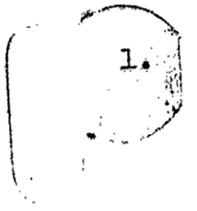


SPECIAL INTERVIEWS
VERBATIM REPORTS INCLUDING INTERVIEWERS'
COMMENTS

612

358 AP

1929



DON'T DISCLOSE IDENTITIES

From the beginning of these studies, the identities of the persons under study have been kept confidential. We look to you to carry on this trust. Please guard the privacy of the persons involved by substituting fictitious names, or code symbols for real names.

May 29, 1929,

Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer explained the program and told him some of the things that the Company was trying to accomplish with the program.

Interviewer: "How long have you been on this job?"

Operator: "Fifteen years and twenty with the Company."

"The rates are no good in this department. My job is a good one for the Company to run on automatics. They have been working on this for a good many years and now they almost have it perfected."

"I worked on plugs with a man and he afterwards became head of the department. When he was working on plugs he said that a hundred and seventy-five plugs was a good day's work. Later he got to be department head and the first thing he did was to insist that we make between two hundred and three hundred plugs a day. It makes me angry to see some of the fellows that have been here only a few months making a dollar an hour when I have to break my neck and I make less than that. I don't think that is right."

Interviewer: "It doesn't seem to be quite fair."

Operator: "The foreman in this department inherited a tough job. The place was run down and the men were all disgusted when he took it over. I think he is doing a good job to build the place up. I have seen this happen a number of times. They put one man in and he ruins the department and then they take him out and put someone else in to build it up. I suppose you hear lots about lockers."

Interviewer: "Yes, quite a bit."

Operator: "Our lockers are too close together. That is a ----- of a place to put a clock. We used to have more lockers but they took them out so that they could put the clock in that corner."

The interviewer noticed that he was perspiring and remarked that it was pretty hot in the department.

Operator: "Yes, the bearings on our machines get pretty hot in the summer. This noon I almost burned my hand when I touched one of the bearings. Sometimes they get so bad in the warm weather that we have to stop and loosen them up. On the plug job I am only allowed a thousandth variation up and down and the machines have to be pretty tight to work this close."

Interviewer: "How long do you think it will be before they put your job on automatics?"

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Operator: "They could put it on tomorrow for all I care. I can make the same money on any job on the floor. The night man interferes with my job. He sets a machine to run the way he likes it and then I have to waste an hour in the morning setting it so that I could work with it. We each lose an hour doing this everytime we start to work."

Interviewer: "Why don't you get together with him and try to run the machine the same way?"

Operator: "That is impossible. I cannot work with this fellow at all. There is only one man on night work that I could work with. They were supposed to take my job to Kearny a long time ago but I guess they didn't have much luck getting the fellows to run a tough job like this out there.

"We have all old timers in this department and we can only make between two hundred fifty and three hundred a day. Whenever I have tool trouble the gang boss tells me that it is all figured in the rate. We used to make one hundred seventy-five plugs fifteen years ago that paid us four dollars and ten cents. That was good pay at that time. Now we have to do three hundred or three hundred and fifty if we want to make a good day's pay and then they tell us that if we have machine trouble that it is figured in the rate. We are having trouble with chipped rubber on the regular plugs. The Inspection rejects all of these plugs now. They used to repair them but now they junk them."

Interviewer: "Do you get paid for the plugs that are junked?"

Operator: "Yes, we get paid for them but I don't like to make junk."

The interviewer asked two or three questions and didn't get good answers. Then he asked what he was going to do on his vacation.

Operator: "Well, last year I went up to Canada but I have had pretty bad luck this year. I don't think I will be able to take any vacation at all. My wife just got out of the hospital not long ago. I was in the hospital for fifteen weeks with an infection.

We talked about the hospital for ten or fifteen minutes.

Operator: "It was a funny thing when I went to the hospital my wife called up the department but there must have been some mixup because the hospital didn't know that I was sick. The day I was brought home there was a card under the door telling me to report at once. My wife called them up and told them how sick I was and they were very nice and sent the nurse out to see me."

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Interviewer: "Did you have any trouble with your pay when you were off?"

Operator: "No, they treated me very nicely. Well, I had to wait three weeks before I got any money at all but that was through some mistake."

Interviewer: "Have you been in this department all your years with the Company?"

Operator: "No, I was in the Inspection Department for about three years and then I worked nights for a year and a half."

Interviewer: "How did you like night work?"

Operator: "I cannot see well enough to work nights. The lights are no good on my machine. The electric light on the machine conflicts with the light from the window and it doesn't do me a bit of good. It is placed about two feet from where I really need the light. It is placed on the back of the machine and way over to one side. A good many of the machines have no lights at all. Have you seen some of the small jobs that we run on these machines?"

Interviewer: "Yes, I have seen some of them."

Operator: "Some of them are not any bigger than the head of a pin and I don't know how the fellows see to do a good job. Our old foreman brought a good many of the men down to see how small those parts were and find out if we cannot get more light but I guess he didn't have any luck."

We sat and said nothing for about three or four minutes.

Operator: "I should think that if the rates were better we would not have so many rejections."

Interviewer: "You don't seem to like to turn out bad work, do you?"

Operator: "No there is no use making a lot of junk. How long will it take to interview the whole Plant?"

Interviewer: "I don't know."

Operator: "Are you going to interview everybody?"

Interviewer: "Yes, we are going to interview everybody that is in the operating division at the present time."

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The operator talked about the hospital and his wife's operation and what a fine doctor he had and about the expense of sicknesses.

Operator: "I am in a pretty bad hole now. I worked three Sundays in a row but last Sunday when the boss came around I told him, nothing doing not on this job. I don't think we are paid right for Sunday work. A day worker gets double time on his day rate but a piece worker gets only his piece work and his day rate. I think he should get twice his average earnings. Whenever I refuse to work overtime or Sundays my gang boss acts as though I were putting him in a hole. He grumbled quite a bit about last Sunday and so I worked Saturday afternoon. I have a job now and I have to work just as hard to make sixty-four cents an hour as the man next to me has to work to make a dollar."

Interviewer: "Is this man working on plugs?"

Operator: "No, he could not make his day rate on plugs. There is one man in the entire department that can make a dollar an hour on plugs. He is a good worker and when he is working he looks as though he were making two dollars an hour. He jumps around like a jumping jack all day long. He does a dandy job and will stop and help a new man any time he can. I think he is a pretty good sort of a fellow."

The interviewer explained about the order paying him his average earnings for the time spent being interviewed.

Operator: "Yes, that is pretty nice. We get our average time when we go to the hospital too and if we are off sick the Company pays our average earnings."

"One man in the department got a lot of boils from the oil that we use. The Company paid his hospital bills and took care of him very nicely. Then they put him back to work in the department and soon he was off with boils again. I don't know where he is now. When I heard what the Company paid to have this man cured of boils I realized what a good doctor I had and how reasonable my bill was. The bill the Company paid for this other operator was around a thousand dollars. The new automatics are doing nice work on plugs. The machine doesn't make them with the same operations that we use and it does it much faster. They have a diamond cutting tools on these automatics and they can make a plug in fifteen seconds and it takes me a minute and a quarter to make one."

He sat and said nothing for about five minutes.

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Operator: "Did you get any kicks from the men in this department about rates?"

Interviewer: "I got a few."

Operator: "It is a pretty tough racket. I don't know but I think the Company would get better results if their rates were a little higher. There are not many jobs in this department that a man can make a dollar an hour. There is one plug job that a man cannot make his day rate. The Inspection Department is tighter now than they used to be. A man gets a rejection if two per cent of an order is defective. My job is detail inspection. They inspect every plug."

The operator saw a girl from his office walk by and he said that was the foreman's secretary and that she was a mighty nice girl.

Operator: "I don't know whether you are interested or not but we don't get our piece work stubs regularly."

Interviewer: "I am interested in everything. Does that hold up your piece work money?"

Operator: "No, it doesn't hold up the money but I don't know whether my pay slip is right if I don't get these slips. I also cannot tell whether I am getting paid for work that has been rejected. That is the only way we have of knowing the number of parts that we are being paid for. These slips don't come through and I don't know why."

Interviewer: "What does your gang boss say about this?"

Operator: "He says that he cannot locate them and he goes to the clerk to see if he can find them. We have a new clerk in this department now and he is very accommodating. We had a couple that would not do anything for us. One clerk that we had was the fastest worker I ever knew. He got our pay checks out in the morning. The clerk we have now is very accommodating and that helps us a whole lot."

The operator looked over the pages that the interviewer had written and said, "Gee they will think that that's a gabby guy when they get all that."

Interviewer: "No they won't think that at all. We have some interviews that are a lot longer than yours."

Operator: "This is not for the interview this is just between you and I. One of the men working near me came back and told us that if the boss found out what he told the interviewer he would be fired. I will bet you that there is not another man in the gang that will kick about the gang boss that he kicked about. I think this gang

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boss does all that he should do and I know he has always treated me all right."

Interviewer: "Did this other fellow tell you what he said to the interviewer?"

Operator: "No, he told the man working next to me and he told me."

Interviewer: "It is very foolish for a man to talk about what he has told the interviewer."

Operator: "Yes, I know it but I think that the man was nuts anyway."

Interviewer: "You seem to get along pretty well with all of the bosses you have."

Operator: "Yes, I don't have any trouble. We had one foreman in this department and no one liked him. I didn't talk to him about the job in the four years that he was in the department. I met him outside a few times and he was very friendly. He was the man that spoke to me a moment ago. I have my little arguments with the bosses but that is all in the day's work. I forget them as soon as they are settled."

Interviewer: "Well do you think we have everything here that you wanted in the interview?"

Operator: "Yes, I cannot think of anything more. If they make the rates a little higher and a few more lockers in this department I will be very well satisfied with my job."

Time of interview - 1 hour - 49 minutes.

June 10, 1939,
Operating Branch-1.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Likes

"We receive our average time when we go to the hospital and if we are off sick the Company pays our average earnings. This helped me a lot when I was sick."

Dislikes

"Our lockers are too close together. That is a ----- of a place to put the clock. We used to have more lockers but they took them out so that they could put the time clock in that corner.

"I don't like the lights on my machine. The electric light on the machine conflicts with the light from the window and it doesn't do me a bit of good. It is placed about two feet from where I really need the light. It is on the back of the machine and way over to one side. A good many of the machines in this department have no light at all. I don't see that the fellows that run the very small jobs are able to do the work on those machines."

THE JOB

Likes

No comments.

Dislikes

"The rates are so good in this department. My job is a good one for the Company to run on automatics. We used to have to do one hundred and seventy-five parts a day. That paid us four dollars and ten cents and was considered a good day's work. In order to make a good day's pay now we have to do three hundred or three hundred and fifty. That is almost impossible if we have machine trouble. It makes me angry to see some of the fellows that have been here only a few months making a dollar an hour when I have to break my neck on this job and I make a good deal less than that.

"I think the Company would get better results if their rates were a little higher. There are not many jobs in this department on which a man can make a dollar an hour. There is one job that a man cannot make his day rate. The Inspection Department is tighter now than they used to be. This makes it harder than ever to make a good percentage.

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June 10, 1930,
Operating Branch-4.

THE JOB

Dislikes, continued

"I don't think that we are paid right for Sunday work. A day worker gets double time on a day rate but a piece worker only gets piece work and his day rate. I think he should be paid twice his average earnings."

SUPERVISION

Likes

"I think my gang boss does a pretty good job. I have my little arguments with him but that is all in the day's work. I forget them as soon as they are settled."

"Our old Foreman tried very hard to have lights installed on all of the machines. He had a good many men down to look at the small parts we have to work on but I guess he didn't have any luck."

Dislikes

"I worked on this job with a man who afterwards became head of the department. When he was working on the job he said a hundred and seventy-five parts was a good day's work. Later he got to be department head and the first thing he did was to insist that we make between two hundred and three hundred parts a day."

"I don't think that the Gang Boss is fair in giving out day work. Whenever I have tool trouble the Gang Boss tells me that it is figured in the rates. We used to be able to get all the day work we needed but now we cannot get any. I don't get my piece work stubs regularly. This bothers me because I don't know whether my pay slip is right if I don't get these stubs. I also cannot tell whether I am getting paid for the work that is rejected. My Gang Boss said he cannot locate them and then he goes to the clerk to see if he can find them. It often happens that the clerk cannot find them."

AM



July 1, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

Interviewer: "It is very warm today so I guess you won't mind sitting down and having a little confidential talk with me."

Operator: "No. I am glad to get a chance to sit down. I have to stand at my work and my feet bother me. They are swelled up so bad at night that I can hardly stand on them."

Interviewer: (Noticing that all the girls at the job are sitting) "Isn't there any way that you can sit at your work?"

Operator: "Oh, yes, but I can't turn out my rates when I sit down. It seems so unhandy for me. It seems I am always out of luck not only on the job but everything."

Interviewer: "Have you ever done any other kind of work in this department?"

Operator: "Yes. I have worked on soldering but the smoke bothered me and I asked to be taken off that job so I am afraid if I ask to be taken off of the job I am on now they will think I am a grumbler."

Interviewer: "Have you worked for the Company very long?"

Operator: "A little better than a year. I am getting one week vacation with pay and I am taking one at my own expense. They did not give vacations that way when I worked here before."

Interviewer: "Oh! Did you work here before?"

Operator: (Started to cry.) "Yes. I started to work here a couple of years ago but I was a silly kid from an orphanage and I thought I could run the place. The boss I worked for sure had a lot of trouble with me."

Silence for a few minutes.

Interviewer: "Why did you leave the Company?"

Operator: "I was laid off. My boss said they had no work but I knew the boss wanted to get rid of me and I don't blame him very much."

Interviewer: "That was too bad."

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July 1, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

Operator: "I'll say it was. I worked in many different places after that but I didn't like any of them like I did the Western Electric Company. I always wished to come back."

Interviewer: "Why didn't you like the other places as well as the Western Electric?"

Operator: "I couldn't earn near as much money and I couldn't save any. Of course, I can't save very much now because I get so many hard knocks, but through the Ready Money Plan I am saving a little."

Interviewer: "Well, isn't it nice that you have that?"

Operator: "Yes. After trying out so many places I finally got up my nerve and came back to the Employment Office and told them my hard luck story. I sure had a bad record but I explained that to the girl and told her I was older and had more sense now, so she gave me another chance, and I sure was glad."

Interviewer: "You seem to be getting along nice now with your boss."

Operator: "Oh yes. The Foreman has been very good to me and gives me very good advice and I must say my Gang Boss has had a lot of patience with me and he always gives me an even break."

Interviewer: "Well, that is nice."

Operator: (Crying.) "Yes, it is nice, but sometimes I think what is the use of living."

Interviewer: "My dear girl, why do you feel that way? A nice young girl like you should have many nice things to live for."

Operator: (Sobbing.) "Those are the kindest words I have heard since my mother died."

Interviewer: "How long has your mother been dead?"

Operator: "Since I was eight years old and I am nineteen now and it seems I have had nothing but hard knocks since. My oldest sister took care of us kids for a while after my mother died, but then my father got sick and was in the hospital for a long time and my sister got married and I guess didn't want to be bothered with

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Operating Branch-W.

us kids so she put us in an orphanage. There were three of us; two younger than myself. When I was fourteen years old I got out of the orphanage and went to work for a woman doing the house work and taking care of her children and she sent me to school, but when I got a little older I did not like the idea of doing house work and minding children."

Interviewer: "Do you make your home with your sister now?"

Operator: "Oh, no. I live in a rooming house on the north side. Lots of times I hear the girls I work with say, 'Any girl that lives in a rooming house isn't any good.' I don't think they are very nice to pass such remarks when they have no reason. I know those remarks make me feel very bad. Do you think it is very nice?"

Interviewer: "No. I wouldn't say it was nice."

Silence.

Interviewer: "Don't you think you would be happier if you lived with your sister?"

Operator: "No. I couldn't get along with my sister. She was too bossy. She was so different than my mother."

Interviewer: "I should think you would get very lonesome living alone."

Operator: "I did have a girl rooming with me one time. We had light housekeeping rooms, but it seems I was more unhappy then than I am now."

Interviewer: "What made you so unhappy then?"

Operator: "Well, the other girl would doll up on Sunday and go out visiting her relatives and I was left in looking at the four walls."

Silence.

Operator: "Are you going to tell anyone what I am telling you?"

Interviewer: "Certainly not. No one but you and I will know about

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July 1, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

what you are telling me. Our talk is strictly confidential. Unless you tell someone what you are telling me it will never be heard of."

Operator: "Oh, I wouldn't do that, but you have been so nice to me I think I would like to tell you some more of my troubles if you would care to listen."

Interviewer: "I will be glad to listen to anything you have to tell me."

Silence.

Operator: "Well, one Sunday morning when I was rooming with the other girl I spoke of, she got dressed up and went to her aunt's for dinner. After I was left alone I got so despondent and blue I thought I would end it all so I put lysol in my coffee. That didn't do the work so I decided to turn on the gas. I wanted it to appear it was accidental so I put the coffee pot on the gas to make it appear that it boiled over but I guess I didn't put water enough in it for when they found me they knew it was an attempted suicide."

Interviewer: "My! Don't you think you were a very foolish little girl to do that?"

Operator: "At that time I didn't. You know I had been keeping company with a fellow I planned to marry and my landlady happened to see the fellow and she told me he was a gangster and I had better not marry him."

Interviewer: "Well, aren't you glad she told you?"

Operator: "Yes, but at that time I just felt that the world was against me and I thought how my mother used to dress us up and send us to church every Sunday and the nice dinner we used to have. Since she has died everything has changed."

Interviewer: "Don't you go to church anymore?"

Operator: "No. It seems I can't pull myself together to go."

Interviewer: "Well, don't you think that if you changed your way of

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July 1, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

living and moved to a different neighborhood and went to church that you could be more happy?"

