

PETROLEUM INDUSTRY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
TRANSCRIPT

INTERVIEWEE: Walter Dingle

INTERVIEWER: Nadine Mackenzie

DATE: July 1983

NM: This is Nadine Mackenzie speaking. Today is Tuesday, July 5th, 1983. I am at the home of Mr. Walter Dingle, situated at 72 Eagle Ridge Dr. S. W. in Calgary. Mr. Dingle, thank you very much for having accepted to participate in our project. Can you tell me, where were you born?

WD: I was born in Burnaby, British Columbia, which is just outside of Vancouver. Went to school there, public and high school and went to University of British Columbia after that.

NM: What did you parents do?

WD: My father, he worked in the newspaper business, in the mechanical side.

NM: Were they Canadian.

WD: No, he was an Englishman, he was born in England, the son of an Anglican minister as a matter of fact, and was educated in the church school in Canterbury. But came to Canada and into British Columbia in about 1892, or 3, or 4, somewhere in that order.

NM: What brought him to Canada?

WD: I think probably not much opportunity in England. As a matter of fact, he and his 2 brothers came. Going to a school like they did, it's pretty much of a classical education, there's really nothing in it to encourage you to get a job. So I think they came here and he did all kinds of things, the same as his brothers did, but he eventually ended up more or less in the printing side of the business.

NM: Did you do all your studies in British Columbia?

WD: Yes, I did. All of elementary and high school and the university. I graduated from the university right in the heart of the Depression, 1934, and of course, there were very, very few jobs around. I eventually got a job working in Ottawa as a matter of fact, worked for the federal government for awhile.

NM: What did you study at the university?

WD: I graduated in civil engineering.

NM: What made you choose that?

WD: I suppose everybody has sort of attributes and I suppose mine leans towards sort of an orderly presentation of things, which is fundamentally what an engineer does. So I guess that's the main reason.

NM: Did you go straight to Ottawa from university?

WD: No, actually as I said, times were tough, I was out of work for a year after I graduated and I went about a year later. One reason I went, I had worked while I was going to university, on various surveys for the federal government. This was sort of a continuation of surveys that got me sort of a permanent job.

#030 NM: So they were the type of summer jobs. . . ?

WD: It was through summer jobs that sort of gave me the contacts with the government and I went to work permanently for them for awhile. The type of surveying was actually mapping and I worked all over Canada as a matter of fact, in Quebec and in Ontario, in British Columbia and in Alberta on mapping various parts of the country.

NM: Travelling a lot?

WD: Surveys in those days, you were usually out of communities, living in tents and have your own cook and facilities along. We'd be out anywhere from 3 ½ - 4 months every summer, somewhere in the country.

NM: How long did you stay in ???

WD: About 8 years.

NM: 8 years? And then, after that?

WD: I joined Imperial Oil as a matter of fact, at Norman Wells. At least I joined Imperial and I went to Norman Wells.

NM: And how did you join Imperial?

WD: Well, we've got to recognize that this was in the war years. I couldn't see myself continuing to work for a government for the rest of my career.

NM: Why? Lack of challenge or . . . ?

WD: The job was challenging enough as an engineering job, but basically, particularly in those days you sort of waited for somebody ahead of you to die to get promoted, which was probably the biggest reason I thought about leaving. Then of course, with the war years coming on and with the Canadian and American governments getting involved in this development of the oil in the north for potential use in the Pacific theatre, the Canol project which it ended up as, of course, turned out to be a very big wartime project in which Imperial was very greatly involved. That's really the reason I got into it, it was something connected to the war effort but it was something sort of in the engineering line that I was associated with and there was a way to get out of the civil servants so I made the switch. It was quite a change, for one thing to work in Norman Wells at that time you went in for a year's contract. Of course, no families in there, so you were away for a year and then you would get a month's leave and then you would go back for a year. So it was quite a wrench from sort of living in Ottawa and working there, to go and take a job where you're away from home for a year. But by the same token, it was I would say, much easier on you than if you in the services where you were overseas and could be for 3 or 4 years. So it kind of balanced out.

#058 NM: So what did you do in Norman Wells?

WD: Quite a few things. I was in charge of, you might say, their camp facilities, that is, all the building and the facilities that go with them. We had a machine shop and a repair garage and a number of boats on the river and this sort of thing. I was in charge of those. We had an engineering department to do the necessary engineering for the oilfield development, this sort of thing, which I was in charge of. And those are the basic responsibilities.

NM: Were there a lot of people working there at the time?

WD: Yes there were. It's of course, very difficult to get a handle on how many. I would say in

the period of the Canol project, Imperial alone had up to 2,000 employees, but never of course at one time. There was always somebody coming and somebody going and somebody working. In my own case, I was employee #542. How many of the previous 541 had come and gone I don't know. And of course, some of them were working full time in Edmonton where we were headquartered for that project. So they weren't necessarily all up north. I don't know what the total numbers got to at the end but I would assume it was something over 2,000. At the same time of course, with the pipeline being constructed and the facilities for that, which were all done by American contractors, we used to estimate in their camp they had about, probably 2,500-3,000 people at any one time in the camp. I'm sure they had about the same number coming and the same number going. So I wouldn't know what their totals were but I would say at any one time they had 2,500 people at least.

NM: Was everything organized from Norman Wells or from Calgary?

WD: Actually the headquarters of the Canol project was in Edmonton. That is, Imperial's part of it. I'm sure there were headquarters in Whitehorse because the pipeline came from both ends. Part of the Canol project was the road they built from Dawson Creek up to Whitehorse and they had a lot of activity in Fort St. John as a matter of fact, where they had most of their people. I'm sure they had a big staff in Washington worrying about it. But Imperial's part of it was primarily Edmonton and Norman Wells. And about nineteen hundred and about, I guess it would be sometime in '44, we practically closed the Edmonton office and moved everything to Norman Wells. All we had really in Edmonton at that time, was somebody for hiring of people and for arranging of shipping the goods. Other than that it was all done in Norman Wells.

#088 NM: Can you tell me a bit more about the Canol project?

WD: I guess to start on, right at first, there was great concern after the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbour, that there was a great danger of them, in effect, moving in through the Aleutians, Alaska and in to the west coast of the United States. A great concern about it and the recognition of course, if they moved in there, there was no way of really supplying the fuel for the forces that could resist them. So it was known that there was oil at Norman Wells and after an agreement between the Canadian and American governments they decided to have the field developed and to build a pipeline over to Whitehorse and to put a small refinery in there and produce aviation gasoline, primarily used in case the Japanese forces did get into the Aleutians, they would have a fairly good supply of aviation fuel fairly handily. That was the theory behind it. Basically, by the time that the project was finished, and the first oil went through in 1944 I think, by then the U.S. forces and the Australian, New Zealand forces had things somewhat under control in the Pacific, so there wasn't the urgency. I think there has been a lot of criticism that it was a waste of money, the project, but when you consider the times and not knowing what was going to happen, I think it was just like a lot of things you do in wartime, you do it. . .

NM: Go ahead with it.

WD: That's right. I think it has been good for, probably the people that got more out of it than anybody was Canada because it did develop the oil field that's there now. And of course,

at the present time Imperial is expanding that field very, very greatly. So that Canada probably gains more out of it than anybody, certainly the United States. They put up the money and as far as they're concerned, they really got nothing out of it because by the time it was finished they really didn't need it.

NM: So in fact the States just gave the money.

WD: In effect, that's what happened.. They put all the money up. They had an agreement with the Canadian government, as far as I know, that in future years they were entitled to, I forget the number, million barrels of oil at 5 cents a barrel to compensate them for it. But of course, when you look back over the 35 years the oil at Norman Wells, it was of no use to the United States no matter what they did with it because there was no way of getting it to them to start with. So basically, they put up the money and that just was part of their war effort.

#121 NM: Was there a lot of oil there?

WD: It's not a big field. I'm not too sure of the reserve figures, I think it's around, estimated total recovery of about 100 million barrels. One of the real problems in the field is that the majority of the oilfield is under the Mackenzie River and the Mackenzie River at that point is quite wide. As a matter of fact, it must be going on for nearly 3 miles wide. And the oilfield is primarily under the river. So in the Canol days, in '43, 4, and 5, we drilled and produced wells on what we call the north shore because the river at that point is running pretty nearly east and west. And on the 2 islands, Bear Island and Goose Island, which are in the middle of the river we produced some wells off of the 2 islands but the majority of the field was between the islands and the north side. We were able to produce enough from the wells on the islands and on the north shore to meet the requirements of the pipeline. And of course, since that time there's been no economic reason to go in and try and develop the rest of the field. Currently though, with the price of oil now in the 20 and 30 dollar range, Esso Resources are putting artificial islands in the river and then hope to produce the oil by '85 I guess, '86. It will be about 8 times the production that we had in those days. And that activity is going on right now.

NM: At the time of the Canol project, where was the heavy equipment coming from?

WD: Mostly from the United States. I guess they rounded it up from anywhere in the United States, mostly used Caterpillar tractor equipment, which it was. I'm sure, well of course, during the war years there was no real civilian construction going on anyway so the equipment was available. And it came in mainly by barges, down the Mackenzie River. There was a lot of equipment there.

NM: But everything flew to Edmonton and then taken by barge to. . .

WD: Well of course, it would come primarily in those days, by rail to Edmonton, as a matter of fact, by rail to Waterways. Then was loaded on barges at Waterways and taken down the Athabasca River to just south of Fort Smith where it was unloaded. There's a big series of rapids of about 17 miles at Fort Smith and it had to be all unloaded and taken around the rapids on trucks and trailers and then reloaded on different barges on the downstream side of the rapids and taken then by tug and barge to Norman Wells which would be, I guess 800 miles from there.

#158 NM: Quite a long trip.

WD: Yes, going down river it would take the boats, I don't know, depending on the weather and conditions, probably 8-10 days.

NM: What were the conditions of living in Norman Wells on the Canol project?

