

**Bill Myers discusses his career at  
REO Motor Car Company and Diamond REO Trucks, Inc. 6/24/2004**

1  
2  
3  
4  
5 Shirley Bradley: This is Shirley Bradley and Bill Myers and we're at the REO's  
6 Transportation Museum. This is June 24, 19-, or 2004. [chuckle] 1904,  
7 [chuckle] I don't think that's right. And we're just going to talk about  
8 REO memories. [0:17] And I'm going to start by asking Mr. Myers just a  
9 little bit about himself, where did he grow up and where did he go to  
10 school and...  
11  
12 William Myers: I grew up in Battle Creek. I graduated from [Lakeview 0:27] High School  
13 outside of Battle Creek. I went to work for Oliver Corporation in 1948. I  
14 graduated in '47. And I worked in the Engineering Department as a  
15 blueprint file clerk for 72 ½ cents an hour.  
16  
17 Shirley Bradley: 72 ½ cents an hour.  
18  
19 William Myers: Went home, married, went home with \$35 a week. I lived within blocks  
20 of a place where I could walk to work. I graduated from a blueprint file  
21 clerk to a specification writer, which is how to build farm equipment,  
22 combines and corn pickers.  
23  
24 Shirley Bradley: I'm sorry. [1:05] What kind of writer did you say?  
25  
26 William Myers: Specification writers, how to build the equipment on paper.  
27  
28 Shirley Bradley: Okay.  
29  
30 William Myers: And from there I was – I worked there for 13 years but in the last years of  
31 that I, I graduated from Assistant Manager of Specification Writers to  
32 Assistant Manager of [inaudible 1:25] Department. We built some  
33 combines for Ford Motor Company.  
34  
35 Shirley Bradley: Hm.  
36  
37 William Myers: Ford Farm Equipment.  
38  
39 Shirley Bradley: Oh, because he was doing tractors and things.  
40  
41 William Myers: We did everything. We didn't do tractors but we did the farm harvesting  
42 equipment in Battle Creek so we built some, some Ford combines for the  
43 Ford Motor Company and we built 5 for them and 2 for us at the same  
44 price. And I was experimental assistant at that time because the original  
45 supervisor quit and went to Ford. So then Oliver closed and I came to

1 Lansing for Diamond REO when Bob Burgraff came from Oliver. He  
2 came up here and he said very good place to work, come up and see me.  
3  
4 Shirley Bradley: I'm sorry. [2:12] Bob?  
5  
6 William Myers: Bob Burgraff. He was...  
7  
8 Shirley Bradley: [2:15] Burgraff?  
9  
10 William Myers: Burgraff, he was the Personnel Manager at the time.  
11  
12 Shirley Bradley: Oh. B-u-r-g-r-a-f-t something like that.  
13  
14 William Myers: A-f-f I think.  
15  
16 Shirley Bradley: Huh?  
17  
18 William Myers: Double F I think.  
19  
20 Shirley Bradley: Okay [inaudible 2:28].  
21  
22 William Myers: Okay. Then from there, Bob went to work for Mack Trucks in Allentown,  
23 Pennsylvania as a Finance Officer.  
24  
25 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
26  
27 William Myers: He was an, he was an attorney. When, when he came from [inaudible  
28 2:41] to Battle Creek, he came to Battle Creek as the personnel manager  
29 and he came back here as a Personnel Manager at Diamond REO.  
30 Anyway, I worked for Diamond REO for 13 years. I worked for Oliver  
31 for 13 years. And when I had come to Lansing for Diamond REO, I  
32 started in the [inaudible 3:00] engineering for military vehicles.  
33  
34 Shirley Bradley: [3:06] Engineering?  
35  
36 William Myers: For military vehicles.  
37  
38 Shirley Bradley: Farm and military vehicles.  
39  
40 William Myers: Yeah. It's for military only. That's...  
41  
42 Shirley Bradley: Mil-, oh, for the military trucks.  
43  
44 William Myers: That's separate contracts. Yeah. And at that time, there I was, set up  
45 standards for military hardware, which they had a lot of stuff in there  
46 including stuff for outer space which they didn't need on a truck.