Operator: "Oh those words seem so encouraging to me."

Interviewer: "Well, why don't you try some method like that?"

Operator: "Maybe I will."

Silence.

Interviewer: "You are so young that you shouldn't let your troubles get the best of you like that."

Operator: "That is what the girls at the Welfare Department told me after I had done that."

Interviewer: "Oh! You were working here at that time?"

Operator: "Yes. Miss X from the Welfare came to see me at the hospital and she told me when I got better to come back and she would put me in a different department and no one would know about what I had done and I am very thankful to her."

Interviewer: "Well, that was very nice of her."

Operator: "And I am very thankful to you for being so kind to me now and talking to me the way you did. I know I can go back to work with a whole lot off of my mind."

"I wonder sometimes when you are in the department if you wouldn't come up and talk to me for a few minutes. I know it would do me lots of good."

Interviewer: "Yes, I will sometime when I am in the department."

RS



June 3, 1929,
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer explained the program and told him some of the things that the Company was trying to accomplish with the program.

Operator: "I think the Company is a good place to work. They have good rules but the people don't obey them.

"Other companies have special men to grind tools. Here every man does this himself. When the night man grinds tools I cannot use them. I have to take all the tools out of the machine in the morning and grind them so that I can use them. If the Company had special men doing this work the tools would be ground right.

"I could make more money working in Toledo but my wife doesn't want me to stay there. She has a lot of friends in Chicago so she got me to come here to work."

Interviewer: "Everybody seems to be busy in this department."

Operator: "Yes, everybody is busy and I don't see why they want to try to kill all the men by making them work Saturday afternoon and Sunday.

"When I started here a new man didn't have a chance to make money. Now the new men make more money than we can. When our old foreman was here a man would get fired if he kicked about the jobs. Now that our new foreman is in the department a man can go to the office and tell him his troubles and he will listen to him.

"I think this Company takes better care of their men than they do in other places."

Interviewer: "What do you mean by that?"

Operator: "Well, this Company has the hospital and they have savings plans and that makes it a lot better for us.

"The bosses here let us know that they are a lot better than we are but I guess that cannot be helped because that happens every place."

Interviewer: "Where are you going to go on your vacation?"

Operator: "I am going to see my father in Toledo. I would like to go to the old country. It is very nice over there. I had a high school education in the old country but I cannot use it here because I don't speak English very well."

AM

June 3, 1929,
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "How are the jobs in this department?"

Operator: "It is hard to make money on most of the jobs. More than half of them are no good at all. On some jobs I cannot make two dollars a day. I think it would be good for the Company if they would raise the rates on these low jobs. I would feel much better working if I could make a little money on every job. If the automobile factories had the same system as they have here at the Western an automobile would cost ten thousand dollars.

"The gang boss puts a job on a machine and he doesn't care whether the machine will run that job or not. After he has the job set up I have to go and tell him that that machine will not run that job. He gets mad at me and says that he ran that job on that machine before and it should be all right now. He tells me to go back there and make it run. This gang boss thinks he knows more than any of us."

The interviewer explained about being paid average earnings for the time he was interviewed.

Operator: "I get day work anyway. I got a job now and I cannot even make my day rate. If they would take care of the machines and the tools we could do a lot better. I can work very fast for a little while and then something goes wrong and I have to stop."

The interviewer explained that the average pay was figured over the past six months and that he would get more than day work by the time he was being interviewed. Then he asked him how he liked his old foreman.

Operator: "I could not talk to him at all. When he was in the department I could not say anything. One day I was fixing my belt and he came along and hollered at me from the aisle. He said, 'Hey you, get away from that belt. You don't know anything about fixing those belts. Tell your gang boss to get someone to fix that who knows how.'

"I didn't like our old assistant foreman either. I don't think anybody in the department liked him. I was taking a belt off the pulley one day and he said, 'young fellow, don't you see that other belt on there?' I told him to get some glasses because there was no other belt in the way. He took a better look and he saw I was right. Then he got very mad and was looking to get something on me all the time. Another time I was out of work and I couldn't find anyone to give me a job so I went to him. He told me to take a certain job. I didn't know how to set up this job as I never worked on it before. I told him that I didn't know anything about it and

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June 3, 1929,
Operating Branch-M.

he got mad and said, 'If you don't like it go home.' I guess that fellow didn't have very much education because he could not speak to a man without swearing. I like to work for a man with an education because he talks nicely to us. I wish I knew what they did with all the parts that we make. I think our job would be more interesting if we knew what the Company did with all these parts. I wonder why they don't fix up the machines that are out of order instead of keeping the men overtime and Sunday. There are three or four machines that are broken now and they could hire men and put them on there if they wanted to. I should think they would get good machinists to fix their machines instead of the ones they have now. These men are working day work and they don't care if they fix the machines today or tomorrow. I don't call them over any more because I can fix them myself in half the time that they can."

Interviewer picked up a part that was on the desk and asked him if he ever worked on that job.

Operator: "I made the rate on that job and I cannot understand the price they gave us. The old rate was a dollar and forty cents a hundred. They made a new timing because they added an operation to the job and when we got our piece rate it was only sixty four cents. I don't know how they ever figured this rate because I couldn't make any money on this job before. It is very hard to work on this job when a fellow has a wife and two children. If I didn't have any children I would be back in the old country."

Interviewer: "Do you ever speak to your new foreman?"

Operator: "No, I don't ever have to talk to him. The gang bosses do a better job now that he is in the department. I am not afraid any more because I see that I can make a living in this country. I liked my job in Toledo best of all because I was working with a lot of Bohemians and I could make more money than I can make here. My wife didn't have any friends there and she was so lonesome that she got me to come to Chicago. I told her that I would go to Chicago all right but that if she should kick because I didn't make very much money I would get a divorce and go back to the old country. She didn't like the first few pays I brought home when I worked here but when I bring a small pay check home now she says, 'All right maybe it will be better next week.'

"I got hurt one time and I was off fourteen days. I only got paid my day rate for the time I was off. I know they pay some of the men average earnings. That is the trouble with me. I cannot talk very well and they think I am green so they give me anything they feel like."

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Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "Did you go to school in this country so that you could learn to speak English?"

Operator: "No, I have to make a living and I am too tired at night to study English. If I knew that I was coming to this country I would have learned the English language in the old country. We had to learn two languages when I went to school but I thought I would always stay in Europe and so I learned two of the languages over there. My brother learned English in school and now he speaks better than some of the bosses do here."

Interviewer: "Do you save very much money?"

Operator: "No, since I have been in this country I have only been able to save a couple of hundred dollars. That is because there are so many men in the department and there are only a few good rates. Everybody else wants the good jobs so I cannot get them. I make about thirty two dollars a week and if I were going to save any money I would have to make about forty."

"I want to get a job for my brother. He is a draftsman and makes good money. He says that he would come to Chicago if I could get him a job. He has five hundred dollars and I have two hundred dollars and this way we could buy a house. I think things would be better for me if he were here. We could make a little Company of our own and then my brother could teach me to speak English. I don't think it is very good for my children to hear nothing but Bohemian all the time. They have to go to an English school and I guess that will make it hard for them. If my brother would come here he could speak English to them and then I would learn to speak better myself. If I could speak good English I would have a good job because I was an accountant in the old country. I have forgotten most of the algebra that I knew. I have to learn to speak good English soon or I will be no good. My grandfather was a very smart man. He could speak seven different languages when he was ninety-two years old. I would like to be as smart as he is. All of the men that I talked to in this department speak Bohemian. I don't have to speak English at all."

Interviewer: "I think you speak very well for a man that doesn't practice speaking any more than you do. Does your gang boss and section head speak Bohemian to you?"

Operator: "No, they don't speak Bohemian but I don't have very much to do with them. I just bawl the gang boss out once in a while. When I don't do enough work he says ---- you work like a big kid today. I say, 'Yes I work like a kid because you bring me one tool

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to work with today and another one tomorrow. How can I get anything done when I don't have tools to work with?"

Interviewer: "The part that that man is working on over there gets pretty hot. Don't they use any oil on that job?"

Operator: "No, that is a dry job. That is one of the things I don't like around here. When I work on that job they make me wear glasses. I told them the next time they make me wear glasses I am going to quit. They have a glass guard on some of the machines and that is the way they should have all of them. The last time I wore glasses all day I could not sleep all night because it felt as though I had them on all the time. I waste a lot of time because I have to stop and clean the glasses about every ten minutes.

"Some days when I come to work everything is upside down because the night man leaves my machine all out of order. Some days I cannot start working until ten o'clock. One day it was three o'clock before I got started. On one job I made two thousand parts without wearing glasses. I could only make fifteen hundred parts when I was wearing glasses. If they make me wear glasses again I will quit because I cannot make any money and it bothers me so very much."

Interviewer: "Have you any new machines in this department?"

Operator: "They put in a few new machines not long ago but the machinists that they have here are putting them on the bum very fast. Some of them are not any better than the machines that have been in the department ten years. Some of the men put these machines on the bum. Some men come in this department and tell them that they know how to operate these machines and then they come over and ask me what this is for and what to do with that. These men have never seen a machine."

Interviewer: "Can you think of anything else that you went in the interview?"

Operator: "No, that is about all. I don't have very much trouble. Some men go to the boss and say I want this certain job and he gives it to them. I take what he gives me and I don't argue with him. I am afraid if I should argue with him he would think I am green and he would not give me what I asked him for. I am a little ashamed to speak English to him because it is hard for me to say what I want to."

Interviewer: "Well, maybe if you can get your brother to Chicago you will be able to get along better."

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Operator: "Yes, I will be very happy if I can get him here because then I will get a good job and I will not have to work so hard."



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Interviewer explained the program and told him that the Company was trying to improve the plant and they will be glad to get any suggestions that he can make.

Operator: "There are a good many things around here that could be improved. The rates are too low. I think they could improve that very easily. Some of the rates are too high. A man doesn't have to work very hard on these high rates to make a dollar an hour. He cannot make his day rate on some of the low rates. I have been thinking lately that maybe it would be better if we had gang piece work. If a man had trouble it would not be quite as bad if we were working gang piece work. I think that the men would see to it that everybody kept busy if they had gang piece work. Maybe we would make more money that way. It is pretty tough to work on a low rate. Some of the rates here are fifteen and twenty years old. When they were set four dollars a day was good pay. We cannot live on that any more. I guess that is about all I can think of. If they would make the rates better or put us on gang piece work I believe I would be better satisfied."

Interviewer told him to sit down and take a little rest and he explained that he was being paid average earnings while he was being interviewed and that he might as well take advantage of it.

Operator: "I thought you were the insurance man when the gang boss called me over. I wondered what you wanted to talk to me for because I was the first one in this department to take out insurance. I had talked to my wife about insurance before the man came around and when he talked to me I signed up right away. I think it is pretty nice to have them take this out of our pay."

Interviewer: "That is quite a picture that you have on your arm, isn't it?"

Operator: "Yes, but what a ---- fool I was to have those things put on my arm. I was in the Navy then and that accounts for it. Now I am with civilized people and I feel very much ashamed of those pictures."

Interviewer: "I suppose your wife doesn't like to see those, does she?"

Operator: "Oh she doesn't care very much. I don't like them myself."

Interviewer: "Do you work on the same job all the time?"

Operator: "No, I work on every kind of a job. I have a pretty good one now. I have been here ten years and I notice that the gang boss
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picks on me to do all the hard jobs. The rates are low on these jobs and it is very hard to make any money. About three years ago I worked for two months and didn't make any more than my day rate."

Interviewer: "How did that happen?"

Operator: "Well, they were laying off a good many men then and they kept me on all the hard jobs. If we were working gang piece work I would not mind working on this job but I guess the bosses know what they want. It seems to me that a working man hasn't a chance in this Plant. They are treating us pretty good now but I guess that is because the bosses can see into the future and know that they will need all of the good men they can get.

"I think they should be willing to pay the good men more money. A new man can come into this department and make as much as I can. The Company should look into a man's personal affairs and see if he can handle money and if he can I think they should pay him more than the man that wastes all his money. Most of the men in this department have automobiles and radios. I cannot have these things because I have two children and my wife is sick most of the time. I like to figure out things ahead of time before I buy them. The other fellows are not brought up right now. As soon as they have enough money to make a down payment on a car they buy one. I will buy a car after I have money enough to build a garage to put it in. I want to give my children a high school education. After I do that I will buy a car and enjoy myself."

Interviewer: "How did you get along with your old foreman?"

Operator: "Well, he was a little bit one sided. He didn't seem to care very much about the working man. One day the gang boss made me set up a machine and then he didn't let me run the job. This happened on three jobs in a row and I got mad and went to see the foreman. I explained that I didn't think I was being treated right because I was only being paid day work for setting up these machines and the new men were getting all the piece work when they were running the job. The foreman said, 'You get back and do just what that gang boss tells you to do. I don't want to listen to your kicking any more.' That was the first time I had said anything to him and I would quit the job if I didn't have a family. I like the foreman we have now because he gives a fair decision any time a man complains. The gang bosses have to treat everybody fairly now because if they don't the foreman will bawl them out.

"I am glad that the Company is asking for our opinion on the way things are going. I think that some day they will give the

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men that can handle money a chance to get more. I used to drink a whole lot and I was making ten dollars a day at that time. If I had made twenty dollars a day I would have spent it all. Lately I have been thinking what a fool I was to spend all of that money. The Company knows that things can be improved and I don't see why they cannot figure it out so that we can make more money. I know several times my wife has had to wait until I got my pay to buy groceries for supper."

Interviewer: "Don't you make enough money to live on?"

Operator: "Yes, I just barely get enough to live on but sometimes I have doctor bills and other expenses and that makes me pretty short for a while."

Interviewer: "Does the sun bother the men that are running the machines over by the windows?"

Operator: "It used to be pretty hot over there but about a year ago they put shades on the windows so now it is much better. I think the Western Electric is better in a good many things than other Plants."

Interviewer: "I suppose you have been here long enough now so that you don't have to ask your gang boss many questions."

Operator: "No, I don't have to bother him very much. He is very nice and he helps me whenever he has time. Some jobs are pretty hard to figure out and if he helps me we can get the machine set a lot faster."

Interviewer: "Have you worked in this department all the time?"

Operator: "No, when I first came to the Company I had a job where a man didn't have to know anything. I started working in the stock-room and I had three or four jobs in that department. Finally they gave me a job that was very hard and he would not raise my day rate so I went to the foreman in this department and asked him if he would give me a job. He told me that I would have to see my own foreman first and if I could get a transfer from him he would be glad to give me a job. This foreman didn't want to let me go but I insisted on a transfer and finally he gave it to me. I consider myself lucky to get in this department because I didn't know how to run the machines and I have very little education. They treated me very nicely when I first came in here and the gang boss wasted a lot of time showing me how to run the different machines. I am going to see that my children all have a good education and then they will not have to work as hard as I do."

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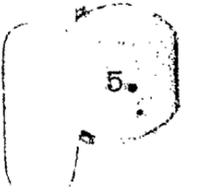
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Interviewer: "Does your boy like to go to school?"

Operator: "Yes, he seems to like school pretty well. He is in seventh grade now and he wants to go to the Y. M. C. A. school this summer. He is all excited about having a vacation this summer. Last year I took them out to the Lake for the first time and we all had a good time. This year he is inviting all his friends to come and see him at this Lake and I don't know whether I can afford to take a vacation or not. I guess I will have to squeeze out money enough for a vacation somehow because it will be good for all of us."

Interviewer: "Can you think of anything else that you want to put in the interview?"

Operator: "No, I think we have everything now. I am treated fairly well. I guess they are doing what they can but I wish I could make a little more money. When I think of what the stockholders are making in this Company I wonder why they don't want to pay us a little more. I have been pretty lucky since I came to this country because I got a job right away and I don't believe I have been out of work more than one month in the twenty years that I have been here. I don't have very much patience with men in this country that are out of work because I know that it was not hard for me to get a job and they could do the same thing if they wanted it."



May 30, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

9-7640

The operator was introduced by the Section Chief.

Interviewer: "Rather warm today."

Operator: "We have a nice breeze in this department in the morning, and in the afternoon when the sun shines in, we pull down the shades."

Interviewer: "I suppose you have heard something about the interviewing program."

Operator: "Not very much, but I have heard some of the boys talking about it."

The interviewing program was explained to the operator.

Interviewer: "How long have you worked for the Company?"

Operator: "About three years."

Interviewer: "How much of that time have you spent in this department?"

Operator: "I was hired for this department."

Interviewer: "How long have you been on your present job?"

Operator: "I started on this job."

Interviewer: "How do you like this class of work?"

Operator: "Well, I will tell you. It is a very clean job, but it is very hard on my eyes. I am adjusting relays and the work is very close. We adjust them to one one-thousandth of an inch. I think we should have a rest period the same as the inspectors on the same class of work."

Interviewer: "How is your piece work percentage running?"

Operator: "It runs about 50%, so I average about \$.75 an hour. That is not a bad rate, but we have to work steadily all day."

Interviewer: "Do you think you will get something better in time to come?"

Operator: "Well, I hope to some day. We are all out to make more money. I would be willing to be transferred to another department tomorrow morning if I could make more money."

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May 30, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "Are you a married man?"

Operator: "No sir."

Interviewer: "Do you live with your folks?"

Operator: "No. My parents live in Canada."

Interviewer: "How do you like the states?"

Operator: "I like them real well. In Canada times are dull. The only industries in my home town are mining and fishing, and neither one of them pays very well."

They talked about Canada for fifteen minutes.

Interviewer: "What do you think of the Western Electric Supervisors?"

Operator: "They are O.K. They treat me fine. As long as I have worked for the Company I have never had any trouble with the Supervisors. I take pride in turning out a good day's work, and I think they appreciate that."

Interviewer: "Are you able to save any money on this job?"

Operator: "I do not save very much, but I am taking my limit in A. T. & T. stock because I think it is a very good buy. I am also buying some insurance through the Company."

