

Transcript of Interview with Eric Andersen 4th Jan 1987

Ross: We are going to find all about the life of Eric Andersen. Now tell us about when you were born first of all. Where were you born?

Eric: I was born at Te Kuiti on the 7th of September 1918

R: So we are now in 1987, so makes you 68.

E: Yes I am 68.

R: What were your parents names and where did they come from?

E: My father came from Norway and his name was Harold Oscar. My mother was born in Wanganui and her parents came from the Shetland Islands. Well her father did. His name was Sandison. Her father built the wharf's in Wanganui in those days. He died at the age of 27 so he must have been a clever young feller.

R: Sandison? So Andersen married Sandison?

E: That's right. Her mother got married again to an Etheridge. That's when Etheridge came into the family. Her step father.

R: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

E: I'd need to count them up you know. Dorothy, that the eldest sister. We have Olga, there was Fred, there was Thomas. If you're going to ask me who Thomas I know him but you would call him Keith but Thomas is his correct name. So you found something out today didn't you? T K Andersen. One was supposed to have died. His name was Harold but that was I think, between Dorothy and me around that region somewhere. We don't know very much about him. But he is buried up in the Pueora Forrest somewhere.

R: Were you the youngest?

E: No, 2nd oldest. Dorothy is older than I am. She is in her seventies. Everybody is still alive apart from the one that died donkey's years ago.

R: So you lived in Te Kuiti

E: I was born in Te Kuiti, but I never lived in Te Kuiti. I lived in a place called Pukemako for most of my life.

R: How far from Te Kuiti is that?

E: About 30 miles I suppose. Its 14 miles into the bush from Mangepehi.

R: Why did you live there?

E: My father worked there. He worked for Ellis & Burnand. He worked the bush tram up there for them. In those days the timber came out by bush loco. My old man put the bush tram for them. He was a ganger. Put the railway lines through. He worked on the Government railway here from Frankton to Te Awamutu, when the war was coming to an end. It was a pretty dicey in those days. He came out from Norway. He came out in a wind jammer and decided it was a bit rough life that he and another feller they took off from Auckland and hid themselves on top of the Bombay Hills as we know it now, amongst the scrub until their ship left. Then they went back to Auckland again and got shanghaied onto the railways because they were naughty boys. But lucky for him because the ship was never heard of again.

R: So what sort of things did you do in your childhood? When you were living in the bush there?

E: Oh, I was a good boy. There wasn't much to do really. The only things we could do was to go fishing, shooting, things like that. Set fire to the scrub and bush. Just to see the black smoke you know. That was alright in dry weather!

R: You didn't cause any decent sized bush fires?

E: Oh yes, quite a few. But we never done it. It was always the other fella. The majority of the time we went to school and home and occasionally had to cut wood,

cut trees down for wood. We had chores to do, cut fingers. Plenty of scars on these ones. They had to be done and the weekend there was always doing something with the old man, cutting wood. Growing vegetables. He always had our own garden, that's one thing about him. He was a tough old beggar. If you'd been a naughty boy. We used to go from Pukemako to Te Kuiti at Christmas time. It was a gala day for us. And had I been naughty or playing up during the year, that was it you never saw Te Kuiti that year. He made sure of that. He wasn't fooling. If he said no, he meant it. No need arguing the point with him. And that was it.

R: And that was the big thing for the year?

E: To go to Te Kuiti. A place like that. Oh Yeah. You got a ride in a train, hang yeah. Bloody oath. We used to go down by a horse and a little wee jig thing at the back, pulled by this horse, 14 miles down a bush track, to Mangapehi.

R: What school did you go to?

E: I went to Tur?? piro school, which is out of existence now. I understand it was burnt down many long years ago. It's been about 50 odd years ago I left there. It's a long time ago. If I try and remember back, the school teachers name was Bishop, cabinet maker by trade. He came out from England, this was an appropriate time I think to do it. Got himself a job as a teacher. Couldn't get anything else. That was the teacher we had, but ah mostly Maoris. I think in those days there was not electricity up there. Only had candles or kerosene lamps to see by, or the moon, whichever comes first. Shoes, I never saw shoes from one year to another, always barefooted. Feet were as hard as hobnails you know. Walk across glass and not even get them cut and things like that.