1  
2 Shirley Bradley: [3:25] Outer space?  
3  
4 William Myers: Just like that, they talk about the, the, the stool for the bathroom and the  
5 hammers that cost so much money. That's the same kind of stuff that was  
6 in the truck. It didn't need to be.  
7  
8 Shirley Bradley: Huh.  
9  
10 William Myers: Anyway, I left there in military engineering and I met Bob [Kavista 3:42],  
11 which is an engineering assistant.  
12  
13 Shirley Bradley: The reason I'm asking is somebody is going to type this later from what  
14 they hear, so I'm sorry, [3:51] Bob?  
15  
16 William Myers: [Kavista 3:52]. He, he was from...  
17  
18 Shirley Bradley: Tuvista?  
19  
20 William Myers: [Kavista 3:55], K.  
21  
22 Shirley Bradley: K.  
23  
24 William Myers: Uh-huh. And he went – I don't know how you spell it. Anyway, he was,  
25 he was from Diamond REO, Diamond T out of Chicago.  
26  
27 Shirley Bradley: Okay.  
28  
29 William Myers: And he put me in the specification department for their truck and from  
30 there they were setting up the truck on IBM computers, computer-wise  
31 everything on cards.  
32  
33 Shirley Bradley: Oh really? [4:20] When would that have been do you think?  
34  
35 William Myers: The last 3 years of Diamond REO.  
36  
37 Shirley Bradley: So it would be 73, 74, 75, something like that.  
38  
39 William Myers: Yeah. They didn't, they didn't get it all on.  
40  
41 Shirley Bradley: But they were working with computers.  
42  
43 William Myers: They were working on it. Yeah. They were working and it was on a card  
44 form. It wasn't in a software form [inaudible 4:37] paper and stuff like  
45 that.  
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
2

3 William Myers: Just an old card form.  
4

5 Shirley Bradley: Cards.  
6

7 William Myers: Yeah. And then Diamond REO closed and I waited for what 6 months,  
8 almost 9 months of the year. The end of the year I figured I had to go to  
9 work because they weren't going to open again, so from there I went to  
10 Mack Western which was [inaudible 4:59] not [inaudible 5:01], Hayward,  
11 California, on the bay. And I worked there for 6 months and – less than 6  
12 months, 3 months, and my wife was going to come up for holiday and she  
13 decided she wouldn't, didn't want to go.  
14

15 Shirley Bradley: Didn't want [inaudible 5:13] out there.  
16

17 William Myers: No, so she [inaudible 5:15] came back home. I went to work for CATA  
18 driving a CATA bus. I drove a CATA bus for 17 years and retired.  
19

20 Shirley Bradley: Did you?  
21

22 William Myers: Yeah.  
23

24 Shirley Bradley: Hm.  
25

26 William Myers: And that's it.  
27

28 Shirley Bradley: [5:26] And so while you were at REO, you hired in what year do you think  
29 the first time?  
30

31 William Myers: Probably '63 [inaudible 5:34].  
32

33 Shirley Bradley: '63 maybe.  
34

35 William Myers: Yeah, [inaudible 5:36], yeah.  
36

37 Shirley Bradley: [5:38] And they put you right in Engineering?  
38

39 William Myers: Yeah. That was my background to start with anyway.  
40

41 Shirley Bradley: For the military trucks.  
42

43 William Myers: Yeah.  
44

45 Shirley Bradley: Okay. [5:50] And do you remember who you worked with or who you  
46 worked for and how much you made?

1  
2William Myers: Osborn, Osborn was the chief in that area.  
3  
4Shirley Bradley: [5:57] Osbin?  
5  
6William Myers: Osborn.  
7  
8Shirley Bradley: Osborn.  
9  
10William Myers: And Bud Pelton was his assistant.  
11  
12Shirley Bradley: Bud.  
13  
14William Myers: Pelton. He died recently.  
15  
16Shirley Bradley: I guess I didn't get the last name.  
17  
18William Myers: Pelton, P-e-l-t-o-n.  
19  
20Shirley Bradley: P-e-l, oh, Pelton. I'm sorry. Okay, okay.  
21  
22William Myers: And then I went to the other engineering specifications in the IBM.  
23  
24Shirley Bradley: Specifications.  
25  
26William Myers: Yeah. And that's where they were putting the stuff on cards.  
27  
28Shirley Bradley: Hm. Like the old punch cards, huh?  
29  
30William Myers: It was the old punch cards, right.  
31  
32Shirley Bradley: Hm. [6:34] And what did you do when you were in Engineering working  
33 on military trucks? What were you in charge of doing?  
34  
35William Myers: Nothing. Just setting up the books.  
36  
37Shirley Bradley: Just...  
38  
39William Myers: Books of stuff that came loose.  
40  
41Shirley Bradley: Setting up books.  
42  
43William Myers: Yeah. A standard hardware book for military engineering. Like I said,  
44 they had stuff in there that was used in aerospace and they didn't need to  
45 go in the truck.  
46