Interviewer: "I suppose you will go to Canada on your vacation this year?"

Operator: "No. I made a trip up there last year."

Interviewer: "What do you think of the Company as a whole?"

Operator: "It is more up-to-date in every respect than any Company I ever worked for."

Interviewer: "What do you think of the new vacation system?"

Operator: "I think July is a very good month to go on a vacation, and since they changed it to two weeks for two years of service, I will get a two weeks' vacation this year."

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May 30, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "If you were writing a letter to one of your friends in Canada who was figuring on coming to Chicago and expected to land a job with this Company, what would you tell him about the place?"

Operator: "I would tell him that the Company is located in a large city where there are plenty of places to go and lots of excitement. I would tell him that the wages are good, and that the Company tries to give everyone a square deal."

Interviewer: "Have you ever had occasion to go to the hospital since you started to work for the Company?"

Operator: "Only once. When I was hired they gave me one month to get glasses, and when the month was up they sent for me. I had my glasses by that time, so they were satisfied."

Interviewer: "Do you ever have any heavy lifting on this job?"

Operator: "No, we do not. I think the Company tries to get away from that heavy work as much as they can. At the present time they are putting in a new carrier system in this department."

CMG



May 30, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

9-7641

The operator was introduced by the Section Chief.

Interviewer: "How are you standing the heat?"

Operator: "I nearly went bugs yesterday. I am not accustomed to working inside on hot days."

Interviewer: "Have you heard the boys talking about the interviewing program?"

Operator: "No. I have not heard a word about it."

The interviewing plan was explained to the operator.

Interviewer: "How long have you worked for the Company?"

Operator: "I have eight months' service."

Interviewer: "How long have you been in this department?"

Operator: "I have always worked in this department."

Interviewer: "What kind of work did you do before you came to work for this Company?"

Operator: "I was a carpenter's helper for three years."

Interviewer: "Why did you quit that job?"

Operator: "Because the work was not steady."

Interviewer: "How do you like your present job?"

Operator: "I like this job fine. It is the kind of work I always wanted to do."

Interviewer: "How do your wages here compare with the wages you made at the building trade?"

Operator: "Well, I make less money per hour here, but I think that at the end of the year I will be money ahead. The building trade does not get in much time during the cold weather, and during the warmer months you lose time on rainy days.

"When a job is finished, it is up to you to cart your tools all around the city looking for another job."

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Interviewer: "Are you able to save any money on this job?"

Operator: "Yes. I am making payments on an automobile, and I am buying five shares of A. T. & T. stock."

Interviewer: "Is this work as dangerous as the carpenter's job?"

Operator: "No. It is not. When you work on one of the large buildings, you never know whether you are coming home alive or not. There are a great many men killed on those large jobs, but you never read about it in the newspapers. I have had several friends killed on the new Daily News building, but that was hushed up in a hurry. If you get hurt on a building you do not receive the attention that you do at the Company hospital. When I started to work for the Company I got a small blister on my hand, and I had to go over to the hospital every day until it healed up. While I was working on a building I ran nails almost through my foot, and I had to work several hours until the contractor had time to get me to a doctor. When you get hurt there, it is just another man hurt. I have seen men working in this department get a little scratch and they were hustled over to the doctor right away. That shows that the Company is anxious to take good care of their employees."

We talked of the dangers of the building trade for fifteen minutes.

Interviewer: "What do you think of the supervisors here?"

Operator: "They are tame compared to the building trade's bosses. Here they tell you to do something, and there they ordered you to do it. You should hear some of those boys cuss. They talked to the men worse than the Western Electric supervisors would talk to a dog."

CMG

7.

May 30, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

The operator was introduced by the Gang Chief.

Interviewer: "Well, how are you today?"

Operator: "All right."

Interviewer: "I suppose you feel fine after having a fifteen-minute rest period."

Operator: "I feel all right."

Interviewer: "Have you heard anything about the interviewing program?"

Operator: "No."

The interviewing program was explained to him.

Operator: "Everything is all right with me."

Interviewer: "What job are you on at the present time?"

Operator: "I run that cutting machine over there, and sometimes I roll paper."

Interviewer: "How is the job?"

Operator: "It is all right."

Interviewer: "What do you like about it?"

Operator: "I don't know, but I like it."

Interviewer: "How long have you been on this job?"

Operator: "Several years."

Interviewer: "What do you think about the Western Electric supervisors?"

Operator: "I have no kick about the bosses. They give me the job, and I run it out."

Interviewer: "How are the piece work earnings running?"

Operator: "About 50%."

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May 30, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "How much money can you average a week if the percentage runs 50%?"

Operator: "About \$25.00."

Interviewer: "Are you married?"

Operator: "No."

Interviewer: "I suppose you can save quite a bit of money every week."

Operator: "No. I give it all to my mother. I signed up for three shares of A. T. & T. stock a long time ago, but they never took any money out of my pay."

Interviewer: "Did you speak to your supervisor about it?"

Operator: "No. It does not make any difference to me."

Interviewer: "Do you think they will give you something better in a few years?"

Operator: "I don't know. I never think of that."

Interviewer: "Is there anything else that you like about your job?"

Operator: "Sometimes I supply the girls with work, and then I get a chance to move around."

Interviewer: "I suppose all the girls are hollering for service at the same time."

Operator: "No. They are not so bad, but they like to kid me once in a while."

Interviewer: "What do they kid you about?"

Operator: "Oh they all know that I am bashful, and when a new girl starts to work in the department, they tell me the new girl wants to know what my telephone number is."

Interviewer: "You must make quite a hit with the ladies?"

Operator: "No. I think they are only fooling me, but one girl did ask me to take her out."

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May 30, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "Did you take her?"

Operator: "No. I don't get enough spending money to take girls out. My mother only gives me \$2.00 a week, and then I knock down a few more dollars on her every pay day."

Interviewer: "How can you knock down any money, when they pay by check?"

Operator: "My mother does not like to cash a check, so I cash it at the bank before I go home."

Interviewer: "Is there anything else that you like or dislike around this plant?"

Operator: "I don't know what you mean."

Interviewer: "Are you satisfied with the job and all the bosses?"

Operator: "Yes. I get a kick out of everything."

Interviewer: "What do you mean by getting a kick out of everything?"

Operator: "I don't know. I like everything."

Interviewer: "What do you think you will be doing ten years from now?"

Operator: "I don't know."

Interviewer: "Do you think you will be married by that time?"

Operator: "I should be."

Interviewer: "Where do you live?"

Operator: "I live in Hawthorne."

They talked for ten minutes about the town.

Interviewer: "Where did you work before you came to the Western Electric Company?"

Operator: "I worked part time on a truck farm."

Interviewer: "How did you like farming?"

Operator: "All right."

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Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "Did you like it better than this job?"

Operator: "Yes."

Interviewer: "What did you like about it?"

Operator: "The day passed quicker than it does here."

Interviewer: "How do you account for that?"

Operator: "I don't know."

Interviewer: "Did you get your board and room when you worked on the farm?"

Operator: "No. All the boys slept at home, but they ate at the farmer's house."

Interviewer: "Did he serve good meals?"

Operator: "No. I couldn't eat his wife's cooking, so I brought my own lunch. The farmer's wife did not like the idea of me carrying my lunch, but I either had to do that or go without eating all day."

Interviewer: "Do you get a paid vacation this year?"

Operator: "Yes."

Interviewer: "I suppose you will spend it on the farm?"

Operator: "Sure."

They talked for about twenty minutes about farming. All the interviewer received was yes and no answers.

Interviewer: "How much schooling have you had?"

Operator: "I went to the Morton High School for two years."

Interviewer: "Did you take up public speaking?"

Operator: "Yes. Everyone had to take that up."

Interviewer: "Did you ever make any speeches?"

Operator: "Yes. We had to make four a year, but I only showed up once."

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May 30, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "Did you get a good mark that time?"

Operator: "No. I only got about a half of what the teacher thought I should have gotten."

Interviewer: "Are you sure there is nothing wrong around this place, or that there is nothing that you like or don't like?"

Operator: "Well, we do not have enough room on the bench. The typist keeps us waiting two days for shipping tickets, and the work piles up too much."

Interviewer: "Where are the lockers in this room?"

Operator: "They are down in the other end of the building."

Interviewer: "I suppose each man has his own locker?"

Operator: "No. They have a couple of men in each locker."

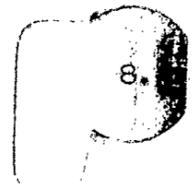
Interviewer: "Is there anything else you would like to add to this interview?"

Operator: "No. Everything is all right with me. I always tell people what I think, so if there was anything wrong I would not be afraid to tell you."

Interviewer: "Well, [REDACTED] it is getting pretty close to quitting time, so I guess we will call it a day. I am glad I met you, and I will see you again sometime."

Operator: "All right. So long."

CMG



June 7, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

I met this girl at her machine. I walked out of the room with her talking.

Interviewer: "Well, you are my next victim."

Operator: "Yes. I might as well have it over with."

So when we got to our destination we sat down and I explained the Interviewing Program to her. I looked at her for a few minutes after that and I said:

Interviewer: "Well, what do you want to talk about?"

Operator: "I don't like the overtime. I never worked as much overtime as I have lately. Sunday work is out of the question. I would rather stay home on Sunday than a week day. I am willing to help out once in a while, but every Sunday is too much. I worked last Sunday and then I was home two days during the week. That was on account of the holiday. During the week all of your friends are at work so what good does it do you to stay home? Give me Sunday off. That's all I want, and no overtime during the summer. I want the fresh air. I like to be out all I can in the warm weather. I know they have to get their schedules out, but if all of the girls worked steady we would not have that trouble. If the overtime and Sunday work keeps up I hope they transfer me to some other department. Other departments work straight time, and they get out the schedules required."

She then stopped and waited until I got finished writing this. She spoke up again without any questioning.

Operator: "The dyes they use on our material is terrible. At times we have material with fast colors. If they have this sometimes, why not all the time. Look at the color on my hands. The dye ruins your clothes and sometimes I go out of here and I look as if I have red hair instead of --. I also think this is injurious to your health. The lint flies from our material and we breathe that in all day. That is bad enough without the color coming off on our skin. The day work: if a person is waiting for our machines to be repaired we should get paid day work or else why don't they have two machinists on the job. Sometimes all of the machines are running all right and again several of them break down at the same time; then we have to wait. This morning it was eight fifteen before I started my work waiting for my machine to be repaired; then they wonder why

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June 7, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

Operator, Continued

you drop in your amounts. It doesn't do any good to tell him your machine was broken. I think they could have a way of signing up when you call the machinist and then they would know how long we waited and according to that could fix up our time. They would also know just what a mechanic had to do a day as well as how long we have to wait. There was a time when we got paid day work while our machines were repaired."

After a few minutes' silence I asked her what else she would like to say.

Operator: "I would like to get a transfer to some other department or else to be changed on another job in this department. The work I am doing now is tedious and the colors hurt my eyes."

Interviewer: "Did you speak to anybody about this?"

Operator: "I never asked my supervisor for a transfer because I heard he never wants to transfer anybody. If he would transfer me on other work in this department I would be satisfied. I feel I have as much right to that work as new operators. I was transferred to this department because the work I was doing left Hawthorne."

While she was waiting for me to finish writing she called my attention to the women who were working around in the restaurant.

Operator: "The work these women are doing in here is much healthier than my work." (Laughter)

She saw me writing this down then she said:

Operator: "I work very hard. I know I have given satisfaction. Many times I help the supervisor out, but I don't think he appreciated it because when it was time for me to get a transfer he did not care whether I was satisfied or not. This was the job that was open and I had to take it. Many times we have to work overtime because other operators tell the supervisor they want to work; they need the money. This very operator who tells him that stays home whenever she pleases. How would you like to come down some morning and then be told to go home because you worked Sunday. He claims he has extra help. He is crying around that he has no place for them. Those new operators can't turn out the work you can, but I had to go home. If they told me the night before I wouldn't care so much, but after you get up and get here - . Did you notice how we have to work under a stand. The machinist worked under this stand repairing

LA

June 7, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

Operator, Continued.

one of the machines and when he was through his clothes were wringing wet. I suppose they will leave that stand there all summer, and the girls will have to work underneath it."

I told her I did not notice it when I met her at her machine. She said:

Operator: "Don't forget. You go and look at it when you are all through. The reason for these stands is that they are remodeling the building.

"Our body needs the rest we get on Sunday. It is accustomed to that and it is hard for us to change. There should be a way of getting the work out without working on Sunday." (Silence for a few minutes)

Interviewer: "Where are you going on your vacation?"

Operator: "I want three weeks if I can get it. I want to leave the city. What will they do? Close the place down when the vacation period comes? That is July."

I explained the new vacation schedule to her then and she said she was glad that all of the girls were getting a chance in July.

Operator: "If they would take care of everything the way they do the vacations things would be all right here, but they don't do it."

Then she waited for me to finish writing. When I got through I looked at her and said:

Interviewer: "Are you saving anything?"

Operator: "Not down here, but I am saving. That is why I am working, so I can get ahead and have something later on."

I asked her if she was married and she said yes her husband was working and her mother lives with her. Then she talked about things in general for about five minutes and I asked her if she ever took any active part in any of the activities the Hawthorne Club sponsors for the employees.

Operator: "Yes, at the noon hour."

She enjoys the loud speaker. It is right in the room they

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Operating Branch-W.

are working in.

Operator: "When we are eating our lunch we get every word of it over the speaker. We have a great time watching one of the men in our department. Every time the Hawthorne Club has a program on he spends every minute in the department sitting up on a box all by himself listening to the program."

After a silence of about a minute I asked her if she liked the supervisors here as well as in the other department.

Operator: "The supervisor here is very hard to understand. I saw a girl go up to him to talk to him when he was coming down the aisle and he walked away and never answered her. He listened but did not say yes or no or I will let you know or anything else. That is one of the reasons why I hate to ask him about changing me on different work. If he would say, 'Well, in a month or two I will see what I can do for you,' but not a word."

"My previous supervisor did not do the right thing by me. When we got transferred over here all of the girls went on their vacations first because our work left Hawthorne, and when we came back this is all they offered me. I think he could have given me a better job than this. Before I went on my vacation the Personnel girl took me over to another department, but the machines were too high and I did not like the idea of reaching so high. I would like to get on rewinding. This morning he brought a girl from the other department and put her on the job I had my mind on. Maybe I am wrong. I suppose I ought to go up and ask him to give me a chance on the other work."

While waiting for me to finish writing she was watching me all the time and said:

Operator: "This job would not be so bad if they cut out Sunday. I was talking to one girl and she said, 'Oh, I have nothing to do on Sunday,' and I said to her, 'Why don't you go out in the air. That would be better for your health.'"

"The supervisor has no office in this building, and I don't think he likes to have the girls stop him in the aisle. In that way you don't know what to do. Some day when I think he is in a good mood I will brace up enough courage and ask him. It is hard to tell that by his expression. He looks the same always."

I advised her to speak to the Gang Boss and if he said to

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Speak to the supervisor, ask him when the proper time would be for her to go up to him.

Operator: "I don't think I am asking for much. I am willing to work in the same department if they only change me on white cotton so I can get off of the dyed cotton.

"In other departments they don't work on Sunday nearly as much as we do and overtime the same. The hours here are long enough without overtime. When we first started to work overtime I thought it would only be a few times. I understand they can't make you work on Sunday, but to avoid all trouble I come in.

"We had an instructor in the department I worked in before who was a wonderful woman. I worked near her and many times when I saw the girls doing their work wrong I would call her attention to it, and she always assured me she appreciated what I did because that gave her a chance to stop the defective work before it went through. I got along with her very nicely and I know she liked me. I often think I will go over to see her because she is in the other building, but I don't have the time because I would have to change my clothes and that can't be done in such a short time. I enjoyed my work when I worked for her. The day flew by and things seemed so different."

We talked with one another for a while and I asked:

Interviewer: "What is your day work rate now?"

Operator: "Now my day work rate is thirty-eight cents per hour. When I came over here I was reduced ten cents per hour. Since then I got a two cent raise. The reason for the change in rate is because I was day work and now this is a piece work job.

"What kind of a department has my previous super got? I hear he is still Foreman."

Interviewer: "I don't know."

Operator: "I heard he is in another department and the girls are satisfied. Now if he did the right thing he would have me transferred back to his department. When I worked for him I was well satisfied and I know I got the work out for him. The work is so dirty here. The dyes all come off on my clothes, and I don't ever feel like getting my hair marcelled. When I get my new job,

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Operator, Continued.
I will brace up again."

When this girl was leaving me I handed her a slip and told her what my name was; then I explained to her about this little slip and told her it was the time she spent in here with me and to give it to whoever took care of her time and she would get paid. She laughed and said:

Operator: "This is the first time I ever got paid for doing nothing. You can put it down too if you want."

June 14, 1929.
Operating Branch-III.

The interviewer explained the interviewing program to the man, what benefits were going to be derived from it, and all about the supervisory training course.

Operator: "As far as I know, it is the most wonderful place I have ever worked. The shop is kept clean, and I really can't find fault with working conditions."

They sat and talked about five minutes about the warm weather.

Interviewer: "I suppose you are getting along fine here?"

Operator: "Yes. The only trouble we ever have is with the rate department. The Company thinks that it costs too much money to have a rate man sit down and time every job. At least, that is what they tell me. They guess at a job when they rate it. They should have a man rate jobs who understands them and the work, so that he could set the right rate and give the men a square deal and a chance to make an honest living. They do not consider the time that it actually takes to do a job. They just take a look at the job and set down a rate for drilling that one hole. They don't take into consideration whether the hole is to be drilled by machine, or if the piece to be drilled is too big to be done by a machine and has to be done with a brace and bit. They don't consider if it takes five different tools to make that one hole or not. All they think of is to pay a man for drilling one hole, and they don't care how it is done. In some cases I have to drill a hole in a desk. Well, I have to get on my back with a brace and bit, and it may take an hour to do it. Still all I get paid for is drilling one hole, the same as if I had drilled it on a machine. I don't like to complain because I am earning my living here, but I'll tell you one thing. I have to work very hard to do it. I have to rush as much as my nerves will stand for from morning until night, and I always have to be on the jump to make a living wage."

