, I'd get home by midnight, go to bed, and repeat the process the next day. That dragged me on through the summer of 1964 I believe it was. Until one day I saw an ad--. Or not an ad, but the headline in the Times Journal that just popped out at me that Canada had made a humongous wheat sale to the Soviet Union. And I started studying all the figures that I was looking at there. The figure was given in bushels. I think it was something like 300 million bushels. I can't remember exactly the figure. I began converting those bushels into tonnes and carloads, and I came up with some kind of figure that told me there would be 3,500 trains of grain coming. And I knew this was overwhelming. It convinced me that I didn't have to go back to Simon-Day and finish my apprenticeship. I resigned and just threw my lot in with the railroad. That's how I got to stay with the CPR.

NP: Earlier when you were telling me about which positions you held, you started as a switchman in the--?

EL: Yeah, I started off as a switchman, and I stayed basically for about 12 years doing that. As I say, in 1964, things began to get a little busier. Business picked up in the later '60s. It started to get really busy. And then in the '70s, it was just a real full-blown grain rush. I don't know that many people realize this. But anyhow, they were short of people in all departments, and people were retiring, so they asked me to be a yardmaster. So, I took on that job, and I stayed with that for over 20 years.

NP: I'm going to ask you just to comment about the job of a switchman, and then I'd like to just have you describe what the railyards are like, and the division between CN and CP, how that worked in relation to deliveries of grain. So, let's start with the switchman's position. What exactly is that?

EL: Well, the switchman was a member of the switch crew, which consisted of an engineer to run the engine, a foreman, and two helpers. The switchmen were the helpers of the foreman. They all did the same work. Basically, you just moved cars around to get them all in their proper order—or proper significance, if you want to call it—so that if you were marshalling grain cars, you'd

marshal grain cars for, say, Pool 3, and other cars for Pool 7, and other cars for Manitoba Pool. When you got them all lined up the way they were required, you'd either haul them to the elevators and take the empty cars out of the elevator and replace them with the ones you just marshalled. So that's about basically all it was. You were simply just marshalling cars all the time.

[0:25:07]

NP: And switching them to the proper tracks?

EL: Well, that's what it is, yes.

NP: Is that where the term comes from? Switchman?

EL: Exactly, yeah. You switched them. You threw the switch. So, it either went into Track 2 or Track 3, whatever switch you aligned that was where the cars would find their final destination.

NP: Would an engine haul cars for different elevators? Or would they be all attached to one engine and sort of dropped along the way?

EL: They'd haul cars for elevators in a particular location. So, most of the marshalling was done in Westfort. They had a big receiving yard they called the A Yard in Westfort. So, every car of grain, and every grain train that came into Thunder Bay, came into Westfort and was dropped off in this big receiving yard. And then we had a hump built there that goes way back to the first existence of the CPR in Thunder Bay, where these cars were marshalled into their separate tracks.

Each grain elevator in Thunder Bay basically had their own track. So, these cars would come out of the receiving yard, go over this hump—which was a single track—and then they'd be marshalled. We'll say, if it was a car for Pool 7, it would go to the Pool 7 track, and if it was a car for Manitoba Pool 1, it would go to the Pool 1 track. That's basically what happened. And when those tracks got filled up with enough cars then an engine would come and haul them away and take them to, we'll say, he would take Pool 1's grain and McCabe's grain—because they were both in the same location—and put those cars away. And then after he'd pull the empties out of the elevator then those cars would be ready to be pushed in.

NP: What did you like and not like about that job?

EL: I liked everything about that job. It was interesting, it was challenging, it was physical—and it was good physical. You walked all the time. You were climbing up on top of boxcars, and it was just something that--. And it was challenging. It was extremely challenging because in most of those jobs, some crews could do an assignment and the average time might have taken six or seven hours. Well, some guys couldn't do it in six or seven hours, and other guys could do it in three. It all depends on how they marshalled the cars, and the moves they made, and the positions they were in, and all that kind of stuff.

NP: How do you do that? What skills do you build in order to be able to marshal faster? Like you just don't take--. "Here comes a car so we send it down to Pool 7 track. And here comes another car and it goes to McCabe's." What do you learn over time that makes you more efficient?

EL: Well, you sort of plan ahead. The foreman would do the planning, and they'd tell you what to do, but you'd have a guy out in the field there. Even though you might be putting cars into one elevator and getting them ready to go into the elevator, you might be over at the other elevator getting the switches lined up beforehand, so that when you went in there you wouldn't have to stop every time you came to a switch. You'd go in and he'd be able to look at the four or five tracks that the elevator had in front, and he'd be able to say, "It's going to be advantageous to take Three Track and double it onto One Track and leave Two Track there until later. Then when we pick it up, it'll be in the right position." And if you didn't plan those kinds of things, you were just stumbling from one thing to the next, and whatever time it took, it took. Planning made a big difference. If you were on the ball, you could save a lot of time.

NP: When you initially said the crew for a switching crew was made up of the engineer, the foreman, and two workers, I thought, "Well, gee, why in the world would you have one foreman for just two workers." And now I understand because there was an awful lot of behind the scenes.

EL: Well, they all worked together. The foreman, everybody, did equal work.

NP: But he would be doing the planning as well?

EL: Yeah, he had to do that. That was pretty well done at the beginning of the shift, and once you got to the position you were going to work at, you'd look at the layout and figure which were the best moves to make at that time.

NP: Now, let's step back and take a look at the bigger picture. You were talking about the location of the hump, which I assume is not there anymore?

EL: That's right, the hump disappeared. That happened--. Well, the reason the hump existed in the first place is, as I said, every grain car that came into Thunder Bay arrived in the receiving yard in Westfort. And in those days, the farmers sent their grain to whatever Pool they belonged to out west—so it would have been a Manitoba Pool or a Saskatchewan Pool or United Grain Growers—and that grain would then be earmarked for that grain elevator in Thunder Bay. So, you couldn't mix a Manitoba Pool car with a Saskatchewan Pool car, although they both held the same content. They both held exactly the same type of wheat. But when they were marshalled in Thunder Bay they had to go to the separate elevators. And that was a big ball up all the time, you had to keep separating every car of grain.

[0:30:14]

So, when you were humping these cars of grain, you might have a Pool 3, a Pool 1, a Pool 7, you might get two cars in a row for Pool 6, and each cut required a guy on top of the hump to ride that car into its separate track, you see? So, there was a lot of labour involved there.

NP: How did it get to the top of the hump?

EL: An engine would get onto the west end and push it. A special engine with a booster on it. And it would push it up over the hump, and when it got to the top of the hump the foreman of the hump crew would have a list there of each car and he'd know exactly which track it would go into. He'd signal somebody to align the switches, and down they'd let the cars go and release them. They'd have these people that we call switch tenders—they were not switchmen, but they were in the same trade—and their job all day was simply to align the switches to make sure each car went into the right track.

NP: Doesn't sound too safe to have people riding down a hill on cars, moving cars.

EL: It wasn't safe, but it was a lot of fun. It was so much fun we'd look forward to doing that when we were on the spare board. They used to call us on Saturdays and Sundays all the time. [Sneezes] Excuse me. The hump was a great place to work. A lot of the older guys there were experienced and knowledgeable. Most of them—I guess just about all of them—had, when they come onto the railroad, didn't have seniority enough to work full-time, so they had other jobs. Some of them were carpenters, some of them were--. Well, they called themselves lawyers, and doctors, and everything else, but you could sure get a lot of information from them in those days. [Laughing] It seemed like going to the hump was like going to college.

NP: Were there accidents or surprisingly not so?

EL: Yeah. I'm going to mention that. When the hump--. When the grain boom really started to take off in the late '70s—or mid '70s I guess—the hump that normally, we would say, in a busy year, would employ 20 men on a shift for the day shift. Well, when business really got booming, they had two shifts on the hump. So, they had the regular day shift and then another shift would start at 3:00 and work through most of the daylight hours until they got enough cars humped to satisfy the needs of the grain elevators.

And then when it got really hairy—this is when the grain elevators began working around the clock—somebody thought that the only way we could keep up to this was to put three shifts on the hump. So, they actually had a midnight shift working there. And they put some extra lights on, but that was so dangerous that they abandoned the process. And somebody did lose their leg—actually two people did. One fellow fell off a boxcar and fell on the track, got his leg severed almost at the thigh. And another guy was riding the car into a track, and the track ahead of him hadn't cleared and he went smack into the back of another car—young fellow, he lost his leg as well. So, that sort of put an end to that process.

NP: Where was the hump?

EL: The hump was right at the foot of Tarbutt Street in Westfort.

NP: And what happened that they could get rid of it?

EL: Well, one of the biggest changes that occurred—and it was after the large wheat sales to the Soviet Union and the rest of Europe had taken place—the Wheat Board decided that they were going to begin to pool the grain. So, there was no longer the need to separate a car of Saskatchewan wheat from a car of Alberta wheat. It was the same wheat. They could go anywhere. And that began the slow process of eliminating the hump because then sometimes you'd get a train that came in and it had all wheat on it. It didn't matter what grain elevator unloaded it, or what farmer put it in whose bin. It was all wheat, so it could go to whatever grain elevator handled wheat. So, large portions of the train—20 or 30 cars at a time—could be marshalled onto a track. And then eventually the entire train could be sent to, for example, Intercity, and they could put 50 cars of wheat to Pool 7 and 30 cars of wheat to Pool 1 and dissipate the rest among whoever needed it. That eliminated the hump altogether.

NP: At one time, Thunder Bay had three grain companies [sic] that were transporting grain—the Grand Trunk--. Did CN [Canadian National Railway] exist--? Yeah. CN existed at the same time as Grand Trunk, but they just sort of merged at some point.

EL: CN took over from Grand Trunk, that's correct. It was a little bit before my time, but when I--.

NP: Or there was the Canadian Northern [CNoR]. There was the Canadian Northern because there was the Canadian Northern Elevator built which became Pool 6. And it definitely was before your time; it was like at the turn of the last century. But when you were working there were the two—there was the CN and the CP.

[0:35:20]

EL: That's right.

NP: Because I'm not knowledgeable about this but interested, tell us about how the rail system was set up, divided between the two. And how they serviced elevators, whether--.

EL: Well, it was set up so that both railroads got almost an equal share of the grain arriving from the west. A little bit more came by CPR I believe. They apportioned it so that--. For example, at Intercity there was Manitoba Pool 1, McCabe's, and Parrish & Heimbecker [P&H]. And all three of those elevators were handled by the CPR because they were all on the same lead. And Pool 7.