1 Shirley Bradley: [6:54] Would that have – the books you’re talking about, would that have  
2 been like catalogs?  
3  
4 William Myers: Just like this, yeah.  
5  
6 Shirley Bradley: Like a loose-leaf notebook.  
7  
8 William Myers: Yeah  
9  
10 Shirley Bradley: And...  
11  
12 William Myers: The stuff, see, the military originally was set up for MS, which is military  
13 standards, and [inaudible 7:06] which was the [inaudible 7:07] was the  
14 actual [inaudible 7:09] specifications for automobiles which were used in  
15 the trucks as well. [Inaudible 7:13] high-class, good stuff and that was,  
16 that was part of the military engineering.  
17  
18 Shirley Bradley: So they wanted the best material on the military trucks.  
19  
20 William Myers: Yeah.  
21  
22 Shirley Bradley: And, and then they wanted things that they couldn’t even use.  
23  
24 William Myers: Well, they had, they could use it but it was so expensive they didn’t need  
25 it...  
26  
27 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
28  
29 William Myers: ...in the military truck.  
30  
31 Shirley Bradley: So, [chuckle] this is interesting. So all these trucks were, military trucks  
32 were put out with stuff on that...  
33  
34 William Myers: Well, for instance, they probably had a titanium screw in the instrument  
35 panel which was made for outer space and they didn’t need it in the truck.  
36  
37 Shirley Bradley: Just a regular...  
38  
39 William Myers: It was, it was the right threads and right everything so they’d use it but  
40 they didn’t really need that expensive piece. It’s like...  
41  
42 Shirley Bradley: Oh, they could have done with something cheaper.  
43  
44 William Myers: Yeah, they didn’t need an expensive hammer or expensive toilet seat,  
45 that’s what they wanted.  
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Oh, a hammer tucked inside the toilet seat.  
2

3 William Myers: No. Those are the things that you hear about that cost so much money for  
4 the military.  
5

6 Shirley Bradley: Yeah, oh, I see what you're comparing it. Right. Okay. [chuckle]  
7

8 William Myers: That screw probably cost 40 cents. When you bought a standard one it  
9 would only cost you like 1/10 of a cent.  
10

11 Shirley Bradley: Hm. [18:21] Uh, do you remember any, any other things that were...?  
12

13 William Myers: No. That was the big thing. They needed, what they really needed was  
14 the people that go to the catalogs and got something they didn't really  
15 need and couldn't really use but it was, it was the right dimensions so they  
16 put it in.  
17

18 Shirley Bradley: So they'd use it anyway.  
19

20 William Myers: And that was the wrong stuff to use. They could have gone back and  
21 looked further in the catalogs and find the right stuff.  
22

23 Shirley Bradley: [8:40] But they didn't want to do that?  
24

25 William Myers: They didn't know to do that.  
26

27 Shirley Bradley: Too much trouble. [chuckle]  
28

29 William Myers: Yeah. It's like buying out of the Sears catalog. There's a lot of stuff that  
30 you don't need at all.  
31

32 Shirley Bradley: Nothing changes, does it?  
33

34 William Myers: No.  
35

36 Shirley Bradley: Uh, so then you went from engineering military trucks into specifications  
37 did you say?  
38

39 William Myers: Yup. It's the same.  
40

41 Shirley Bradley: [8:58] And what is that? What did you do there?  
42

43 William Myers: It was the same thing. [Inaudible 9:00] how to build a truck. They – in  
44 order for a truck when the truck if it needs some new gauges, different  
45 type gauges, manual gauges, and you have to take the old gauges out and  
46 put the new gauges in, you are going to have so much wiring and stuff to

1 go with it to put it in and you have to take that out of the paper and put it  
2 in to the paper and then it goes in the build.  
3  
4 Shirley Bradley: Hm.  
5  
6 William Myers: And that's doing paper-wise building a truck by paper.  
7  
8 Shirley Bradley: Oh. You're building a truck by paper.  
9  
10 William Myers: Yeah.  
11  
12 Shirley Bradley: Figure it all out on paper first.  
13  
14 William Myers: Yeah.  
15  
16 Shirley Bradley: Like a pattern.  
17  
18 William Myers: Yeah. If there's stuff required like additional dryers on the frame, you  
19 need additional holes in the frame to hold the dryers.  
20  
21 Shirley Bradley: [9:36] To hold the what?  
22  
23 William Myers: Dryers, dryers for air.  
24  
25 Shirley Bradley: Dryers?  
26  
27 William Myers: Dryers to dry air and keep the water out of the system.  
28  
29 Shirley Bradley: [9:44] Oh, uh, if the truck was going through a big muddy hole or  
30 something?  
31  
32 William Myers: Well, no. The air brakes collect air occasionally and collect water and that  
33 dryer seeks that water out.  
34  
35 Shirley Bradley: Oh, out of the brakes.  
36  
37 William Myers: [Inaudible 9:55].  
38  
39 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
40  
41 William Myers: [Inaudible 9:57] up.  
42  
43 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
44  
45 William Myers: [Inaudible 9:58] means whatever it takes differently, you have to know  
46 what to put in and usually they send it to Engineering and they come back