WD: Well, when I first went in we had some bunkhouses there for a lot of the employees. I personally lived in a tent with a wooden floor and we had a little gas stove and there were 8 of us shared about a 20' square tent until they built more you might say, bunkhouse accommodation, which we moved into. After we got rid of the tents we lived in the quarters that way, mostly 2 people to a room as far as, you might say, the supervisors and the engineers were concerned. Most of the men were probably in larger numbers than that, in bigger quarters. Eventually, particularly by 1945, Imperial Oil as a company had decided, and it was pretty obvious by then that the war was kind of winding down, Imperial as a company decided that they would continue exploration and operations at Norman Wells and see if there was any more oil to be found and this sort of thing. So they had arranged and got some prefabricated houses, where from I don't know, but they were brought in and we reckoned about 10 or 12, and the superintendent, some of the engineers, some of the foremen, people that they wanted there sort of on a full time basis. We brought our families in, for instance my family were in with me until I left, they were there for a year and a half. Ralph Landers family were in there, several of the others had their families in there. As a matter of fact, my wife has the honour of being the mother of the first child born in Norman Wells.

NM: Quite an achievement.

WD: He's now 37 years old. I guess the other thing, probably towards the end of 1943 and early '44, we brought a lot of women to work in the kitchens and to be in the office, secretaries and office help and this sort of thing. So there were quite a few around there, as a matter of fact, before the project was over quite a few of the people up there had married some of the ladies that came in. So got a few started that way.

#198 NM: Very romantic.

WD: Yes. Well, of course, when there's 4 or 5 hundred men and about 20 women. And all away from home, I guess it encourages it.

NM: That's right. What about the food supply? There were so many people there.

WD: The food was mostly brought in by barges and of course, they only ran in the summer time. So all your food came in primarily in the months of June through to September. Most of it would be the canned and dried. We never had anything like fresh milk or anything like that, it was all powdered milk. Such things as potatoes and that, they would keep for awhile, but mostly where they would be dehydrated potatoes. Vegetables, carrots and that, some of them were dehydrated and a lot of canned foods. Pretty typical, I would say, of camp life away from good communications where you have to bring your supplies in well ahead of time.

NM: You did not have to go hunting for your food?

WD: Oh no. As a matter of fact, it's not an area of very much game. There is some but it's not what you'd call a high density game area. Plus the fact it's against the law to go and shoot

game for feeding camps. But we would run into shortages. . .

NM: I was wondering about that, if the food was running out or what they were doing?

WD: I wouldn't say we ran out but we would run out of certain things. I know one spring, I think it was the spring of '43, for about a 4 week period we were basically eating in the mess hall, we were probably eating as good canned hams as you could get, chocolate pudding and a couple of other things were all we had. So we had them for breakfast lunch and dinner. Till the barges came in. Occasionally a plane would come in and there would be some fresh stuff on it but very seldom. Because certainly in those days, the planes weren't very big and they were used mainly for moving essential supplies and people. So food, as long as you had something to eat, fresh stuff sort of took second place. But we all ate well. I gained a lot of weight there, eating in a mess camp for 3 meals a day, you get putting on weight pretty easy.

#236 NM: How were the planes in this time?

WD: I guess in the latter part, I'd say from late '43 on, I would say DC-3's were the main aircraft. When I first went in there I flew in on what they call the Boeing 10. It was a 10 passenger aircraft made by the Boeing company, a 2 engine deal and it was probably 3 years ahead of the DC-3 in design. It was quite satisfactory but it was so small with 10 people. But it flew in, actually, Canadian Pacific Airlines, they were flying it and I went in with that. But most of the workhorses were the DC-3's. I saw my first DC-4 when I was in Norman Wells when Henry Wallace, who was the vice-president of the United States, came by on a tour. Of course, we looked at this airplane as the biggest airplane we'd ever seen, was a DC-4. He came in for a day. Other than that the airplanes were mainly single engine Norseman, the old sort of bush type plane and they were predecessors of the Beaver's and Otter's, which are really used now.

NM: What about the pilots, where were they trained?

WD: Most of the bush pilots were trained I guess, with a little instruction probably in Edmonton or Calgary and then landed in the hideaway up in the north on their own. For awhile at Norman Wells there was a unit of the Canadian Signal Corps and they used to run the radio and communications for the north. They had assigned to them, I think it was a Norseman and flown by an RCAF pilot. He was stationed there for about 8 months I guess so there was a military aircraft there, mainly doing sort of work for the government on communications. There would be quite a lot of military aircraft, U. S. military Aircraft came in through there. One of the big reasons of course, for construction of the original Canol road up to Whitehorse and Alaska was, was to have communications with various airstrips they built along the route. And these airstrips were used as a ferry route for taking American made military aircraft that were turned over to the Russians, and they flew them from the United States, up through Edmonton, along the current Alaska highway, like Fort Nelson and places like that where there are strips and into Whitehorse and into Alaska and then across to Russia. That's the way these fighter aircraft that were turned over to the Russians, that's how they got there.

#288 NM: Were there a lot of accidents?

WD: I suppose there were. You never heard of them. For one thing I'm sure they've got records of them but radio communication in Norman Wells was poor and there many days when the radio wouldn't work, where the atmospheric conditions were poor that you couldn't get anything. And of course, you got no newspapers so you didn't get any knowledge of what was going on.

NM: ???

WD: Yes, and I'm sure some of them did. As a matter of fact, you occasionally see even today, where they found the remnants of a World War II aircraft. Basically, all the time of course we were there, World War II was going on in the European theatres and we basically heard very, very little about it. We may get newspapers in there a week or two old, something like that. I was kind of interested myself, I was in Australia 3 years ago on vacation and I went in to the war museum in Canberra. They have great displays of the activities of the Australians and the New Zealanders in the South Pacific and I was amazed of the involvement that those countries had in it. Because being in Norman Wells in the war I don't suppose we ever heard a word about. . .

NM: ???

WD: Well, any war news that we'd hear would be what was going on in Europe where the Canadian forces were, we never heard anything about what was going on in the South Pacific, other than we'd hear the Japanese had invaded this or that. But you didn't hear any details. And I was certainly very, very interested and surprised to see what involvement there was from that side of the world that sort of is a blank as far as I was concerned, because I never heard anything about it, even while it was going on. And I think this is what happens in a place like Norman Wells, when you were isolated in those days, and no good communications like you have today, you just hear very little and you're completely out of touch really, with what goes on.

#325 NM: Maybe it was a good way to keep people working too.

WD: As you recognize in World War II, there was conscription in Canada. If you of course, weren't physically able to qualify in conscription you were put to work somewhere, in some kind of war job. So that that's where they got the people.

NM: End of the tape.

Tape 1 Side 2

WD: I think as a result of the conditions there, you might say, the calibre of employees we generally got, in the general operations, the field operations, they weren't very good. All the good people around were working somewhere else and we would get the dregs in many cases. In some cases we sure got the dregs, there was no question about that. We were very fortunate as far as Imperial was concerned, we had some very, very good engineers and some very good foremen. So that was why you could get along pretty well, if you've got good supervision but a lot of the general employees, they were very poor. They were just sort of at the bottom of the stream of employees. If they couldn't get a good job around in southern Canada, they ended up in Norman Wells or something like

that.

NM: Were there some other people working with you in Norman Wells who are now in Calgary?

WD: Oh yes, quite a few as a matter of fact. I'll mentioned some to you, Don Mackenzie, he was head of the oil engineering up there at that time. He was an old Imperial employee, started out in Turner Valley. Alec Hemstock who is retired from Imperial now and works as a consultant with I. D. Hardy and Associates. He was there for about 3 years. Ralph Landers, who retired about 2 years ago from Imperial, he was there for nearly 4 years. Jack McRae in town here, he was there, a chap by the name of Neil Sherwood who lives in Calgary now, his parents were living in the Norman Wells area and his father ran a sawmill there before the Canol project. So he predates the Canol project, he grew up up there, then he finally went to work for Imperial Oil out in Alberta. But he's got more background in the early days than anybody because he was just a young person at that time. His father worked for Imperial during the Canol days, he kind of ran our little store, liquor store we had and post office and this sort of thing. As a matter of fact, both Neil's mother and father, when they died they were buried back in Norman Wells.

#039 NM: How many years did you spend there?

WD: 3 years and 4 months as a matter of fact. I left there, I was offered a job in Peru with a subsidiary of Imperial Oil called International Petroleum. So I left in June of 1946. But with delays in getting clearance to go into Peru I worked around Alberta for about 6 months before I finally went down to Peru in December of '46. So it was quite a switch, from the Arctic down to the Peruvian area. In Peru I spent most of my time in the jungles.

NM: That was quite a change then.

WD: It was quite a change all right. Interesting though. I lived in Lima as a matter of fact, and while I worked in the jungles, we'd fly over the Andes and had a base in the town of Aquitas on the Amazon and we'd work out of there. I had my family in Lima and you'd go out for a couple of weeks and fly back, this sort of thing. I guess the most interesting parts about the Peruvian aspect of it was sort of getting your stuff there. First of all you'd take some personal things and in those days of course, not having the big aircraft that they have today you'd ship most of it by boat. Our stuff got into a shipping strike and we actually lived in Lima for about 3 months on just the stuff that we had taken with us on the airplanes. It was really what came out of the suitcase. And I had 3 children at the time, so we limped along with what we could buy down there. This was right after the war of course, and they didn't even have too much still in many places down there. It was kind of an interesting aspect of it.

NM: What was your work there, you were in the jungle but what were you doing?

WD: Actually I was doing some work much the same as I'd done for the federal government. I was mapping parts of the Amazon basin in Peru for the oil company. International Petroleum was doing oil exploration there and of course, they needed basic maps to work from. We were flying the area and photographing, then we were establishing the necessary control on the ground to sort of orient the pictures to the right scale and the right spot. That's what I was doing over there, was doing that mapping for that part of the

country.

NM: And how long did you stay there?