NP: The same lead being--?

EL: Well, when you branch off of the mainline onto a lead track, a lead can take you anywhere. The lead from the mainline went into those three elevators, so the CN did not have access into that elevator. Now to get over to Pool 7, you went a little bit further east along the track, and we had sort of a joint yard there. It was CN yard mostly. But any grain that was for Pool 7 that came in on CPR lines we'd put it into these long tracks in the storage yard, and we'd put them into the west end and the CNR would pull them out from the east end and shove them into the Pool 7 elevator. So, that's the way we exchanged cars. The CPR got credit for the unloads because it was a CPR car, you see? But the CNR got paid for handling it.

So, they always tried to sort of balance that out. And the same thing happened over on the Mission. We'd spot cars for the Grand Trunk and the Searle elevator at an interchange track, and the CN would stop a couple of times a day and pick up the cars and take them over to the island and get them dumped.

NP: Whether they were CP or CN cars and then the credits would be worked out through the paperwork?

EL: Well, they would all be CP cars. It was rare that we got a CN car in our--. Somebody would have to make a large mistake in Manitoba, in Winnipeg, for us to get a CNR car.

NP: So, CP was delivering to Grand Trunk and--.

EL: Yeah, the CNR had their own cars.

NP: Or Cargill and the Searle.

EL: Well, I guess it was before Cargill took over it was Searle. Yeah, the CN would get their grain from Neebing and take it over to service those elevators, and on the way by, they'd stop and pick up any cars that we'd left on the interchange for them. And on the way back at the end of the shift they'd leave the empties there and then we'd go get them at night.

NP: Was there separate trackage for CP and CN into those two elevators? Or was there a single track? Who owned the track?

EL: I can't--. I can only think of one elevator—there may have been more—but the only elevator I can think of where there were separate tracks for both the railways was Paterson's. They had a track that they serviced, and we serviced the rest of the elevator. But all the other elevators, they were designated. The CN did all the switching, and all the filling, and all the pulling, and we did all the switching and pulling in the CP elevators.

NP: What were the CP elevators? That you remember.

EL: Well, I mentioned--. I remember the three over at Intercity. In Current River, CPR looked after Richardson's elevator. They looked after Pool 4A and B—which had become one elevator, but there was still two workhouses, so we had to do three elevators in effect. United Grain Growers was serviced by the CN. So, we had the same set-up over there. We'd haul the cars over there for the Grain Growers and shove them in from the west end, and when the CN needed them, they'd take them out the east end and use them to fill the Grain Growers.

NP: When you started as a switchman in around 1960, what was operating along the river?

EL: Along the river?

NP: Anything up near the mill? Or had they already gone?

EL: No, the Northwestern was still operating then. And so was the Lakehead. And they were very small elevators, they only held about, I think—eight cars on each track times four—maybe 30 cars, 32 cars would fill the elevator at Northwestern. They weren't

working when I'd started there, they'd only work when it was something extra. It wasn't busy enough. But they did start again when the boom began, and they were working pretty well full-out there.

NP: Was that CP track?

EL: Yeah. CP serviced those two elevators, as well as Elevator D, of course.

[0:40:04]

NP: Yeah, right. And coming along to Paterson's, you said that was both companies. And then you're into Western, Fort William E and F, Ogilvie's, or Pool 8?

EL: Oh, yeah, I forgot to mention. Pool 5 was operating in those days, too. It was among those three little elevators along the riverside there. Pool 5 was, we'll say, the most modern one. I can't recall, there was an explosion there one time at Pool 5 and they may have rebuilt it. That's why it was newer. So, they were operating all the time and so was Pool 8, which was further down just behind the CPR station on the Kam River. The Pool 8 was a little bit more modern than the ones you'd mentioned there that were formerly CPR elevators. So, they were working, and they also had the flour mill in there as well.

NP: The Ogilvie's?

EL: Yeah, Ogilvie's flour.

NP: Yeah. And what about the starch plant? Was it even operating when you were--?

EL: Oh, yeah, the starch plant was operating. They had upgraded that facility and put in great big bins. I don't know what all else. But that required extra switching too.

NP: It was a beautiful facility from what I've read.

EL: It was. And inside the old elevator when they shut that down, all the bins were made of hardwood. Oak. A lot of people, when they dismantled it, people went in there and got some of that wood out. I don't know whatever happened to it, but it was just beautiful. Especially after having the grain run over it, it was just shiny and old wood.

NP: Your career would have taken you across the times that those elevators were demolished—Westland D, Lakehead, Northwestern, Western, or Pool 5. Did you pay attention to any of those?

EL: Yeah, I was on duty the day that Pool 5 was imploded. We knew that we had all been cautioned to stand clear, and we had to clear some tracks around it. When the explosion took place, I was up on the second story of the office in Westfort where I worked on the hump—which was still operating at that time—and it was pretty spectacular to watch it just compile into a pile of dust. And the others, I don't recall when they were taken down. And actually, some of them are still there; parts of Pool 11 are still there, and so is Pool 10. I think Pool 10 is the--. I don't think they still operate in them.

NP: Oh, yes, they do. And in fact, they're the one we're putting up for National Historic Site status.

EL: Oh, good. Okay. Well, I'm glad to hear that. I'd always hoped that they would do that, that one.

NP: What did you like about that one? Why did you think it would be a good--?

EL: Well because it was a good candidate. It was easily accessible. I wouldn't say that easily accessible, you had to go around underneath King Street subway to get to it.

NP: Or across the--.

EL: Yeah, you couldn't get across the tracks.

NP: You could get over the Brown Street walkover bridge.

EL: I don't even know if they still have that there. The bridge is still there, I don't know if they can still walk over it or not.

NP: They fought a battle. I don't know if it was with CN or CP because it was supposed to be in--.

EL: CP. Yeah, I know. CP offered to rebuild the bridge or tear it down or pay the city, but the city neglected to accept the offer, so they ended up with the same old bridge, I guess.

NP: They got a new one built because some people wanted to negotiate a trade-off between rebuilding that bridge and reinstituting foot traffic on the Jackknife Bridge. But Westfort residents said, "In perpetuity means in perpetuity, and we want that bridge." So, it

was rebuilt. So, there is that access. The elevator is almost like a little museum. Do you recall anything about delivering grain to that elevator that made it a little different or--?

EL: I don't think there was anything special about it. I never actually went inside of it, just on the outside when we were shoving cars in. It was an old-style place that still used the hand shovelling—with the wooden shovels that I told you about—I don't think they ever upgraded beyond that.

NP: They had little bobcats, the electric.

EL: Okay, well, if they did that then that was a step forward for them. They actually came into vogue in McCabe's as well after I had gone from there. But they never installed the automatic dumpers. The automatic dumpers were a huge investment that the larger elevators—Pool 7 and the Grain Growers and Pool 4—had installed those things. And they worked fine during the time when boxcars were the only method of hauling grain. But once the hopper cars came in, you didn't need the automatic dumpers anymore, you just opened the hopper car and the grain went down into the hopper.

NP: Monika, could you pause please? **[Audio pauses]** Can we go back then?

EL: Sure, go ahead.

NP: For someone like me—and I'm hoping that a lot of people listening to these voices over time—we know trains go by and they carry grain, but that's about it. But I'm interested in speaking to you about where were the various yards? So, a train coming in from--. A CN train coming in, a CP train coming in—what was the sort of administrative set up? Where did they go? What properties were theirs?

EL: Well, as I mentioned, the CPR trains, the grain trains, all came off the mainline just east of the King Street bridge, and it went into the large receiving yard in Westfort called A Yard. That was where our longest tracks were. We could bring--. I think there was 13 tracks there—or 12, something like that—they held about 70 boxcars each, so you could probably put three or four trains into that yard. That was our main receiving yard for grain. The CN's yard was in Neebing, way out in Neebing, and it's still there. They would haul their grain either across the bridge over to the island [sic] for Cargill and Searle. And the grain for Intercity they'd have to haul it right across the city, across all the main street intersections. There's always been a big debate about that because of the amount of time that they take to cross Arthur Street, and where they cross at Balmoral and Intercity. They tie up traffic.

NP: And CP skirts along the river and the lakefront. So, CPR is--.

EL: CPR never crosses any crossings except at Westfort when they come into the yard there. Small crossings, Mountain Avenue and those kinds of streets.

NP: When you're talking about the King Street bridge, that's the overpass?

EL: No, that's the underpass that the--.

NP: So, the trains would be going above us as we travelled under it?

EL: That's correct, yeah. That's right. The CPR paralleled Hardisty Street and stayed on the southside of the city, basically all the way through the city, and exiting at the east end and going east. So, they never bothered any traffic. It was oftentimes there, at the city's instigation, there was surveys taken to try to get the CP to handle CN traffic through the city, so it wouldn't have to bypass all those crossings. I remember when they were taking the surveys, the CPR was trying to show that those tracks were occupied too often to allow the CNR to travel on them. So, I'm not saying they falsified the figures, but we sure put a lot of cars on those tracks when that survey was being done.

NP: Did that change over time? Because once rail shipments of grain started moving west rather than, to the same extent, east, it would be pretty hard to justify that the tracks were too occupied? Or nobody bothered again?

EL: I don't know what you mean by grain moving west.

NP: Well, at one point we were shipping—well not quite 100 percent—but an awful lot of grain, and then now the markets have shifted to the extent that--.

EL: Oh, you mean to the West Coast?

NP: To the West Coast, yeah.

EL: Oh, there was always grain going to the West Coast.

NP: But not to the same extent as--. When you were talking about the Russian sales, I mean, those were mostly going out of here.

EL: Most of it came out of Thunder Bay because they hadn't built the new elevators in Prince Rupert and stuff like that at that time. No, nothing ever changed. I think you'll still see the CNR hauling their trains across the town. They were never able to convince the CPR that they would want to share their track with the CN.

NP: In Intercity there seems to be an awful lot of trackage. Is there something going on there?