They sat and talked about five minutes about rate men and about bum rates.

Interviewer: "That job seems to be quite hard."

Operator: "The job is not hard. It is the poor rates that make it hard. When I get a job with a poor rate, I really have to rush myself to death to make a good day's wages. I have experience on the job, I like it, I know how to sharpen all my tools, and I keep everything in shape. I do not like it one bit to have anyone touch my tools or use

CMS

June 14, 1929.
Operating Branch-II.

them. All I think of all day is different ways of making more money. You know, that after I do the same job ten times or more, I am always trying to find a better and easier way of doing it, so that it will make it easier for myself and also eliminate inspection troubles. Then it will come out better for myself and the Company."

About that time the man's Gang Boss passed by.

Interviewer: "Your Gang Boss seems to be a nice fellow."

Operator: "The Bosses are pretty good fellows. They are good to the fellows who do good work and do not have any trouble with their work in the inspection.

"There is one boss that I will never forget. He was a Foreman in one of the departments I worked in before. He was the best boss I ever had. He knew all about the jobs and the rates, and the rate men could not put anything over on him because he had worked on every one of those jobs at one time himself. When a rate man set a rate, he fought for us. He could look at any job and tell just what it should pay. He would tell the rate man that this job should pay so much, and another job should pay so much. Well, the result was that we always got fair rates. I could not help liking a boss who always fought for us like that."

For about five minutes they talked about that boss.

Interviewer: "How are things at home?"

Operator: "Oh, everything is all right. I have a nice family, and they are all in good health. I hope they always continue to be that way, because I am a poor man and really have no money to pay for doctor bills."

Interviewer: "I suppose you manage to save a few dollars now and then?"

Operator: "No. I can't save any money. You know, I have a father and mother in the old country, and when I have a few dollars to spare I send it to them, as they are very old and I have to help them out. Then I have four children to support, so that does not leave me much to save. Look at my hands. See the way they are all cut up, and how nearly every one of my fingers have been injured at some time or other? Well, that is from hard work and from trying to make a decent living for them and my wife. You know, when I can't give them the things that I'd like to and when rates are poor, then is when I feel very bitter towards this Company. All I can think of is that they are unfair, but then I guess

CLE

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Operating Branch-II.

I am just like anyone else. When I get good rates, I forget about the bad ones, and I tell everybody what a good Company this is."

They talked about his four children for about five minutes, and then the interviewer asked if he had anything more that he wanted included in this interview.

Operator: "No. That is enough now. I have really done more kicking than I ought to. What do you do with this interview now?"

The interviewer explained what was done with the interview.

Operator: "I suppose when they read that upstairs, they will think I am just nothing but an old crab."

Interviewer: "No. They will not. They are glad to get some of your ideas."

Operator: "I hope they don't make trouble for me anyway."

The interviewer assured him that ^{they} he would never give him any trouble on account of the interview.

The interviewer shook hands with the man and told him that he hoped everything would be all right, that he hoped to meet him again some day, and then left him.

While walking back to his machine, the interviewer explained that the operator would be paid his average earnings, so the operator would not lose any money for the time that he was being interviewed.

CLG

10.

June 29, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

The interviewer spent several minutes explaining the program to the operator. The operator started talking almost immediately after the program had been explained.

Operator: "I am satisfied with everything, but I got a bum deal some time back. I was taken off from a good job and placed on a job where I couldn't make anything. I asked the Foreman several times about it but he never paid any attention to me until about a month ago when he transferred me back."

Interviewer: "That didn't seem to be treating you quite fair."

Operator: "I did that work before and they put me back on it. I was making one hundred per cent on this job before when the Foreman took me off. That is the only kick that I have around here. My average will go way down and I'll get very little pay for my vacation."

Interviewer: "Have you planned what you are going to do during your vacation?"

Operator: "Yes, I am going to spend one week here in Chicago and will probably spend the other up in Wisconsin."

Interviewer: "How did you get along on the old job before they took you off of it?"

Operator: "Fine. I like it much better than the work they transferred me to because it caused me to have dizzy spells now and then. My eyes would hurt and get blurred about twice a week. I told the Foreman about this but he never did anything about it."

Interviewer: "Did you go to the doctor about your eyes?"

Operator: "Yes, I have them looked over every year to see if the glasses need changing. Another thing about the Foreman is that I asked him for a pass for the hospital for a cold and he came back with the remark, 'Did you ever spend fifteen cents for cough medicine?' I don't think that was decent of him, do you?"

Interviewer: "No, I don't think that he should have made a remark like that."

HL

June 29, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Operator: "They gave me first class attention over at the hospital when he finally did let me go.

"As far as the Gang Bosses go in this department, they are all right. The service was poor for a while but they added another Gang Boss and that took a great deal of the load from the one Gang Boss and the service improved. I am satisfied with the pay I am making now."

Interviewer: "Do you think you would be satisfied to work here all your life?"

Operator: "I am going to night school down town and am interested in trying to improve myself. I realize that I haven't the chance here without an education. I never tried going to the Hawthorne school because I didn't think their credits were any good any place else.

"The Foreman put me back on the old job about a month ago. I didn't make the rate on that job because I couldn't see the work. It is too fine for me."

Interviewer: "Do you ever do anything to try to get in good condition for work?"

Operator: "I go over to the gymnasium twice a week to work out. I think it is a fine thing for the employees. I think they ought to give us more instruction on the parallel bars. We have been playing too much indoor ball in the gym class.

"I expect that most of the men complain about the clock. It is a wonder that someone hasn't been hurt. They had three clocks at one time for the operators in this department, but they have completely done away with two of them."

Interviewer: "Have you ever heard of any of the fellows talking about this interviewing program before?"

Operator: "The Foreman goes around here like an old grouch. He never says 'Good Morning' to anyone. He seems to be softer lately especially more so than he did some time ago. This interviewing program is a good thing for him.

"The old Foreman was swell compared to this bird. He

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showed that he was interested in the men. Another thing, we have to wait around here for apparatus and I lose time doing it. Under the old Foreman we didn't have to do it."

Interviewer: "You seem to be pretty well satisfied now since you are back on the old job again."

Operator: "Yes, I make good money and I like the work. I am afraid I won't get much vacation money because they will take our average earnings and I didn't make anything at all before they put me back on my old job."

HL

June 10, 1929,
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "It looks as though you have a nice easy job there."

Operator: "I have the hardest job in the Plant. That is the trouble, everybody thinks that I have an easy job."

Interviewer: "Have you heard of the Interviewing Program?"

Operator: "No, what do you want?"

Interviewer told the operator what the Company was trying to accomplish and he told him how he could help the Company to avoid making mistakes if he would tell some of his experiences.

Operator: "Well, I have had plenty of experiences. Everybody thinks I have an easy job and it is the hardest in the Plant. Do you know what I am doing?"

Interviewer: "No, I don't know anything about your work."

Operator: "I am grinding up these tubes and the machine has to do perfect work. The rate man thinks that my job is easy. He has made the rate too low. Whenever he makes a timing he thinks that I am cheating him. I chased him away the last time he came over because he wanted me to run the machine faster. I am only about one thousandth variation in the tool and that means that I must do perfect work. It is impossible to run the machine fast and do good work at the same time. Do you know our general foreman?"

Interviewer: "I have met him."

Operator: "Well, not long ago he asked me if I wanted my pension. I told him that when I became a parasite on the gang that I would take a pension."

Interviewer: "You won't be a parasite for a long time."

Operator: "How old do you think I am?"

Interviewer: "Oh I don't think that you are more than fifty."

Operator: "I am sixty-two and if I should take a pension I would have to look for another job. Why should I do that as long as I can do my work here."

"The engineer that worked on my machine doesn't know very much. He is like most of the big fellows, he doesn't want to work."

AM

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Operating Branch-M.

He thinks that he can sit upstairs and figure out what is wrong but that is impossible. A man has got to sit down beside a machine and study it in order to make it work. How do you suppose I know how to fix the machine?"

Interviewer: "I don't know."

Operator: "I take forty or fifty tubes and run them through the machine and then I listen to the sound that the grinders make. If they don't sound right I change them a little bit and when I get the right sound I know that the tubes will come out all right. This engineer tried to figure a way to set the grinders on a piece of paper but he could not get it right because he didn't want to study the machine. He is afraid to get his hands dirty. We have had trouble with the machine and finally I would get it running properly. Then the engineer would bring his boss down and one day I heard him tell his boss that he had the machine operating perfectly.

"I want to tell you something else about him. I am the only one who knows this. I have not told anyone before but I want to tell you because you have told me that this is confidential and that the Company wants to know these things. One day this engineer was feeling the stone and instead of running his hand against the stone he ran it the same way that the stone was turning and before he knew it his hand was in the grinder and he lost his middle finger. He didn't tell the hospital how he hurt his finger. He told them some other story because he thought that he would look foolish if he told them the way he had the accident. I saw what he was doing with my own eyes and that is the reason I tell you. I don't believe in repeating something that someone else has told me but when I see it with my own eyes I don't mind telling it."

The operator borrowed the interviewer's pencil and explained to him how the machine operates and he also explained why it was so difficult to set the grinders.

Interviewer: "That must be very difficult. When I saw you operating your machine I thought that you had an easy job. That shows how easy it is for a fellow to make a mistake."

Operator: "Yes, but you realize that you were wrong. These other fellows don't know enough to realize when they are wrong. A man has to study all the time. Do you know Mr. X?"

Interviewer: "No, I don't know him but I have heard his name."

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Operator: "He knew a lot about rubber. He was studying all the time. He could walk by the place where they are mixing the compound and cut off a piece and smell it. Then he would tell the operator just what he should do with the compound to make perfect rubber. That is something that no one else has been able to do. He was very good to all of us. If I needed something all I had to do was to ask him for it. He could stand beside an operator for one minute and tell him how to do his work more efficiently. I learned all that I know from him.

"I have had to work hard all my life. I was a meat cutter. I worked at that trade for over twenty years. I hardly remember my mother. My father tried to make a tailor out of me. I had to pull out basting threads when I was a boy and run out and get whiskey for the tailor. I didn't like that job at all so I ran away. I came to Chicago and worked in the packing houses. I am an expert at cutting meat. I can cut every bone out of a pig and still leave the pig whole.

"Do you know that the packing houses made Chicago? I worked in a good many of them. Rockefeller financed Swift when he started. Old man Swift was a fine fellow. He was not afraid to work. Louis Swift was the same way. I was glad to help him learn the packing business any time I could because he was not afraid to get his hands dirty. He used to come out and sit alongside of me for hours learning how to do the job. After he learned the job he would come out and run his hands into a big pile of trimmings to see if the trimmers were throwing away any good meat. That is the way he got ahead.

"He sent me to Kansas City when they opened their packing plant there. I went there for a little while but my wife would not go so I had to come back. Do you remember Mr. Y? He was head of the Packers' Union. He had that Union so strong that nothing could break it. What do you think they did to him then? They gave him a big government job and the Packers' Union has been bad ever since he got out of it. That is the trouble with this Company. There is too much graft and crookedness. I got out of the Union then and came to work with the Western Electric. I was getting eighteen and a quarter cents an hour. I worked on the shipping platform. That shows you that I am not afraid to work. When they started this department I came over here and I did all kinds of heavy work. Before long they gave me a chance to run the hand grinders. The Foreman taught me how to run these machines but I had to study things out for myself. I was a Gang Boss for a long time and I liked to help everybody but I had to stop because they said that I thought I knew it all. Do you know anything about the Bible?"

Interviewer: "I know something about it."

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Operator: "Do you know what the Life of Christ shows us?"

Interviewer: "No, I don't believe I do."

Operator: "Love - every act and every word that He spoke was full of love. What did He say when He was on the Cross? He said, 'Father forgive them they know not what they do.' When He had risen from the grave what did He do when Thomas would not believe Him? He held out His hand so that Thomas could feel the scar. *1/1/29 see below*

"Do you know Christian Science teaches a beautiful thought? It teaches love but it is commercialized. They are for the money. That spoils all the good that they could do with their religion.

"My mother did a lot of good when she was living. I can remember the people in the neighborhood use to bring their children to her. They came to her with all kinds of trouble but she never took one penny from them. Before she died she said, 'I am sorry I cannot stay in this world to help you. You will have to grow up without me. Try to learn to be a good man.' She knew she was going to die. I was only eight years old then and I have only a faint recollection of her.

"When I came to the Western Electric I used to go around with the fellows. We had ball games and five or six of us would go over to the saloon from work and we would stay there until it was time for the ball game. We always had a lot of beer and we were feeling pretty good by the time the game started. One day I went to the saloon and waited for the rest of the fellows. I ordered a stein of beer and drank it. I waited about a half hour but none of the fellows came. I ordered another stein of beer and I started to drink that but I could only take one swallow. I waited a while for the fellows but they didn't come. I tried to finish the beer but I couldn't drink it so I went home. When I got home my little girl said, 'Daddy won't you go to church with me tomorrow?' I told her, 'No' but the next day I went anyway. I have been studying the Bible since that day. I go to a little church in Oak Park now. We have a very fine minister. The first Sunday he was in church he preached a fine sermon. The next Sunday he called me over and showed me some of the letters that he had received from the congregation. He said that they didn't like his sermon because it hurt them. I said, 'Doctor, I hope next Sunday you can preach a sermon that will hurt me.' That is the trouble with people nowadays-- they don't want to be hurt. *1/1/29*

"That is the cause of my trouble here. I said things that

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hurt someone. There are too many men in this Plant that never did a days work in their life. Our rate man is one of them. He is a parasite. He was in the Inspection Department and all he ever did was to destroy work that we had completed. He made the Company believe that he was working hard but he was not. 'Doubting Thomas.' The Western is full of them.

"Not long ago the engineer came over to my machine with a stop watch. I pushed him away. I said, 'What are you going to do with that thing?' He said, 'I want to see how fast you are going.' That made me mad and I told him, 'If you want to know how fast I am going ask me and I will tell you.' I know what I am doing all right. I am making five hundred tubes an hour."

Interviewer: "The engineer didn't think that you knew very much about your work."

Operator: "No, and a lot of others thought the same thing. Do you know Mr. Z?"

Interviewer: "I don't know him personally."

Operator: "I could have told him all of these things and it would have made it bad for someone. I learned a lot from Mrs. Eddy's Book. She teaches us to love everyone.

"You know I was a gang boss and I was taken off because another gang boss went to the Foreman with a lot of lies. The engineer and the rate man told him things about me too. He didn't realize how much I knew about the work here and they took me off a machine and put me in another gang. I took this punishment without complaint and I tried to think good of all of them. I help them now whenever they ask me to. I like to help anyone that is not afraid to work. I have kept all of these things to myself because I knew that some day the Company would send someone to ask me about them.

"I think the department is running pretty well now. The man they have in charge of the gang that is making the rubber understands his work well. He is improving the rubber all the time. Whenever I find something wrong with the rubber I go over and tell him about it. He always is glad to have me do this because he knows that I know good rubber when I see it. That man has worked hard all his life and he has studied rubber until he understands how it should be made. I think they realize that they made a mistake when they took me away from my machine. They had a lot of trouble with the machine when I was gone and I guess they found out that my job was not as easy

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as it looked. The Gang Boss seems to be trying to make up for some of the things that he did to hurt me. The other day he asked me to help him fix another man's machine. He told me that I knew more about it than he did and that he would appreciate it if I would get the man's machine running. The Foreman talks very nicely to me now. He tells me things that he doesn't tell the rest of the gang. I think he realizes that he made a mistake. The thing that pleases me most is that they are coming to me and trying to make up for their mistakes. I am glad that I have kept all of my troubles to myself because I believe that they will treat me better from now on."

Interviewer: "I am glad that you are being treated better now and I hope it will continue."

Operator: "I like to see a young man that wants to work and study get ahead. I like to see a college man come into the shop to get experience. When one of these fellows come over and ask me something I find out if they are really afraid to work. If they are not I do anything I can to help them."

Interviewer: "Well I want to thank you for what you have told me and I hope that we can do a lot of good with your interview."

Operator: "I don't expect any benefit for myself from the things that I have told you but if the Company can make the plant better for the young fellows that are starting here I will be very glad."

AM

12.

July 5, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

After being seated the operator was asked if he had heard something of the interviewing program. His answer was, "Yes, I've heard something about it."

The interviewer then explained the program to him. First giving him the history; then telling him of the present operations, and what we intend to do in the future. This was followed by the explanation of the subject we wished him to talk about, and ~~was~~ the reason for his doing it.

Operator: "I'm getting treated all right down here. There was a time when I wasn't, and I wanted to get out, so I went to the Foreman about it. The rates are pretty poor on some of these jobs. The rate on the job that I was on at that time was one dollar and fifty cents a hundred. Then just to show you how low it was, they later made it three dollars a hundred, but the boss took care of me all right, and I needed it then too because my wife was in the hospital.

"As far as the bosses are concerned I'm satisfied all right. The trouble is when we have one good job we don't know when we'll have another one. It would be a good idea to get electric lights on machines in here. On this locker question, mine is right by the clock. It's too darn close. When I change my clothes at the locker, the door is right in the way of the fellows punching in; so I have to go away over in the corner. I have to wait until they all get out from there before I can hang my clothes up and then they called me in the office for punching in twenty-eight minutes after. I notice lots of fellows hang outside until the twenty-five minute whistle."

Interviewer: "How long have you been working here?"

Operator: "One year last August. I worked here before in another department, but they got slack, and they shifted me until they finally had me down painting frames; so I quit. That's a regular laborers job, and the painting had a funny smell that I couldn't stand."