R: Now what about when you left school? You finally finished school you started working. What jobs did you do then?

E: On the bush tram with my father.

R: You worked with your father. Did he teach you the ropes?

E: Not really no, he didn't want us there at all. Not really no. Went contracting cutting firewood for the bush loco that had to be steamed up. Went away from that onto cutting this firewood on contract. 4 shilling a ton, 12 bob a cord. I remember that. Ellis and Burnand. I done that well over 12 months.

R: That was cut by hand? Tough work.

E: Cut by hand. Cut your own trees down and then cut it up yourself. Oh yeah. Chopped it up yourself with a six foot bimmin coarse cut saw. And your axe, your ?? and your ??? You were on your own. No one gives you a hand.

R: Did you cut them up wet?

E: Yeah.

R: So you chop it down and cut is up straight away.

E: There and then. Yeah. Split it up and stack it beside the railway line for when the driver needs wood he would stop and put it straight into the loco, like where they put the coal in the railway engines.

R: What sort of trees were they?

E: Mostly Matai or Rimu, Depends. Totoru. But mostly they like the Matai in preference. It was god timber down there. Some of those trees they chopped down you could build houses out of them today. They could make thousands of dollars. We'd go down just to hear a bang, to hear it crash into another tree. You had to do something. Pinch the old man's axe or something.

R: You finished that because of the war, was that right or did you have another job?

E: No, no we shifted. They decided they had had enough of the bush. The kids had grown up and there was nothing for us there. Probably saw what I was getting up to

and thought they had better get out before I shoot somebody or something like that. Pretty wild in those days. Kids in Mangapehi School used to come up to see the savages once a year. That was us. We were pretty good with bows and arrows.

R: Did they call you the savages?

E: Yep. I was pretty dap with a bow and arrows made out of subtle jacks and string and I was pretty good at those. They shifted to Manunui.

R: Where is that?

E: That 4 miles the other side of Taumarunui. The National Park side of Taumarunui. The old man said ??????? around this place. We would go to Mum's place at Manunui. Dad was still in the bush. We were in a whole house to ourselves. We got you a job in a box factory, Kings Box Factory at Taumarunui. That's how I got out of there. I didn't like that much. I had Ellis and Burnand in the blood and once you have been there you had Ellis and Burnand for life I think. I wanted to get out. They had the mills at Manunui and also the box factory at Manunui. I also had a boyfriend in the box factory called Keith and that was no good for Eric. He wanted to go back to Ellis and Burnand. And he did. He got back and saw a joker called Orlando Collier and he said we could do with another fella. You can start tomorrow. I said fine. I was there 3 days and my fingers off.

R: Tell us about that

E: It got caught in the cogs in a nailing machine. A machine like that I had never seen in my life before. Never. It was my job putting the bottoms on Anchor Butter boxes. They were made of Kahikatea. They don't make them these days. They make them out of cardboard. I was putting that on. The joker on the next machine to me was putting the sides on. The chap before that had put the anchor brand on. He had done the side and I had done the bottom. Then they were taken away. But unfortunately the machine had jammed. All the coils, not like these days, were pretty loose and were there to be worked on and open. No cover whatsoever. So to get at the thing that was jammed I just put my hand up and grabbed around the cogs. As I did that I put my foot on the plate at the bottom and away she went. It crushed my little finger.

R: Did it cut it off cleanly?

E: No it was crushed

E; So you had to go to hospital?

E: No. No. I went to see Dr Ritchie, who cut it off just between the fingernail and the first joint and wrapped it up. It seeped out and was smelly and rotting. I went back. He said this is not to good so he took it off at the 2nd joint. And there was quite a big stump, as you can see here. He put blue stuff on there and burnt it down. He went down here and got he sinews and put it over the top, which is why I can do that.