EL: That was the major storage for the elevators at Intercity. And there was a--. Let's see. Now that we had one, two--. Two yards there for the CPR and then there was an interchange yard that was basically a CN yard, but we would use--. There was three tracks on there that we'd interchange with them every day. So, we'd put the grain in there for them, they'd take it out, as I said before. And also, other traffic that was brought into the city that had to be brought in—we'll say cars for the Great Lakes Paper or something like that. Or if the CNR brought them in on their line, they'd hand them off to us, and we'd get them spotted. And another thing that came in there often was those tri-level cars from the east with the automobiles on them. The CN brought most of those in. They had that business. So, we'd have to get them spotted and hand them back when they're empty.

[0:50:28]

NP: You were working for the railway when hopper cars came in. What kind of difference did hopper cars make to a railway employee?

EL: They made a big difference because you no longer had to climb on top of the boxcar to tie a handbrake on or stuff like that. In the old days of the wooden boxcars, the ladders went all the way to the top. They had a wooden catwalk on top that you used to walk on and walk along the top of the car and go from car to car—sometimes walk the entire length, say 60 car lengths, to get from one end to the other. You're talking about the real old days when I first started. They were using boxcars primarily as the conveyance for hauling grain. And we didn't have radios. So, when you were snaking in and around those elevators and going around curves, you had to have three guys on the cars—one on the leading car shoving it in, one in the middle to relay signals, and one on the head-end to relay the signal to the engineer. Before you had radios, there was no other way you could conduct that kind of business.

I can tell you, the first shift that I worked on the railway, I was called for an 18:00 assignment. We went over to Intercity to put grain in the elevators and everything went okay for the first three or four hours. Then it started getting dark, and I was standing on top of the car next to the engine with an old coal oil lantern trying to watch the foreman who was 60 car lengths away on a [inaudible] of the car. And, of course, all I could see in the background were about 10,000 lights of the city of Port Arthur, so I couldn't tell which was his lamp and which was the city lights. So, I had to stop the train. And the engineer come up after we

stopped, climbed up on top of the boxcar. I was kind of scared. I thought he was going to throw me off the boxcar. But instead he pointed out to me where this foreman's lamp was, and then from then on, he guided me through the rest of the movement until I caught onto what was happening. And he had the fireman run the engine. Those days were pretty kind of scary when you're up on top of those boxcars and they were moving along. You had to watch your footing.

NP: Especially in winter, I would think.

EL: Yeah, winter was even more risky. But what had happened was when the hopper cars became fashionable, then there was no more need to go on top of the cars. For one thing, we had radios by then as well, you see. And there was no ladders that would get you on top of the hopper car. They only went a certain way up—far enough to tie a handbrake on. A handbrake was only, we'll say, about six or seven feet off the ground, whereas on a boxcar they were way up on top of the car.

NP: How tall was a boxcar on wheels?

EL: Let's say--. I'm going to say 15 feet, 18 feet, or something like that.

NP: Wow. And then you're standing on top of--. Yeah. What kinds of signals were there?

EL: Well, there was only four signals: back up, go ahead, stop, and the other one was, when you put your thumbs up, it was go for coffee or go for lunch.

NP: What's the back up, stop--? Was it light signals?

EL: Well, if in the daytime, you'd just use your hands, your arms. So, you just made a circular motion to back up, and a perpendicular motion—or straight up and down—would be to move forward, and then the stop signal would be to make a move from one side to the other, sort of perpendicular to the track. That would be the other stop movement.

NP: So, at nighttime, would they be doing this with--? They couldn't do this with the lantern?

EL: Yeah, the same thing with the lantern, yeah. The lantern was just like a flashlight. They just used the same signals. Circle was to back up, a straight up and down signal is go ahead, go forward.

NP: So, were they doing a circle like this?

EL: That's right. Yeah, wave your arm. That's all you had to do.

NP: It wouldn't be--. I couldn't see that being too easy with a lantern.

EL: Oh, yeah, it was easier. And the lantern was easier to see.

NP: Oh, okay. Well, I know you'd need the lantern, but I can't see it--. Wasn't the oil flowing out or--? [Laughing]

EL: Well, I'll tell you that little experience with the oil lantern that I had. My first shift, that was the last time I think an oil lantern was ever used. They had already introduced the battery lamps at that time. And when I got to work that night, the stores were closed, and they didn't have one for me, so I had to use the old coal oil lantern. But that's what they used in those days before the battery lamps came in. And now it's all done by radio, so you only need one guy in the point, and you can talk, and he can tell you whatever you want to do.

[0:55:17]

NP: Did these lanterns ever create fires? Because you've got lots of grass growing up near the railroad tracks.

EL: I don't think so. I never heard of any unless somebody dropped one into some dry grass. But not to my knowledge.

NP: Not a big issue.

EL: No.

NP: Yardmaster. Just checking on our time here. Tell me a little bit about that job and its relation to grain cars.

EL: Well, the yardmaster's job was he was set up in an office. And his job was to assign to the various engine crews, or switch crews, the work that had to be done. So, he would set up an assignment to go, for example, to Current River. He'd tell them to go over there, and what grain would be, on what tracks the grain was on or where it was, and take it over to Current River, and service the elevator—which meant pulling the empties out and putting the grain in. On the hump it was really interesting because he would get a worksheet or a teletype sheet of each track and every car on the track, what was the contents of it, and where it was supposed

to go. So then, he'd give a copy of that sheet to the switch foreman and tell him where he wanted to put the grain and how he wanted it marshalled. He'd have to plan all that out. It was a really, really interesting job.

And there, again, it was a job where one guy could do the job in four hours, another guy could do it in two, another guy could do it in eight hours. He couldn't get it done because of the way he marshalled the cars, and sequences that you put them in, and where you put them, and when, and so on. It just was a challenging job.

I remember going to work there during the boom when things were really going full blast on that hump. You'd come in there at quarter to 7:00 in the morning and the next thing you know the guy was coming in at 3:00 to relieve you, and you hadn't had time to have lunch yet. You were gone all--. Eight hours just vanished just like that. And that went on like that all the way through that boom.

NP: This would be pre-computers?

EL: The computers put the kibosh to all that stuff. Yeah. Just going ahead a few years when they had moved the old yard office from Tarbutt Street, they moved it to the far end of the receiving yard near the King Street bridges and A Yard there. They had a little office up there. By then, you'd know the contents of every car on every train before it left Winnipeg if you wanted to. You could find it all on the computer. Prior to that, you didn't know until the train arrived in Thunder Bay. So, having all that foreknowledge, you could sit down at your desk and within 45 minutes or an hour you could have the entire day planned out. And really, I won't admit it, but there was nothing else to do for the rest of the day, and you were just sitting there, bored. So, the company finally caught onto that, and they eliminated some of the yardmasters.

NP: Would there be just one yardmaster position in Thunder Bay?

EL: There was a general yardmaster that looked after the paperwork for everything that went on basically. He was not involved with the movement of trains. The other yardmasters were assigned wherever there was a major yard that needed somebody in charge of it. So, there was one in Westfort. There was one for a time in the train yard at the foot of Victoria Avenue. And then later on when times got a little bit busier, they constructed a new building there and they had a supervisor and a coordinator in that building. So, they changed the position from yardmaster to coordinator-supervisor, but they had two guys doing it. And then they had another yardmaster over in Current River because of the grain elevators over there.

NP: And where was that set up?

EL: Current River?

NP: Was there an office? Was there an office or a building there?

EL: Yeah, they did. They put a little trailer just on MacDougall Street on the CPR side of the tracks, of course. I don't know if that building is still there, but it was there for all the time that I was a yardmaster. I worked there for about five years actually.

NP: What was the administrative setup in Thunder Bay? Who was the head honcho?

EL: Well, we had a--. Thunder Bay was a subdivision point, so we had a superintendent here. And then there'd be an assistant superintendent and following him would be the general yardmaster.

NP: And the three others that--.

EL: Well, the other yardmasters were just, yeah, they were the guys that were taking instructions from whatever the plan was, I guess.

[1:00:02]

NP: What changes in volume did you see and how much of that—number of cars—how much of the decrease would be due to just the increased size of hopper cars as opposed to a complete decrease in the amount of grain coming through, over your career? That's a pretty specific question, isn't it?

EL: You're saying would there be a decrease in the volume of cars?

NP: Decrease in the number of cars because the boxcars were smaller than the--.

EL: Yeah, the boxcars only held 40 tonnes and some of them held 60 tonnes, and the hopper cars held 100 tonnes. But the business was so much busier that they needed those hopper cars, even the 100-tonnes cars weren't sufficient enough to haul all the grain that was coming in. There were more hopper cars, more cars unloaded than the boxcars. I know one day—more than one day—we reached over 2,000 cars—1,000 unloads on the CPR and 1,000 on the CN—which was a phenomenal number of cars to unload. And the grain elevators working full-out, going two or three shifts to empty them all. Every track in the yard was full.

I can remember on some days, up in Westfort, we had three long tracks to accommodate trains of empties. We'd build them up and they'd get serviced by the carmen to make sure there were no bad orders before they let them out of town. We had to get those tracks emptied and those trains ordered in order to make room for the more empties that were coming from the grain elevators.

And there was some mornings that everything was just completely plugged with cars—the three tracks that were assigned to have the empty trains set up on, and then we'd use one of the mainlines to put a train on. The elevators were still emptying cars. There was no place for them to go. We had to haul them across the Jackknife Bridge and store them on the island and leave them there until we had room for them, which might have been two or three days. So, it was really--. It was a challenge.

NP: You referred to this when I said computers came in, so what was the method of organizing before computers? How--?

EL: Well, that's a good question. The method was really--. It was simple, actually. A train would come in from the west, and we had no idea what kind of grain was on that train until it got to Westfort. The only guy that knew was the conductor on the train because he had a waybill for each car. Every single car had its own waybill. So, if we were desperately in need of finding out the contents of those cars in order to get them distributed, we'd have somebody rush to pick up that waybill from the conductor, a [inaudible] I would say. And we'd have a grain distributor at Westfort, and he would look at those waybills and compare them with each car on the train with the number. Then he'd make out some--. We had a big machine there, an IBM machine, that made these IBM cards I guess they were--.

NP: Punch cards?

EL: Punch cards would come spitting out of the machine and then the grain distributor would hand them to a checker, and the checker would check off each number against the waybill. And then he'd put on that punch card where that car was assigned to go—so, Pool 7, Pool 3, Pool 4A, whatever. Then he'd have to run out into the yard with a big stapler and pound those punch cards into the wooden side of the boxcar, so that everybody would be able to see where that car went. That's what the process was.