There was a pause here of about three minutes.

Operator: "Well, that is about all I have to say."

At this time the interview was about fifteen minutes long.

EAD

July 5, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "Well, possibly you have some more things to tell me that you haven't thought of yet. We have plenty of time, and you'll probably think of something more later. Are you set for your vacation?"

Operator: "Yes, I get one week in August. That is five weeks yet. I notice they are checking up on a lot of those rates."

Interviewer: "Have they changed any of them yet?"

Operator: "They don't change them the way I look at it. If they raise them, it's about two cents. Some of them are so low that nobody, no matter how good you were or if you had four hands, could not make out. Some of the jobs are so particular too, and yet they want you to make out. It seems to me that the bad jobs last the longest."

Interviewer: "Did you do this sort of work before you came here?"

Operator: "I ran a milling machine over at McCormicks. You know I pretty nearly lost my patience after working a month at no more than day rate. Twenty-seven dollars a week didn't look like much to me when my wife was sick."

Interviewer: "You haven't made any mention yet, of things you liked here. We are just as interested in knowing what you like or think is good, as we are in what you think is bad."

Operator: "Well, the firm is all right, and the bosses are good. I can go up to the Foreman any time and talk to him."

Interviewer: "What does the firm do to make you think it is all right?"

Operator: "Well, they do everything all right; for instance what you're doing. You are trying to help the employees. Everything is all right but the rates. A piece worker ought to make at least thirty-five dollars a week. They keep the place clean around here, and there are a lot of windows which make it cool."

The operator here went into another lengthy discourse on the rates, but saying nothing new about them, and finishing up with this remark, "Western Electric, I like to work for them, but I never know how things turn up. The vacation is a mighty nice thing. I'm going to

EAD

July 5, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

get a week on a year's service. Some of these jobs must be rated for speed only. I don't think they made any allowance for sharpening tools or anything. Of course a lot of the jobs I'm speaking of I did not run, but the fellows tell me about them. Of course lately I'm making better money and am better satisfied. When I needed it the most was when I got the worse work, but when I went to the Foreman, he spoke very nice to me, and saw to it that I had a better job."

Interviewer: "Oh, yes, I almost forgot to get you name and clock number."

Operator: "I suppose you hear a lot about the rates?"

Interviewer: "Yes, I hear about rates and plenty of other things. It doesn't matter what particular thing you talk about as long as you think it's either good or bad."

Operator: "Well, I don't know of anything else. I figure that if I have the chance to average about thirty-five dollars a week, I'm satisfied."

Interviewer: "All right, we'll call it quits till next year."

FLP-EAD

13.

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

After explaining the entire interviewing program to her she said:

Operator: "I have only two complaints and that is about my job and my Gang Boss and his assistant. They seem to keep me doing the same thing so long that I get tired of it. I don't think it is fair to me because I am acquainted with the work that I should be made to do it every time this particular job comes in. I feel some of the other girls can be broken in or taught the work just as well as I.

"I don't think the aisles should be so congested. They are crowded with boxes and pans. I tear my stockings, and I cannot afford to buy silk stockings every day."

Interviewer: "Have you ever mentioned to your supervisor about the congested condition of the aisles?"

Operator: "I have not even mentioned it because I do not think it would do any good because there is a lot of work and a small space to put it into. They see these conditions just as well as I do. They know we really have not room enough. That is all I have to complain about; otherwise I am satisfied. The girls are very nice to work with."

Interviewer: "Do you know many of the girls in the department?"

Operator: "I know practically all of the girls in the department. There is a new gang which just came in lately, and I am not so well acquainted with these girls. They all seem very pleasant. They smile at me when I walk down the aisle."

Interviewer: "How long have you been on this work you are now doing, and do you like it?"

Operator: "My job is a dirty job and one of the hardest jobs in the department. There is really too much responsibility. The parts are very often loose and cracked. This is some of the work I worry about."

Interviewer: "Is there any work in the department you like to do better?"

Operator: "I am satisfied with all of the work in the gang but this particular job. I do not feel I am getting enough money for it. I

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July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

have not complained about my rate because I was given a raise very recently so I suppose I am making enough money for the job I am doing."

Interviewer: "Have you ever worked in any of the other departments in the Western Electric?"

Operator: "I am in hopes that I will not be put in any other department because I like the girls and the work but this one job. It would be all right if I was not kept on it so steady or so long a time. Some of the girls should be given a chance to learn it."

Interviewer: "You say you have only two grievances, and am I to take it from that that you are satisfied with all the things the Company has to give?"

Operator: "I think the vacation time which the Company has scheduled this year is fine. I have always wanted these two weeks of the year so it just came in fine for me.

"I have the Ready Money Plan, and I think it is fine because I am not able to save any money. If I was to depend on myself to put this money away each week, I would always have some other place to put it. This way the Company takes it out of my pay and I never miss it."

Interviewer: "Your supervisors are all nice aren't they?"

Operator: "They are all right. I think it is his responsibility to get the work out and he just doesn't want to take time to break any of the girls in on this particular job. That is why I am getting this bum work all the time. I don't say I dislike him for that. He is fair and square in everything else, but this one thing, and he expects me to do the work and not complain about it."

Interviewer: "Have you ever spoken to your supervisor regarding this job you do not like?"

Operator: "He knows it. He can tell by the expression on my face every time he gives it to me, but he knows I understand the work and he gives it to me everytime the work comes in, and I should do it without any complaints."

Interviewer: "You say you are practically satisfied with everything else and you have no comments to give on anything else?"

Operator: "I am satisfied with everything. There are no other complaints I have to make but what I have already told you about."

LA

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N-Operating Branch-M.

The operator was introduced to the interviewer by the Section Boss.

Interviewer: "Let's go over and sit by the window where it is real cool."

Operator: "Fine. That is what I am looking for, a real cool place, as it is very warm tonight."

Interviewer: "I suppose you have heard some of the boys talking about this interviewing program."

Operator: "Yes. I have heard quite a bit about it. I have heard quite a few of the boys talking in the shop about it, but there is one thing that I don't quite understand. I don't understand how this interviewing could be confidential, as some of the boys told me that you have been taking their names and clock numbers."

Interviewer: "The names and clock numbers that I have been taking are only for a check purpose. We have a list the same as is used at election time, and all we do is check your name off of the list to see that you have been interviewed."

Operator: "Then that is why you have been taking names and clock numbers?"

Interviewer: "Yes, for that reason only."

Operator: "That is fair enough."

Interviewer: "What do you think of this interviewing program?"

Operator: "I think it is a very fine thing, only I know that lots of these fellows are not telling you the things they really should. There are lots of them who could have told you more if they had wanted to, but they were very foolish according to my way of thinking in holding it back."

Interviewer: "How are you getting along with the Company?"

Operator: "Well I have been here about eight years now, and I am getting along fine. Only I think I have not been treated right, that is, on the matter of wages. I have been doing a certain job for two and a half-years

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July 8, 1929.
N-Operating Branch-M.

or three years, and while I was on that job I was supposed to be a helper, but I was really doing the job myself and the other fellow who was with me was doing the helping. I was really doing the other man's work by feeding the machines, and he was doing the helper's work. I felt at that time that I really should have had more money for the work I was doing. I had always worked very hard and could do all of the jobs on that class of work in the department. Even though I mentioned it to the boss, I never got more money. Some time later the man who was supposed to be actually running the job on that machine, died. After he died, I got full charge of the machines. There were two machines of that kind, and the other fellow who worked on the other one quit because he could not get more money. Then I was the only one left who could run those machines. Of course I had helpers now and then, but it was a long time before they got another man who could run the other machine. At that time they gave me a small raise, but I was not entirely satisfied with it. About six months later I was put on the night shift, and I was all by myself on the machine again. I thought I would ask for more money, and when I did it caused quite a bit of trouble between the Foreman and myself. He promised me at that time that he would give me more money, and he even made a note of it, but he never gave it to me. He just simply forgot about it. I waited a while, and then went up to him and asked again. Then he told me that he had been looking up the records and that I had had a raise six months ago, and that it was impossible to give me another raise. I explained to him that I was on nights doing that job all alone, getting out the work right, not having any rejections or any trouble, and I felt that I should have a few cents more an hour. He simply told me that I could not get it. When I came in the following night I asked for a different job. Well that night I was given a different job by the Gang Boss, and I worked that whole night on this machine. When I came in the next night, they would not let me start the work. The Gang Boss told me to go home and come back in the morning and see the Department Chief. I came in the following morning, and the Foreman did not give me a chance to say a word. He started hollering and wanted to know what the h--- was the matter with me. He said, 'What the h--- is the matter with you? Are you getting on a high horse or something like that?' I said, 'No. I came to work last night as usual, and I was sent home because I had asked to work on a different machine.' He bawled me out something terrible, and he started to tell that I was an ungrateful pup. The reason that he said that was because some time ago I had an accident outside of the Company, and my hand had been injured very badly. He had helped me to get my job back. Well they finally put me on a different machine, but what made me mad was the way the Foreman hollered at me and would not listen to any reason

CMG

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at all. So right after that they hired a new man and put him on my old job, and now they are paying him \$.71 an hour. They are only paying me \$.53 an hour on the same job. I did not expect the \$.71 an hour, but I thought I was entitled to at least a few pennies more than I am getting now. What I did not like and the thing that hurt me the most was that when I asked for the second raise the Foreman told me I could quit or do anything that I liked, and that he would not care. He threw it up to me again that he had helped me out when I had an accident outside of the Company about two years ago, and that really hurt me. I did not like it. If a man does anything for me, I don't like to be told about it every so often."

Interviewer: "That did not seem quite right."

Operator: "Of course, I felt grateful to the Company for keeping me working after I had injured my hand. I thought it was wonderful for them to give me back my job."

Interviewer: "I suppose you have a better job now?"

Operator: "Well, it isn't really a job that I care for very much, but even at that it is much lighter work than the other job I had. It is agreeable with me, and I can handle it better than the other job."

Interviewer: "Then you still think this is a fair Company to work for?"

Operator: "Yes. I certainly do. I think they treated me pretty nice at the time that I was hurt. At that time I was called up to the Personnel Department, and when I went there the man in the Personnel Department did absolutely everything that he could for me. He made arrangements to put me back to work even though my hand was injured pretty badly. Not only that, I was paid my wages for the time that I was off, and that was the best part of the whole thing."

Interviewer: "Are you still working for your same Foreman?"

Operator: "Yes, but I have not had much to do with the Foreman since that time, I really do not have any contact with him, because I am working nights. He is always gone home when I come to work, and I don't get to see him at all any more."

Interviewer: "Is that fellow who brought you here your Gang Boss or Section Boss?"

CLG

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Operator: "Well, I don't know if he is really a Gang Boss or a Section Boss. He is our night boss, and he is a friendly fellow. It does not make any difference what you ask him, you can get a favor from him at any time you ask for it. He is a wonderful fellow, and is always willing to help me out with my work. I like him very well."

Interviewer: "Do you like the job you have now as well as the last one?"

Operator: "Well I never did care for the other job, as it was very heavy work and I never had asked for that job. The job was really wished on me, and I had complained about getting off quite a few times. They kept on hiring new men, but could not get anyone to stick to the job, and that was the reason I had to stay on it all the time until finally they got a man who was experienced. He had got his experience in some shop outside the plant, and he is a good man on the job. He is the fellow who is in my place now."

Interviewer: "Is there anything else that you would like to tell me?"

Operator: "No. I really told you all I wanted to say when I told you about how I was mistreated on rates, and that I thought my Foreman was unfair in throwing up the few little things that he had done for me. It hurt me very much at that time, but that is really the only thing that I could complain of."

Interviewer: "Well all right then. If you have nothing more you may go back to your work, and your time will be taken care of."

The operator and interviewer shook hands and said good-bye.

CMG

15

October 7, 1930.
Operating Branch.

234-24310-1K7-4K60.

2435-2312-3221.

I: "Good morning Miss Dash. How are you this morning?"

E: "Oh, not so good on a rainy day."

I: "Yes, it does seem dreary out doesn't it?"

E: "I don't like rain."

I: "I guess nobody does although we have to have it."

E: "I was interviewed before on nights."

I: "Were you?"

E: "Yes, I was so scared to talk. I didn't tell the woman hardly anything. You know it is quite new."

I: "You're not going to be afraid of me are you?"

E: "Oh no, I'm not so silly now. I've learned a few things since I have been here."

I: "Well, here we are Miss Dash."

E: "Oh, this is nice."

I: "Do you like it?"

E: "Yes, I do. It is very nice."

"You know I worked ten months nights."

I: "You did? How did you like it?" ✓

E: "Oh, I didn't mind it. I slept all day long. It didn't bother me at all. It was a little bit funny at first. Towards morning you'd get kind of a dizzy feeling in your head but it goes away after a while. You know now when I think of it it is just like a dream. I'd never really think that I really worked so long. I liked night work for one reason, because you could save more money. You see you haven't got any time to spend it like you have on days."

BMS

Now I go window shopping and when I see something I buy it. Before when I worked nights I couldn't do that. I guess all girls are that way though. It certainly makes a difference in your pay, these short hours, although I suppose it is all right for a while but I hope it isn't forever. Another thing I liked about night work, most of the bogeys weren't so hard like they are on days. When we came back on days they raised all the bogeys. I suppose you can make them if you're long enough on the job but now that work is so slack you have to do almost anything they give you in order to keep going all day. Of course you can't blame them, you ought to be glad you've got a job. I am not complaining about the job at all. I am perfectly satisfied. You know I started to work here when I was a minor."

I: "You did?"

E: "Yes, but that time they transferred my job to Seventy-Fourth Street. My mother wouldn't let me go that far. You see we live in Cicero. That would be quite a ways to go on the street car so she made me quit. I really didn't want to but she made me do it. Do you live in Cicero?"

I: "No, I don't."

E: "Isn't it funny, when you tell somebody you live in Cicero, they look at you so funny."

I: "Did I look at you funny?"

E: "Oh no, not you but the girls around here. They think when you live in Cicero it is a bad place, but I think they're crazy. I know there are a lot of other bad places to live besides Cicero."

I: "I should say there are."

E: "Oh, it doesn't bother me what people think."

"I suppose it is up to me to tell you what is on my mind."

I: "If you care to."

E: "You know now there is not much to say when they're laying people off. Are you married?"

I: "No, I'm not. What makes you ask that?"

E: "Oh, I don't know what made me ask you that. You know there are

EJS

so many married women around here, almost every other one is married. What is the use of getting married nowadays if you have to work. I think a person is foolish to work for a man. I guess I'll be an old maid and then I won't have to work for any. My mother says she was going to go looking for a job. You see my father only worked a few days and my brother he is not working at all. You know my brother went down to Kansas and he went to Colorado and South Dakota and through all those states trying to find a job. He thought maybe it would be better if he went out of the city but he says it is worse. You know he's got stranded down there in Colorado and he wrote home and asked us to send him money to come home. I sent him money but he hasn't got a job yet so far. The other three boys that went with my brother, they were so disgusted. They wouldn't come back. They went and joined the army down in Texas. Well, now they'll have a job for three years." (Employee was laughing)

"My father and I are the only ones working. You see my little money doesn't mean much and my father only works three days. Of course I have a brother who is crippled. He had infantile paralysis when he was a small boy but he is learning a trade somewhere in some dental college. He is getting only thirteen dollars a week. That just about keeps him going. You know, he is not really crippled like some people are from that disease. He gets around real well. He even goes skiing. He does almost everything what all the other boys do but he isn't very strong so he could never do hard work. My mother doesn't care if he only earns thirteen dollars a week. She says it is better if he earns a little money. What if he would have to stay in a wheel chair like some children. He is only seventeen years old. He is full of pep. He doesn't mind being crippled a little bit. He plays football too. You ought to see him go. His one foot is only a little bit shorter. I don't think it means so much to him because he was a little baby and he never noticed it. You know some children when they are crippled they really think that they shouldn't do anything but my brother isn't that way. I am mighty glad for him because if he didn't he would be a burden to my mother. It sure makes it hard when your dad hasn't got a good job. I am kind of worried that they're going to lay me off too. It is so hard to find a job now. You know my girl friend used to work here and she has been out of work for six months. She can't find a thing. She said to me, 'Gee, tell me where to look for a job'. I said to her, 'My goodness, how can I tell you where to look for a job. If I were you I'd apply at the steamship company. Maybe you can take a trip across the ocean'. She said to me, 'Oh, don't be silly'." (Employee was laughing).

"You know our family, it seems funny. We never could own our own

BKS

home like some people. We've had an awful lot of sickness."

I: "You did?"

E: "Yes, my mother was sick for about two years."

I: "She was?"

E: "Yes."

I: "What seems to be the trouble with your mother?"

E: "Oh, almost everything. I really couldn't put my finger on one thing."

I: "Did she have a doctor?"

E: "Oh yes, she has been doctoring all the time. I suppose it is change of life. We never could save any money. My kid brother, one year he broke one arm and the next year he broke the other so it was one continuous bill after the other. Gee, isn't it funny, some people don't care to work and others can't find a job. It is terrible hard, this world is. You know if I would have had listened to my mother I wouldn't have to work in a factory, but my folks are not very strict. They let us do things on our own hook. My mother said to me, 'Now I am not going to tell you to go to school if you don't want to. You ought to know better'. Of course I've had more education than some girls. I've had almost two years high school and then I went to continuation school so that made me a sophomore. You see I had a girl friend and she quit school. She got a job down here and she coaxed me. She said, 'Oh, it is much better to make a lot of money than go to school', so I quit school and came here. I don't mind working in a factory. I suppose if my folks insisted upon me going to school I would have gone but they don't care. They just think, well, if you don't want to do it don't, and then I can't blame her, and if I didn't have that girl friend of mine coax me why I suppose I would have been in school yet. I could go to night school but I'm afraid I wouldn't go all the time as long as I haven't got anybody to go with. You know I am afraid I haven't enough will power. I am so hopeless."