R: Still move it around?

E: Oh yeah. If he hadn't tied the sinews around it would have been quite stiff. He'd have to have taken it off here somewhere. I got a whole 60 pounds for that.

R: So that brings us up to the war years.

E: Ah yes, I went back to National Park after the box factory closed down. There was seasonal work there at the finish. Went back to Ellis and Bernand in Ongarue. I worked in a timber mill there when the war broke out.

R: Now tell us how you were called up?

E: Well actually we were in the Territorials in those days. They paid you to be in the Territorials. Especially a young fella. They left you alone. You went on a camp every 12 months in Rotorua. This one we had to have it in Ngaruawahia. We were there the day War broke out. It was a Sunday here. Special trains were out on for us to take us back home again. Most of us came from the King County. We were taken

back there again. That was on the Sunday and if anyone wanted to volunteer they could go on the Monday they could do so. We waited for a while to see what was going on. To see if there was going to be a war or not. They advertised for forestry jokers, special force. They were especially asked for by the British Government. The application was in the Herald, filled it in, sent it away, away it went and then forget about it. That would be 1939. In 1940 just after Christmas, we started to get the call up from them. They just ring you up and tell you to go to Taumarunui and have a medical. Ring you back if you passed it and they sent you a warrant which took you up to Papakura camp. So that's about it for that lot. I've still got my call up papers, as you saw, which wasn't much to come and go on. We went into Papakura camp on a Friday or Saturday. It was on a weekend. The Colonel we had to see was too busy playing tennis so they shoved us off to Auckland. Told us to come back Monday, which we did. That was the week I got sent on final leave. The first week I was there. We were given 6 pounds out of the patriotic fund. We hadn't put any money in there at all. We were sent on 3 weeks leave. I was only back a week and I had my teeth out, teeth in and in 10 days was on a ship overseas.

R: What was the ship called?

E: Andes


R: And which way did you go to England?

E: We went left Papakura camp on a Sunday. It was in secret. They had the blinds all pulled down. It was a black out train. We went down at night time. The funny part of it was wherever we came from – we came from Ongarue, the post office opened all day to take telegrams from us to our parents. We were meant to go down to Wellington on the blackout train in secret. I always remember that. We spent the day at the exhibition which was on then 1940. Had tea at the Empress of Britain, got the Wahine and went down to Lyttleton. All the way from Papakura to down there. The railway company came down there with us and the 21st battalion were on that ship as well. We sailed from there on the 2nd of May and our first stop was Freemantle. That's where the yachties are now in Perth Australia. We arrive there, I think on the Friday morning and we left Friday night. On we go again. We are going up to Columbo. That's where our destination was, our next stop. Unfortunately for us Italy come into the war and they diverted us down to Capetown. Capetown was a nice place. We lied down and sunbathed. We had 4 hours leave. That's all. We walked off that wharf with these iron gates. Through there they gave us big limousines. We thought Oh yeah. They take us around and show us about. 4 days after I got picked up by a blimmin cop. Ashore without leave eh. A deserter just about. We would have been if the ship had gone. 3 of us and 3 Aussies eh. They were interested in wine and stuff like that so we went through the wine and vineyard and that's how we sort of got caught. I got horribly drunk on wine, which I have never drunk since. Never. I hardly need to smell it and I get a father of a head ache. And I got really rotten on it. It cost me 98 days pay and 2 stripes. From there we went up the gold coast of Africa to a place called Sera Leone. We were there 3 days but we never got ashore there. We waited for our convoy. The only we had from here was The Leander from here to Perth and from Perth to Capetown we had The Leander and The Sydney. And from Capetown to Sera Leone we only had the Sydney. And there we sat and waited. We spotted little fishing boats coming over the horizon. The sea was quite calm. Boy they seemed to be moving. That was the first time we had every seen or heard of Corvettes. Wee boats. One funnel job with little wee mast in the front. And 9 times out of ten all you could see was that and the wake behind it. Boy they could move. 3 of those to a ship. One behind and one on each side of him. There was the The Hood,

The Renound, The Repulse the battleship they all came and took up their positions and we took off.