Well, later on, when we began using the computers--. And CPR, by the way, I think, pioneered the computers in North America. They were one of the first railways to go into that process. They started off slowly, but they eventually became organized with it. So, then, you could look at a train when it was leaving Kenora, or even when it was leaving Winnipeg, and you'd know that there was a train coming in with 100 cars of wheat and 40 cars of barley—or whatever it was—and you didn't have to plan anything, or have anybody there to distribute it, or do anything. You just sent it directly to where it wanted to go. That help you any?

NP: Yes. [Laughing] Working through the system. Every business went through the same changes. From paper to punch cards to--. So, pre punch cards then, did you have a ledger book or--?

EL: Oh, ledger books. The CPR had ledger books piled up a mile high. They had records of every car that ever came into Thunder Bay and where it went and when it left—every single car. That was the job of the grain distributor. They would have every car that would come in. They would write it down in this huge ledger book. These big books, they weighed about 15 pounds, and they were probably 16 inches wide by about 2 feet high, and they were all indexed. Every car would be registered on there when it arrived, what the contents were. And then when it left, the same thing would be entered in the book. So, there was always a record. You could go back two years, or three years, and say, "This car was in Thunder Bay a year and a half ago. We haven't seen it since. What happened to it?" Somebody would find it over on the Island, empty, been sitting there for a year and a half in the weeds.

[1:05:43]

NP: Where did those books go? Just get tossed?

EL: They kept them for a long time, but I don't recall if they--. They probably did get discarded.

NP: What a shame.

EL: Yeah. I know I saw some of them when they tore down the old sheds along the Kam River, up towards where the East End was there. I guess that was No. 5 shed, or whatever it was. They did the same thing. They recorded all the cars that went in there to the cleaning yards and all the cars of flour that were offloaded onto the ships. And these huge register books were held there. They had a clerk there, or whoever was in charge of that—wasn't our department.

But I remember when they tore those old sheds down, some of the books were just left lying on the ground there. And I remember looking at them, and these records went all the way back to 1901. They just sat there. And all these different names of these people that were in these books. I was looking for a particular guy's name because he stayed at our house as a boarder when I was a little boy growing up. And one of his jobs was--. Well, his only job was to go to these different sheds, wherever they were required, and unload the flour from the boxcars and put them on the boats. His name was McClean, and I did actually find his name in one of the things. It was interesting what the pay was also. It would show that a certain guy worked on a particular day. He worked eight hours and I think he made something like 35 cents an hour or something like that. Hundred-pound bags of flour for eight hours at 35 cents an hour. Pretty tough stuff.

NP: Wow. If you ever find anybody who kept one of those. It's just as you said, some of the old ones tell such a story.

EL: There might still be some around. I know they kept them in Westfort when I left the yardmaster's job and went to work on the mainline as a conductor for the last four years. I still remember seeing some of them around. I don't know why they kept them, but--I don't know—somebody probably came along. I guess they did because they tore those buildings down and the books probably went with the buildings.

NP: And if they went anywhere, they would have gone to the--.

EL: Incinerator.

NP: To the incinerator? Not somebody might have kept them at the main station here?

EL: It's possible they might have kept a couple, but the CPR wasn't great on preserving history. They just wanted to get things done. Get it over with.

NP: You then moved on to be a conductor. I have to chuckle because I used to think a conductor was like the guy who welcomes the people onto the train and takes their tickets. But conductors are quite different, I've been told.

EL: No, that's correct. The conductor did that. The same conductor. If he had the seniority to hold a job on a passenger train, he did exactly what you said. He took the tickets, and he welcomed the passengers onto the train.

NP: But he also said whether the train moved or not.

EL: He was in charge of the train.

NP: He was in charge of the train.

EL: He did the same thing on a freight train, only on a freight train there were no passengers, just the engineer and the two brakemen.

NP: So, tell us about being a conductor on trains that carry grain, any challenges, what you liked about it, what you didn't like about it?

EL: Well, for me it was a different job. Most trainmen are conductors, engineers that take that job when they start. They have to be cut out for it because it's a different life. You have no time to yourself. You never know when they're going to call you. On a two-hour call, you could be gone for a day and a half or 16 hours, or you can go and make a trip to Ignace and be back in 8 hours—it was all possible. But you never knew. You couldn't plan the next day what you were going to do, you see? And so--.

NP: Because you were--?

EL: Well, you were always on call.

NP: And assigned to a train? And wherever it went, you went?

EL: There was only one assigned train, and that was a local train that ran out of Thunder Bay. It would service propane gas and anything else along the line, and switch at Ignace and bring back short hauls and stuff like that. But other than that, there was no assigned trains per se. Everybody was just on a rotating board. And when your number came up, they called you, and you went to work, and that was it. You could never plan anything as working on the road. It was different than working in the yard as a switchman or foreman.

[1:10:31]

NP: Did you--. Explain how you'd get a call, and what were you assigned to? How long did you--?

EL: Well, when you got called, they would say, "Your called for an extra west out of Westfort." And they would give you a two-hour call, so they'd call you at 20:00 in the evening, and you'd have to be there for 8:00 at night—20:00. You would pick up your engine off the shop track. The brakeman would go pick up the engine off the shop track, and the conductor would get on the engine at the depot. And then you'd go on up to Westfort and put your caboose on the train.

In those days, when they had the cabooses, the conductor would be on the caboose along with the tail-end brakeman, and once the caboose was on the train, the engine would go to the head-end. And all this process would take about an hour, an hour and a half. Do an air test, and when you got the okay from a dispatcher or the operator, you'd get the signal and take the empties west. And that was usually about a four and a half hour run up to Ignace. You'd leave the train there and then a Kenora crew would take it into Kenora, and then from there it would go to Winnipeg with a Winnipeg crew.

Other trains, if it was what we called time-card trains or similar trains that ran daily—express trains if you will—they'd be right on the mainline and you'd simply—the units would already be on the train—you'd simply get on the train and take it away.

NP: To Ignace again?

EL: Same thing, yeah. To Ignace.

NP: So, you never really went any further than Ignace in one direction and what about the--?

EL: No, our subdivision extended just as far as Ignace.

NP: And in the other direction?

EL: The eastern trains went as far as Schreiber. That was actually--. Thunder Bay was the division point for eastern and western lines. So, I worked on western lines, and eastern lines started at Thunder Bay and went to Schreiber.

NP: Then you'd just hop the next train coming back?

EL: Not necessarily the next train, but whatever. It depends on how many crews were ahead of you. If there were three or four crews ahead of you, then they would get called in turn. And then when your turn came up, you'd get called. So, it was the same thing. You'd go to the bunkhouse, and you might wait for 8 hours or10 hours, or they might decide that there is no train coming and then put you in a taxi and send you back home.

NP: Ah. So, you didn't just ride the train if you weren't doing the work.

EL: No. That's right. You were there--. There were so many hours--. I think after 12 hours they started paying you for layover. But when they still had the cabooses on the train, if they knew that there was two extra crews there and no trains coming, well, then they just put two extra crews in the caboose. They called that dead heading. You'd get paid a straight 100 miles for coming home as opposed to the 155 miles that you would have got paid if you were working.

NP: Anything else about the conductor's job? Did you like it?

EL: Yeah, it was fine. I didn't mind it too much. It wasn't as interesting as being a yardmaster, that was for sure. One thing I liked about it was I liked travelling on the trains. So, on good days I'd have a lunch and sit on the fireman's seat and look out the window. It was just like being on the passenger train as far as I--. And I was getting paid for it on top of that. [Laughing]

NP: Now, a thought came into my mind and just flitted out. Oh, I know. I have a special, weird interest in grain car doors.

EL: Oh my gosh, grain car doors? Yeah, they were special. What did you want to know about them?

NP: Well, whatever you'd like to tell us.

EL: Well, they were--. I'll tell you a funny story. When we used these old boxcars, those 40-foot cars. They were getting long in the tooth, and getting bumped around, you know. There's 150 of them sometimes on a train and they're getting jostled back and forth pretty hard. Those doors would kind of get sprung a little bit when they were in transit. The grain would leak out the side of them, so there was trails of grain along the sides of the mainlines all the way from Winnipeg to Thunder Bay. And they'd come into Thunder Bay leaking, and then they'd leak more, and sometimes there was grain piled up in the yards, I'll tell you, it was two feet deep. And then it would sit there and rot. It was a real mess.

Anyway, the problem was so acute that one time there, when the hump was really operating full blast, they had set up a position called "car stuffer". And there was a guy that went around with a stick and a bunch of wool rags, and stuffed rags in between the car door and the frame of the boxcar to prevent the grain from leaking out. And that was a phenomenal thing, but that actually happened.

[1:15:33]

NP: Did the leaking grain create any problems? Normally I think of birds and rats and mice.

EL: It certainly encouraged rats and birds, and eventually geese, to flounder around in the fields out in Westfort where the cars were stored. But it was also dangerous because it was slippery. It got wet, especially fine grains like flax and stuff like that. When they got wet, they were just like ice, and you slipped on them. So, they were a problem. I think the health authorities got after the railway, and they had to clean those yards up.

NP: So, it wasn't something they would do on a regular basis, just to prevent problems to begin with?

EL: No. It was an extra cost, so they would leave it there as long as it was tolerated, I guess.

NP: The grain car doors. The comments made by some people are there's very interesting things made out of grain car doors because--.

EL: Okay, well you're talking about the wooden doors now. The grain car, the steel door wasn't sufficient to hold the grain inside the car. When the car was loaded at the terminal out west, they had these doors that were, I think, made out of wood—most of it spruce. And they were six-inch boards, about an inch thick, that they would put together and nail across crossways across the two doors in the boxcar. And that was to prevent the grain from having access to the steel door and leaking out. So, they would build those up about, oh, six or seven feet up the side of the wall of the car. And then, when the car arrived in Thunder Bay, the grain elevator would open the steel door, then they would take a fire axe and chop through the two bottom sections of the wooden door to let the grain flow out. And once enough of it had flowed out, then they would use the other end of the axe to pound the door into the boxcar. And they'd take it out and throw in on a pile until the car was empty. Then when the car was empty, they'd put the grain door back in the car. At the end of the day when the empties were pulled out of the elevator, the crews that were pulling the grain cars out of the elevator would go slow enough so that there--. The grain door department was a separate department. All they did was take the grain doors out of the cars, make big piles out of them, and then repair them so that they could be shipped back in cars and sent out west, and repeat the process again. There was a lot of work involved in that.