I: "What makes you say that?"

E: "Well, I'm twenty-one years old. I ought to have enough brains to go and do what I think is right. I haven't my own mind. I don't know what is the matter with me. I just don't know what to do. I just don't fit in with the girls. I never did. I suppose if I told

END

you I've never been to a dance in my life you wouldn't believe it."

I: "Sure I would. There are a lot of girls who don't go to dances."

E: "Oh, there are very few who don't go to dances. I have a girl friend who goes to dance and she tells me all about it. When she tells me all the things they do and how they treat her, why I think that I don't care to go. Oh, I went to the ballroom up here when my father's lodge ran a banquet and that is the only time. Well, I can dance but I don't care to go to public dance halls. Now I don't want you to think I'm a man hater. You know I get heart failure when I think of some of the things people do and say."

I: "What do you mean?"

E: "Oh, I suppose you think I'm funny."

I: "No, I don't."

E: "Well, I'd rather go home and read. My whole family, they like to read. My father, he gets up and sits down and he lays down and he does everything just to read a book and my brother reads all night. You know I've gotten this habit that I just can't go to bed. I stay up to read till two o'clock in the morning sometimes."

I: "Don't you think that is bad for your health?"

E: "Oh no, it isn't. I never go anywhere. My life is just one thing after another, the same thing over. Now let me tell you. It is like this. Well, yesterday my girl friend came over and we went to show went home and went to bed. Tomorrow night I come home and read and go to bed, and get up and go to work, and it is that way every single day."

(Employee was laughing continuously)

"Now you see that is so funny about me."

I: "That isn't funny. (A lot of people don't go out much when they have to work hard.)"

E: "I'm not tired but I just don't want to go anywhere. Oh, sometimes I go out. You know what I like to read. I like to read the Cosmopolitan, Liberty, and the Red Book. Oh, I've read so many books. If I were to tell you I couldn't name them. Sometimes I go to the library and bring books home that I've read before and my bro-

END

ther, he has got a terribly good memory. He says to me, 'Now why do you bring these books home when I read them before?' I say, 'Oh gee, I never thought of that'. He says, 'I think you're funny, trying to read the books over you've read before', but you see when you read so much you forget what you read. I really could read it over sometimes and don't know that I read it. My father too, he is such a great reader and he loves to write. He is always writing something. You know my people are all great entertainers, my aunts and my father. He never wants to perform but one day they made him. You know he was the hit of the show. When we went to see him act why we couldn't get over how wonderful he was. He laughed at us after that. Now he is in every play they give in his lodge but my aunts and uncles, they're all that way. I too used to be in some of the plays over there but I am not so crazy about it. I never told anybody my secret ambition."

(Employee was laughing).

"Say, I am going to tell you a good one. My mother has a lady friend and they went to a sale the other day down on Twelfth Street. Of course my mother didn't want to go. She said, 'Oh, I haven't got any money to go'. This lady said, 'Oh come along with me. I've got a lot of money and if we see some bargains why I'll buy them for you and then you can pay me later'. My mother took my little sister. She is three years old along. This lady is just crazy about my little sister, so mother took her along and they went to the sale. They went early in the morning but when they got on the street car this lady said to my mother, 'You'd better give me your bag and I'll put it in my own'. You know this lady had one of those patent leather bags that you go shopping with. My mother said, 'Oh no, I had better carry my own bag', and this lady always insisted on carrying my little sister. She is three years old and she is quite heavy and my mother said, 'You'd better not carry her', so when they got on the street car three boys jumped on and they stole that lady's bag. They stuck their hand in her grip some way and took it out. Everybody hollered, 'Oh, there are the boys. They took it, they took it', and they started running down the street but the lady couldn't get off the street car no more. They were gone. We were laughing at home and my mother was saying, 'It is a wonder they didn't steal my little sister on her'. I don't think that would have been so funny, but this lady when she got home she said to my mother, 'Don't you tell anybody. I don't want them to laugh at me, going to a sale and losing eight dollars'. That was a good joke on her wasn't it. You know you only get a bunch of rubbish at those sales anyway. I don't see why my mother wanted to waste her time. I guess my mother only went along for the ride. My little sister likes to ride the street car."

BMS

(Employee was laughing)

"Isn't it funny all the pitiful sights you see nowadays. Now the other day I went over here to the bank and there was man sitting with his leg out off and by his side was a lady sitting. She had dark colored glasses on. I suppose she wore those glasses so nobody would look at her. They all three of them looked down at the ground. They had their little baby girl along and this little baby was always picking out the pennies out of the hat. It sure was a terrible thing to see. It made tears come to my eyes. It certainly makes you feel ashamed of yourself when you see somebody like that that is so hard up and you're always complaining. I am certainly glad that I got a job. You know I worked at Sears. I never liked it. The girls were too swell there. They used to wear, oh, such fancy clothes for work and then I never could. Well, I suppose I could afford it too if I wanted to spend all my money but I am not that way. I don't want you to think I'm a miser because I'm not. I like to save my money. I'm conservative but I don't want anybody to think that I am not as swell as they are. They always used to look at me and used to talk about me behind my back. They used to make fun of me."

I: "They did?"

E: "They sure did. They knew I didn't go to dances and things and they used to come up and tell me all about the swell boy friends they had and how they went to cabarets and roadhouses but I'm not saying that I can't go to a roadhouse because I would too. There isn't anything so bad in that. There really isn't bad in anything. It is just the way you look at it. I may be funny. I might look at things different."

(Employee was laughing).

"I quit there and come back here. I was glad to come back too. I like this place and I hope I never have to quit. Gee, I'm certainly saying a lot ain't I?"

I: "Oh no, that is perfectly all right."

E: "Miss Dash, do you know what I dreamt last night?"

I: "No, I haven't any idea."

E: "I dreamt I bought the swellest car, oh, one of these long coupes. You could put your canopy down and it would be a touring car. I was driving around all night. Gee, I certainly had a swell

E: 48

time. Another funny thing about it, I dreamt that I only had to pay a dollar down and a dollar you know when they catch you. You know that saying."

I: "Yes, I do."

E: "Of course you know it was only a dream and dreams don't mean anything."

(Employee was laughing)

"You know, talking about dollar down and a dollar when you catch me makes me think of a joke. Do you want to hear it?"

I: "Sure."

E: "Once there was a woman that bought a baby carriage and she went in to make her last installment. The man said to her, 'I hope your baby is fine Madam'. The lady said, 'Oh, thank you. Yes sir, he is just going to college today'. He, ha, ha, isn't that a good joke?"

I: "It sure is."

E: "Such a jumble I'm telling you."

I: "That is all right."

E: "Did I tell you about my brother?"

I: "You told me about one of your brothers being an invalid."

E: "No, I don't mean him."

I: "Then you didn't tell me."

E: "You know my brother, he talks just like a colored boy. He reads, oh, the most wonderful books and he is a grand writer. He sits and writes for hours at a time but then he destroys it. One time he wrote some things and he happened to set them aside and I saw them and I read them over. I really didn't think he was capable of doing anything so beautiful. I said to him, 'Now why don't you write stories?' He said, 'Oh, don't be silly. I am not interested enough'. You see my brother didn't have the opportunity. I guess he did have the opportunity but he wouldn't go to school like I did so you see it is his own fault. You know I'm going to tell you my secret ambition."

DMS

I never told this to anybody before in my life."

I: "I'm honored."

E: "Well, I can see that you believe me."

I: "Oh, thank you, I do."

E: "You know you can almost tell when somebody believes you and when they're interested or not. Sometimes you can talk to somebody and look at them and you can read their eyes that they think you're lying to them but I can see you don't feel that way do you?"

I: "I should say not."

E: "I always wanted to be a writer. I think if I went to school and took up grammar. You see, I just can't put things in its place. I take too long to say things. You know when I start I always say, ah, ah, ah. Now a person can't put that down on the paper. You have to come right out and write. That is one thing I can't do. I have a wonderful memory. I can memorize almost every picture that I see and I don't get them mixed up either like some people do. My girl friend said to me, 'I can't see how you can memorize all those things', but I never told her that that was my ambition to become a writer. That is why I take notice of everything. I like to study human nature. I like psychology. You know I like to see just how people think and act. I'd like a job like yours to meet a lot of people and you can judge them."

I: "Oh, it is pretty hard to judge a person."

E: "Yes, I guess that part is but you meet a lot of people that tell you interesting things don't you?"

I: "Yes, I do. I enjoy it very much."

E: "I can see you do. Now, you know Miss Dash, one time I was in a play and when I was in that play I changed the whole play for them. I could just see where that play wasn't right. Why, the director of the play, he said I was marvelous. He said I ought to try and write but a lot of people make fun of me. They don't really know how I think and how I feel. Don't you see, that is why I don't like to tell anybody about it. There is only one person in my life that ever did. I will tell you about him later. You know, there is another fellow that used to work nights with us. He was going to college and he was studying to be an engineer. Now to be an engineer he has to know a lot of things and he had to write compositions so he used to talk to

EAS

me during lunch hour and he said to me, 'I heard that you can write compositions'. I said to him, 'Who told you?' He said, 'I just heard that', and he said he just made that up. Now he must have read my mind don't you think?"

I: "Perhaps."

E: "So he said to me, 'Would you mind writing some compositions for me?' and I said, 'Well, I don't mind, if you think I can do it well enough', so he told me just what he wanted and I wrote three or four compositions for him and he gave him to his professor and he said they were wonderful. Of course the boy got a wonderful mark on it. If the professor ever asked him who wrote it he'd have to tell him, he couldn't lie and I suppose he would have flunked. I am certainly glad he didn't ask him but this boy, he was very much interested in his work. The only thing he couldn't do was write. I said to him, 'Well, what are you going to do if you ever have to take a test on that?' He said, 'Oh, I'll get by somehow. You just write those for me'. I certainly liked to do it and I did fine and I told him so. I thought I would just get some benefit out of it. He really didn't know what I was driving at and I wouldn't tell him. I never went out with him. I didn't care for him, so we were friends like that. Everything was on the level. I don't want you to think that I was crazy about this fellow because I wasn't. You know I think I'll just go on like I am until I get married. You know my sunts are afraid."

I: "They are? About what?"

E: "Oh, they're afraid I won't get married. You know my mother and father were quite young when they got married. My mother was only sixteen and my father seventeen. My mother is only thirty-eight years old now but my father is thirty-nine so you see they are quite young."

I: "I should say they are."

E: "When I go out with my mother why everybody says, 'Oh go on, that is not your mother, that is your sister'. The only thing my mother is small and fat and chubby. She looks like a regular rolly-polly but my father is tall and thin like I am. If things go on like they're going now I guess I'll never get married. I am not crazy about the men. The kind of man that I want I can't find so I guess I'll just have to forget about one and leave them for a while. Did you hear somebody say draft."

I: "No, I didn't."

E: "Oh, I guess it is somebody in the next booth. Perhaps they're

BMS

cold."

I: "Well, we couldn't help them because our windows are closed."

E: "Yes, that is right. Miss Dash, have you a permanent wave?"

I: "Oh no."

E: "Well, I'd like to get a permanent wave. I had one before but I just can't afford the money now. I have to borrow money for anything like that."

(Employee lifts up her shoes) "She said:"

E: "I think I ought to buy myself rubber heels instead of getting myself a permanent wave. You know that is something you can do without. I guess I'll just do without it for a while. I'll be better off anyway if I've got my money in my pocketbook."

"Don't you think my heels are kind of high?" (Showing interviewer her heels).

I: "Yes, they are a little bit high."

E: "Well, I have to wear high heels like that because my feet ache. I think I've got an awfully high instep. If I wear low heels I get terrible pains in my foot. You know when I was on my vacation I wore those tennis shoes and the first week I was jumping around like a grasshopper but the second week, oh my goodness, I walked like an old lady. Everybody that was up there was giving me some lotions for my feet but it didn't seem to help, and the mosquitoes up there, they were regular barbarians. I'll show you along the crease in my hair".

(Employee stands up and show the interviewer the crease in her hair).

E: "Now you feel along here and see if you can't feel some bumps there yet. I had lumps that was almost as big as eggs."

I: "You did, that is too bad."

E: "Yes, that is the only thing I didn't like about my vacation."

I: "Where did you spend your vacation?"

E: "Oh, some friends of ours have a cottage up there near Dash Lake."

BS

Of course you know we couldn't complain. We got everything for nothing. We had a good time if it weren't for them darn old mosquitoes. You know there was an old man around there and he had a cottage and we used to kid him along quite a lot. He used to call us in and give us candy and everything. We had a very nice time with him. Well, you know these people haven't any swell place. They just have a little garage all fixed up. Next year I don't suppose we will have any place to go."

I: "What makes you say that?"

E: "Oh, if times are as hard as they are going to be this winter we will just have to stay at home and keep the home fires burning. Well, I guess I'll get married then. No, I don't think I will. I will have to work twice as hard because then you have to work for a man too, and come home and do your work, oh no, I couldn't do that, but I don't know. I don't think that I'd have enough to do. I suppose I'd work like the rest of them. You know I don't like to gossip. I just like to say 'Hello' over the back fence. You know what I'd like to do? I'd like to shoot myself."

I: "What?"

E: "Oh, I get so disgusted. It is just the same thing over all the time."

I: "Oh, you're a young girl, you mustn't say that." *advice*

E: "You know if I had the nerve I would shoot myself, but I haven't got the nerve. I am a coward."

I: "Oh, there are lots of nice things you can do in your life. You want to get out and meet a lot of nice young friends."

E: "There are three things I want to do before I die."

I: "What are they?"

E: "Ride in an airplane, go to Europe, and go to the circus."

(Employee was laughing)

I: "Well, you don't have to worry about that. That is possible. Do you save your money?"

E: "Oh, I should save all that money to go to Europe and give it out

BMS

all at one time. I am not a miser but I wouldn't want to spend all that money at once. Gee, if I had to save all those years and then have nothing, no, I don't think I could ever do that. The only way I'd go to Europe is work on a steamboat and work my way across."

I: "That is a good idea. Can you do that?"

E: "Sure, some people do that. You know the boss was kidding me one day about getting married. He said, 'What are you waiting for ----?' I said to him, 'I'm waiting for a millionaire'. He said, 'I'll have to find one for you'. I said to him, 'Oh, there aren't any around here'. He said, 'Well, you never can tell. Nobody is going around with a sign on their back and telling you how much money they've got'. I think he was right. There are a lot of people have got money around here and they don't go bragging about it. You know my boss, he is a bachelor. I don't know why a jolly man like him couldn't have got a girl. You know the girls when they come up and talk to him, he is always kidding them. One girl told me he is always advising the girls to get married. He says, 'Don't be like me and stay a bachelor because when you get old you haven't got anybody at all'. I guess he knows what he is talking about. I am sure he wouldn't say that if he didn't feel that way about it. He certainly is a great kidder and I like him. He is always kidding me whenever he goes by. You know when I first came to work down here I used to be so scared of him. Everybody used to say, 'Watch out for him, he is an old crab'. Oh, he is kind of strict but I guess everybody has to be that way, but I don't think he is a crab. He certainly knows how to jolly you along. When he used to come around I used to get so nervous and I used to shake all over but I got over that. I just don't get nervous at all any more. I said to myself, why should I be afraid of a boss. He isn't any better than I? He is only a human being. If he talks to me I will talk back to him. Of course the whole trouble with me, I speak too frankly and I guess a lot of people don't like me on account of that. You know Miss Dash, I am going to tell you about that man. Oh, I can't tell you who he is or anything."

I: "You don't have to tell me who he is. You can just talk about him if you wish."

E: "You know there used to be a man living next door to me. He was a married man. My father and mother knew that he use to take me to work but he was all right and through him I met this fellow. Well, there was another fellow and he brought this fellow along and he was in the car one day and I met him so this fellow said to me,

RMB

'Say, I've got a car. Can I take you out sometimes?' I said, 'Well, I don't mind going for a ride with you', so he came over. He met me on the street. He was only a young fellow. Well, he was almost twenty-seven years old but he looked twenty. I said to him, 'Well, you certainly look very boyish'. He said, 'Well, that is because I don't work hard'. You see he was a dancer. He used to dance at a lot of benefits. Oh, he knew a lot of swell people. He got around lots. He told me of all the women he had. You see he wasn't afraid to talk to me at all. Now, I don't want you to think that there was anything wrong between us because everything was on the level between him and me. We decided we would just talk to each other frankly and express our opinions and we did. Why we talked on the most intimate subjects that you could ever imagine. Of course I didn't care. He said that is what he liked about me. He told me how he lived in apartments with women and how they used to keep him. You see there are a lot of rich ladies that are glad to have a young man like him. You know what I mean don't you Miss?"

I: "Yes, I do."

E: "I thought you did. Well, you see he said that these women, these rich women, they have a lot of money and they want to get enjoyment out of life so they keep these young men. He was a bad boy, that is what everybody would say but I didn't think he was so bad. I admired him for it. You know he always said to me, 'But don't you ever let anybody keep you, because if I ever found out that you lived with a man and weren't married to him, why I'd kill that man'."

I: "He must have cared for you then?"

E: "Oh no, he didn't care for me at all, not in that way. He told me right off the bat that he never would marry me, that he only wanted me to talk frankly to him, that he couldn't me, that he didn't want to put a girl in misery, because he wouldn't support no woman. He wanted a woman to support him. You know in New York he said in the Metropolitan Opera, the premier danseuse was crazy about him. He even showed me some of the letters that she wrote to him. She was a beautiful thing, long hair. He said he could have her any time he wanted to so you see that is the kind of a man he was, but then again he was very generous. He used to come to Chicago and buy his mother criss cross curtains. Imagine a bad boy going downtown picking out criss cross curtains for his mother. You wouldn't think a bad boy would do such things, would you?"

I: "I don't know."