R: And did you get attacked?

E: The Sunday we arrived at ?? the submarines had a go at The Queen Mary, which was quite a big ship we had in our convoy. We had the Queen Mary. The only one that was missing was The Queen Elizabeth. They were all British, The Queen Mary, The Aquitania, Empress of Canada, Empress of Japan, The Mauretania, Empress of Britain and us. Awful lot of tonnage of ship there. There was only one out, that was

	<p>This little picture depicts a spectacular sight which the world will never be witness to again.</p>
<p>It shows a convoy of some of the century's most famous passenger liners bound for the war with thousands of Australian and New Zealand troops. The photo was taken on May 5th, 1940 off the coast of Fremantle, Australia. The Australian and New Zealand escort ships which can be seen in the distance are HMAS Canberra, HMAS Australia, and HMNZS Leander. Left to right, the liners are Queen Mary, Aquitania, Andes, Empress of Japan, Mauretania, and Empress of Canada. The ill-fated Empress of Britain was also in this convoy.</p>	
<p>The photo is from <u>The Pacific Empresses: An Illustrated History of Canadian Pacific Railway's Empress Liners on the Pacific Ocean</u> by Robert.D. Turner.</p>	

The Queen Elizabeth. They had a shot at on a beautiful sunny day. The first we heard that something had happened, we saw that the bottom had been cut off our boat. Like a jab like that. We were at a church parade believe it or not. We looked and just white foam from horizon to horizon and it went in between The Aquitania and The Empress of Britain. A submarine had fired at them alright. He was lying in wait. Dead certainty. They don't want to call it a figure eight exercise. We saw The Mauretania, we thought it was going to come right on top of us.

They set their tail and just moved and all of sudden, we were on our own. There wasn't a ship anywhere. Only the Corvettes and they let the depth charges go. Boy you should have seen the muck that came out of that water. It came up too. They weren't satisfied, they gave it some more too. And we carried on. I don't know if any survived, or anybody stopped really. We arrived in Gourock Scotland.

R: And what did you do during the war?

E: Well we were with the Forestry Company. We were supposed to go a place called Moraine in France but unfortunately France had capitulated and all our gear was up there. We lost all that. So we were sent to Eastbourne and Brighton on the coast of England making tank traps. Putting props into ???? when they came over in the invasion from their tanks and things like that. Then we went to Wilmer. We stayed there for about a fortnight I think, we recuperated up. Then they sent us down to Cirencester where we cut Lord Bathurst's park up for him. All the trees in there we cut those up for a couple of small one for the props for the mines. The large and the spurs of bigger trees we cut into timber. The ??? had been made by Canadians. You

had to line the log onto the saw. The Kiwis didn't put up with that for long. Much like we have here you know. We had our belts going this way and that way. We had everything turning and rolling and everything else. To hell with this turning by hand. We cut our timber there. The biggest job we had on that was cutting balsa wood for the mosquito bombers. They came from Canada or America or somewhere. They were fairly big trees, about 60 feet long too. You could pick one up and away you'd go.

R: It was so light. Amazing

E: Oh yeah. Had to hang the nose down the chain to hold onto the saw or you'd never get it through eh. We cut those into square blocks. Then they were taken away and we just cut timber. We had a month in Cirencester and George Gammons come and said they want another joker in London and you're the youngest we've got and that's you, and you're going. You'll have a good job up there, you won't have to muck around with the timber. Course he didn't tell me the Battle of Britain was up there and I was walking into all of this stuff eh. I said 'oh yes, I suppose. What do I do up there?' He said all I can tell you is you are going to the services club. Report there and they'll tell you what you are doing. The only job they had there was sitting over a seat peeling potatoes. That's all we did in the morning. The rest of the day we had to ourselves until the evening and then you had 2 nights on with the Westminster Fire Brigade. Number 36 was our number. We had tours of duty every week to do with those at night time. One morning a week you were down there practicing in a hole. If a place had been bombed out during night she was all out, you know. Put tonnes of water in there or spray it up at the office blocks with all the girls looking at you. That type of thing. On the whole that's about all I did I think. It really is hard work.