WD: As a matter of fact, I stayed in Peru, I was only there for about 14 months. International Petroleum, partly because of political problems decided to shut down that exploration there. So by late '47, very early '48 we'd decided to shut it down. I was kind of pleased because as I'd mentioned earlier, I had worked in Alberta for about 6 months before I went to Peru, filling in time between Norman Wells and getting permission to go to Peru and I had . . .

NM: What were you doing then?

WD: I was actually surveying well sites for Imperial Oil all over Alberta. About the last well site I surveyed before I went to Peru was Leduc #1. So I left right after that and went to Peru and did not know about the discovery of oil in Leduc which was in February, I didn't know about it until about May. I was sitting in a staff house on the banks of a river in Peru called the Erdamolas??? River, reading the Oil and Gas Journal and I see that Imperial Oil had made an oil strike at Leduc #1.

NM: And you had surveyed the site?

WD: I had surveyed the location. And of course, you get an itching to come back when you realize there's going to be a lot of activity in Alberta at that time. So you have an itching to come back. Actually it turned out I came back to Alberta and I was back in Alberta about the 1st of March in '48 and went to work in the engineering side of the business in the Leduc field in '48. So I was right back, sort of picked up from where I'd been 2 years before. Except they had found the oil in the meantime.

#084 NM: Can you tell me about Leduc?

WD: Yes. Both Leduc or the town of Devon, even the oilfield. When I surveyed Leduc #1, which was in October in 1946, we stayed in Leduc I guess, in the hotel there, something like that. Anyhow what I can recall about it mostly is, I think it was the day we surveyed the location or about then, Leduc was having a plebiscite as to whether they should put sewer and water system in the community. So that was the kind of thing you would remember because it was a pretty poor, undeveloped community. I think there were about 900 people there at that time.

NM: Was it farming mostly?

WD: Yes, it's a good farming community around there, it would be. There would be implement dealers and that sort of thing that were located in town that dealt with the farmers. There was a small hotel there, because of course, it was on the main line between Edmonton and Calgary on the highway. A few businesses because of traffic that way but fundamentally it was a farming community. And certainly, it was not very wealthy. Of course, where the town of Devon is now was nothing but a barley field at that time. As a matter of fact, I did not end up being on that piece of property because the well we surveyed was about 2 miles south of the town of Devon. But the whole country was not too well developed. There were quite a few farms but not too well. The roads were mainly just dirt and if it rained, they were very muddy and in many cases you couldn't travel or you'd just get stuck. I think we've got to recognize that we're now talking about the period right after

the war, people had been away, there'd been no money, nothing done in any of the communities because of the war effort. So that things were probably at the low end in all those communities. So you look back on Leduc and it really wasn't much of a town in those days compared to now if you go by it. While I was in Peru, and of course, after Leduc had been discovered, Imperial decided to construct a town in Devon for the employees. That started in the summer of '47. Not too much done, a little surveying, some of the roads put in. Then when I got back in '48 we were very active. Part of my job was laying out the town site, building the roads, laying out the sewer and water system, all this sort of thing. That was done mainly in '48, in addition to doing all the construction of roads and well sites and ??? facilities and oilfield equipment for the field itself. We did it through the engineering department there. Finally moved out, we had a little office in Leduc until about the middle of '48, maybe late '48 and then we built an office in Devon and moved out there. I personally built a house at Devon and occupied it, in 1949 and got transferred to Calgary in 1950. So I lived there for about 18 months, in the town and part of that I had my family and we were living in Edmonton and I used to drive out to work. Of course, in those days the roads were poor and narrow, even the highway wasn't very good. It was very interesting though, working the field. I think the most interesting part is of course, in a new development, there's lots going on, there's lots to occupy you, you don't get any chance to sort of sit and bitch about what's going on, you're too busy. So they were exciting and interesting years. You look back on it and you realize the conditions were pretty primitive and you were always fighting the mud and the weather and this sort of thing. Even in those days there was still a shortage of supplies. It was again, just after the war, getting such things as automobiles for use privately, to get a car, you probably had to wait 6, 8 or 10 months to get one. Most of the businesses, like the oil business and that, they'd get priority in getting cars for use so consequently it as individuals you had to wait a long time to get them. And a lot of other things, household goods. It wasn't a case if you wanted something you went around and looked and tried to figure out, oh, I like this or I don't like that, if you wanted say a fridge, when you went and bought a fridge the first one you saw you bought because it might be the only one you see. Those were the conditions. They started to pick up after 1949 but for about 2 or 3 years right after the war, material goods like that were very scarce. Things we don't think about today. Getting a telephone in. . .

#145 NM: They are taken for granted.

WD: Yes, taken for granted. If you lived in the city of Edmonton you might have to wait 8-10 months to get a telephone. We forget those things, those were part of the problems you faced in those days, such things as phones, which as you say, we take for granted today.

NM: What about the discovery?

WD: In what way, what about it?

NM: The one for example, when you were first surveying the. . .

WD: Well, I guess. . . it was no different than surveying any other wells. And I'd done a lot down in eastern Alberta in the Viking Kinsella gas field and down around Provost, we'd done a lot of work down there. So it was just a routine job of going in and surveying our

location and marking it out so the rig could go on. By of course, government regulations, it's got to be in a certain location. So that's what your surveying requirements are, is to do that, get it in the right position, make a deal with the farmer to get on his land, agree with him where you can put the road in so it doesn't interfere with his land as much as possible, this sort of thing. As far as we were concerned it was just another well site at Leduc and it has no real reason to stick in my mind except when you read about they found a discovery afterwards, then you start to think about it. But at that time it didn't mean anything, it was just another well site. I guess I can look back on it and say, it was late October, it happened to be beautiful weather. Alberta in late October, if you get a fine one, it's a beautiful spot. So you have that kind of a fond memory of it, but apart from that I can't really say anything about it.

NM: ??? came back to Alberta?

WD: Yes.

NM: And where were you living at the time?

WD: When I came back to Alberta, as I say, I was assigned to work in Leduc field. I bought a house in Edmonton and my family, who had come back from Peru with me and they had stayed with my parents just out of Vancouver until I got a place and then they moved in. We had a place in Edmonton which I bought and we lived in for a year until we finished the place in Devon and then we moved there. Lived there for about, going on for 2 years I guess and then came here. I was in Calgary for 5 years and then went back to Edmonton for 6 years, then into Toronto and then back here. I don't think there's anything unusual about what we did and where we moved, everybody was doing the same, you'd get transferred, they were getting moved. As a matter of fact, you'd get transferred and all your old friends would probably be there too. It wasn't like a lot of people get transferred to a new city and they don't know anybody. We get transferred and half the people that you've been working with, you would find them again. So it was a little better that was. As a result I guess, of getting after working in Devon, and they were some interesting times, I can certainly recall some kind of interesting stories, really nothing to do with the oil production. As you can well realize, after they'd made a big discovery in Alberta, it was the scene and site of all kinds of tours. Everybody in Canada that had a convention in the Edmonton area or anybody that wanted, they always wanted a tour of the Leduc oilfield, something new. So we spent a good part of our summers, in addition to working, conducting tours. I can recall one time we had a tour of 400 school teachers and that's quite a project to organize the buses and run people out and explain the oilfields to them. Also at this time, the United States, Canadian and British military authorities had a number of what they call, staff colleges, where they were training for senior officers. Most of these people on these courses would be probably colonels or higher. They had a number of these and of course, again, the oil discovery in Alberta and of course, its impact on the economy of Canada and the United States, this sort of thing was of interest so we'd always get tours about every 6 months of a bunch of these staff colleges, and there would be about 40 people, as I say, rank of colonel or higher. I can recall, we had one and we had a busload of all these people with a little corporal driving the bus. This was the time that the Atlantic #3 well was wild and they all wanted to go and see it, so we

drove by this thing.

#210 NM: Really a tourist attraction.

WD: Oh yes. So we drove by this thing and they all had a look at it and then we went down the road. As I mentioned earlier the roads weren't very good and the little corporal driving the bus, he decided he was going to turn around and go back and he started to turn into a farmer's yard. Everybody on the bus said, don't turn there, you'll get stuck. So he turns there and get stuck so now I've got a busload of all this military brass and they're stuck in the mud there in the farmer's entrance. I'm sure the corporal was a private by that night. But we finally rounded up some cars and took them out to see the rest of the oil activities. They were watching one of the production operations and in those days they weren't as well under control as they probably are today and one of the wells kicked in a bit and the flare sort of kicked up and it sprayed a little bit of oil around and all these guys uniforms got plastered with a little oil. I'm sure they weren't very happy. It didn't bother me, not being part of the Army but I'm sure they were pretty unhappy. They were a chore to look after the tours, but they were interesting in many ways, to get the reaction of people to something they've never seen before. It got to be sort of a joke, we'd have certainly, at least 2 tours a week.

NM: What type of people then, you'd have school teachers, military. . . ?

WD: Well, we'd have school teachers, military, a good example might be a technical society or say, the Canadian Institute of Mining or the Manufacturers Association, well they'd have a meeting in Edmonton. Well, most of these conventions, they'd have a tour for people and they'd all want to go see the oilfields. Of course, Imperial Oil had a public relations department and they'd bring them out but it meant that somebody that worked in the field had to go with them and explain what was going on. Kind of the interesting background of just the work is how you got involved in people.

NM: Were there a lot of accidents at Leduc?

WD: There were certainly some. On the whole I would say the oil industry's record against today's standards was poor. In those days it probably was reasonable standard. We had accidents that were unfortunate and couldn't be foreseen. It reminded me just the other day, we read about that heavy rainstorm they had in Edmonton, actually when that little boy was flushed down. . .

#249 NM: ???