1 or if they have it, if we've done it before, we research the papers and find  
2 it to get it and do it again.  
3  
4 Shirley Bradley: Hm. [10:12] So a military truck is a lot different than a commercial truck,  
5 huh?  
6  
7 William Myers: Yeah.  
8  
9 Shirley Bradley: I mean the things they need.  
10  
11 William Myers: No. The military is a set standard. You don't change it at all unless you  
12 get the approval from the Detroit Arsenal.  
13  
14 Shirley Bradley: Oh. Detroit Arsenal, they were the...  
15  
16 William Myers: They, Detroit Arsenal, sent their, their military people in to see us all the  
17 time for the minor changes like that.  
18  
19 Shirley Bradley: Oh, they did? So they were in and out all the time.  
20  
21 William Myers: All the time.  
22  
23 Shirley Bradley: Officers I imagine.  
24  
25 William Myers: Yeah. Lieutenant Pruitt.  
26  
27 Shirley Bradley: Lieutenant Pruitt. Oh. [10:40] Um, so let me see, besides that on the air  
28 situation there for the brakes and that, did the military trucks did they  
29 have, I don't know I'm guessing here, heavier metal or extra...?  
30  
31 William Myers: We didn't do a lot, a lot of that on military. Military is already re-  
32 engineered so that was just paper. They'd put paper together to send out  
33 for bids and that was all anybody did there and keep those up,  
34 Engineering...  
35  
36 Shirley Bradley: Hm.  
37  
38 William Myers: ... keep it up to date on the military. We couldn't do a lot with it. That  
39 was already done.  
40  
41 Shirley Bradley: Already done.  
42  
43 William Myers: Yeah.  
44

1 Shirley Bradley: [11:14] Um, was there a lot of – uh, oh, what do I want to ask you? Uh,  
2 did you, were – you got 1 or 2 shifts where you worked, running 1 or 2  
3 shifts or just 1?  
4

5 William Myers: No, I always worked 1 shift...  
6

7 Shirley Bradley: Always.  
8

9 William Myers: But we had a lot of overtime.  
10

11 Shirley Bradley: A lot of...  
12

13 William Myers: A lot of overtime.  
14

15 Shirley Bradley: A lot of overtime.  
16

17 William Myers: Yeah.  
18

19 Shirley Bradley: Well, that came in handy, didn't it? [chuckle]  
20

21 William Myers: Well, the wage wasn't that good that the handy part came with the  
22 overtime.  
23

24 Shirley Bradley: Hm. [11:36] How much did you make do you think when you were  
25 working there in Engineering?  
26

27 William Myers: Oh dear, probably \$12 at the most.  
28

29 Shirley Bradley: [11:43] An hour?  
30

31 William Myers: Yeah.  
32

33 Shirley Bradley: Uh-huh.  
34

35 William Myers: Yeah.  
36

37 Shirley Bradley: [11:46] And what kind of benefits did you have?  
38

39 William Myers: They had all kinds of benefits, good benefits. Of course, I couldn't use  
40 everything. I was healthy and good teeth, good [inaudible 11:52], good  
41 health, good everything.  
42

43 Shirley Bradley: Good health and hospitalization and that.  
44

45 William Myers: Yeah. They had everything. Yeah. And dental, the whole...  
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Oh, you had dental. Vision I suppose.  
2

3 William Myers: Yeah, I'm sure.  
4

5 Shirley Bradley: Wow, that's great.  
6

7 William Myers: We had it all but when I went to CATA we had it all also but when you  
8 retire you don't get it all. [chuckle]  
9

10 Shirley Bradley: No. Um, [12:12] how long were you there at REO did you say? You left  
11 when?  
12

13 William Myers: Thirteen years.  
14

15 Shirley Bradley: [12:16] You were there until it closed?  
16

17 William Myers: Yeah. They closed, what, in February. I, I went out of work until the end  
18 of the year and then finally went to work for Mack Truck Western.  
19