R: Well in that a time you met our wife. Tell us about that.

E: Well that's the problem. As a matter of fact I was going out to meet somebody else and met her. Believe me it can rain in London, and get cold too and sleet. It happened to be one of those days. We were going to a place, Ginger Dyak and I. We were going to a place called Brixton to met these couple of WAFS we'd met the night before at he club. You can't get a across the road. It was such a downpour eh. We wanted to go, only 200 yards across the road we'd get on the tube station. We'd get wet through just getting there. That's the road you've got to go down you see. We sat there and this poor little bedraggled little ATS girl coming out. She was wet through. She walked into the Service Club. The first place you go to for sanctuary I suppose. She walked in past us. We thought we'd let her go right between us and then she walked straight out again. So I said 'What's wrong don't you like our club?' She said 'It's all men in there. Is there anywhere else we could go? I'd love a cup of tea.' She was wet through. I said 'You want a cup of tea? I'll get you a cup of tea'. She said 'I'm wet through. Is there any ladies toilets here?' I said 'oh yeah'. Anyway she went and dried herself out with a towel and I got her a cup of tea. Worse thing I ever done you know! I should have gone to Brixton. She came though a couple more times to London. Plenty of girls there. Thousands of them. Millions of them actually.

R: How long after that were you married?

E: About 12 months I suppose. Be about that then. Everybody was banging for you know and Bill Jordon, he was the High Commissioner over there, Sir William. He was a boy from Ngaruawahia to. He was the High Commissioner in London and he said..... (tape turns over)

R: After you were married there you didn't stay with your wife did you?

E: After we got married. She was in Tonbridge and I was in London. We use to have to go backwards and forward in the rail. It didn't take very long 59 miles in 59

minutes is not bad going. It didn't take long. She stayed. She had Patsy coming along the way cos she left the blimmin force. She had to. I don't know just why but the army or government decide we'd been there too long and it's time to come home. Finished Tour of Duty it is time to come home. The rest of the Forestry Company had left London, left England. They had done their tour and some were already home. Some were in Italy waiting to come home. The first I knew about it was, because I was the -always known as Corporal Snow there, always Corporal Snow. Especially the Army, the Air Force boys or Navy chaps who were over in England or Canada for doing their training. 'When you get to London, go to the Service Club, the first joker you ask for is Corporal Snow. He'll put you right' And I knew how. Wanted to know where the dolly bars were, where the brothels were. That kind of stuff you know. Where you could go to a good show or where you could get a good feed, where you can get accommodation. Corporal Snow knew! That's me. In fact I was called that all the way through. Where was I?