WD: They had, if you figured it out from the metric system, they had about 3 1/2" of rain in the afternoon, which is a lot of rain. I can remember a Saturday afternoon in Devon we had, we figured about 4" of rain in about 4 hours. Of course, everything was flooded but on the road going out to Devon from Nisku, on the highway out to Devon, the road comes along and then the Whitemud Creek goes through it and the road dipped down for about 100 yards and up again. There was a drilling crew going out to work for their 4:00 shift and driving along there and they came over and just hit the water and it was then about 4' deep and of course, they just swept right into the ditch which was about 8' deep and a whole bunch of them drowned. Just like that. They had no reason to realize that there was water on the road. It was this storm in Edmonton sort of recalled that to me, because it was just

about an identical type of storm, about an inch an hour for about 3 or 4 hours and that's a lot of rain. We had certainly there were accidents. I personally don't recall many of them but there would be, as you can well realize, pretty near everything was done by contract, the drilling was done by contractors, the road construction was done by contractors. They had their problems and I'm sure they had their accidents. In many cases of course, as a company we were not involved. We were always involved if they were working for us. So you didn't necessarily. . . you'd hear there had been an accident. I don't think the accident rate in the oil industry would certainly be any higher than it was in the forestry or the mining or anything like that. I think the other thing we have to look back on, the equipment wasn't as good in those days, and people were inexperienced. Practically everybody that was working were returnees from the armed services, young fellows on their first job and certainly there weren't the safety training programs that there are today. You can't be happy about the accident conditions but you can't say that they were abnormal.

NM: What about the environment, were people talking about that as they are doing nowadays?

WD: Nobody ever thought about it.

NM: There was no problem at all.

WD: None whatsoever. As a matter of fact, not only nobody ever talked about the environment there wasn't nearly as many government regulations. I could probably use an example, the field was getting developed pretty quickly in '48 so we were drilling lots of wells. We'd get a call from Calgary that one well was finishing and this was probably on a Friday and the well was finishing and they wanted a new location for it by Monday. Maybe a mile away or so and you'd have to go out and survey the location, get permission from the farmer, survey the location, move the tractors in, prepare the location and have the rig moved on on Monday. Which is what 3 days, 4 days. And you could do it. Today if you decided you wanted to move a rig on the location you could allow at least 3 months to do it. That's strictly getting the permission, clearing it with the landowners, getting all the government regulations met you have to do, it takes at least 3 months.

#309 NM: So in this time the decision was made and . . . ?

WD: From the time you decided to do it, you had the rig working in maybe 3 days.

NM: Incredible.

WD: So things have changed. I think if you look back on it, there were some abuses. I think in some cases the farmers weren't treated right and of course, this has resulted in tougher regulations. But in those days, we had a good working relation with a lot of the farmers. Sure, they wanted more money every time you wanted to go on their land but apart from that we had a pretty good working relation. I suppose they didn't know all their rights anymore than we knew all their rights. We got the job done. Today I think we've gone far too far, it just takes too long.

NM: Bargaining all the time.

WD: You see it today, if you decide to do something, I suppose any project you hear about today, they've got to have a public hearing. And then somebody will come to the public hearing, either deliberately or because they aren't ready and say, we're not ready to make

our presentation, how about delaying it. So they give them another 4-5 months to work on it. Well, if they deliberately want to delay it they can always use that excuse. So today, before you can practically do anything you're going to have a year to 2 years of public hearings. I don't think the public in Canada really realize that they're paying for this. Particularly if you go back to the late 70's and very early 80's, with inflation going on, if you were 2 years later the thing cost you another 40 or 50%. So I fully support that you have public hearings and the people to have an input but I think you can have timing on it and people meet their timing. If they haven't met it that's too bad.

NM: End of the tape.

Tape 2 Side 1

NM: So we can say that Leduc put Alberta on the map?

WD: I don't think there's any question about it. And it put it on the map in ways that most of us don't realize. And it's not just Leduc, it's a fact that because of Leduc people started to explore for oil all over the province of Alberta and British Columbia. And this is what I think, really developed both Alberta and the northern part of British Columbia, is the fact that in exploring you may be wanting to drill a well 50 miles from the nearest settlement or road and you have to build your road and get yourself out there. As a result of that, citizens who want to go back to the land themselves are utilizing these roads to establish themselves, either through purchasing property or through pre-empting property. Many areas, I think particularly north of Fort St. John, British Columbia is a good example, at least 150 miles north of Fort St. John there's farming development going on in areas that, before the oil industry there was nothing in there. So the activity and the roads that were build allowed people to get in there and develop the country. And I believe if you go practically anywhere in Alberta north of Edmonton, you'll see the same thing. All the activity that's gone on, there's always somebody seems to, for some reason, build a house or done something and living and working there. This is what's opened the country up and I think it's something that the average person doesn't realize. All they look at it is the oil development and the jobs that are around in the oil activity and in Edmonton and Calgary and they don't realize what it's done in the, you might say, the hinterland is concerned and the people that are actually living on the land. I think of course, this is what's made the strength of the province, is the people that have developed that way.

NM: It is different in other provinces.

WD: Yes, it is. Saskatchewan has not developed the same way because all the oil activity was primarily in the agricultural area that was already developed. In the farmland of southern Saskatchewan. Consequently, it wasn't opening up new country like northern British Columbia and northern Alberta. So there's quite a difference in the provincial development and of course, in Manitoba it's the same thing. Any activity there as far as petroleum is concerned is solely in the southwest corner. So it hasn't had the impact that it has in so many other ways as it has in here and of course, in the northeast part of British Columbia.

#032 NM: How long did you stay in Leduc?

WD: I guess Leduc field and during that period I lived in either Edmonton or Devon and I was there from March of '48 till about October of '50, when I transferred to Calgary. However just because I was in Calgary I didn't lose my association with Leduc because I was the chief engineer for Imperial in Calgary and of course, we had all the engineering projects going on there so I would be back a lot. Then I got transferred back to Edmonton as division manager in '55. And of course, all those fields then came under my direct operations so again, I'm back in close proximity to Leduc and Redwater and all those developments. So basically, you might say, nearly 20 years after Leduc I was pretty closely associated with the fields themselves. The latter years I guess I got out of it and was in a broader management area and consequently didn't see as much what was going on. Some kind of interesting things come up, when I look back to '46 when I worked here and '48 and that period on, in addition to working in Leduc, we were responsible for doing all the well sites and things for exploration in the northern part of Alberta. So we'd have survey crews that were based in the Leduc field would go out and survey the locations, do that. A good example is we did Redwater, it was all controlled and done out of Leduc until the discovery was made and then they set up their operations. So as a result I personally travelled over a lot of Alberta to where development was going on, to see what was going on. Just after I retired I was president of the Alberta Chamber of Commerce for 2 years and I as president of that organization I travelled to a large number of communities in Alberta. So 30 years after I had been in them in the oil industry and I think more than anything, it was the comparison, in 30 years in these small towns, what has gone on to make you realize how the province has developed. We tend to think of the development in Edmonton and Calgary but the development in the small communities in this province is phenomenal. You'd be surprised, even today, there's all kinds of new houses in communities all over the province. Most of them are reasonably wealthy, well matured communities. I guess the biggest difference I notice is that every community that I know of in Alberta today has got a good motel. 30 years ago there were some pretty poor hotels. Many of them that I stayed in in '46, they did not even have indoor plumbing, you wouldn't ever see that now. I can recall in '46 working down east of Edmonton in the general area of Mannville, staying in the hotel there. We'd get up and go to work at 6 in the morning so we could finish by 3 in the afternoon so we could come in the hotel and get a bath before the water ran out. They were of course, operating off wells and by 5:00 there was no water left. So we'd quit work early to come and have a shower.

#070 NM: What about the bars in this time, there were strict rules for them?

WD: Yes, in Alberta there were very archaic liquor laws. In the city of Edmonton and Calgary they had the taverns and they had the taverns where most of the space was allocated to men only. If your wife wanted a drink or your girlfriend wanted a drink they went to another part. But in all the small communities, outside of Edmonton and Calgary they were allowed to have mixed drinking in the beer parlours. So in Calgary and Edmonton everybody used to flock out to St. Albert in Edmonton or to Cochrane and places in Calgary here, where they were allowed to have mixed drinking in the beer parlours. The

fatality on the highways between Edmonton and St. Alberta and Calgary and the outskirts here, were very, very high, particularly on the weekends because everybody would flock out there and get lapping up on beer and then get involved in an accident coming home. But cocktail lounges did not come in to Alberta until about '58, as late as that.

NM: Why is that?

WD: If you go back in Alberta and look at its history it was kind of a bible-thumping area if you want to phrase it that way. Basically, people had never been associated or grew up where there were such things as cocktail lounges or drinking that way. It was one of the last provinces to go for putting in open cocktail lounges. I suppose the government had something to do with it, the premier of the province did not drink and I suppose that had something. . .

NM: That was a good reason.

WD: But like anybody else, the government I'm sure, switched over to cocktail lounges strictly thinking of the revenue they get for selling liquor. Actually, it was the best thing that ever happened I think, because prior to them having cocktail lounges, and particularly my association in the oil industry, everybody carried a bottle of liquor around out in the fields, in the cars, particularly the salesmen. They were selling bits, they were selling this and that and they would go out and. . .

NM: To help with the deal.

WD: Yes. And there was a lot of that. Plus the fact of course, it was illegal to carry an open bottle in the car, so the tendency was, well we'd better finish it. So consequently there was a lot of drunkenness that you don't see today, because you can publicly have it. Plus the fact that, in the early days of the oil industry, companies would come in and set up a business, maybe they were handling certain equipment and they would build a little warehouse and they were handling it. Then to let all their potential customers know they were there, they would open it up and have, probably a barbecue and drinks. Well of course, because liquor was not open everybody would go there and get completely soused and it was very poor I think. I think the more open liquor laws here now stopped a lot of that drunkenness and there was a lot in the early days.

#108 NM: What did people drink except beer?

WD: They'd probably drink mostly rye and drink it straight out of the bottle, not even bother with a glass. Of course, that can hit you pretty hard too. Of course, beer always has been the big drink but because you couldn't have it in cocktail lounges or anything, couldn't have it with mixes, you'd just take it out of a bottle or you might have it in a glass with some water so you could abuse it very badly I think.