E: "A lot of people warned me against him and said he was so ter-

YMS

rible. I didn't pay no attention to them because I don't think he is terrible. I think he is wonderful. He is really the only person in the world that ever understood me. Now don't get me wrong Miss Dash. There was nothing ever between us. There was everything on the level. He was just one of these on the level men that you could talk to without getting intimate. He never even as much as held my hand. Isn't it funny how I could tell you all this. I never spoke to anybody about this in my life. You won't put this in the interview will you?"

I: "Not if you don't want me to."

E: "Well, this is only personal between you and me."

I: "Yes, I am glad you feel that way Miss Blank."

E: "I do. I feel as I could tell you everything."

I: "Well, you just take your time and do. I will be glad to listen to you."

E: "Well, I want to tell you a little bit more about this boy friend of mine. You see he really isn't a boy friend because him and I, we never cared about each other. The only thing we liked about each other was because we could talk our thoughts, our frank opinions on different subjects. You know he told me about one time he was gas inspector. Oh, he used to do almost everything. He was so clever and he said the fellow before him knew him real well so he marked on the ticket where he used to read meters, 'This lady is easy. This one will give you something to eat. This one you can see any day. This one you can get anything out of'. I got a big kick out of that when he told me that. I said to him, 'I don't blame you. If the women are that foolish and they are willing to sacrifice themselves, why a man should just go ahead and do it.' I don't care. I don't think anybody is bad and things like that. You know there are a lot of other things that you could say are bad. I don't think just because a man pronounces a few words over you and says, 'Now you are married until you die'. I don't believe in that. I think if I loved anybody real much I wouldn't care what I done. That is why I am afraid to get married. I am afraid I will get married and then somebody else will come along and I'll fall in love with them. I don't really know what I'd do then. I am going to be mighty sure of myself before I do get married. When I told this fellow that, you see I don't want to mention any names because I don't want him ever to be found out. I don't want anybody to ever know that I knew him."

MS

I: "That is perfectly all right. You don't have to mention his name at all."

E: "You know another time he told me when he lived with a girl three months. He said, 'When you're on the road it is much easier for a man and much cheaper to live with a woman because you don't know where to find one all the time. Does this seem funny to you?'"

I: "No, it doesn't."

E: (Laughing) "I don't blame him at all for getting everything he can out of life. You know I have a friend of mine and she is married. She has got an apartment now and she has men keep her. I don't blame her. She tried to be on the level with her husband but he took her for a fish. She used to go out and work for him and everything and then take all her money. I know that she was a good girl and he made her that way so she just divorced him and she showed him. She said to me, 'Oh, have I got fellows. You'd be surprised.' She said one of the men came up the other night with a five hundred dollar check but he is kind of a tight wad. I couldn't get a nickel out of him, but don't you worry, I'll get something on the next guy', and she has the most gorgeous clothes you ever saw. She works too but she really wouldn't have to. A lot of people think she is a bad woman but I wouldn't think so. That is her business. If she wants to be like that let her. I wouldn't mind having an apartment myself. If it weren't for my mother and father living perhaps I would have one too, but I don't mean that I would be bad. You don't actually have to be bad to have an apartment. A lot of people think you do but I know you don't. I wouldn't worry about what people think about me anyway, because when you're going to start worrying about what people think about you you'll never get anywhere. That is why I like this fellow. He certainly had grand ideas. He never thought what anybody cared about him at all. He could be very generous when he wanted to be. He was good. If he was good to his mother he was a good man. I always thought that of him. I certainly miss him now."

I: "You do? Why, has he gone away?"

E: "I couldn't tell you where he is. I don't know a thing about him. That is just the way he does things. He disappears and comes back, but I often long for him. If I could just get out and talk with him for a few hours I would be all right. Now you see today I feel much better that I had this opportunity to talk to you and tell you all these things."

I: "Would you like me to come back and talk to you some other time?"

END

E: "Oh, I wouldn't want anybody to know that I talked to you about this and if you came back they might suspect so you better not. Now I think I will go back Miss Dash. That is really all I have to say to you. I had a very lovely time with you. I am glad you were so patient with me and listened to all this."

I: "That is perfectly all right. If you want me to come back again I certainly will. I'd like to talk to you some time Miss Blank."

E: "All right, that will be fine."

I: "Do you think you would like to make a suggestion or a comment on anything?"

E: "No, I have told you so much I really don't know what I have said. Oh, yes I do. I remember every word I said. If you would ask me over I could repeat every line that I said. I have a very good memory."

I: "That isn't necessary."

E: "No, but I was just fooling you. I'll go now. Good-bye Miss Dash."

I: "Good-bye."

Note: This employee lifted her hands in the air and laughed continuously during the whole interview.

October 8, 1930.

RMS

July 8, 1929,
Operating Branch-W.
4-13331-217-4E7C

The interviewer explained the interviewing program to the operator, and she said:

Operator: "I wanted to get a transfer. I was so disgusted with my work. Some of the bosses are all right, but my Gang Boss seems to misjudge me. Mr. X, the Department Chief, and Mr. Y, his Assistant, are all right, but my Gang Boss uses me for a goat and picks on me all the time. He is not satisfied with the amount of work I do, and if I make my rate he still wants more to make up for someone else."

Interviewer: "You said that you wanted a transfer. You are more contented now."

Operator: "It was all on account of my Gang Boss. He sends me around to help in one place and then another and at the end of the day if I haven't enough of work done he bawls me out and wants to know what I have been doing all day. The rates are high on our jobs and if we want to make them we have to work steady and not change around much during the day. When a girl is trying her best it gets her disgusted; she gets bawled out and she doesn't feel like working."

Interviewer: "You are more satisfied with your Gang Boss now?"

Operator: "Well he is still unreasonable. About a month ago I was sick and was sent to the hospital. I had to wait there a long time; it was so crowded. I was gone about two hours. When I got back he bawled me out for staying out so long and said I was stalling. I had started my work before he came up to me. He grabbed the work that I was doing out of my hand in such a rough manner and sent me to the office to the Chief but the Chief talked with me and was so different. When I explained it all to him he was civil about it."

Interviewer: "This is not the same Chief that has been here right along is it?"

Operator: "No this is a new Chief and he is a fine man. He is strict but still a gentleman and I would do anything for him. I was so worked up after that affair I couldn't work. It makes me terribly nervous to be treated like that. I had to go home again and I was home for a little while longer. Now he brought that on himself just by the way he handled me."

AJ

July 8, 1929,
Operating Branch-W.
4-13331-217-4E7C

Interviewer: "When you wanted your transfer did you go any further than your Gang Chief?"

Operator: "Yes he sent me to the Personnel Department and Miss Z. told me not to change; that I would have to start in a new department for less money and it would not look good for me to go to another department because I could not get along after working here six years. I could understand that, but I didn't like the idea of being picked on because I have tried to do the right thing, but she told me to try it again for a while and not to take things so seriously - I am trying."

Interviewer: "Has that been a long while since you spoke to Miss Z.? and do you feel a little better since you talked to her?"

Operator: "Well, since I was to the Personnel my Gang Boss does not bother me quite as much but he still doesn't like me. The way he is, if he likes a girl she can get away with murder and she does not have to work hard. He will stand around and talk with her for hours; but if he doesn't like you he watches every move you make and is always hounding you for more work. All the girls notice that about him. One time an engineer wanted to experiment on the machine I was working on and the Chief told my Gang Boss to move to to another place for a while. I heard the Gang Boss say to the Chief, 'She will do nothing but talk if we put her over there.' Those things hurt; all girls talk but I don't do any more than anyone else. I am not a talker but he wanted to make the Chief think that I was worse than anyone else."

Interviewer: "You say you are with the Company six years? Have you always worked in this department?"

Operator: "No; this is the third department I am working in. The last department I worked in was moved to Kearny. I liked that department so much better. I made more money there and was treated fair. The bosses there were different and treated all the girls fair."

Interviewer: "What about the first department you worked in?"

Operator: "The first department I worked in the work was close and it affected my eyes."

Interviewer: "Tell me some of the things you like about working at the Western Electric. I know there must be something you like."

AJ

July 8, 1929,
Operating Branch-W.
4-13331-217-4E7C

Operator: "Indeed there is. The sick benefit is wonderful and everything that I can think of is all right. If it wasn't for this Gang Boss I don't think I could complain about a thing. The Company does lots of things for us and I wouldn't like to leave here for a while. I have been married for about a year and I would like to work until I get my furniture paid for. My husband is young and hasn't got much of a start yet and I want to help him."

Interviewer: "Has anything else ever troubled you since you have been with the Company, outside of that little misunderstanding you had with your Gang Boss?"

Operator: "That is the only trouble I have ever had but that is plenty because the person you work for is what really makes you happy or unhappy. I enjoyed working in the other departments and would have been in the place I started if my eyes were good enough. In the second department I liked the work and everything would have been fine if the work hadn't been taken away. When I came in here everything was all right for a while. I really didn't think that a boss would treat me as this one did. My other Gang Bosses treated me all right and I have worked for several of them."

Interviewer: "But this Gang Boss is a little better now isn't he?"

Operator: "Yes; my Chief told me that if things didn't go right for me to come and see him, and he told me to do the right thing and he would see that I am treated right."

Interviewer: "This is the new Chief you are talking about now, isn't it?"

Operator: "Yes; the one we had before was all right but you had to have a drag with him to get along well and he always took the word of the Gang Boss. A girl didn't have a right to express her mind at all, but I think this one is different. He is more strict about the Department but he is fair. He listens to both sides of the story. He is a younger man than the one we had before."

Interviewer: "You didn't tell me anything about your work. Do you like the work you are doing?"

Operator: "Yes; our work is interesting and any girl would like it. The work I am on is cleaner than most of the jobs in the department. If I am left alone I have no trouble in making the amount required; but to have someone stand in back of you, always watching and nagging you, no matter how well you like it, you get disgusted."

AJ

July 8, 1929,
Operating Branch-W.
4-13331-2A7-4E7C

Interviewer: "Well I hope things will be better for you and that you will be happier, and I think you will as long as you had that talk with your Chief and he was so reasonable with you."

Operator: "Well I hope so because if I am disappointed in him and find that he is not on the square I am going to get out of this department even if I have to take five dollars less a week."

Interviewer: "I don't think you will have to do anything like that. Things will shape themselves all right. I will see you again some time and I know you are going to feel a lot different."

AJ

16.

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

43-15327-5K8-2B8B

After partly explaining program, as Operator didn't wait for me to finish.

Operator: "You know I am German. I have been in this country for five and one-half years. I was in one department for two and one-half years and news came out that the married women had to be laid off first. One day, I was the first one that was told that I had to be laid off in three days. I have a husband that has a crippled arm from the War and he had an operation on his arm at that time and several since. The Gang Chief thought I was rich as I had bought a house two months before on the installment plan. I paid \$1,000 down."

Interviewer: "Where did you save the thousand dollars?"

Operator: "I saved \$500 here in America, and \$500 in Germany from the sale of property."

Interviewer: "Did you have a lot in Germany?"

Operator: "No, just my household furniture and good linens. My idea of buying the house was to get a little money made to get my son from Germany. I think it was terrible to lay a woman off that had so much trouble. I told my Foreman that I was ready to kill myself."

Interviewer: "Did you tell him all about your trouble?"

Operator: "His answer was that I should not have bought the house. It was really foolish."

Interviewer: "What was foolish?"

Operator: "To buy the house because he said that I could get laid off any day, and my answer was, 'I'm surprised Mr. -- , because I know I'm a good worker'. I always got out over my rate and sometimes double."

Interviewer: "In this department too?"

Operator: "There was one job that I made double my rate in that department. I think I was foolish to do that. I didn't know any better. I just came here from Germany. One time the assistant Gang Chief told me that he wished he had a couple of operators like me. I never had any trouble or fights there. I was never late or sick a day and I was just

MK

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

y 3-15527-5118-213813

Operator, continued

married one and one-half years the second time."

Interviewer: "Do you think that that is the reason they had it 'in' for you?"

Operator: "I don't know. I never could understand why that happened to me."

Interviewer: "What happened to you?"

Operator: "That I got laid off. There were a lot of married women working in that department that had husbands working in the Western Electric Company and making lots of money, because I know it. They told me."

Interviewer: "Were you laid off?"

Operator: "No, but the Gang Boss told me that I was going to be laid off in three days and I told the Foreman my troubles and also told him that I felt like killing myself. Then they tried all over to transfer me and said that if they could not transfer me I was to be laid off. I guess there was not one in the whole department who did not feel sorry for me. I remember, one day the instructor took me over to the Cable Plant to try to get a transfer for me. She was very nice. The boss in the Cable Plant told me that the job he had open was too hard for me."

Interviewer: "Then what happened?"

Operator: "The instructor told me to take anything I could get, night or day. She knew of all my trouble and she told me I could come back when they got busy. I worked one and one-half years at the Cable Plant. I was a very good operator there too. I made as high as I could make. I lost my health there. I got a couple of break-downs because I had to lose too much money while learning the work there. I couldn't live on what I made and pay on my house. I made \$17.00 a week there while learning and in the old department I made \$28.00 a week."

Interviewer: "How long did that last?"

Operator: "That was straight piece work and trouble always came up."

MK

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

Y 3-1527-518-2B8B

Operator, continued

The highest I ever could make was \$24.00. That was the best anybody could make, not a cent more and that is the reason I ruined my health trying to make the money. Sometimes the machine would break down or the material would run out. The people in the Cable Plant treated me wonderful, the Foreman and alloof the girls. I always did my best and was always on the minute with my job, what I had to do I did. I was sick a couple of times over there and was taken home twice from the hospital in a taxi. I wanted to stay there but couldn't. I didn't mind the work but the money worried me. I had so many bills to pay. I thought I was going to lose my house.

"My father died while I was in the Cable Plant. My son had stayed with my mother and father in Germany. He went to school there so when my father died, I had to send them more money."

Interviewer: "How did that affect you?"

Operator: "I always sent them \$15.00 a month and when my father died I had to send them \$25.00. Then you know I could not keep that up anymore. I had to write the relations of my dead husband for help and they told me that they would send my mother and son over to America. Now you see I had them here and supported them and I thought my son could help me but he couldn't."

Interviewer: "In what way could your son help you?"

Operator: "He didn't want to work, he wanted an education. He went to high school here one year and graduated. He then wanted to go to college but he saw that I could not help him, so he went back to Germany to his grandmother on his father's side and now he is in college, and that is the way it goes. If I didn't have that trouble I would not have lost my son either. And if I had just a little bit more money, just a little bit. The money I lost in the transfer was the cause of it all. I never expected to be laid off.

"The principal of the high school that my son went to, said he was the finest boy he ever saw and wanted to get free college for him but the boy needed \$300 to enter for clothing and food and I didn't have that much money. Oh, it was terrible!

MK

June 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

43-15527-JK8-213813

Operator, continued

I tried to go back to the old department seven months ago and the Gang Chief spoiled it for me. They have a new Foreman down there now and when I went to him he said he didn't know me. I told him who my old Foreman was and he said, 'All right, wait a minute, I will call the Section Chief, he may know you'. When the Section Chief came, he turned his back to me and talked to the Foreman and the Foreman looked as though he didn't know what to do. The Section Chief turned around and looked at me and said, 'Well M--, the only reason you were going to be laid off, was because you were always kicking about your job'. I said to the Gang Chief, 'You must be mixed up. I never kicked about a job in my life,' and he said, 'Oh no'. So I said to him, 'I know now why I got laid off. I took my transfer later'."

Interviewer: "Where did you get the transfer from later?"

Operator: "From the Personnel Department."

Interviewer: "How did you go to the Personnel?"

Operator: "I was home sick seven weeks and my doctor told me that I could go back to work but not to the job I had been doing. I told the Company doctor the same thing so he sent me to the Service Division and the lady there sent me to the Personnel. I told the lady at the Personnel all about the Section Chief and why he didn't want to take me back. I told her that he said that I kicked about the job but it was not that at all. He used to use dirty language and asked me terrible dirty questions about my husband and I told him to leave me alone. He acted nice to me after and I couldn't find any reason for him wanting to lay me off except that. I still see some girls from that department and they told me that he is terrible dirty. The girls down there call him a dirty pig. I am glad I am here. I make better and can pay more on my debts. If I keep on again like this, I will be out of my debts in another year and I can have my boy back again. When I first came here I could not speak good English. If I could, I would not have left that Section Chief get away with what he did because I am too sure I did my work right. I am not so dumb now. They were hiring a lot of girls when I wanted the transfer back to that department seven months ago, but he wouldn't take me back. Now I wouldn't go back. What's the use? I am satisfied here. I was always satisfied. It was just that I needed the money."

MK

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

Y3-15527-518-2388

Interviewer: "You are satisfied with your work here?"

Operator: "Nobody could call this a good job."

Interviewer: "Why?"

Operator: "Because it is too easy and simple. All the jobs in this department are the same way. Nobody can call an easy job an interesting job because it is easy and simple. But I am not kicking, I am satisfied here. You have to be handy with your fingers. That is all."

Interviewer: "When I write this interview up I will not put your name on it."

Operator: "Oh, I don't mind if you do. I would like to see that fellow face to face and tell him what I think of him. He spoiled lots of things in my life. More than he ever thinks maybe. I just feel good to tell anybody how that Section Chief hurt my feelings."

Interviewer: "Have you ever told this to anybody else?"

Operator: "No, just one girl that I eat with. I guess he thought I was a horse. One time he saw me doing an easy job and he told me that it was too easy for me. He said, 'A woman like you, like a horse, should work on a machine'. I told the girl in the Personnel Department about him and that he was not only dirty to me but was with the new girls too. You see how hard it was that I could remember so long. It just seems to me like as if it happened today. I don't think I will ever forget. It seems to me that I am not the same person because I have not so much trouble now in this department."

Interviewer: "What do you like about this department?"

Operator: "The Gang Boss is not so nice, but the Section Chief is good."