R: You're coming back home now

E: I went down to New Zealand House and Brigadier Parks was there, the Brigadier in charge of us here. "Just the chap I wanted to see. Office" His little office was much bigger than this place here. We were all friendly as hell there. I said "What the hang have I done now?" "You wait till I have finished with you" he said. "you'll find out!" He said 'you're married, and so forth and so forth'. I said 'That's right. I'm very happy here'. He said "Well I've got some news for you". I said 'Yes, going to Italy I suppose where the rest of them are?' 'No' he said 'You're going further than that. In a weeks time' he said, "you won't be in this country. You're going to be on your way home." I said 'You're kidding. Will I have my wife with me?' He said 'Unfortunately no. She'll come at a later date. But you are on your way home'. He said "you have been here over four years". I said "That's right. What about the other three jokers who are at the club?" "They are reinforcements" he said "Some of them have only been here 2 years. They can remain, but you are going home". So I had to go back to New Zealand House another couple of times. Then I had to go to a place call Marylebone Hotel in Paddington. Have injections there from the doctors and be examined. Make sure you are fit enough to travel home. He put the injections in the back of the arm. I said "What did you put them in there for" He said "You can't suck them out of there mate". Gave me hair cut. I had white hair in those days, a couple of storks sticking up. Said go down to room 11 I think it was, 300 and something see the admin and he will give you the papers waiting for you. I went down, got those and said "What happens now?" He said "Tonight you will be taken to Euston Railway Station and put on the express for Liverpool. That's where you are going. When you get there you go to the RTO Office there, they know all about you there" I went there and they said "Yes, that's right you're going on the Britannic" Which I've still got that piece of scrap too. I've still got the berthing card for the Britannic. It was cabin G, Deck D, Mess table 10. Yes they had it all worked out. And I went from there to Egypt. Port Said. We pulled into Gibraltar. That was night time and then went to Naples and down through Cyprus to Port Said. But we never got off at any other places but Port Said. We went from there to Maadi Camp on the Flying Scotsmans they have over there. A joker sits on the Whistle all the way. All you could hear is this shrieking whistle. I decided to go to the toilet. Mind you find the toilet you couldn't stand still enough because it was a hole in the floor. That's what those things are like eh. I was there, must have been about a month I suppose. I went up to what they call Bludgers Hill in the Maadi. We had one night there. We were put on an Italian truck and taken away down to Tewfik, the bottom end of the Suez Canal.

We got on the Stratheden (sounds like STRATHALLAN), a big passenger liner. Went with it to Bombay. Transferred off that onto the Strathmore. We went down to Columbo and transported back onto the Stratheden, back to Bombay again! Got off the Stratheden onto one called the Andanida Castle and came all the way home on it. One cruise job, very slow.

R: And what did you do when you got back to New Zealand?

E: Had 3 months holiday. Other than that, oh I dunno, I went back in roof tiles. Looking out there I probably made some of them. I may have even put some of them on. Made them and put them on. Done that for a while. Manpower was what they want so put me on the railway. You had to go where you were told in those days. Manpower was just about finished, so I wasn't there very long. As soon as they lifted the manpower up I was away. To hell with the railways. I should have stayed there. Course I went back to it after. I went to JJ Nivens in the foundry. Furnessman. Graduated of that to a Moulder. Still got some of the trowels here you know. I did that for quite a while. I don't know how many years I stayed there. I changed doing the same thing and went to Mull and Noyes. They paid more. This is the thing now, we were talking about education yesterday. Get a good education. You've got to have it. I know from my own experience you know. I'm doing perhaps the same job as you are in a foundry. You've got your O levels or whatever they are called. You've been well and truly educated. I haven't. You are getting at least 35 – 40 cents and hours more than I am. We are doing exactly the same job. I got no kick come. But they say 'but oh yeah, He's teaching you, you're following him' " That's their answer. You've got to have and be on your own. I found that out. That's why we never ever got anything. We didn't have the money to do it. When you've got 6 kids to bring up.

R: And what was your job you did for the last part of your working life?

E: I worked for the National Dairy Association, mainly because I had to get out of the foundry because I had dermatitis on my legs, from the diesel fumes from the open furnaces when you are lightening them up. Pit Furnaces. Then I went to National Dairy Association for 3 months believe it or not. I was there about 17 years. I finished up there one of the highest paid men at that time there. The job I was on. Self taught actually. ??? I couldn't do it I just happened to go there one Saturday morning and fluked it, you can do one, you can do another, you can do another one. I believe on average I was getting 20 cents an hour rise. That's how it started. I was getting eight dollars something an hour when I left there. An hour! When I started there 17 years before I was getting 66 cents. That's a hang of a big jump up.

R: Now what have you done since you have been retired

E: Nothing. I haven't got time. I am too busy. I go over now and again to a union meeting and see what's going on over there. I'm a life member of the Engineers Union.

R: And what sort of things had you done in the Union before you retired.

E: Oh, I was the president of the Waikato Engineers Union, here for the Waikato. I also a Waikato Trade Councillor. Number of jobs there. I can go back to those any time I want, being a life member of the Engineers Union gives me that right. I can tell them I even want to go to the Labour Party Conference. They would have to find accommodation and fund the fare. Everything be paid. Cos I'm a life member. I get my card every year. And I get my paper every 2 months. It's all set here.