NP: So, hopper cars did away with that department too?

EL: Hopper cars eliminated that. Yeah, my father brought those grain doors home when we were young. In fact, he bought an old table saw, and we used those grain doors to make rink boards for our hockey rink. We built a hockey rink just between Hardisty Street and Ross Street there, and put boards around it, and built a shack out of grain doors, and put a stove in it. The city came around one time. They thought it was their property. They thought it was a city rink.

NP: [Laughing] Were there other novel uses for those doors that--? It would have been, I would think, mostly in your dad's time. So, as you were growing up. Chicken coops and--.

EL: Oh, people built sheds out of them. I think, yeah, some of those old-timers had houses built out of them, garages, and repaired roofs. It wasn't wood good enough to build furniture out of, but it was a lot of uses out of it. It was good wood.

NP: The other stories that sort of come across our ears over of the length of this project are people that would be pilfering, either with or without permission, grain from cars.

EL: Empty grain cars?

NP: Yeah. Was that--. What can you say about that?

EL: Well, that was an ongoing process. There was a couple of guys in town that made a living doing that. The CPR was aware of it. They tried to arrest them several times, but they had to catch them red-handed, and lay a charge, and then you'd go to court. And the judge would say, "Well, we don't know whose grain it was he stole. We don't know where it came from, and nobody's made a claim against anything being stolen." So, the charges were dropped. And, actually, the CPR police were more intimidated by the guy taking the grain than he was by the police.

[1:20:17]

And I recall, on a couple of occasions, I saw this particular fellow jumping out of a boxcar with a 100-pound bag of wheat on his shoulders, and then reaching back in car and grabbing another 100-pound bag, and carrying them away—one under each arm. I don't think I'd want to tangle with him either.

NP: Now how would he get 100-pound bags of that much grain left on--.

EL: Oh, there was more than that. They--.

NP: Or he'd just sort of take from car to car to car and eventually it was 100 pounds?

EL: I don't know. He'd get that out of a car easily. The cars were built, originally, with wooden side walls. Grain would get in between these walls. It would get overtop of the walls from the cars shuffling back and forth, or just being improperly loaded. The grain would get in between the side wall, which was about a six-inch space between the steel side of the car and the inside wooden wall, and it would just stay in there. So, this guy would just know what to do. He'd go along and tap on the car, and if it sounded hollow, he'd go to the next car. And when he tapped a car that had a thud to it, he'd know there was grain stuck in the wall. So, he'd climb in the car and take a crowbar, he'd pull the bottom board off. The grain would leak out onto the floor, and he'd just keep sweeping it into a bag until it was full. Sometimes he'd get six or seven bags out of one car. So, there was a lot of grain being picked up that way. Part of that was the grain company's fault. The grain elevator guys should have made sure that there was no grain left in the car when it left the elevator, but they just erred.

NP: Were they allowed to just pull off a sideboard to do that?

EL: They should have. The car would have to be repaired when it went back out west. The farmer that was loading the grain would be in charge of repairing that door, so the problem wouldn't happen again.

NP: Speaking of farmers, did you have any thoughts for your job related to farming? Or you did your part, you knew grain came--.

EL: Yeah, that's one thing I never understood. I just know the farmers had--. I often wondered how they managed to put so much grain in those elevators to send them to us. Because when things really got going, man there was no stopping it. There was always grain in Winnipeg, and all Winnipeg had to do was send it to Thunder Bay and forget about it. And we had to handle it when it got here.

By the way, when the grain boom did begin there, it was a simple matter for the lake shippers, for example, to adjust to the increased volumes because they had already began building bigger ships, more modern ships. And it was easy for them. For example, the *Saguenay,* I believe, took 1 million bushels of wheat out of here one time. Prior to that, you would be looking at ships that took half that out of Thunder Bay. So, they just had no problem, as long as you could pour the grain in the boats, they'd provide them. And the grain elevators, they'd already begun adding new annexes and building better modern unloading facilities. As I mentioned before, they had those automatic dumpers, and they were unloading by hopper cars as well. But they just needed to add more shifts if they had to handle more grain.

The challenge was for the railroads. We had antiquated equipment—these old 40-tonne boxcars, and some of our engines were so old they could barely pull themselves, never mind pull the boxcars. We were way behind. And the result of that was because the railway didn't make any money hauling grain. They were subsidizing the farmers to haul grain from western Canada to Thunder Bay because they were stuck with the old Crow Rate. They were getting paid in perpetuity a rate that had been established in 1897 or something like that. So, it was a money-losing proposition. There was no reason why the railways would improve their fleet of cars. I guess it was not until the government finally realised that they had to chip in, so they began building those grain hoppers. In 1972, they built 12,500 of them. Then Alberta and Saskatchewan chipped in a couple of thousand each. So, they had over 15,000 cars that were in service then, and the railway didn't have to supply the cars anymore. So, that sort of alleviated the problem.

But later on, I guess it was that Western Grain Transportation Act, around 1983 or something like that, when they agreed to suspend the Crow Rate—or they altered it to some degree where there was move revenue coming in. The railways could haul it profitably. Then they also agreed to spend some $15 billion, or some figure like that, on upgrading and infrastructure and new tracks and all that kind of stuff. They had to build new tracks because those hopper cars were so heavy that they put awful wear on the rails.

[1:25:06]

NP: What implications did that have for Thunder Bay track yards then?

EL: Oh, it was brutal. There was derailments almost daily because we had old, old tracks that were--. We called them--. Railway tracks are gauged by pound per foot, so we had 80-pound rail in those days. And they were okay for 40-tonne cars and stuff like that, but then when you get into 100-tonne hopper cars, you needed bigger rail—like 100-pounds, or 120-pounds, or 150-pound rail. Almost double. And that's what they use now almost exclusively. But in those days, those big cars were putting--. And they were longer also, so they put side stress on the tracks when you were going around curves. Ah there was an awful bunch of pile of derailments, daily.

NP: And how is a grain car derailment handled? Like what's the physical process that's--?

EL: After it's derailed you mean?

NP: Yeah.

EL: Well, if it's empty, you can sometimes put it back on the track just by pulling it with an engine and using a re-railer. Some funny stories. We used to derail cars out in Westfort. They got old tracks in there. Some of these old foremen were pretty smart. They'd just pile some old wooden grain doors along the side of track and pull the car back up on the grain door, and it would fall on the track. They would go away and there was no mention ever made of it. Nobody had to make out a statement. There was no 1409; nothing ever happened.

But if a car was loaded, it was a different story. You had to--. You could sometimes pull it up on the track, and if it was badly swiped or there was damaged to the trucks—which meant the wheels—they had a big auxiliary hook come along and pick it up, take it off the ground, lift it up, put the wheels underneath, and then drop it back down again.

NP: They never had to empty the car and--?

EL: Oftentimes that would happen, yeah. Sometimes if the car was badly damaged, then you couldn't put the grain back in it. They'd just put a car on an adjacent track, and they'd had these machines to blow the grain—siphon it out of the derailed car—and blow it into the car on the adjacent track.

NP: Did CPR have their own--?

EL: Yeah, they had equipment for that.

NP: For that. They didn't hire a Vac-U-Vator or--?

EL: I don't know if they hired a vac--. I think they had their own car. There was enough derailments that it merited it. One of the things that you may not have heard mention of, was when you were putting cars into a grain elevator--. We'll say there's capacity on a track to hold 20 cars, and so you might be going and shoving 40 cars into the elevator, or 60. So, you know you can only put 20 on a track behind the elevator. After that there's nothing stopping the car from going over the end of the block, and it's going to end up in Lake Superior. And that happened quite frequently, many times because the switch foreman lost count of his cars. He thought he had 22 and he had 24. Or else the rails were slippery, and they didn't have braking power to stop, and they just couldn't slow down in time. So, that was a major problem. And the harbour authority wouldn't allow the cars to sit at the bottom of the lake, so they'd have to send divers down to attach cables around them, and it was a big process to get them back out of there.

NP: And a big report.

EL: Huge report, yeah.

NP: Were some people regular offenders for not keeping track? Or it just happened to everybody?

EL: No. It happened to me on one occasion, I still don't know to this day. I'm pretty sure I had the right count over at Northwestern Elevator. They had four tracks of eight cars each—and we had the right amount of cars—and somehow we ended up with one car too many. It didn't go into the Kam River, but half of it did. It was stuck over the end of the block and the wheels were just dangling in midair over the river.

We had to make out a statement and we finally had to admit that we had miscounted. But I suspect that one of the grain elevator employees had pulled the pin on one of the cars and left it up. And that car didn't get unloaded that particular day, and it was at the back of the elevator, and I didn't see it there when I was doing the count. I just assumed that all the tracks were clear. I didn't go walk all the way back at night to look. I guess this car was sitting at the block all by itself. When we shoved in with our eight cars, well, we bumped this car over the end. So, my job was--. The first thing they ask you in the statement, "Did you assure that the

track was clear?" And having told you what I just said, I guess I didn't—so, ten demerit marks.

NP: Ah, okay. How long did demerits stay on your record?

EL: I think they were wiped clean after about six months or something. Or they would reduce them anyway. Once you accumulated 40 of them, you could be held out of service.

NP: What kinds of incidences created demerits?

EL: Well, there were many things. Derailments were one. Running through a switch was a simple one. That was just pure negligence, and they only gave you five demerit marks. But if you repeated it again and again, well then, you'd get ten the next time and a good warning. You could be held out of service for stuff like that. But derailments. Sideswipes was another bad one where you failed to recognize clearances, and then you'd push a car into a track when the adjacent track was too close, and then you'd end up damaging the end of the car and stuff like that. Other things, they were personal things too, for example, being late for work or not showing up for work. Those kind of things would be dealt with. The process was you make it a 1409, and the yardmaster—the general yardmaster—would assess whatever he thought it was.

NP: 1409? That was in the river?

EL: No, 1409 was a general statement that you made out whenever there was an incident. It could be a flat tire on a truck, or a car off the track, or coming late for work, or anything like that.

NP: You talked about going into Northwestern and having the incident there. Were there elevators that were sort of notorious for being tricky for getting cars in and out of?

EL: Yeah. That's right. Richardson elevator was the worst. It held 15 cars on each track, and it was uphill all the way shoving in. So, with the old-type yard engines that we had when we first started out there, you'd have to wind up with a pretty good head of steam just to get into the elevator because if you didn't, you'd stall, and you'd have to pull back out and shove back in again. And if it didn't get in that time, you'd have to pull back out, and shove back in again. You could spend all night just filling Richardson's elevator.