20 Shirley Bradley: Hm.  
21

22 William Myers: [Inaudible 12:25].  
23

24 Shirley Bradley: [12:27] You could see the end coming could you?  
25

26 William Myers: They, they told me to go to CATA. A lot of people, Clare Loudenslager  
27 went to CATA, and they told me to go to CATA [inaudible 12:35],  
28 Barbara Stone at the time and she said come, come and go to work at  
29 CATA.  
30

31 Shirley Bradley: I'm sorry. [12:43] Barbara?  
32

33 William Myers: Stone [inaudible 12:44].  
34

35 Shirley Bradley: Stoneman?  
36

37 William Myers: Stone, S-t-o-n-e. [Ronnie 12:47] Stone...  
38

39 Shirley Bradley: Oh, just Stone.  
40

41 William Myers: [Ronnie 12:48] Stone was the secretary of the union.  
42

43 Shirley Bradley: She was the secretary of the union.  
44

45 William Myers: No. Her husband was.  
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Her husband was the secretary. Oh, okay, um.  
2  
3 William Myers: So she wanted me to go to work at CATA. I said no, I'm going to wait.  
4 They're going to open, yeah. She said no they're not. So finally I got a  
5 call from, uh, the chief engineer at that time and he went to California and  
6 he called me up and he said I got a job for you so he, I went out there and  
7 worked for him 6 weeks and my wife didn't want to go so I moved back.  
8  
9 Shirley Bradley: Um, you mentioned Clare Loudenslager. I heard his name quite often  
10 from, you know, over the years it seems like his name pops up. [13:38]  
11 He was the general manager?  
12  
13 William Myers: Yeah.  
14  
15 Shirley Bradley: [13:40] Of the whole plant?  
16  
17 William Myers: Of Diamond REO.  
18  
19 Shirley Bradley: Of Diamond REO, general manager.  
20  
21 William Myers: Then he went out to CATA as the [inaudible 13:46].  
22  
23 Shirley Bradley: Right. [13:48] Uh, so you worked with him sometimes?  
24  
25 William Myers: Very little.  
26  
27 Shirley Bradley: Very little.  
28  
29 William Myers: Very little. No. He, he comes here one time and Arnold Schuppert put his  
30 foot on my desk and said you got to get this paper out quickly. And he  
31 was 6 foot [inaudible 14:01] tall man.  
32  
33 Shirley Bradley: [14:02] Clare was?  
34  
35 William Myers: Yeah. No. Arnold Schuppert was [inaudible 14:04].  
36  
37 Shirley Bradley: Arnold Schuppert.  
38  
39 William Myers: Right. Chief engineer at the time. But Clare came through and when they  
40 showed the place a lot and he was always well dressed and well taken care  
41 of.  
42  
43 Shirley Bradley: I, I understood he always wore a shirt and tie.  
44  
45 William Myers: Always wore a shirt and tie. But he never [inaudible 14:18]. He  
46 [inaudible 14:20] in '76, '77, when we were driving the bus and they

1 would load about 100 people on the bus and go to [inaudible 14:26]. He's  
2 out there [inaudible 14:27]. The bus is loaded anyway. [chuckle] And he  
3 finally did [inaudible 14:33] long time ago but.  
4  
5 Shirley Bradley: Hm.  
6  
7 William Myers: He was always with us all the time. He'd come on our driving [inaudible  
8 14:39] drive here. This is our place where I started to work and he would  
9 come down here and [inaudible 14:43] with us and talk to us [inaudible  
10 14:45].  
11  
12 Shirley Bradley: He did?  
13  
14 William Myers: Yeah.  
15  
16 Shirley Bradley: So I know this, this museum was the CATA bus garage.  
17  
18 William Myers: Yeah.  
19  
20 Shirley Bradley: [14:52] And, uh, so the buses were, were they housed around here or just  
21 here for repair or?  
22  
23 William Myers: No, they were here inside actually, inside the back room where the...  
24  
25 Shirley Bradley: Oh, the buses were inside.  
26  
27 William Myers: Inside actually.  
28  
29 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
30  
31 William Myers: And the garage was inside and the office was inside. And this probably  
32 was an office that wasn't good at all. This was kind of run down and they  
33 fixed it up.  
34  
35 Shirley Bradley: [15:14] But the office was [inaudible 15:15] was kind of where it is now?  
36  
37 William Myers: Exactly. Everything was right here [inaudible 15:18].  
38  
39 Shirley Bradley: So we really have a, we've cosmetically changed, but. [chuckle]  
40  
41 William Myers: Oh yeah. You got a lot of changes, yeah.  
42  
43 Shirley Bradley: Yeah.  
44  
45 William Myers: Yeah. A lot of friends that would come to work in the wintertime and, or  
46 springtime [inaudible 15:30] water in the garage from the...