NM: Was liquor expensive?

WD: No, I guess not. Not in today's prices. I suppose we'd pay \$3 for a bottle of liquor. It's no more expensive now in relation to what you get paid and I think we tend to forget that. We tend to forget it buying gasoline too. I can recall when we first opened our refinery in Edmonton in '48, I think we charged in those days, it was about 32 cents a gallon. But at that time we were probably paying \$1, \$1.25 an hour to people working. Now you're paying 2 something, maybe a gallon for gasoline, people are getting \$10 or 12 an hour. So

relatively it's not as expensive. The only difference is, of the \$2 we get now, the government takes an awful lot more percentage wise than they did back in those days.

NM: What about the equipment for working in this time comparing to what they have nowadays?

WD: Maybe I could use the best example, when we would start production of oil wells in Leduc let's assume there's 12 wells and they're going to produce into a certain area which we called a battery. We'd drill the wells and the pipelines into the battery and they would flow into there. Then they would separate the oil and the gas out of it, and if there's any water they'd separate that, so they had a man on duty doing it. In the early days of Leduc we would have somebody in that battery 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Because we had no automatic controls or anything, it was all done manually. Then as the years went on we got automatic things to do it and we shut down to maybe having just 1 man on duty 8 hours a day for 7 days a week. Then we got it down to the point where it was 8 hours a day for 5 days a week. Now in most cases, there's so much automatic controls to run the thing, start the wells, shut them off, to test them, to do everything, you might have a man drop around once a day. So that's what's gone on in 30 some years, from 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, manual operation to practically all automatically controlled and only visit once in awhile.

#145 NM: A real difference.

WD: It is. The other thing probably that's gone on is your communications. You have all kinds of ??? now, if something goes wrong it can trigger a radio signal back to your office and people know something is wrong and they can get out there and do something about it. In those days, you could go out there and everything could be running fine and you could drive off the lease and something go wrong and you'd never know about it till you came back 24 hours later. So that is I would say, the biggest change.

NM: This is the end of the first interview with Walter Dingle.

Tape 2 Side 2

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Tape 3 Side 1

NM: This is the second interview with Walter Dingle. After Leduc, Mr. Dingle, what did you do?

WD: When I was at Leduc, I was what they call district engineer and I got transferred to Calgary as the assistant regional engineer for the western provinces. Not too long after I came to Calgary the chief engineer left the company so I became the chief engineer, and as such of course, was responsible for all the engineering that the company did in connection with its oil and gas exploration and production in western Canada. While we were headquartered in Calgary, actually most of the engineering went on of course, in the oil fields and this sort of thing. So I had a very direct tie with everything that went on from an engineering point of view for the period I was in Calgary, which was until 1955.

NM: Where was your office in Calgary?

WD: The office in Calgary was at the corner of 2nd St. W. and 9th Ave. It was known then as the old Albertan building, it had been the building which the Albertan newspaper had. It was demolished about 2 or 3 years ago by this method of implosion, where they just blow it and the whole thing falls in on itself.

NM: And you stayed there for a long time?

WD: 1955. Then I got transferred to Edmonton. We reorganized the company quite a bit then. Of course, it was growing as a result of Leduc and we formed what we called a division in Edmonton and one in Regina. As a matter of fact, quite soon after, one in Dawson Creek, where each of those areas was responsible for the activity of the company in that area. For instance, in Edmonton we looked after most of the province of Alberta, sort of south of Dawson Creek, both in exploration, production, engineering, this sort of thing.

NM: So you were travelling a lot were you not?

WD: Quite a bit, yes.

NM: And then you went back often to Norman Wells too?

WD: No, as a matter of fact, I didn't go to Norman Wells in that period in the 50's at all. Mainly after the Canol days Norman Wells sort of dropped off to a small production operation to supply products for the activity along the Mackenzie River. It wasn't large. We had no reason to go. We kept some production people up there to produce the field and usually had an engineer based there for 2 years. But I had no reason to go at that time and we were so busy in the general Alberta area there was no point in really going up there. Plus the fact that transportation wasn't as good as it was today either.

#035 NM: Not very easy then, to go there. After the Canol project they left a lot of equipment.

WD: Yes, they did. Basically, when a war time project like that folds up everybody just gets out and most of the stuff is left behind. After Leduc was discovered one of the shortages in Canada was steel and steel pipe, or steel to make steel pipe. There was quite a lot of activity going back and picking up the pipe off the pipeline that was laid on the surface, between Norman Wells and Whitehorse and bringing it out. A lot of it was used in what we call the flow lines, to take the oil from the wells to the central gathering points. So they were used that way. There was a fair amount of heavy equipment like tractors, some trucks and this sort of thing, brought out. Not too much, but some, again, because it was short in Canada. Other things that we needed we brought out, but fundamentally, not too much. Other people, particularly contractors would go up there to see if there was equipment that they needed and some of them did make arrangement to bring things out. We must remember that a lot of this was complicated as the material was brought in to Canada during the war years and of course, it didn't have any restrictions in the way of duty or import taxes and this sort of thing. Once people wanted to use it in peace time in Canada, then they were faced with taxes and import duty and this sort of thing and it discouraged a lot of people from picking it up and using it. It made it reasonably expensive by the time you acquired it at Norman Wells, transported it out and then were faced with taxes and duties. So that had a restriction on the utilization of it.

NM: When you were living in Calgary in the 50's, what did the town look like?

WD: It was a nice little town. I guess about that time, if I have to remember the population, about 1950 it was probably somewhere between 100-125 thousand and I suppose by 1955 it would be around maybe 200,000, although I'm not too sure of the numbers. As you know, I live out in Eagle Ridge, which is roughly 75th Ave. When I left here in 1955 Elbow Drive was only paved just beyond the Elboya Bridge. As a matter of fact, when we lived here in the early 50's we used to come out to the Glenbow Reservoir, beside the dam, for picnics.

NM: So here it was country?

WD: It was country and of course, that is north of where we're living now, where we used to come out for picnics. But it was a pleasant place to live then, because it was small I think.

#068 NM: So did you know all the oil men at the time?

WD: Pretty well. It's pretty difficult to work in Calgary in those days, in the oil industry and not get to know practically all the people that were working in Calgary, whether for your company or for others. You would meet them, partly because you may have met some of them when you were working out in Leduc or Redwater, that sort of thing. Some you'd met because of interaction and dealings between the companies, some from the point of view of working on committees, with such things as the Canadian Petroleum Association. And of course, through social affairs. So you'd get to know most of the people that were around.

NM: Did you meet them also at some clubs?

WD: Did we have clubs did you say? Well, before I came here, in 1950, there was a group living in Calgary that had been in the oil industry, primarily in the United States that were used to having what they call a Petroleum Club. Of course, in these days there were no cocktail lounges or this sort of thing in Alberta. So they formed a little club and they rented rooms on the floor of the Palliser Hotel below the penthouse. They'd get a permit each day for a supply of liquor and then people would go over there. . .

NM: Each day?

WD: You had to get a daily permit. And they would go over there and get together at lunch and have lunch served up, I think mostly up in the penthouse. They would have a drink and then go up and have lunch. Then they grew, they took over the penthouse for awhile, kind of as their club facilities and several years later they got together with an old established club in Calgary called the Renfrew Club, whose headquarters were down on 6th Ave. They joined up as a club and they came out under the name of the Calgary Petroleum Club and that's how it started. With a sort of marrying up of a group that were working sort of hand to mouth in the combination at the Palliser Hotel, together with those of the Renfrew Club that had facilities but didn't have many members and financial problems. So that's the way it started.

NM: How many members were in this club when you came to Calgary, a handful of them?

WD: I suppose it started with you might say, a dozen. How many were there when I first came, I don't know. Actually I did not have anything to do with the club, other than visiting occasionally for lunch, while I was here in Calgary. When I went back to Edmonton in

1955 I was quite instrumental in the expansion of the Edmonton Petroleum Club, where we built the current club facilities, which are on Kingsway and 108th St. I got involved with them very intimately and went through the opening up of the new building. As a matter of fact, I ended up as president of the Edmonton Petroleum Club about the year I got transferred out of Edmonton.

NM: And then did you become a member of the club here?

WD: Yes, after I came back I did. I'd been to Toronto in the meantime and came back here, have been a member of the Petroleum Club every since, as a matter of fact, still am.

NM: You left Calgary in '55, where did you go then?

WD: To Edmonton.

#107 NM: And what were you doing in Edmonton?

WD: I was what they call the division manager for Imperial Oil.

NM: What is a division manager?

WD: It's just an organizational set-up where what we call the division was responsible for all of Imperial's activity at that time, you might say, from Edmonton, somewhat north and right down of course, south to the U.S. border. We took responsibility for the drilling, the production and the exploration of Imperial's activity in that area. We had similar set-ups in Regina, where they were responsible for the activities in Saskatchewan and southeast Manitoba and similarly a small office that looked after everything in the general northern B.C. area. We called them divisions at that time. They could be called anything, regional office, we called them divisions in those days.

NM: And after Edmonton where did you go?

WD: I got transferred to Toronto as a matter of fact. I went to Toronto as what they call the producing coordinator. That was basically to be in Toronto with a very good knowledge of activity in western Canada and be basically, the go between, between the western operations and the senior people in Toronto, the Board and the senior people and the other departments in Toronto. In other words, they needed people down there who were familiar with operations, who could still be available for advice to them without having to come out to Calgary to get it.

NM: Did you choose to go to Toronto?

WD: Not particularly, I got transferred.

NM: Were you missing Alberta at the time?

