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right, you'd have a hard job. And then you'd have to fight with the driver. The driver would want steam. I fired quite awhile. Promotion was very slow then. I'd say I fired about 10 years, anyhow. They had the S & L engine. There used to be a pit where they used to haul stone, off of Jefferson's. Anyhow, I got that train one time. John Willie MacDonald was the boss. And I made such a good record on her, they wanted to keep me on her. So I agreed, if they'd give me steady work on her, I'd take the engine. So, I took the engine, anyhow, and I made a good success of her. First I'd go in that quarry in the morning. We'd bring the load of stone in first. And then the afternoon, we'd go over after a load of coal. And lots of those fellows, when they had the load of coal, they'd have trouble coming over the hill at Jefferson's. Especially in rainy weather. When I came in in the daytime with the load of stone, I'd go down to the roundhouse. That'd be in the morning. I'd have my lunch down there. Then I'd go to work. I'd get hot sand in the sandbox (of the engine). And when I'd come over from Sydney Mines with the load of coal--they used to load you up pretty heavy, you know--instead of pulling her out at Leitches Creek like the other fellows did, I'd take my time with the nice hot sand. And the hot sand would grab the wheels. They wouldn't slip. (You had a way of throwing the sand?) Yeah. Little valve there in the cab. And I wouldn't give her too much, now, just enough. The sand pipes were out under the wheel. And then I wouldn't have to pull her out, like the other fellows used to do. (What does "pull her out" mean?) That's the throttle. They were giving her too much steam, and she'd lose her feet. And that's a trick I had. Even the superintendent came over, John Willie MacDonald, wondering how I was getting over that road. Mostly, they had a lot of trouble getting over the hills. They used to stall there; they had trouble a lot. They'd have to flag out the flagman, and get the other train coming, stop the other fellow, see. And that was my only trick--the sand. (I saw the list that you wrote up of all the accidents that you were able to stop, that weren't accidents. Were you ever involved in an accident?) No, I had pretty good luck. I never had one, my own cause, nothing at all. I always had pretty good luck. I always avoided them. I never got any demerits. There were accidents on the line. And a lot of those accidents were caused--well, I kind of explain it--by not being careful enough. I was shunting at Big Brook, on the pickup. And the brakeman was standing on a pile of ties, see. I was shunting back like that. And I had a Johnson bar. That's not an air reverse, you know. A Johnson bar is the old-time lever. You could stop it pretty quick. And if I had the air reverse on that time, I couldn't stop her as quick as I did. So this fellow was standing on a pile of ties. Whatever happened to him, I don't know--he went headfirst between two cars. So anyhow, I told the fireman, "By golly, that fireman fell between two cars." VOLVO Ken Yazer Motors Ltd. U 400 GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY 0
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