1  
2 Shirley Bradley: [15:32] From the roof?  
3  
4 William Myers: Yeah. The roof leaks all the time [inaudible 15:35].  
5  
6 Shirley Bradley: Oh. We've had some tremendous roof leaks here.  
7  
8 William Myers: Oh yeah?  
9  
10 Shirley Bradley: Fortunately we have a new roof now.  
11  
12 William Myers: Yeah.  
13  
14 Shirley Bradley: But where all those different additions meet...  
15  
16 William Myers: Yeah.  
17  
18 Shirley Bradley: ...and the roof levels are different...  
19  
20 William Myers: [Inaudible 15:47] all the time.  
21  
22 Shirley Bradley: Yeah. We've had some floods years ago.  
23  
24 William Myers: Oh yeah.  
25  
26 Shirley Bradley: In the 80s we had floods and Sandy Draggoo who is now, as you know,  
27 Director of CATA was telling me about the rats. [chuckle]  
28  
29 William Myers: Always, you know, the girls were scared of the rats and they were always  
30 here.  
31  
32 Shirley Bradley: [chuckle] They'd scurry through the building, huh?  
33  
34 William Myers: Yeah. Sandy talked about those rats a lot. In this part of the building is  
35 where they were. But yeah, Sandy, Sandy was a great leader and she took  
36 it from Clare.  
37  
38 Shirley Bradley: Mm-hm.  
39  
40 William Myers: [Inaudible 16:16].  
41  
42 Shirley Bradley: And she speaks very highly of him.  
43  
44 William Myers: Oh yeah.  
45  
46 Shirley Bradley: Of his, uh...

1  
2 William Myers: Yeah [inaudible 16:19].  
3  
4 Shirley Bradley: Uh.  
5  
6 William Myers: Of course, he probably drank a lot too but that didn't matter.  
7  
8 Shirley Bradley: [chuckle] It seems like just about everybody that worked for REO, and my  
9 mother and dad worked there, my dad went to Fisher early on but my  
10 mother was there, and, uh, every so often she, you know, of course, she'd  
11 come home and say this...  
12  
13 William Myers: [Inaudible 16:38].  
14  
15 Shirley Bradley: ...is what happened today at work and I almost always heard his name.  
16  
17 William Myers: Yeah.  
18  
19 Shirley Bradley: When something was going on, you know, I'd hear his name and being a  
20 kid I didn't connect it with anything but.  
21  
22 William Myers: No.  
23  
24 Shirley Bradley: Now that I'm hearing these different interviews from different folks, his  
25 name still pops up all the time.  
26  
27 William Myers: Sure.  
28  
29 Shirley Bradley: He impacted everybody.  
30  
31 William Myers: Oh yeah, yeah.  
32  
33 Shirley Bradley: Sandy was telling me a story about, about how strict he was with wear, for  
34 his men to wear a tie.  
35  
36 William Myers: Oh sure. Yeah, you had to wear a tie certain months out of the year. You  
37 didn't get out of it until like in the fall or you had to get in it in like  
38 September, October and you had to run it until spring until you start  
39 sweating and you take your tie off.  
40  
41 Shirley Bradley: [17:15] Oh, it was okay to do it then?  
42  
43 William Myers: Yeah.  
44  
45 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
46

1 William Myers: You had so many months you could take your tie off and wear a different  
2 shirt [inaudible 17:19] shirts, anything else you couldn't. [Inaudible  
3 17:22] wear, I still got black, black or brown or black and blue socks. You  
4 have to wear them all the time also.  
5  
6 Shirley Bradley: Oh, black and blue socks.  
7  
8 William Myers: Black or blue.  
9  
10 Shirley Bradley: Dark socks.  
11  
12 William Myers: Dark socks, yeah.  
13  
14 Shirley Bradley: Shirt and tie.  
15  
16 William Myers: Shirt and tie.  
17  
18 Shirley Bradley: Jacket.  
19  
20 William Myers: Yeah.  
21  
22 Shirley Bradley: Hm.  
23  
24 William Myers: Standard stuff which is, which is right because a lot of people that they  
25 hired couldn't afford the right socks, couldn't afford the right shoes, you  
26 know, and anything like that but when they hired them they put them in  
27 uniform and they stayed in that uniform.  
28  
29 Shirley Bradley: [17:49] Oh, that was provided?  
30  
31 William Myers: That was part, yeah.  
32  
33 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
34  
35 William Myers: The socks weren't but the pants and the shirts were.  
36  
37 Shirley Bradley: Oh, they were?  
38  
39 William Myers: Yeah.  
40  
41 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
42  
43 William Myers: Even a winter jacket, a winter jacket.  
44  
45 Shirley Bradley: Oh, I see.  
46