WD: Well, it was quite a different assignment. I guess I missed Alberta a lot, not so much the province and that, I missed the activity. When you're in Toronto you're over 2,000 miles from where any of the activity is. You seem so far removed from it. Plus the fact, you're in a big, complex organization down there, which included not only the production operations but the manufacturers and the marketing and the sales people, all the things that go with a big company. So it was quite a change. Also to go from living in Calgary and Edmonton, which at that time were probably less than 300,000 to go to Toronto which had a couple of million people is quite a change. Certainly it was a lot more difficult to get to work just for the traffic problems and this sort of thing. But I enjoyed it down there, as a matter of fact, I was only there for about 18 months then I got transferred

back to Calgary. As a matter of fact, I built a house and lived in it for exactly a year and a week.

#140 NM: In Toronto.

WD: Yes.

NM: That's a very short time after building a house. And then after you came back to Calgary, what did you do?

WD: I came back here as what they called at that time, the regional production manager. I was responsible for all production, that's all field production, the gas plants, the drilling department and the engineering department.

NM: But during the time you were working for Imperial the company was expanding a lot.

WD: Yes, it was. Not only in the what we call the producing department, which is the exploration and production but of course, in marketing and manufacturing. We got into chemicals like fertilizer plant at Redwater, this sort of thing. So it was growing quite fast.

NM: What about the offices they were building all over Calgary?

WD: Yes. As a matter of fact when I came back from Toronto in the fall of 1962 we were looking for a place to build a new office and we acquired a site at the corner of 6th Ave. and 4th St. and built a 7 storey building on that. Then about 6 or 7 years later we added another 5 floors and of course, the building is still there today. But that's when we moved, we moved in actually about '64. We built the building late '62, '63, this sort of thing.

NM: Was your work here in Calgary, were you travelling a lot or staying mostly here?

WD: A good part of it was here. I would travel a lot to Toronto. I would travel out to the field, we had offices in Edmonton and Regina, places like that. I would go out sometimes because we had meetings there scheduled, sometimes I would go out just to go out and try and get out in the field and see what was going on. Also probably a good excuse to get out of Calgary office.

NM: And then you stayed in Calgary?

WD: Yes.

NM: Can you tell me about your work, were you doing the same thing all the time?

WD: No, I wasn't as a matter of fact. As I mentioned I was when they call the regional production manager, which was responsible for drilling, production, gas plants and engineering. I was in that job, I don't quite recall, till about 1970 I guess. Then I got promoted to what they call regional manager, responsible for not only the production side of it but we had an exploration manager and as regional manager, we had a production manager that took my place and I was supervising him as well as the exploration manager, plus the other activities. Then about I guess, 2 years later, we had another organizational change in Imperial Oil and this was to change all across Canada. We formed what we call a number of positions called corporate managers. We had a corporate manager in British Columbia, one in Alberta, one in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, one in Ontario, one in Quebec and one in the Maritimes.

#180 NM: What was a corporate manager?

WD: I suppose the best way to refer to it would be like a regional vice-president of the

company. Why we did it was, at this time and we're now in the early 70's, the environmental, the government problems, the dealings with the public, all these things were really coming to the fore. In many cases, Imperial being such a big company, we had so many sort of you might say, diverse organizations, like producing department, we had a big sales group in Edmonton and all the service stations. We had a refinery, both in Calgary and Edmonton, we had a fertilizer plant in Redwater, we had other operations going on, all under the name of Imperial Oil. As far as the public or the government is concerned they really didn't know who to deal with. So the corporate managers were charged as being the contact for the company on broad matters that affected the company in all those areas. In my case, not only just producing department but for all the departments, the refiners and this sort of thing, for the sales people, for the fertilizer plant. I had no responsibility to run those plants, but solely to be between them and the public and the government. And I guess I can give you a good example, it was about 1972 or 3, we decided to build a big new refinery in Edmonton and close down 3 small refineries in Calgary, Regina and Winnipeg. As you can see, that would cause a lot of problems in Calgary, Regina and Winnipeg with shutting down refineries. So I spent a lot of time informing the government what we were doing, why we were doing it, why we were shutting things down and why we were concentrating in Edmonton. Spent a lot of time dealing with the city of Calgary, to explain why we were cutting out a refinery which had 135 employees and moving away from here. The chap that had the similar position, responsible for Saskatchewan and Manitoba, he was talking to the governments over there. Certainly we had to answer the new people who would call up all the time about shutting down the refinery. Our refinery here was unionized, we had problems with the unions concerned about jobs and this sort of thing.

#215 NM: So it was a bit of public relations and ??? too.

WD: That's right. I think the advantage of having, in those days, a corporate manager, it allowed the people that were doing the work, that is running the producing department, or the refineries or the marketing, to get along with their work and I was spending my time sort of between them and the media, between them and the government, between them and the public or any problems that arose. I guess the other area that I got deeply involved in, to make sure that a facet of the company, let's say refinery, doesn't do something that is different than what another part of the company is doing that would affect again, on the public. And it's a matter of coordinating it. And when you're very active and very busy like we were in those days, it was essential that we had some focal point to turn to. It got to the point where the new media would call me, they'd know that I would follow up on it. They didn't have to bother checking with other people and sort of getting shovelled around. Rather interestingly, I said I've done a lot with the city of Calgary in shutting the refinery down in Calgary, they were quite surprisingly quite interested in the shutting it down because the refinery was now getting pretty close to the centre of town and they were glad to see it going from there. Also we had about, with the refinery and the tank farms and other land, I don't know, probably up to 2,000 acres. Of course, a lot of it, after we closed the refinery down it was available for housing, which helped out the city.

Where the refinery itself was there's quite a few warehouses and this sort of thing on the property. And I guess right today, there's probably 1,000 or 1,500 people working on the site where there used to be 135.

NM: What did you do with the employees when you were closing down the plant?

WD: First of all we went to all the employees, told them what we were doing. We offered jobs to some of them in the new refinery in Edmonton. We offered substantial retirement to people that didn't want to move, were at an age that they didn't want to move and didn't want to leave the city where they'd been living. Because a lot of our employees were of course, experienced in refinery operation, which was not too dissimilar to operating a gas plant, through our contacts with other companies we were able to get a lot of them jobs in gas plants throughout the province. At the same time, while we were closing down, it took about a 2 year period, we still had to operate the refinery. And of course, as jobs came up for people to move out we had to replace them. So we had a program of hiring people, training them and then trying to accommodate them with jobs when the thing closed down. Looking back on it I think most of them got jobs working in the oil industry and the gas plant. So it worked out very well, I think on the whole it was satisfaction. I believe the same both in Winnipeg and Regina.

#264 NM: Nowadays, is the title corporate manager still used?

WD: No. As a matter of fact, just about 3 months ago they reorganized and abandoned them, for a number of reasons. First of all, they made in 1978, after I retired, they formed Esso Resources to look after all the exploration, production and mineral s operation of the company in Calgary. In effect, they appointed a man, Jack Underhill, as their external affairs man so he took over that particular job that I was doing for the province of Alberta, he does it for Esso Resources, all over where they work. Similarly, recently, we have an organization in eastern Canada called Esso Petroleum Ltd., which looks after the refining and marketing group. And the corporate manager who was in Ontario is in that organization and sort of does the same thing for them. In the others, Maritimes and in B.C., they've put the work on to other people who have other assignments as well. Part of that is the fact that because of the recession in the last 2 or 3 years, you just had to cut back on the number of people you had. So that's what happened. Plus the fact, we're not nearly as busy as we were in the 70's, which sort of negates the reason for having these direct contacts and nothing else. When I was in that job and for about the last 6 years I worked, I maintained, not only an office in Calgary but one in Edmonton and I would be in Edmonton at least twice a week, just to be available for the people, to deal with the government, to deal with the parts of the company or to deal with the public, with news people, that sort of thing. They would know I would be in Edmonton 2 days a week and 3 down here. Many days I would go up there, there was really nothing much to do but once you try and establish a presence and an availability then you've got to live with it. So I would travel back and forth on the airbus, twice a week to Edmonton.

NM: Esso changed name 2 years after you retired.

WD: Imperial. . .

NM: Imperial I mean.

WD: It changed . . . it formed a separate company to look after oil production, oil exploration, its drilling, its mineral department, which happens to be a coal mine and this sort of thing. It's all under the name of Esso Resources. It is a separate company, 100% owned by Imperial but operates completely as a separate company, with its own chief executive officer, its own board, internal people of course, and it is responsible of course, to Imperial's main office. Basically, it's happened in marketing and refining. Really Imperial Oil now, the board of directors, they're really a holding company and they have another number of offshoots. But it's really a holding company now.

NM: Where is the name Esso coming from?

WD: Going back to the United States and going back a period to 1885, John D. Rockefeller, formed an oil company by getting a bunch of small ones together and called it Standard Oil. Standard Oil operated as Standard Oil until about, I guess it would be sometime between 1900 and 1920, I'm not sure of the date. They had an antitrust or monopoly suit against Standard Oil because they said they controlled all the oil business in the United States and they were too big and controlled everything.

NM: End of the tape.

Tape 3 Side 2

WD: As I mentioned they had this suit in the early 1900's and it was handled by a Judge Landis, who eventually became the commissioner of baseball of all things, but anyhow he brought down a ruling that the Standard Oil Co. had to be broken up. It was broken up to, and I don't know the number of companies but some of the offshoots that are currently available today are Standard Oil of California, which operates under the name of Chevron, Amoco, which at that time became the Standard Oil Co. of Indiana, there was the Standard Oil of Ohio, which is now part of British Petroleum, there was Standard Oil of New York, which is now the Mobil Corporation and I forget the other names. But because Standard Oil was a well known name all of them wanted to continue with the name Standard Oil. And they operated, as I said, as Standard Oil of California, Standard Oil of Indiana, Standard Oil of this, that and the other thing. And as you can imagine, this was quite confusing. Standard Oil of New Jersey, which is the parent company of Imperial Oil, it finally decided that it had to maintain the Standard Oil name, at least the initials, the S and the O. And that's how Esso came, it's nothing but the spelling of the 2 initials, S and O.

NM: I see.