R: Since you've been retired you've had a bit of problem with your health?

E: Oh yes. I got a new artery put in my leg and had a double hernia fixed up at the same time.

R: What was the problem with your leg?

E: No circulation. Caused through too much smoking.

R: So you don't reckon it's a good thing to smoke.

E: I haven't smoked since.

R: Do you feel better for that.

E: I get very short of breath. That's about all I get at the moment. Very short. Mind you I haven't got over the 2 operations. Cos I had the 2 in 12 months. 3 actually if you take in taking off a toe as well. It takes a getting over. You can't do it in five minutes. I'm still under the doctor even now. It was 12 months ago last November since he done the operation. I've still got to go back and see him on the 22nd of March or something.

R: Right let's come back to your family. Your wife and patsy came back after the war. Where did you settle?

E: Here in Hamilton. I was going to go back to Taumarunui to the bush. But everything looked so small when we got home. Little wee railway engines and little wee railway wheels. Little wee things ever so small. Little wee houses, stuck here there and everywhere, with miles between each one. Not like they were over in England. Jammed up against one another. Everything was different. Everything. So small tiny little buses. They looked so long I was frightened to get on, it could have folded in half. That's the impression you got everything was so large. The railway here was 3' 6 rail, 5' 2 over there. A big difference.

R: So you settled in Hamilton and you had some more children. What were their names?

E: Oh God you better ask Mum about that. Mum brought the children up herself mostly. Even when in the tiles, this was how it were in those days. The employer, Bill Hall, a chap we used to work with making these tiles. A married man, he was the man of the moment. He's give you anything as long as it didn't belong to him. But he was a hard man. We were getting 9 pound a week irrespective of how long you worked. You might go from here to Thames. It's an awful long way. You might leave at 6 o'clock in the morning, in a model T Ford he had, a little truck. There might be 7 or 8 of you on that. Sitting on the back and away you go. You get broken down there. You get punctures. Pullover on the grass all this business but you never got paid until you were on the job. And also when you left the job, you never got paid to come home again. You might not get home till 9 or 10 o'clock at night. Things were like that eh? You only get paid when you are on the job. You wouldn't get paid while you were off it. No sick pay. Oh no, no. Nothing like that those days. And believe me your hands used to get cut to pieces with the concrete tiles.

R: So you had 6 kids and they have all got grandchildren have you got?

E: I think I have about 12 alive haven't I? Something like that yes.

R: Do you enjoy seeing them?

E: Yeah. Oh God yes. Oh Yeah.

R: have you got a message for them for the future? For maybe sometime they will be listening to this.

E: If they ever listen to this. Yeah. The only thing I could say is they have got to family-wise stick together as a family. One for all, all for one. That type of thing. One to help the other. And they have got to have an education. I know from my own experience. I don't know how far I would have gone. I'd probably gone a long way at NDA had I been better educated. I probably could have been pushing a pencil up in the office in there. Something like that. Costing or something like that. Instead of slaving your inside out, cos you didn't have the education. You see with all theses

tankers and all the things we made there, on this machine we had. It used to be made by Fletchers in Auckland. I used to do a lot of work on them. I fluked them. Did one or two and didn't let on. Then they told Fletchers that they would do them themselves. That they had an operator who was doing ok. I was polisher and grinder and done that for years. I was on this thing all the time. Anyway they came down and asked if we could do some of these things for them. A complete reversal.

There was 12 of them I think. I done them. They came down one day and sent them back next. They couldn't believe it. For the quickness and that there wasn't a mark on them. They were perfect. From then on I got theirs as well. We done theirs. Marley's machine they threw it away. It was cheaper for me to do them, truck them down here and truck them back to Auckland, than do them themselves. It's true.

R: We'll, we'll finish off there. It's been terrific to hear about your life and it will be interesting for your children and then your grandchildren and great grandchildren to listen

E: Thanks very much. Hooray.