1 William Myers: [Inaudible 18:01].  
2  
3 Shirley Bradley: You're not talking about a suit coat jacket, we're talking about a winter  
4 jacket you'd zip up.  
5  
6 William Myers: Winter, winter jacket and they also had a blazer.  
7  
8 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
9  
10 William Myers: You get a blazer as well.  
11  
12 Shirley Bradley: You could have a blazer too.  
13  
14 William Myers: They provided good, good stuff.  
15  
16 Shirley Bradley: Hm. Uh, the REO clubhouse was still there. [18:17] Did you have any  
17 family activities there? You mentioned...  
18  
19 William Myers: No. My family lived in [Vail Peak 18:21]. I drove for 2 years working  
20 here. Then when they finally came here, I was working so much time I  
21 didn't have a lot of time for activities.  
22  
23 Shirley Bradley: Hm. That was too bad when they tore it down.  
24  
25 William Myers: Oh yeah. They've improved the lots down there and have a lot of stuff  
26 there now.  
27  
28 Shirley Bradley: Yeah. That's true. At least the lot is being used.  
29  
30 William Myers: Yeah.  
31  
32 Shirley Bradley: It's been cleaned up. And, um, let's see, if you didn't really take part in it.  
33 [18:50] One of my questions usually is can you remember anything that  
34 happened that was funny, kind of out of the ordinary or maybe not so  
35 funny.  
36  
37 William Myers: No, no, everything was all [inaudible 19:01].  
38  
39 Shirley Bradley: Okay. [19:08] Uh, looking back on it now, what's your impression of  
40 REO Motor Car Company? What kind of place was it to work?  
41  
42 William Myers: It was good. It had good equipment and good engineering [inaudible  
43 19:17] equipment.  
44  
45 Shirley Bradley: Oh.  
46

1 William Myers: It was, it was well done. As good as General Motors were and Oldsmobile  
2 as well but it was done great. It didn't have a lot of truck [inaudible  
3 19:27] everything like that. Everything was good.  
4

5 Shirley Bradley: So the machinery was pretty up to date.  
6

7 William Myers: Oh yeah.  
8

9 Shirley Bradley: Because I know, you know, I know the money wasn't coming in and some  
10 parts of the building were so old I didn't know about the machinery.  
11

12 William Myers: Oh no.  
13

14 Shirley Bradley: [19:40] That was getting pretty old too or?  
15

16 William Myers: Clare wouldn't let them paint. He kept painters on the job but he wouldn't  
17 let them paint because they didn't have the money to buy the paint so he  
18 just kept them [inaudible 19:49]. Of course, we had a painter that was  
19 drinking all the time in the ovens so that didn't work either.  
20

21 Shirley Bradley: [19:55] Ovens?  
22

23 William Myers: Yeah. He, he couldn't [inaudible 19:57] he was drinking in the ovens.  
24 [phone ringing]  
25

26 Shirley Bradley: Oh, where they would dry the...  
27

28 William Myers: Where they dry the paint.  
29

30 Shirley Bradley: Where the paint would dry on the vehicle. [chuckle]  
31

32 William Myers: Yeah. But we couldn't find him so you couldn't [inaudible 20:08] him.  
33 No, it was a good place to work and good people.  
34

35 Shirley Bradley: [20:14] Did you make out all right afterwards? I know the pension fund  
36 had been raided. [throat clearing]  
37