WD: Well, they operated under Esso but because they were under the judgement that broke them up, Standard of Indiana was given parts of the United States to operate and sell products in, California was done the same, Standard of New Jersey, now selling under the name of Esso were only limited and allowed to sell in certain states. They continued that way for quite awhile. They endeavoured to move into other states and of course, the companies that were operating there, they bucked it. So eventually Standard Oil of New Jersey decided they better get a new name, I forget the year, sometime in the 70's I believe, they looked around and actually manufactured a name, which is of course now

Exxon. They spent quite a program, they had a real committee to pick a name because they have to make sure the name doesn't interfere with any other name that's available, you have to be very careful that it doesn't have a bad connotation in another language. If I recall, one of the names they were thinking to use was Enco, Energy Company and then I forget which country it was, it really meant a bad car in that particular language.

#042 NM: It was out then.

WD: That was out. So it was quite a chore I guess, to get a new name for a company, when you work worldwide. So that's how it came about anyway. But the Esso itself is nothing but the spelling of the 2 initials, S and O.

NM: You retired in which year?

WD: 1977.

NM: Did you keep on working then or doing consulting work?

WD: No, I have not. I went on the board of Ranger Oil after I retired and I'm still on the board of Ranger Oil and it's really my only association with the petroleum industry. I find it interesting and different because Ranger Oil, while we do operate in Canada, we're more active in England and the United States and have and still have, land and activity in Australia and we've just got partial interest in some blocks in the China Sea. So it's quite a different and interesting area to be in. I personally did not want to get involved in working, if you want to put it, after I retired. I'd worked, between the government and Imperial, for 42 years and I just figured it wasn't worthwhile. I think the other thing is that all the time I worked with Imperial, particularly in the last years in Calgary I was very active in the community. I was on the board of and president of the United Way for a couple of years, I was president of the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, I was chairman of the Canadian Petroleum Association. Since I retired I've been president of Alberta Chamber of Commerce, so I've spent a lot of time on volunteer work. Currently most of my volunteer activity is with the faculty of management at the University of Calgary. I feel after you work that many years you have no necessity to work, unless you really want to. And I'd just as soon get out of the oil industry and do volunteer work. I think you get more satisfaction out of it, you can pick and choose a little bit more, probably what you do. I think the biggest trouble doing volunteer work is saying no. Everybody thinks when you're retired you've got all kinds of time and that's not necessarily right. But I feel strongly too that people, once they retire or even before they retire, should put something into the community. That's where you've earned your money, that's where you've lived, you've got the time to do it and there's a great need for it in all kinds of things, no matter what you want to get into, there's all kinds of requirements for volunteer people. To me, it gives you satisfaction. By the same token, I don't think you can retire and just do nothing.

NM: You used to give a lot of talks?

WD: Yes, I did. I gave talks in very many places, to technical groups. I think probably one of the early ones I gave to the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, I think it was 1949 in Vancouver. I've given several to them. I gave a talk at the first northern development conference in Edmonton in 1958 I believe it was. When you're in a

managerial position with a company you have a lot of talks to give within the company to employees and others. And when you're in a senior position, particularly with a company like Imperial Oil you get called on by external groups to talk, whether they be service clubs or whether they be this, that or the other thing, for talks. And of course, because I was mixed up with the United Fund and with the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, you get overloaded with talks. Particularly the United Fund, I would go and attend many of the meetings of their agencies, talk about the fund and things like that. So you had a tremendous variety of things you were called on to speak on. And of course, when you're in a senior position in a company, the media are always asking you for comments. So most of your life, when you are that way, you're involved in talking some way to somebody.

#089 NM: Looking back at Imperial Oil, how would you compare this company to others in Calgary?

WD: Well, I suppose if you work in a company you've got a pride and you always think that company is the best. And you should do too. However, looking back on Imperial, we made the discovery at Leduc, we had experienced people that had worked in Turner Valley years back and at Norman Wells and we had the majority of the activity for several years after Leduc. Consequently we grew quite fast and had a lot of experienced people. I think we were the source of personnel for companies moving into Canada or into Alberta, and we lost a lot of employees and have done ever since the Leduc days. Hire people, train them and lose them to other companies. But beyond that, certainly I've got to look at the other majors like Gulf or Shell or Texaco, they're all good companies. They have their way of doing things, Imperial has its way of doing things. I think they're all good ways of doing it, they're different. Similarly you cannot compare somebody like Imperial Oil to the smaller companies that are growing up, they operate quite differently with a different approach in mind. But I guess to sort of summarize it I would say, Imperial Oil, speaking of it as a major company, is a good company. There are other ones equally good, it's just a matter of your own personal pride and interest in your company I believe. You strive to make sure it's the best and I'm sure that people in the other company do exactly the same thing. I think Imperial's relationships, partly because we trained so many people who left to go to other companies, and because. . .

NM: Is that happening all the time, you train somebody and then another company. . .

WD: It has pretty well all the time, and still goes on, except for the last few years with the recession, nobody's leaving really. But no, it goes on all the time. It not only goes on here, it was the same in the United States. Exxon Corporation, Amoco and all the majors there, they trained most of the people that worked for the small companies. There's nothing wrong with this. One thing about it, if you train people well and they go to work for somebody else, you've got good people in other companies who are your friends. Which I think is important. Let's face it, the industry is not going to be a success without other companies progressing well and good people help them do that, so it's not necessarily your disadvantage to lose some good people.

NM: But do these good people mostly change companies because of the money?

WD: Some. I'm sure some do and some change to maybe, to start companies of their own or figure in a smaller company there's opportunity to progress faster, this sort of thing. And of course, there's bound to be somebody leave, no matter what kind of a company it is, there's always somebody has a feeling that they don't like it and they want to go somewhere else. But on the whole, I would say that opportunities, whether it's money or challenges, probably gets people to leave.

#127 NM: A few years ago Calgary was full of small oil companies.

WD: Yes, it was. As a matter of fact, it's still full of them. Except some have gone by the wayside in the last few years because of the recession. But you still only had to pick up the oil register or the phone book and look in the yellow pages and there's pages and pages of oil companies. They're here, they're reduced in size to what they were but I'm always amazed at how many there are. Since I retired, for a period I had occasion to visit a number of small companies on a completely different matter and I was really impressed and surprised how sort of, active that these smaller companies were and what fine facilities they had, what good staff they had. Which when you're working you don't see too much of, because you're busy yourself and I had the opportunity to see some of them. It's, as far as I can see, still pretty busy in Calgary but I guess you've got to look at it on the basis that most of the companies are doing what they were doing with a lot less people and a lot less money.

NM: What do you think of the training of oil people nowadays?

WD: That's a difficult question to answer. For one thing, I've been 6 years out of actively involved in the oil industry. I don't think the industry can survive unless they train people. It's just necessary to keep up on new techniques, one way or another. You can do it by in-house training or you can do it by courses or you can do it a number of way, but I don't think you can survive without it. I don't think at this time there's as much being done as there used to be but I think that's because of the recession and there not being money available to do the training. Maybe looking back on training, I can use Imperial as an example, and we did it in many ways but I always look back on the training we gave to reservoir engineers. Every year we would send an engineer to the United States, to work either, in the early days in the Carter Research Lab or Humble Research Lab. Then were since amalgamated into Esso Production Research, of which Imperial has an interest in it. They would spend a year on very, very intensive reservoir engineering projects at the research level. That's probably the best reservoir engineering training available anywhere in the United States in those days. We would have one person every year for a year down there doing it. So we developed in Imperial, a very, very competent, well-trained group of reservoir engineers. I'm sure the other companies did somewhat they same. I know Amoco had a big research facility at that time in Tulsa and I'm sure they others did. But that was one way of training and it's paid off I think, for Imperial very strongly. Because they're still, I think, recognized as one of the companies who are probably very, very good in reservoir engineering.

#167 NM: What do you think of the oil situation?

WD: Today? Gosh, frustrating I suppose, is the best way to put it. It just bothers you to see

how an industry is buffeted around by internal squabbling, primarily amongst the governments, over money and that's all it's over. Looking back, I guess you've got to say a good part of it was started by the Alberta government. They wanted more money and the federal government could see their source of revenue and income tax going down the drain so they made steps to stop it and then it's just gone back and forth for 10 years. It's certainly not solved yet by any means. You have a feeling that they do something, and then they try and patch it up but it never comes back to as good as it was. And they patch it up again and then a little more patching and it just makes it more difficult to operate.

NM: Do you think it's going to improve?

WD: I think it has to. Revenue to the governments comes solely from people or organizations. It isn't printed or anything, it comes from either a business or from income tax. If you discourage activity, things are going along and you discourage anybody spending money, consequently it stops the revenues to the government one way or another. And this is what's been going on. Everything discourages you making any activity and spending money. Consequently things are going to pot. I think too, people in Canada are starting to realize that what goes on in one area affects another. Certainly in the 70's all the people in Ontario talked about the rich Albertans, with some bitterness, not recognizing that practically anything that was done in Alberta in the way of construction and this sort of thing, the material came from Ontario. Suddenly when things slowed down it slows down in Ontario too. So I think that awareness is coming, that we cannot look on Canada in an isolated area, one way or another, and say, those guys have got it good, let's see how we can fix them. You can't do that anymore, I don't think.

NM: If you could give advice to politicians regarding the oil industry today what would you tell them?

WD: Recognizing I don't have to satisfy a voter, I would say they have to put regulations in effect in tax and royalty situations, that would encourage people to go out and do more work. That's the only thing we will increase the revenues to the governments themselves, because if you do the work and you make your money and increase your income tax payment, which helps the federal government. If you find more oil you're going to develop more revenue for the provinces or for the federal government in the way of royalties. I guess the second thing is that they've got to encourage it for the simple reason that we should not be depending on the Arabs or others for our supplies. And I think they've got to face up to it, that it's far better to spend a dollar in Canada than spend a dollar bringing a barrel of oil into Canada. I think it's as simple as that, they've just got to look at the basic regulations and tax regimes on a long term basis. Each government of course, and federal is a good example, they need money today. And they're trying to get money today, but they're stopping in effect, their ability to get revenue down the road. That's my personal opinion, as you can see, I'm basically a hard right-wing conservative.