So, when you got an engineer and you convinced him that you were going to be able to stop him in time, he'd have to wind her up pretty good. And he'd come steaming in there with five or six cars of air for brakes, and once he got about seven or eight cars inside

the elevator then you'd start slowing him down. Well, by then, the drag would pull him in, and he'd stop right on the hopper, and away you'd go. He did the next track.

But if you were not very handy with the throttle on the engine, you could easily wind up one car short. And you couldn't push anymore because now you're at a dead stop. So, you'd have to pull out and start all over again because the elevator superintendent wouldn't tolerate a short spot. He was entitled to 15 cars on each track and that's what he wanted. There were lots of challenges.

NP: And what were some of the more slick operations for getting in and out? What was preferred, sort of? Obviously, uphill was not preferred—or downhill, I would think. Just the opposite problem.

EL: Downhill worked easy if you could--. Over at Pool 4, on the Pool 4B side, you had to shove up because their loading facilities were elevated because of the new automatic dumpers that they had installed. Most elevators were putting those in now, but Pool 4A was still an old workhouse and it was downhill going in there. So, you could go in there with 45 cars or 60 cars on a draft—and each track held 20 cars. So, you could stop, pull the pin, let the brakemen run in with 20 cars, and he'd get a hold of two or three handbrakes, and he'd slow them down as they were going in. And then, the foreman would align the switch and then you'd shove in with the other 40 cars. And when he got them spotted, he pulled back out and then go and shove in the 20 cars that the brakeman had run in in the first place.

And that's another situation where you had to be pretty handy in gauging when to put those brakes on, because if you put them on too soon, you'd stop, and if you put them on too late, two or three cars would end up over the end of the block and they'd be in Lake Superior.

NP: I don't think I'd want to be a newbie doing this stuff.

EL: That's what happened one night when I booked off on that job, there was a new guy on the job. The preceding three or four months I was the guy riding the cars in, and I had to go to a wedding one night, and I told the foreman, "Don't forget to tell that guy to put those brakes on." He was only a very small guy—good worker and everything, but he was really slight—and he let him go in there with 20 cars. By the time he got 3 handbrakes on, he was three cars past the hopper. That's three cars in Lake Superior.

NP: Did he get 30 demerit points? One for each car?

EL: Well, I didn't get any because I was at the wedding, but the foreman got 30 and I think the young helper might have got 10 or so because he just didn't--.

NP: He just didn't know.

EL: He just didn't know. But it was fun doing that because you sure could cut a lot of time off your job if you did it that way.

NP: The other elevators, pretty straight forward? What was the best configuration for, say, track to elevator?

[1:35:05]

EL: Yeah, they were--. Pool--. McCabe's was the best because it was flat, there was not very much grade—in fact, there wasn't any—and if you put a car over the end at McCabe's, you didn't know how to count, let's put it that way. [Laughing] Yeah, it was probably the easiest one, that I knew of, to do. Every other one had a grade you had to push up. And it was really the problem. The motive part was the problem. We had old diesels. The CNR had nice new diesels, great big heavy ones. And they used two in tandem, whereas we used these old diesels and, like I said, some of them could barely pull themselves, never mind push 15 cars. But I notice nowadays they've got more modern engines.

NP: And nowadays too it seems to me that they've got the major railway lines, CN and CP, they don't do the moving in the yards, in the elevators. They sort of hand it off to--.

EL: On certain places where the elevators have their own engines, such as at Richardson's. But you still have to put the cars in their receiving track before they can do that. You have to get them there. The railways still do most of the spotting, from what I understand.

One thing we never mentioned, and I don't know if you're interested in it, but during the time that all these sales were taking place and, what I call, when the boom was on, the grain that was arriving in Thunder Bay couldn't be moved to those markets in a nine-month period because the shipping was tied up in December when the lake froze over. So, in order to meet those commitments, the government had to continue hauling that grain east by rail.

So then, we started what we call an export grain program. That was really interesting because now we had to push empty cars into the grain elevators as opposed to full ones, have the grain elevator load the cars, and then assemble them into, I think, they were 92-cars, or 93-car trains. And then we'd put them on a track and send them east. Those were the million-dollar trains. That's how much I think the revenue was on one train from here to Montreal, something like that.

The pressure to get those cars loaded and assembled and put on a train and out of town was just tremendous. I think the railways, with the equipment they had, they did an admirable job in doing that. I think we exceeded anybody's expectations. We did one train a day, some days more.

NP: That's what they called the unit trains, sort of?

EL: Well, they were unit trains because they were solid trains and they all had the same commodity, yeah. We just called them export trains. It was quite a job to get those things. That was the number one priority because, like I say, they were a million dollars, I think, to get those trains going. That's how much revenue they received from each train.

NP: Did you have any contact with the Wheat Board at all?

EL: Just--. Not really. I didn't have any direct contact with them because I was pretty preoccupied with my own little yard, or whatever I was doing. But I did consolidate a lot with a position known as the grain coordinator in Thunder Bay. It was set up when the wheat boom started. It was a yardmaster's job who got promoted to what they call the grain coordinator, and his job was simply to coordinate grain from the west and talk to grain elevators in Thunder Bay. He's the one that pretty well--. He was a Czar, actually. He said how much each elevator would receive in a certain day and so on.

NP: And who was that? Is he still around?

EL: In fact--. I just talked to him on the telephone last night. Patty McCart. He was my best buddy, him and I worked in the same office.

NP: Patty--?

EL: Pat McCart.

NP: McCart.

EL: Yeah, you'd want to talk to him. I'm going to be seeing him in the near future. I haven't seen him for a couple of years now, so we're going to just chat and get together, have some coffee. But he would tell me—his desk was only about ten feet from mine—and he'd say, "I got an order for Pool 8," which was down on the waterfront very close to our elevator. And he'd say, "They're going to work overtime tonight. We need 20 cars of spring wheat to be spotted by 6:00." So, I'd have to shuffle out three or four

cars here, and four or five there, and six there, until I got 20 cars. Nobody could touch those cars. They were dedicated for Pool 8. Stuff like that, see.

NP: Now, did you get involved with the elevator managers? Because I'm sure there was some sort of attempt to get your grain, to get their elevator filled before the competition's elevator. Was there any of that?

EL: No, the managers--. That all went through Pat McCart. It all went through that. He talked to them. It wasn't very often that we talked to a grain elevator. The only time--. I don't think I ever did. They would phone the superintendent's office. If a grain elevator didn't get spotted in time--. And I have my little story there.

[1:40:15]

I recall one night over in Current River it rained steady all night long, just poured rain, and we went to go over there and take the empties out of Richardson's and Pool 4B, and put the grain over there that we'd brought in. We just couldn't get it done in time. We were just drowning over there. We phoned--. We got a hold of our yardmaster in Thunder Bay and told him we couldn't get the job done by 8:00. He said, "Well, you're either going to have to go on overtime until somebody comes there to relieve you, but you can't leave there until you get that grain elevator filled."

So, we kept on plugging away. We had a green head-end man—he didn't really know what he was doing too much—and the foreman had a broken leg, or a leg that had been broken that didn't repair very well. He couldn't do very much work. So, we were struggling away, and I guess it was about quarter to 8:00 in the morning, I see this car drive up and somebody gets out. The next thing I know, there's a guy there with a suit and a tie on throwing switches and aligning switches. Pause.

[Audio pauses]

NP: The next two minutes.

EL: Okay, you can put it back on.

NP: Ready to go back on?

EL: Anyway, it was the general yardmaster. He'd come all the way from town. I guess he'd got the call from the superintendent of the grain elevator saying that he didn't have a full spot of cars. So, the general yardmaster drove down in his car, got out, got on the

tracks, and started working with the switch foreman to align switches and pull pins on cars. We eventually got the job done—a little bit late—but we got it all done.

NP: What was the yardmaster's name?

EL: His name was Beauregard.

NP: Beauregard?

EL: Yeah. L.L. Beauregard. He had originally come from Winnipeg. He was a general yardmaster there. He was the guy that hired me when I was applying for a job when I was fresh out of high school. I was very fond of him.

NP: I was going to ask you about other characters that come to mind when you're thinking about your career. Just about every place has at least one or two.

EL: [Laughing] There was a lot of characters on the railroad. A lot of special nicknames. I'd have to stop it for a moment and start thinking of some of them.

NP: Was there--. When we talked earlier, when you were working in the elevators, about the different ethnic mix of elevators, was it the same thing on the railways? Did CP tend to--. Did certain nationalities gravitate to the CP and CN? Or different jobs?

EL: No, there was sort of a class system on the railway. If you went into the, for example, the grain door department—a separate from ours altogether—a lot of Italians and many Slavic people worked in those departments. In the departments that did fixing the rails, maintenance away, a lot of Italian people. A lot of other ethnic people worked in those departments as well. But switchmen, going way back, a CPR conductor was like a priest. In those days it was a pretty elevated position. So, they wanted to hire somebody that came from England or Great Britain or somewhere like that that had some background—and they had to have a pedigree to be switchmen. And that just about carried on. So, if you were Irish or English or French or something like that, that helped in getting hired.

NP: Do you think any of that had to do with ability with the language and the fact that you needed to be able to read and write in English? Would that have been an issue?

EL: I believe it did. Yeah. Communication was important. But it also depended on your heritage. If you had any relatives working for the railway then that was pretty well an open door to you if you wanted to seek an opportunity there. That's pretty well how all people got hired. There was a lot of that went on.

NP: Everywhere.

EL: Everywhere, yeah, but particularly on the CPR. And it carried on through. The CPR was—I don't know how many companies you could say this about them—but the CPR didn't look outside when they needed help. When they needed somebody to promote up through the ranks, like vice-president and president and chief executive officer, they came right out of the ranks. They came from switchmen and conductors and brakemen. I don't know that they still do that, I kind of doubt it. I think most people come with educations now and that's the way they do it. But in those days, if you go back to the days of N. R. Crump—president during the late '40s there—he was an engineer before he became president of the railway.

NP: Anything more to say about the various elevator managers, foremen? Ones that--. Especially, we don't want people to mention names where they were very difficult to deal with, but the ones that seemed to understand the railway business and the--.

