

Transcription of Interview with James Trueman Langille.

B.1903, Springhill.

on Victoria Street.

--his father was an official.

--his mother was a Ripley from Fenwick.

--her father was magistrate at Springhill for a time.

7 boys and 1 girl in his family.

--Trueman was third oldest

table was always full. he was a salaried man (his father).

would donate books to strikers' kids.

those days they worked 12-hour shifts. so you didn't see too much of your father. 'You pretty near had to have a picture on the wall to see what he looked like....'

--when they went into eight-hours shifts it wasn't as bad as that.

on 30 June 1931.

--his father was a Kirk Presbyterian from River John, his mother was a Methodist.

--didn't mix too well up at the high school. 'We were called Hermit Roaders and they were called town people....You had that distinction.'

--boys from Hermit Road had to fight snowball fights all the way in and all the way home--

--kids from McGee Street and Morris Street.

left school. all the boys were leaving work at 16--he felt he ought to go. wouldn't hire you at the mine unless you were 16.

mine lost its attraction for young people during the world war and just afterwards. (the second world war).

second world war changed the people a lot.

--he tried to get a job at the mine at the bottom of Junction Road (6-7), and they wouldn't take him on. Finally, he confronted his father and said, 'Look, I don't want you to go in the mine.' --he'd be the one telling them not to hire him.

--this official didn't want any of his boys to go in the mine.

--wanted his children "to be somebody in the world."

oldest brother worked as a telegrapher.

first job was trapping a door for a horse.

'Oh, it was lonesome. You're all alone. And we had the old oil lamps, safety lamps, ...'

--trapper switched sides on the door.==had trapper boys until they got the longwall system. air was controlled differently under the longwall system. different system of ventilation altogether.

[Transition to longwall affects everything!]

only in the mine about year--came out, mine was bumping very bad. Working in No.2, west 47--"It was pretty rough."

worked at "Slewing on the Sheets." West 47. incline. 'You would have a box comes down the incline, the empty goes up. There isn't any motor on that, there's just a drum with a rope wrapped around it. And the man has a brake on it, and he controls that brake with his brake pan. And when the man on the sheet way up above puts the full one on, the empty leaves the place you are and goes up, full one comes down and put it on the full road and take the empty off the empty road and put it on again....'

--his job was taking the box away from the incline.

every one of the men injured in the bump--nobody killed. coal up their knees, but no one killed.

then he got a job delivering groceries, for a lot less money. Stayed with that for a few years, then went with the telephone company. worked with telephone company until 1925.

went from that to the Harvest Train-- place called Ritchley, Sask.

car ahead of them--all of them arrested for rough-housing.

visited in Kenora, Winnipeg, Fort Frances. worked across the border from Fort Frances--International Lumber Co.

came home in 1930.

had lodges in the town that made things lively.

joined the Masonic Lodge in 1936 or so.

must have been 1928 or so.

--social gatherings the main things.

his father was a hard old conservative--but his father was a liberal.

--man he used to travel with was Conservative.

--Lancelot Swift was a hard Conservative; his father thought so much of Swift he converted!

Cowans had one of the best cinder tracks in the province.

Doesn't think the Scott Act worked too well.

there were some class distinctions. 'upper crust families'.

every one of Trueman's brothers went into the mine, except one who became a minister.

'There's a close bondage in a mining community. [People] would come to your support if you were down.'

'You'd support your union same as you would your lodge. You paid your dues, you'd go and hear the pros and cons. You'd weigh them to suit yourself.'

--pretty near everyone in Springhill had a nickname, his father was called 'The Old Fox.'

--father found it easy to cross picket lines when a strike was on--no slurs thrown at him.

'When that's strike over, we're all one again.'

--no grudges held about strikes.

telephone company had a strike--wanted more money. none of them went back. That's the reason he went off on the harvest excursion. didn't have any union for this strike.

he was haulage driver, road layer, worked with Fred Fullerton for one of the best road-layers in the country.

when he'd first gone in the mine, there were a lot of horses but only one haulage engine. in the 4700 foot level east, No. 2, East Side. Horses were on the west side, further down.

--can remember 'Syl' and 'Joe'--and a little horse called 'Little Billy.'

--horses liked candy, liked to chew tobacco. horses could get tobacco out of the driver's pockets.

ended work with the big bump. 1958.