

Ray & Mack Teter

High, quieter voice: Ray

Low, louder voice: Mack

0:05 military service (Mack). Names of siblings: Robert, Ross

0:39 two uncles: one in yard, one was brakeman. Father was a barber.

1:17 seen them build high school in Elkins in 1924. Talks about education.

2:50 discipline strict

4:07 used to watch RR go by over bridge

4:40 raymond started in 1936 at age 20 or so

5:05 uncle got him job

5:26 in CC camp in 1934-35

6:00 continues story about getting job on RR

8:05 mack got his job on RR through trainmaster who lived across the street. Went up to Cumberland to get job. Was 22 at the time.

9:28 workday was 16 hours

10:16 workday on track was 8 hours, 7-3:30. But often you'd work longer than that.

11:14 sometimes, left on Friday morning, came back on Saturday.

12:33 talks about extra board – sometime two days/week, sometimes more

13:26 still a lot of trains running in '36, despite the great depression. 5 passenger trains in and out of elkins daily. Had 105 switches to keep clean.

14:20 how switches work

15:05 worked 7 days/week

15:31 mack talks about being a fireman. Had to be a fireman 6 years before becoming engineer. Was a hard job; shoveled coal 11-12 hours/day

16:23 cars could hold 22-25 tons of coal

17:07 fireman: wasn't dangerous, just hard. Going over mountains the engines ate a lot of coal

17:37 raymond started out working on the track, then on the work train before retiring

18:20 cut at Spruce highest place on RR east of Mississippi

19:26 "I've worked a solid week and never had my clothes off!"

19:33 stayed either in boarding house or caboose. Made hot cakes, eggs. No stores out there. Carried a blanket with them. They cooked for you on work train.

20:42 at laurel bank got boarding house once union came in in 1955.

22:05 nothing to do for fun at boarding houses. Sometimes just stayed by side of tracks overnight. Miles from anywhere, "couldn't get no place."

22:40 talks about union coming in.

23:30 sometimes there'd be other men in cabin car that you thought you'd be sleeping in

24:11 ray was in trackman union

24:48 relations between union and employers not great. Used to be that bosses were head men in union. No leverage.

25:50 worked men half-time for a long time; but when union came they were put back to work

27:18 track-walker inspected track to make sure it was safe

27:29 steam engines broke a lot of rails

28:04 one end was Webster spring, other end Connellsville, PA. I worked from one end to another. Side tracks went to mines, other RRs, etc.

28:55 coal mine connection to RR – the Ida Mae. 100 loads/day out of it. Also at bergoo

30:02 raymond got exemptions from service because he was in RR. Got deferment because he had seniority

30:57 grievances that workers had: dangerous job assignments. Also easy to get fired if you got in an argument. Union prevented that from happening.

33:24 strike of 1925. To break strikes, hired old men from out of woods to run trains, even though they had no experience.

35:33 western Maryland bought g, c, and e in 1932.

36:00 shay engines: slow engines used for hauling stuff through woods. Last shay engine built was built by w.md. in 1943. Explains why shays worked well in hilly terrain

37:23 shays "didn't have any brakes on them." Instead, had to tie the brakes down

38:51 diesels: "there was nothing you could do." RR didn't tell employees anything about how to drive them, just showed you how to start and stop them. As simple to run as a car

40:00 diesels were a whole lot cleaner. Also 1 diesel engine = 3-4 steam engines. Had to have 2 men on each steam engine all the time. But on diesels, you could have 5 units and only 2 men total!

41:13 firemen first to lose jobs.

41:41 explains work structure of work trains: operator, helper, others

42:19 how tracks were repaired

42:52 if you went on a work train in the old days, you just hung out over the weekend on the side tracks; too far to walk anywhere. Raymond was a helper on the work train

44:21 raymond helped lay track through tunnel. Laid 60-70 a day. hammered it in by hand. "best job on the railroad."

47:40 ten pound spiking hammer you swung over your shoulder

47:51 mack talks about mallets. Couldn't use them on this end of W.Md.

48:27 had to stop at every water tower you came to

49:46 1400s – those things would run. They'd ball the jack: 50-60 mph.

50:43 talks about tunnels. Had to cover up your face to withstand the smoke. Raymond helped lay track through them.

52:22 in wintertime knocked icicles off tunnels.

53:03 had to take water every 20 miles

54:20 talks about bridges – could only run small trains across them or they'd collapse

56:18 only went 3 mph by Hendricks. Used sand to get up hill.

57:00 story when 10-12 coal cars wrecked near parsons.

57:42 steam engines were hard on the rail

58:57 talks about work orders that engineers got

1:00:00 story about hitting a car after coming out of a tunnel. 32 mph when I hit him. Broke his collarbone.

1:01:00 story about woman running into me at train crossing

1:02:15 bridge at marsdale, PA very very long. We'd run across it 50 mph.

1:02:42 hit lots of deer at night

1:03:50 decline of railroad. Coal worked out

1:04:31 when the b&o took over, they shut down W.Md. that was in the 1960s. explains why they shut it down.

1:08:06 got rid of passenger service in the 70s.

1:10:00 had seniority, so didn't get fired

1:11:00 retirement

1:11:53 treated ties dipped in creosote. Burned you.

1:13:00 story about putting the ties in the wrong place

1:15:50 talks about asbestos

1:16:30 working conditions better with union

1:18:20 diesels "made all the difference in the world"

1:19:15 talks about dangerous things bosses might ask you to do. Story about how ray almost got killed when asked to go under engine.

## **Track 2**

0:00 continues story about going under engine

2:21 talks about working up at paper mill 7 days/week. Told union man about misdeeds by management; union took care of it.

3:30 labor/management relations

4:11 engineer skills come with practice.

4:40 had to know where to stop for brakeman to switch, had to know how to release slack between cars.

6:24 talking about pumping up air brakes.

6:55 some of the engineers got very good at the timing

7:30 hired old men after strike of 1925

7:45 henry Gassaway davis – remembered him riding a horse. He owned it all!

8:53 first railroad came through here 1905. Greenbrier, cheat, and elkins. They were bought out by the western Maryland.

9:57 mentions skinny evans and eldon plaughter

11:03 mentions herb simmons and guy mundell; was in school with guy's wife

11:58 talks about how railroad was family job

12:28 lot of families on the railroad. Uncles worked too.

13:10 takeover of g, c, and e by western Maryland

14:28 seniority and railroad takeovers

15:31 first steel spike ever made in usa was made at mt. savage

16:06 story about ray almost getting run over by a railroad car, friend saves life

17:15 story about ray saving somebody else's life

18:59 I know a brakeman coming out from spruce fell through between the train, got cut in two

19:17 brother bob fell off while going through tunnel

20:19 brakemen had to walk back and forth and put retainers up. Slipped on nut coal.

21:09 lots of brakemen lost arms and legs. Used to be if you got your arm cut off and there was a watchman job, you'd get it.

21:41 bad times before union

22:40 bad bosses

22:55 had to clean out switches of snow

23:46 had to watch yourself all the time to stay safe

24:47 tells story about tunnel – had to get very close to wall

27:03 now, timber on both sides of tunnel, only place to take cover is on your belly in ditch by side of tracks

29:58 talks about track maintenance in tunnel

30:16 engineer vs. conductor

30:47 men worked together and knew what was going on. Boss would hamper productivity because men already knew how to work together

33:41 talks about shay engine

**garage on 44<sup>th</sup> street between 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>.**

**5 pm**