[1:45:45]

EL: No, I didn't--. My job didn't--. See, we had regular monthly meetings. Now, we mentioned Pat McCart earlier. He was the grain distributor, so he would go to these meetings with the superintendent of the railway and maybe the general yardmaster—I'm not sure—but he would be meeting with the grain company superintendents and executives. They had a pretty good--. They got along very well, and they sort of worked things out, exchanged things, planned things, and how they were going to interact. So, I think they had a very good relationship.

NP: You've talked a lot about the various challenges, and we've covered a lot of changes that occurred over the time that you were working with the railway. Did we touch on everything that you would consider significant events? Or are there some significant events that you haven't--?

EL: Well, one of the significant—well, the significant event—was the big wheat sales to Russia because that created a boom. Just like the San Francisco gold rush, maybe not on such a scale, but as far as the railway concerned, there was nothing like it before. As I start out in my little story that I'm writing there, I was lucky if I worked three or four weeks the first year, and two months the next year, and just spare board work the next few years. But once that boom started, you could work all you wanted to. There was times during the mid '70s there when there were switchmen that were working a regular shift and an additional shift everyday,

seven days a week. And sometimes, if you can believe this, they worked three shifts in one day. Now, that should never have been allowed to happen, but it did, and I know it because I saw it. There just wasn't enough manpower. You couldn't get them in. And then they started having to hire people to train people because they couldn't hire enough people.

When you get into the mid '70s—I think between 1973, '74, '75, and '76—I happened to just glance at the seniority list there one day, and there were more names, more people, hired in that period than all the existing personnel prior to that. It was just amazing. **S**o, they were going out on the street, and anybody that could pass the eye test and wave their arms was hired. It didn't matter what your name was or anything, they hired you. So, when you talk about a boom, money was flowing. Of course, all the attendant problems with extra money were flowing also—vodka and everything else.

NP: Well, if you hadn't raised that, I would have because I'm interested. Every time we interview somebody who was working in the elevators, and they were talking about issues, drinking was, rampant might not be quite the term, but not far from it. Was that just--. Was that a railway issue as well? So, it was just sort of the sign of the times?

EL: When I was first started on the railways, we used to drink beer after work. We'd go and have a beer. We'd re-switch all the cars we switched during the previous six hours in the beer parlours, see who did it the best. But that was the extent of it. There were a lot of closet drinkers on the railway—people that drank because of the hours they worked and the disruption with their home life. And I don't know, for whatever reason. But there were an awful lot of alcoholics on the railway. We didn't find this out until when the boom started, and then it really became obvious then because people were drinking right in sight, actually. There was a couple of serious accidents resulted, because of that.

And as a result of that, there was a big change made in the way that those problems were addressed. You see, prior to that, the only way that a guy with a drinking problem would get reported was if some of his coworkers reported him. Well, then you'd be black-balled, nobody would talk to you anymore—so those problems more or less were ironed out between the two individuals. That didn't really solve anything. But after these—at least one—particular accident that took place, it all came to a head.

[1:50:09]

NP: What accident?

EL: Well, a foreman on a crew was drinking, and he was so drunk that he took over the controls of the engine from the engineman, and drove a bunch of cars into a snowbank, and piled them up, and everything else. So, what resulted after that was that the company hired safety personnel to—I can't remember exactly the name of the program—but they would assist individuals like this.

If they had a problem—we'll say the person was on my crew and I had a problem with the guy that was drinking—I could go to this person and say, "Look, so-and-so's having a problem. You talk to him." So, either he comes to you and admits the problem, even if he has to take time off work or whatever, there's no brownies, no lost wages. It's like clinic work. You're trying to get cured of this problem.

And that seemed to work pretty good for quite a few people. So, that took the onus off the coworkers to take all the blame, you see? Because you could say, "Well, look it's not safe. And you're endangering yourself and your family, and myself, and everybody else." So, most people went that route. And they still have that program in effect. That took the onus off the coworkers.

NP: And it pretty much cleared up the issue, would you say?

EL: It definitely cleared it up because if you were caught drinking--. See, there was only three things you could get fired on the railway. One was for lying, the other one was for Rule G—which was drinking—and the other one was for stealing. So, unless you got caught stealing red handed--. And when I mean lying, I mean insubordination or something like that. But very seldom anybody ever got fired for any of those things. Drinking, you'd get fired if the event was serious enough. In this case it was, the one we had just mentioned. But I think once the employee recognized that there was help available, it pretty well solved that problem. If you were still drinking, well--.

NP: You mentioned that there was a real labour shortage. But I don't think the railways are a hotbed of women employees out on the tracks. Am I misinformed?

EL: Yes, you are, yeah.

NP: Okay, good. I'm glad to hear that.

EL: Yeah, when the shortage occurred it was just like in the war, they started hiring women as switchmen, if you can believe it. I couldn't believe it when I saw one. I thought, "You're in the wrong department. Are you a checker?" She says, "No, I'm a switchman." But they had already begun hiring women in other departments as well, and so it wasn't something new. They were hiring people from all over. There was two guys from Africa that were hired as switchmen, and they were pretty well useless because they couldn't handle the cold at all. And they didn't stay very long.

NP: Did the women stay?

EL: Yeah, oh yeah, some of them stayed. Some of them, they were there during the time I was yardmaster and some of them are still working.

NP: Oh, could you give us a couple of names that might be willing to be interviewed?

EL: I will, but I can't think of them right now, if you want to--.

NP: I'm going to ask you that just in general too, but we like to correct our misconceptions.

EL: Actually now, I think, to hire on the railway you've got to take a course. It's like the courses that Con. College offers where you go and sit in the classroom for six or seven hours a day for six or seven weeks, or more. Then when you've reached enough competency, they put you out on a train. But you could be come right out of the school and be a conductor, I believe. I'm not certain if that's the case, but.

NP: You would have been though a significant event would have been the other side of the boom, and that was when things started trailing off. Did that have any impact on the work that you did?

EL: Well, it got--.

NP: Because it would have been, as it did in the elevators, it certainly had an impact on the size of the workforce.

EL: Oh, on the workforce? Yeah, when things sort of levelled off, I guess you would call it. But by then we'd had computers in there, and the computers were more responsible for things levelling off than anything else. They eliminated so many jobs. Well, they just stopped everything really. You had so much information available ahead of time that many of these jobs were no longer necessary, so you got rid of a lot of people.

NP: The switching and that still had to be done manually?

EL: Yeah, the switching is still done manually, but they've introduced technological changes in that department also. They now can operate a switch crew with an engineer and one man. And actually, they can operate the crew without the engineer because the one man can operate the engine by remote control. And there are crews in some places in Canada where the transport regulations allow them to do that. It can't be done everywhere. I'm pretty sure they tried it in Thunder Bay, but I haven't talked to anybody so I can't verify that.

[1:55:18]

NP: Have you had a chance to talk about your most vivid memories about your work life? Certainly, your trip with your dad to the elevator.

EL: Well, pause.

[Audio pauses]

[Unknown]: And what was this that began the story about--?

NP: The day he gets hired.

EL: You were asking me about significant events, and I guess the most significant event is the day I got hired. That's the day my friend and I walked into Mr. Beauregard's office—the old building on Bethune Street—and asked if we could get a job as switchmen, and he told us that they were not busy enough to hire any new people. But he went on to talk to us, and ask us about the various things we'd done, if we had any work experience. And we told him we'd worked in a paint store and did so many things. We tried to give him some kind of a resume of our work history, and so on. And he simply said, "Well, things are just a little too slack to hire anybody now." So, we had a good conversation with him, we shook hands.

And as we were leaving the room, he said, "By the way, do any of you fellows have any relatives that work on the railway?" Well, right away my friend's ears perked up because his father had been on the B&B—that was bridge and building. He mentioned his name, and Beauregard recognised him, he said, "Yes, Mr. Hochenhull, I know the name." He said, "That's interesting. What about you Ted?" Well, I didn't know anybody, I couldn't think of anything, so I'm ramming my memory trying to think of what to say. I suddenly said to him, "Chapleau and Schreiber." And Beauregard says, "Oh, brakemen!" I says, "No, baggagemen." So, he says, "Oh, good." He says, "That's great to hear." He says, "Well, on your way out, grab one of these forms here and put your name and address on there in case we do have need for somebody in the future. We'll give you a call."

So, we left the building and we're talking to each other, and Mike says to me, "Jeez, Ted, I didn't know your grandfather worked on the railway." I said, "Neither did I. All I remember is my grandmother hollering about Schreiber and Chapleau all the time." [Laughing] So, anyway, that's how we got hired. The next day the phone rang. It was the yard office. They wanted us to come and

fill out some forms and write our B book—that was the book you had to write in conjunction with the operating rules, so that you'd be familiar with all the rules—and within four or five days we were at work. So, that was my pretty vivid experience.

NP: Now, you realize the irony of this whole thing is that one of the three offences for getting you fired was lying, and you got your job by lying.

EL: Well, not only that, I told him I was 18 years old. And we both had to go and see the parish priest to get him to change our baptismal certificate. And he wouldn't do it. So, we hired on when we were 17. We didn't turn 18 until later that year. And that never changed until I went to apply for my pension, and I got my right year.

NP: Great. What would you say was your major challenge over that time? Over your career? Major challenge.

EL: The major challenge was when, shortly after I'd become yardmaster, things got really, really busy, and I was pushed into a supervisor's position, and had to work a job that I really wasn't prepared for at that time. I simply didn't have enough experience. But I remember things were so hectic. I told you before that sometimes a shift would go by in eight hours, you wouldn't even recognise it. But on this one particular day I was working, it was a cold winter day, everything that could possibly go wrong was going wrong—trains were coming in underpowered, the engines were dying, the water in the caboose was freezing, and there were bad orders in the middle of the train. I was answering all the phones, and I couldn't do all the work that was demanded of me at the same time.

So, I finally realized that I was gripping a pencil so tightly that it snapped off in my fingers. So, I turned all the radios off and hung up all the phones, and I went and sat in the washroom and started asking myself questions. "Ted, are you prepared to handle this job? Can you do it? Yes or no. And if the answer's no, you've got to go back in there and finish the shift, and then go and tell the superintendent that you want your job back. Your old job back."