38 William Myers: I got that money finally.  
39

40 Shirley Bradley: You did finally get some.  
41

42 William Myers: Oh sure. I had a lot of money.  
43

44 Shirley Bradley: Did you? Good.  
45

1 William Myers: Yeah. I had a lot of money, all, all the money back and I re-invested it and  
2 using it today. [chuckle]  
3  
4 Shirley Bradley: Good. Oh, that's wonderful.  
5  
6 William Myers: Yeah.  
7  
8 Shirley Bradley: 'Cause I know some people didn't.  
9  
10 William Myers: A lot of people didn't.  
11  
12 Shirley Bradley: Yeah.  
13  
14 William Myers: And a lot of people took over 10 years to get any and then they got very  
15 little.  
16  
17 Shirley Bradley: Ten years and then very little.  
18  
19 William Myers: Yeah.  
20  
21 Shirley Bradley: Yeah. Yeah. That was not good. [20:45] Well, um, I guess I can't think  
22 of anything else unless I've missed some things that you'd like to share.  
23  
24 William Myers: No. That's, that's my life.  
25  
26 Shirley Bradley: Okay.  
27  
28 William Myers: You got it all.  
29  
30 Shirley Bradley: So you were glad you worked there.  
31  
32 William Myers: Oh yeah.  
33  
34 Shirley Bradley: Proud of...  
35  
36 William Myers: A good place to work.  
37  
38 Shirley Bradley: Proud of your part in making the military vehicles.  
39  
40 William Myers: Yeah. Everything that I did, I worked for was, was good stuff all the way  
41 around [inaudible 21:05].  
42  
43 Shirley Bradley: So you had job satisfaction.  
44  
45 William Myers: Oh yeah, yeah.  
46

1 Shirley Bradley: [21:08] Did you ever work on civilian trucks when the military contracts  
2 were, had run out?  
3  
4 William Myers: Oh yeah. We, we did the paperwork for the [inaudible 21:14]. That's  
5 when the drivers and stuff came in we had to do that. Not on the military  
6 'cause you couldn't touch the military but you could touch commercial.  
7  
8 Shirley Bradley: Oh. 'Cause things could be changed.  
9  
10 William Myers: Yeah. You can order [inaudible 21:25] on a commercial truck. It was fun.  
11 It was a good experience, a part of my life.  
12  
13 Shirley Bradley: A good part.  
14  
15 William Myers: Yeah.  
16  
17 Shirley Bradley: And you were able to raise your family on...  
18  
19 William Myers: Pretty well, yeah.  
20  
21 Shirley Bradley: ...on what you made at REO.  
22  
23 William Myers: Yeah.  
24  
25 Shirley Bradley: Hm.  
26  
27 William Myers: My kids didn't have a lot of clothes and stuff but they had their changes  
28 every day and everything worked out fine.  
29  
30 Shirley Bradley: Hm.  
31  
32 William Myers: I'm happy with it.  
33  
34 Shirley Bradley: I think my mother enjoyed her years there too.  
35  
36 William Myers: Oh yeah, yeah. Everybody was good, you know.  
37  
38 Shirley Bradley: She started during the war when the men were gone...  
39  
40 William Myers: Oh sure.  
41  
42 Shirley Bradley: ...in the service, you know. And she stayed on and after the war there  
43 were all these strikes I remember.  
44  
45 William Myers: Oh sure.  
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Coal strikes, steel strike, railroad strike.  
2

3 William Myers: Yeah.  
4

5 Shirley Bradley: I don't know what else. And I imagine there was a space of time before  
6 the military contracts started rolling in.  
7

8 William Myers: We had some good military stuff. Before, even today, we had a military  
9 truck that had individual drive to each individual wheel. I mean  
10 pneumatics going to each and every wheel. You could, you could spin  
11 this wheel and shut it off and go to this one...  
12

13 Shirley Bradley: Really?  
14

15 William Myers: ...and to the front ones. That was part of the last engineering stuff we  
16 had. We were doing it kind [inaudible 22:32] military truck.  
17

18 Shirley Bradley: [22:35] They did?  
19

20 William Myers: Yeah.  
21

22 Shirley Bradley: So say if a military truck got stuck in something.  
23

24 William Myers: Got stuck and 1 wheel was off the ground, the other wheel could take  
25 over.  
26

27 Shirley Bradley: Oh, that's amazing!  
28

29 William Myers: It's just...  
30

31 Shirley Bradley: I'd like a car like that.  
32

33 William Myers: It's just like your 4-wheel drive right now.  
34

35 Shirley Bradley: Oh, is that basically what 4-wheel drive is?  
36

37 William Myers: Yeah. Right.  
38

39 Shirley Bradley: See how much I know. [chuckle]  
40

41 William Myers: That's, that was part of the last military we had.  
42

43 Shirley Bradley: [22:58] You weren't part of any of the test driving or...?  
44

45 William Myers: No.  
46

1 Shirley Bradley: Or they took something out and brought it back.  
2  
3 William Myers: No.  
4  
5 Shirley Bradley: Okay.  
6  
7 William Myers: No. I didn't get out of the office hardly. [chuckle]  
8  
9 Shirley Bradley: Okay. Well, gosh, I thank you very much, Bill.  
10  
11 William Myers: Okay.  
12  
13 Shirley Bradley: I appreciate your sharing your REO days with us.  
14  
15 William Myers: Yeah [inaudible 23:13].  
16  
17  
18/mlc