#225 NM: Did you ever get involved in politics?

WD: Not myself. I personally had no interest in it. That doesn't mean that I didn't feel that probably employees should get involved and a lot of Imperial employees have done as a matter of fact. We had an engineer in Devon, in the Leduc field, for a long time who ran

and became a member of the provincial legislature, as a Social Credit member and was still an employee and worked with us as an engineer all the time he was an MLA. As a matter of fact, he would work in the Devon office until about 1 in the afternoon and then drive to Edmonton and attend the legislative sessions. He in effect, maintained a full working schedule and a political schedule. He eventually became a cabinet minister in the Alberta government and at that time, we had to part company because there was a tremendous conflict of interest then, and I think it has to be when someone is in the cabinet position they cannot be in your employment at that time. Because there's just too many things that conflict.

NM: It can be touchy too, when you are in a senior position.

WD: That's right. This particular individual, after he was not in politics then, came back to work for us awhile and then took off and did other things. So he left us, not because we were unhappy with him, it was just a conflict of interest. I think we have to encourage people to do this way but they've also got to recognize that there are times when you have to sever relations with them because of the political reason, strictly from their conflict of interest and ours.

NM: What was the greatest satisfaction in your career?

WD: Looking back on it I would have to say that the thing that stays with you more and gives you more satisfaction is seeing the development of people you were associated with and the part you took in helping in their training and their development. And being available to them to help them when required, I think that gives me more satisfaction than anything else. The number of very, very good people that I was associated with and I've maintained a good relationship since. I think that is the most important thing of any part of my career.

NM: So you must have liked teaching and helping.

WD: Well, I wouldn't say it's teaching. I would phrase it more on an interest in ensuring that a person is developed or trained. You may not do the training but you make sure that he gets the training. You have to, I think, look at your own conduct and how you do things as an example for others and that's all part of their training and development. I suppose it comes down to the point that you have the people that you're associated with and working for you respect you and feel that they have been given the maximum opportunity while they've been there. That should be your objectives and certainly should give you your satisfaction.

#276 NM: Who were the most influential persons in your career?

WD: I can't sort of say that one individual was most influential. I think there were quite a few in different ways. I can use one example, a gentleman that used to head our research organization in Calgary, who incidentally, to my way of thinking is probably one of the brightest minds I've ever run into. He brought to me an awareness of you might say, science and technology and how he could help and contribute. An interesting thing about this particular gentleman, he never went beyond high school and yet he was probably one of the smartest scientific and research men I ever met. I've always wondered in my own mind whether he would have been further ahead or not, to have gone to university and got

formally trained. He was certainly self trained. You look back and say, here's a man developed himself, he had a natural ability of course, but he had a big influence on how you looked at things, how you handled things. I think different individuals that you had a close association, I'm not going to name them. Some in the area of dealing with people, they give you insights on good ways to do it. Others from the point of doing an operation, this sort of thing. I suppose from a political point of view, a person that I always admired and you look at it was the former premier of Alberta, now a senator, Senator Manning. Just the way he operated. He was a school teacher, he took on the portfolio of Minister of Mines in Alberta in addition to being premier and I would have some association with in connection to Imperial Oil's operation. You would listen to him discuss the oil business, either in Canada or worldwide and you would be amazed at his grasp of it with actually no background in the business at all. Also the way he did things. In many ways different from what politicians today are doing. If he saw he had a problem and wanted to do something he would go around and talk to people or businesses about what his problem was and get suggestions before he'd do anything. And nobody does that today. So I have a tremendous respect and I think, some of the things he did must rub off on you as an influence and I have a tremendous respect for Mr. Manning. Strangely enough I do have a little bit of an association with him these days, we're both on the Council of the Canada West Foundation. So I get to know him as an individual now, not as premier.

#330 NM: Were there any other persons?

WD: No, I don't think so that I want to sort of mention. There's a lot of help to me. You can't say sort of, one was the only one.

NM: Can you tell me a bit about the dealers in the oil patch?

WD: There's all kinds of dealers in the oil patch, both within and without companies. Each company has what they call a negotiator or a contract man who basically deals with other companies to put together a . . .

NM: End of the tape.

Tape 4 Side 1

WD: There were wheelers and dealers, both within and without companies. In a major company or any company they usually have a person responsible for making deals with other companies. Exchange of land or a commitment to do something to get additional land. They carry on their business, backed up by technical people in their organization and they negotiate with other companies to put together deals, that's one way. You have other people, say for example, a geologist in the company will decide to leave that company, will get some financial backing and because of his technical training and background and interest will pick an area to work in and get some financial support, hopefully acquire some land and drill a well and be successful that way in promoting things. There's been a lot of people in Calgary done that and done very, very well. There are other, I wouldn't call them wheeler, dealers, but people who've done very well by starting out small, say with a seismic rig and developing it, growing larger and larger and

eventually getting into other parts of the business, either directly or buying in. They've become fairly large that way. So there's very many ways people have done and there's certainly a lot of people in Calgary have made a lot of money in the oil industry over the period. When you look at it, you kind of wonder, how come some people are successful and some are not. Because there's an awful lot of smart people here and some have done well and some haven't. So it's hard to pin it down. I suppose you've really got to say that some people are more entrepreneurial than others.

NM: You are very involved with the West Foundation?

WD: Canada West Foundation. I won't say I'm very involved, I'm a member of their council which is really their board of directors. It's an organization that's interested in the future of western Canada and we're very careful to say and mean, within confederation because we're not a political or separatist group, it's strictly within confederation. It's something I've personally been interested in for a long time. The work that we do in that is such things as, we completed a big study on the water resources of western Canada, we've done one on coal, we've done one on agriculture. We did a major one nearly 10 years ago on Canada's resources in the national interest, trying to point out where the resources were going, what policy should be developed in the future to be a success. Looking back on it things have changed over the years but some of these things that we expressed have been picked up and gone ahead with. It's again, another interest you can have in your own country to get in and do these things.

NM: When was it founded?

WD: It was founded, I believe, it started in a meeting in Lethbridge, I think it was 1970 or '71. There was a meeting with the title of One Province. Somebody started it with the idea, should we have 1 province in the prairies instead of 3. From that it was finally agreed that you weren't going to break up the provinces. So they finally decided to form the Canada West Foundation and worry about Canada within western Canada. One of the big moving individuals behind it was Fred Mannix. He gave a tremendous amount of support to get it started.

#043 NM: Who else was involved?

WD: ??? Mars, who was the publisher of the Lethbridge Herald, he was very active in it. It's current chairman, who has been very active since the start is Art Child, the head of Burns. George Robbins, who's with R. Angus Co., he's been very active in it over the years and a bunch of others. In that organization, we have a big council representing all the western provinces and the Yukon and Northwest Territories. Senator Manning is on our council, after Ed Schreyer was defeated as premier of the province he came on the council and then he had to leave because he became Governor-General. Doc ??? has been on our council, Senator Buckwald??? from Saskatchewan has been on, the current chancellor of the University of B.C., Jack Kline is a member, so it's pretty well spread around the country with various people. I think it's a good organization. We've done a lot of, I think, good for Canada. I suppose you would call it a think tank if you want to phrase it that way. One of the things actually, that they've been working on very strongly is sort of suggestions for the improvement of the Senate, mainly headed up by Jack Kline, from the

University of British Columbia, the chancellor and they've put out some very good information on what they think should be done. We're quite active in all the constitutional debates, as to what you think should be involved, this sort of thing.

NM: What do you consider your achievements?

WD: That's a difficult question really, to answer. I don't think anybody could sort of spell out, say, this was my achievement. Looking back on it, I would say an achievement I can think on and I mentioned it earlier is development of people within the company, the satisfaction that you have, I think it's an achievement. I think looking back on my career with Imperial Oil, whether you call it an achievement or not but you have a feeling that you did a good job for a good company over a number of years. And I suppose the other place you might think of achievements, at least it's personal satisfaction, and that is the opportunity I've had to be involved with the community, the United Fund, the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, the Canadian Petroleum Association, the University of Calgary, this sort of thing. They're more satisfaction I guess, and from that you get the achievement.

NM: What do you regard as the highlight of your career?

WD: That's again, a difficult question. The one that comes to mind more than anything, just because I happened to be present at the time, I did survey the Leduc #1, which became of course, the focal point of the oil industry in western Canada. So I have that satisfaction of being there. Unfortunately I was not there when the well actually came into production so I had the first satisfaction, not the second.

NM: Even so, you played a historical part.

WD: Yes, there's a historical part in there. I would have liked to have been present when the thing actually produced.

NM: Looking back at your career Mr. Dingle, is there anything you would do differently?

WD: I don't know that I can answer that. I think probably, looking at it after I retired, I probably have a feeling I might have been, I wouldn't say better, I might have had, certainly a different life if I had left a major company and gone out with a small organization. There's no question, when you work for a major organization you are restricted by the organization and by their ways of doing things. In some respects it's good and you can work with it and you can get a lot of satisfaction but looking back, I think maybe it would have been better to have had both. So many of the years under one set-up and so many under another. Maybe that could an area that I think I could have done something different in. I don't regret staying with them the time but you have to think mentally, that well, what would have happened if I'd have gone out on my own. Maybe I'd have been one of the people who went broke.

#094 NM: Or maybe you would have become a millionaire.

WD: Well, it doesn't really matter one way or another I suppose, it didn't happen. Again, I guess what really counted was whether you were happy doing what you'd done.

NM: And you were happy?

WD: Yes I was very happy. And maybe for another reason, as I mentioned at the start, I worked for the federal government for 7 or 8 years. Certainly I could not bring myself to being a

civil servant for my whole career. And I left them basically for that reason. When you say, would I have done anything differently, I guess that was the first thing I did that was right.

NM: Thank you very much for this interview Mr. Dingle.