[2:00:00]

When I sat there, I began to realise that all these problems were coming from somewhere else. None of them were mine. I didn't instigate any of them. All I was answering the phone and relaying the message onto somebody else. So, all I had to really do was make out a sheet saying, "Well, this train was delayed because the caboose was frozen. This train was late because the engineer showed up late for work, or the crew bus driver didn't get him to the engine on time. It was a bad order of 55 cars in the middle of the train and we had to switch it out, and it was 35 below." And I'd go home. I convinced myself that that's all I had to do, and I never ever had a problem after that. Everything went smooth. I think I gained an extra layer of skin that morning.

NP: You said there was a problem in the middle of the car?

EL: Well, a train would come in, we'll say, with 100 cars on it and they would be all switched and ready to go. And then the car department would inspect the train and discover that one of the cars was a bad order. Not fit to travel.

NP: Is that called a break, or something? No. What did you say?

EL: A bad order. Simply--. It could be anything. It could be a brake failure, it could be some loose equipment, it could be a shifted load. Car of steel, for example, well one end of steel shifted out over the end of the car, dangerous. So, they'd have to take that car off the train, and you'd have to send a yard engine onto the train—pull ahead, remove the car, put the train back together—and the whole delay would maybe take a half an hour. So, you'd have to write that delay up. That train was delayed by half an hour because of that incident.

NP: As you look back on your, what I consider, illustrious career, what are you most proud of?

EL: I'd have to say the time that I spent as yardmaster because of the challenge of it and in particular, the last part of the grain boom when we were doing the export grain. That was a real challenge because all of the other work was still there on top of that—the receiving the grain and marshalling it and getting it distributed to the regular elevators. But then getting that export grain, dedicated tracks and everything going on, that was really--. It was fun.

NP: It was accomplishable, and you did it.

EL: Yes, we did it, yeah.

NP: You may not have a comment to answer this question because it takes you beyond your career to nowadays, where the issue with grain transportation is really right up there in the news these days, especially if you're reading the western papers, but occasionally it even comes out into our paper. Any comments on criticisms that are made against the railways for not delivering on what the farmers expect?

EL: I don't know what's going on today. I think they had a big crop year the last couple of years, and there may be a lot of grain, but I--. The railways have always met their commitment to hauling grain to the best of their abilities. Now, if you go way back with that Crow Rate thing, you can see why they wouldn't want to upgrade maintenance and infrastructure because they were

subsidising the farmers to haul their grain. They were losing money to haul it. But after these agreements were made with the government and they got financing, and then the government began building cars, I think they were getting paid to haul the grain and it was like any other commodity—they haul it to the best of their ability. Mind you, they weren't going to put a grain train in preference to a train of perishables or something like that. It's a higher rate freight, so they'll always put that first.

NP: So, there may be some truth to the comment that grain is not being shipped because the railways get more to ship oil? Tanker cars.

EL: They probably do get more to ship oil tanker cars, but that's their business. So, I can't make any other comment on that. But I know that there's money in grain, and they'll haul as much as they can as often as they can.

NP: Any other comments? Any questions I should have asked you that I didn't?

EL: Well, if you pause the thing for a minute maybe I'll think about something. **[Audio pauses]** Okay, I'll just go ahead. Yeah, just in relationship to some of the changes that took place, bringing in the radios was a big change, of course, because the communication was a big thing. It really made the job easier and safer. And then the transition from the old boxcars to hopper cars. Again, you could haul more stuff in fewer cars, and the cars were in better shape, and they didn't leak. The removal of the caboose off the train was a big deal. They put a technological device on the back of the train that measured the brake pipe pressure, so you wouldn't have to have a caboose there anymore. And it seemed to operate pretty good. And then they have far superior motive power than they ever had before now—better braking and better haulage capacity.

So, all of those things made the job a lot better. And another thing was, as I said before, they upgraded the rails. Now they have this heavy 150-pound steel on the mainlines and in lots of the yards. They call it "ribbon rail" on the mainlines. These quarter mile sections of rail that are welded together so there's no more clickity-clack when you go on by. There's fewer derailments.

NP: You mentioned snow removal?

EL: Yeah, snow removal doesn't seem to be a problem anymore. We don't get enough snow. But in the old days, there was a lot of snow, and oftentimes we'd get the snowplows out and the spreaders to clear the tracks in order to be able to move the cars around. It was a problem. You'd have to take away two or three tracks in the middle of the yard just to store snow on them. And they'd stay piled up like that until they melted in the spring.

NP: And getting into the elevators, were the elevators responsible for removing their own snow from the car shed?

EL: Yeah, they were supposed to remove snow from in front of the buildings. They'd get a plow or something out there. But to get to the grain elevator, it was all the railway's responsibility. We had to send spreaders in and snowplows. Not very often snowplows, but a spreader was a big machine that had a wing that spread out and would clear two or three tracks at a time.

NP: Good. You mentioned that you might have pictures of ships that your dad had worked on. Did you keep any pictures of your career with the railway?

EL: [Laughs]

NP: Do you have memorabilia? is our question.

EL: I do, I do have a picture that you'll find very interesting if you want to shut the machine off while I go look for it?

NP: We'll do that after we're finished because we're just about finished, so we can end this up.

EL: This one you'll get a kick out of because it's the day I came to work on the hump with a tuxedo on. I mentioned before that you never knew when the railway was going to call you, and this one particular night I was best man at my friend's wedding and it was a Saturday night. And, of course, 5:00 in the morning or 4:30 in the morning the railway phoned and said, "Your call for the hump. 7:00." So, in my stupor, I took the call and said, "Yes, I'll be there. Of course." I hadn't taken my tuxedo off yet—I still had it on—so I grabbed a pair of work boots and put them on and came to work at the hump in Westfort. Somebody went home a got their camera, I believe it was Pat McCart we'd mentioned earlier. He's in the picture, so you'll see myself and Pat McCart and another friend of mine, Gerry Culliton. And I think a guy by the name of Kennedy was the engineer, so we're all standing beside the hump engine with the tuxedo.

NP: I'd like you to think, and we can do this when we shut off, other people besides Patty—that you've mentioned—that might be worthwhile including. Some of the women working on the railway. Our project to have Western 10—otherwise known as Fort William Elevator F—designated as a Historic Site; if that happens, we wanted to set a centre of sorts to recognize the handling of grain, but also the--. Wouldn't be able to handle grain if you couldn't get it here, and also the shipping going out on the lakes. What do you think would be important to feature for the railways?

EL: Oh, some of the old yard engines. And even before that, the steam engines I guess, pictures of them. I have lots of those.

NP: Oh, good.

EL: In fact, I donated some to the museum about three or four years ago, but I still kept some of the better ones here.

NP: Okay, good. And we can scan those. So, if you could lend them to us for us to scan that would be great. Too bad I didn't know you because one of the toughest things that we had to get—pictures we had to get—for our display was a picture of an old steam engine. And I ended up just getting something out of a magazine that wasn't very good.

EL: Oh my gosh, I've got hundreds of them.

NP: As I said, we don't have a good connection the railway until I met you. So, Monika can you think of anything to add to the--?

MM: Not really. My question would be, were you part of a union? Was there union involvement? You didn't talk about that when there were issues that--.

EL: Yeah, are we recording this now? Yeah, you had to join the union when you were a switchman and conductor, and even as a yardmaster you were still considered as a union employee. So, it was only when you were a supervisor and above that you had to close ranks with the union. And then you were simply paid by a salary and you were covered by the company's health plans and so on. So, I was on that for, I guess, my whole career except for the time I was a supervisor; that was for about two years, two or three years.

NP: Did most people feel that the union was a good or bad thing?

[2:10:25]

EL: It was a good thing because it brought about some good changes, some positive changes. In the case, my own example, I was able to retire early when the company wanted to remove the caboose off the trains, see. So, that meant getting rid of the conductor and the brakeman. The union was smart enough to negotiate, "Well, if we're going to give up the caboose--." They knew there was no use fighting it because it had already been proved okay and safe in the United States, so they said, "If we're going to give up that, what are you going to give us in return?" And they gave us early retirements.

And they learned that lesson going way back to the firemen's strike in 1956, when the firemen refused to get off the diesels even though they weren't needed there. They were there to fire steam engines. And when the company brought the diesels in, they said,

"Well, we don't need firemen." And the union fought that tooth and nail across North America. And they finally, the company, said, "Okay, well we'll agree to leave the firemen on the diesel for safety reasons, but we're never going to increase his wages. He's going to make the same wage in 1959 as he did in 1956. And the same wage in 1962."

And so, they finally they couldn't live anymore. And, of course, by that time attrition was starting to set in, so the firemen were taking the jobs of the retiring engineers. That's where they got all their engineers from was the retired firemen. But the union learned a valuable lesson there, that it was no good to fight the future. You couldn't fight modernization. So, when the next big change of removing the caboose came along, they realized what their mistake was. They said, "If we're going to give something up, we want something in return." So, in that way it was a good thing.

NP: In the elevators, when we're talking about unions, a comment that comes up very often is that the union was very instrumental in safety issues as well, making sure that the place became safer. Was that on the plate of the union?

EL: That was a lot of--. There was always discussion about safety. We had to set up a separate department that handled safety, and we had regular safety meetings. When I first started there was no such thing, you know? Everybody looked after their own safe interests. We had a safety department and we had safety meetings, but I don't know how the union affected that very much. I mean, the people that did the most preaching about safety were the ones that were the most unsafe. They'd come to work, and they would see snow on the steps walking into the building. They'd never touch a broom or a shovel to move the snow away because it wasn't their job. They'd have to call somebody from a shop ten miles away to bring a shovel and shovel the snow away. I ended up doing that kind of work just to simply to keep everybody happy. But I think the switchmen would rather slip on the ice and hurt themself than shovel the snow. And that's what happened on many occasions.

NP: So, the downside of union, "That's not my job. It's not in my description."

EL: Yeah, that really got under my skin more than anything else.

NP: Okay.

[Unknown]: May I mention something?

NP: Sure.

[Unknown]: Did you mention that one third of your basement used to be all model railway, and you have display cases downstairs?

EL: I was going to show them that.

NP: Oh, perfect.

[Unknown]: When you mentioned that new building, yeah, I don't know if you're going to be doing model railways or you're just going to display some pictures.

NP: Oh, we'd love to.

EL: Yeah, I have excellent models.

NP: Well, we'll look forward to seeing them as soon as we say an official goodbye. Thank you so much. This interview was everything I hoped it would be.

EL: Okay, well it was a splash. [Laughing]

NP: Yeah. [Laughing] Thank you. Yep.

End of interview.