Interviewer: "What is the matter with the Gang Boss?"

Operator: "I am on a dirty job. Other girls kick about it and he puts the new girls on clean jobs. I never said anything about my job to him, but one day another girl got sick and nobody wanted her job either because she had to wash blocks and had her hands wet all the

MK

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

43-15527-5718-2B8B

Operator, continued

time. That spoils the skin and fingernails. I was working five months straight on a dirty black job that nobody wanted either. The Gang Boss took me off that job and put me on that other job that had to be washed, and put another girl on my job. He thought I was good enough for that I guess, otherwise he would not have put me on it but let me on my own job. I told him so and had a fight with him about it. He did that a couple of times and one day when I was crying, I went to the Foreman and he gave me satisfaction. He said, 'What you want is only fair'. I saw the Foreman talking to the Gang Chief. I told the Foreman that I would take my turn on it for two weeks straight but didn't want it all the time. Since that time everything is all right. My Section Chief is very seldom here. He is in another department but when he heard about it, he told me that it was never in his mind to take me off my job. He said that I made my rate on that job and it was hard to get somebody to do the job."

Interviewer: "Have you ever talked to your Foreman since that time?"

Operator: "No, we are all good workers and we need no big bosses here. We are all alone nearly all of the time."

Interviewer: "Are you looking forward to your vacation?"

Operator: "Yes I need it. I have worked steady for seven months."

Interviewer: "I didn't explain everything to you when I started. Have you anything else to say about the working conditions of the Company?"

Operator: "No, I just had that one little fight on the job here but I wanted to show them that they can't do with me what they want. I didn't mind the job, but I just wanted the Gang Boss to know that I was just as good as any other girl. Other girls refused the job and wouldn't do it and he let it go and thought I could do it."

Interviewer: "Has the Company ever done anything very good or bad for you?"

Operator: "No, only that one time when I was going to be laid off."

MK

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

73-15527-5118-288B

Interviewer: "Well you were not laid off."

Operator: "No, but I was transferred and when I told my Foreman my troubles I think he should have kept me. I pleaded for my job and wasn't proud at all. I just saw all my troubles coming up. There were girls he could have laid off that were better off than I, who had four or five working in a family. I was too dumb then. If I could have spoken as good English then as I do now, I would not have let that go by me. I would have gone higher. I would have gone to the General Foreman."

"When I asked the Gang Chief why he picked on me and told him that he had a lot of other married women working here with husbands making \$75.00 a week, he said, 'I know but they have worked over five years and we cannot lay them off. We have to go higher when we want to lay people off with five years service'. But I was only working three years and they could lay me off without going higher. It was just a mean thing, that is all."

Interviewer: "Would you like to be transferred out of this department?"

Operator: "No, I like it here. But if that Section Chief was out of the old department I had first worked in, I would like to go back there because I know all of the girls and all of the jobs, and the wages are better."

MK

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

9-7794

The operator was introduced by the Section Chief.

Interviewer: "We will take a walk down to the other end of the room where no one will bother us."

Operator: "That suits me."

Interviewer: "Well I suppose you have heard something about the interviewing program?"

Operator: "Yes. I have heard a little about it, but not very much. I know that everyone gets a crack at it."

The interviewer explained the interviewing program.

Operator: "Well, I know I am quite a talker, but you are going to get tired of listening to me before I get through."

Interviewer: "Well, I am a good listener, and you will have to be some talker to tire me out."

Operator: "Well the only thing I want is a transfer to a better job. I am adjusting switches, and this job is a little too close for my eyes, because the light is very poor. We should be moved to the west side of the room where we would get more day light. They are always talking about a new lighting system, but that is not what we need. What we want is the benches moved over to the outside wall, and then we would have plenty of day light."

Interviewer: "I notice from this list I have [redacted] that you have been with the Company over five years."

Operator: "Five years! You mean five years the last time. Why I worked here when they organized the Hawthorne Club, and we had to pay \$.25 a week to be a member. I am an old timer around here, but I have left five times."

Interviewer: "I suppose you landed a good job every time you left?"

Operator: "Well they were good in a way and bad in a way. Every time I quit I did the same kind of work. My father is a scenery painter, and I tried that game when I was out of here. Of course you can make good money while you work, but you are only working about half of the time. An A number 1 man can make \$125.00 a week, but I was a helper and made

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July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

\$55.00. To join the union, I would have to pay down about \$200.00 and show that I attended art school for four years. I am married and have two children, and I cannot afford to attend school.

"I was offered a job a few months ago at \$60.00 a week, but they would only guarantee two years steady work, and as long as I am sure of steady work here, I do not like to leave.

"One thing I am dissatisfied with around this place is that they never offer me a gang boss' job. In the last department I worked, I was considered one of the best men. They were making gang bosses out of men who were fooling around all day, and when I went up and asked for the job, all they would say was, 'I don't know. I will think it over.' I recommended a brother of mine two years ago, and now he is up in the office, and has a better job than I. Now he is giving me advice, and he tells me to sit tight and something will develop later on. I always thought service did not mean anything around this place, and I still think the same way. The longer you are here, the worse they treat you.

"I have not had a raise in two years, and I had a fight with the boss. I tried to tell him I should have at least one cent an hour more. He said my bogey would have to go up higher before he could give me a rerate. I can prove that other fellows in the gang received an increase, and their bogies were lower than mine because I am the highest man in the gang. I would not have spoken to the Department Chief about this, but one thing they did got me boiling. One man working on the same bench with me does not turn out as much work as I, and he has four-thousand demerits to my two-thousand, and by giving him an increase he is making one cent more than I. I am leading the gang with only two-thousand demerits, where some of those fellows have one-hundred and twenty-thousand. I don't like to pat myself on the back, but the inspectors would rather inspect my work than the work of anyone else. Why one of them said to me the other day, 'I was behind with my output, and I got a hold of eight of your sets and I could easily catch up.' When this inspector heard I did not receive an increase, he said, 'For ---- ----! Didn't you get a raise?' What gets my goat is the kidding I get from other operators. They will say, 'That's what you get for working so hard. Why not take it easy like the rest of us?' This makes me so sore I would like a transfer to another department. I know the Department Chief would not stand for it, and it would do me no good to take it over his head, because he could reach the Personnel Department with the telephone before I could get up there."

CMS

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "What do you think of your chances for advancement in this department?"

Operator: "Not so good. I put my heart and soul in this work, but cannot get to be a gang boss. I worked fourteen Saturday afternoons straight without any overtime during the week, but it did not do any good. It seems that the fellows who don't take an interest in the work get the jobs. From now on I think I will be dumb and when anyone asks me anything about the work, I will pretend I do not know anything about it.

"I can't get over the last raise. Even the Gang Boss and Section Chief were surprised when I did not get a raise. I have high blood pressure, and I take a day off now and then. If I don't feel as though I can do a good day's work, I stay home. I think this has something to do with my progress. Being off this way, cuts down my pay and it is hard for me to get by. I even told the Gang Boss that it is quite a strain to buy stock when you do not work every day."

Interviewer: "I suppose now you have a desire to be transferred to another department?"

Operator: "Well sometimes I think I would like a change. Six months ago the Section Chief told me I was on the transfer list, but I never heard anything about it. Of course, I could easily get a job on the outside. I have plenty of friends who are politicians, and when I was married there were quite a few of them at the wedding. I could go to work in the city hall tomorrow morning, but that does not mean anything, because every time you get a new mayor, you are out of a job. I was going to get on the Chicago police force, but after I had filled in the application, my wife tore it into a thousand pieces. She was afraid someone would kill me. A few years ago that job was all right. If you saw a fight you could turn on your heel, walk around the block, and come back when it was all over; but now things are different. Every step you make, you have a sergeant behind you and he is there to make sure that you get in on all the scraps. That is why there are so many policemen killed performing their duty."

Interviewer: "What do you think of conditions around the plant?"

Operator: "Well there is one thing around here that should be stopped, and that is chewing tobacco and spitting on the floor. It is a good way to spread disease. One time my whole gang was home sick, and I know it was caused by the fellows spitting on the floor. If I were a

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Operating Branch-M.

a Gang Boss, that is one thing I would stop. You know these cockroaches around here thrive on tobacco juice, and they are so plentiful they will run right over your shoes. One time they sprinkled black flag around in the cracks, and we had to get up off of our chairs to fight them off. As long as we have tobacco chewers around here, we are going to have cockroaches. In one department I worked the man next to me had a garboon he cleaned about once a week, and the odor from this would make you sick."

Interviewer: "I suppose the boss got after him when he noticed it?"

Operator: "No. He did not seem to care. They were not strict enough with the men. Of course in this department, they do all they can to stop that practice. We have some pretty good supervisors in here. Of course, I have arguments with all of them, but that is soon forgotten and we are always on speaking terms.

"Is the Automatic Electric Company owned by the Western Electric Company?"

Interviewer: "Not to my knowledge."

Operator: "Well I have a brother working there, and he has an idea that the Western Electric owns that company. He is always telling me that if I had stayed there I would have a good job by this time. I think in time the Western Electric Company will own the Automatic. Then they will break up that union. It is all the bunk anyway. The fellows down there think the union is making money for them, but it is their own hard work that is getting them the money. You can make just as much money here if you work as hard as they do. I was talking about the paid vacations to one of the boys, and I told him the Automatic Electric Company took their vacations at the same time as we. He said that they did not get a paid vacation, because they belonged to the union. I told him that was a ---- of a union, and if those fellows quit, what the ---- good is their union card. I worked at the Automatic Electric Company for a short time, but I did not belong to the union."

Interviewer: "You must have worked in the office when you did not have to join the union."

Operator: "No. I was a bench hand, but I stalled them off and got away with it. You know I have been a bench hand too long. I have worked for this Company too long as a bench hand to get anything. When you get

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Operating Branch-M.

to be an old bench hand, you are through. Some of the men working here have been on the bench for twenty-five years, and they have never been a gang boss."

Interviewer: "Do they ever change supervisors in this department?"

Operator: "No not very often. It does not make any difference to me who they put in here as a boss, because I can get along. You know I have a lot of crust, and the bosses do not look any bigger to me than the men working next to me. Why when I used to work up in department --- I rode home with the Department Chief every night. All the fellows would kid me and say, 'How do you get your stand in? Do you paint his garage?' That was not the case. I just hailed him for a ride, and he picked me up and from that time on I rode home with him every night. In another department, the boys were always crabbing about Mr. X, but I thought he was a swell fellow. He would get crabby on the job, but when you met him on the outside he never failed to speak to you. The only thing I don't like about the bosses is that some of them change your bogey. You turn your report in on a piece of scrap paper, and they enter it in the book and throw the scrap of paper away. There is nothing to stop them from changing that bogey. They never tell us what our efficiency is, so I have a hunch they are changing the bogey. If I were a gang boss I would treat all the boys alike, and they would get credit for whatever work they turned out. At one time I used to argue with the bosses about working overtime. I never won out, so I quit arguing with them."

Interviewer: "Well is there anything else you would like to talk about? Is there anything around here that you can think of which you like or dislike?"

Operator: "No I guess I am through. I could go on talking for a week, but it would not mean anything, and anyway it is a few minutes to five and I have to get back, clean up my bench, and go home. You know I enjoy a good talk once in a while, and I sure appreciate your visit today. Well I will see you some other time. So long."

Interviewer: "The pleasure is all mine. I think I enjoyed this talk as much as you did."

CMG

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MILWAUKEE

July 8, 1929.
N-Operating Branch-W.

After explaining the Interviewing Program to operator.

Operator: "To tell you the truth I like my job. I have to be home quite a bit but as far as the job goes, I like my work."

Interviewer: "Have you been doing this same kind of work all the time you have been here?"

Operator: "I was in the Inspection Department first and then transferred in here. I had a girl friend working in here and that is why I asked to come in here. I have been in here ever since."

Interviewer: "Was your girl friend doing better in here than you were in the Inspection Department?"

Operator: "No, I wanted to come in here in the first place but they put me in the Inspection Department, so afterwards I came in here."

Interviewer: "How are you getting along on your job?"

Operator: "I am getting along all right here. I am working here quite a while now. I just can't remember how long. I worked in the Inspection Department but it wasn't so very long."

Interviewer: "How are you going to spend your vacation?"

Operator: "I am not going anywhere. I have some place else to put my money. I have no place else to go anyway. I like to stay home and rest. (Silence-one minute)"

Interviewer: "When you first started to talk to me, you said that you had been home quite a bit. Were you sick? Did you get paid while you were home?"

Operator: "No, I had my husband call up for me. He did not tell them that I was sick. He asked just to have me excused. I was home for a week and a half."

Interviewer: "Did you have to go to the hospital when you came back?"

Operator: "No, they didn't know I was sick."

Interviewer: "Does your husband work here too?"

MK

July 8, 1929.
N-Operating Branch-W.

Operator: "No, I have one sister working here and she likes it."

Interviewer: "Do you like working nights?"

Operator: "I don't mind. It is not so bad. I don't do anything at home any way."

Interviewer: "Did you ever work anywhere else?"

Operator: "Oh yes, but I don't have any trouble with the girls or the bosses. I always mind my own business. I don't pay any attention to the girls. Whether it is a good job or a bad one it is all the same to me. I am not such a fast worker though."

Interviewer: "Does the night seem long?"

Operator: "I think when you are on straight piece work it seems short. It don't seem long to me."

Interviewer: "You have a rest period during the night don't you?"

Operator: "It makes the night seem shorter and I have a chance to eat then. I buy most of my lunch and sandwiches here. I think it is better to have a lunch counter here."

Interviewer: "██████, you give me the impression that you don't trust yourself with me. Haven't I explained this program good enough to you?"

Operator: "Oh sure, I understand all right but why don't you ask me questions? It is easy for you to know what you want but I don't know what to say and then I would answer them. (Silence-a few minutes)

"I don't eat very much at home. I drink water most of the time but down here I buy lunch during the lunch period and rest period too. I like it better. Sandwiches from home get so dry."

Interviewer: "Have you ever had anything to do with the Hawthorne Club?"

Operator: "No, I never did. I took up sewing in school."

Interviewer: "Do you ever feel like there is anything in here and any way in which you could get hurt?"

MK

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

Operator: "No. Of course, we have a lot of improvements like the goggles and the hairnets, but I am never afraid of my machine."

Interviewer: "Do you find working nights any different from working days?"

Operator: "No, I don't think there is anything different except the hours."

"Are you working for the Telephone Company or the Western Electric Company?"

Interviewer: "Why do you ask me that?"

Operator: "Because I see the blue bell on your note book."

Interviewer: "No, I have working for this Company a good many years."

Operator: "That is a long time but still time goes fast and I'll bet it doesn't seem that long. (Silence-two minutes) I have a sister trying to get a job with the Telephone Company. She is studying to be a teacher and wants to get work during vacation."

Interviewer (looking up at window) "It must be raining. It smells like it."

Operator: "I saw it lightning before."

Interviewer: "Are you afraid of lightning?"

Operator: "I am. I don't like to see it lightning."

"I have tried to do my best and if I can't make it, well, I am just as well satisfied."

Interviewer: "Do you ever run into work that you don't exactly know how to do?"

Operator: "When I get a job that I don't know how to start, I call my instructor and she starts a part for me and then watches while I make one and in that way, I never have any trouble with my work."

MK

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

Interviewer: "I guess you are anxious to get back to your job now."

Operator: "No I am not, but I haven't anything to say and I don't mind working."

Interviewer: "Do you have the fans going like this all the time?"

Operator: "Oh yes, the ventilation is good now. It is not like it used to be when they had all the soldering irons in here. (Then operator talked about her sister for five minutes. Silence- two minutes)

"I need the money. That is why I like to work. I am so used to this place and I like it too because I have a lot of friends working here. I have no trouble down here with the instructor. I have no pals to chum around with and I have no trouble with anyone. I try to do my work right and when I make a mistake, I try to do my work better. (Interview: Seventy minutes)

MK

June 10, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

After a self introduction the interviewer explains the program to the operator.

Operator: "There is not much room in the locker room. My locker is in a place that everybody has to pass and I have to keep moving out of the way. I always have to wait until my buddy gets dressed before I can get to the locker. It is not so bad now that we get clean overalls every day but before it was awful as they brushed up against your good clothes with their dirty overalls and just about ruined them.

"I can't say anything against the bosses as I like them all; I have never had any trouble with any of them.

"The street car transportation is very poor; at night you have to wait so long for a street car they are so crowded. It is better to get clean overalls every day, you know before we used to get them once a week and the dust used to get right through them to our bodies.

"I do not like my job very well; I would like to get a transfer from this department but don't know if I can as I have never asked for a transfer. This is all that I have to say."

Interviewer: "It may be that you have something you like real well. You know we like to get the likes as well as the dislikes."

Operator: "My wages are all right as I am working on a day work job now and get 75 cents per hour, but they are going to put us back on gang piece work and the way it is now we will have to work just as hard and make less money. Piece work would be all right if you had good stock and good dies to work with but sometimes the dies are no good and we get a lot of bum wire."

Interviewer: "How long have you worked here?"

Operator: "I started last July. I get a week's vacation with pay this year and think it is pretty good.

Nothing said for three minutes.

Operator: "The machines are set too close together and we do not get enough air. It is terribly hot in the summer time. I guess thats all I have to say."

Interviewer: "Did you ever work for the Company before?"

RU

June 10, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Operator: "No, I am just four years in this country from Germany. I was in Steubenville, Ohio, for three years then I came to Chicago and got a job at the Western. I like it here, there are so many pretty parks in the City and I do not have to work as hard here as I did in Steubenville. I have had much better luck here in Chicago. In Steubenville I was nine months sick with double pneumonia. It was awful to lay for nine months in the hospital with nobody to come to see me.

"That is one thing they have here and that is the fine hospital and they treat you pretty good. There are not so many that get hurt here as there were in the steel mills around Steubenville. For a while, while I was convalescent I used to help around the hospital and there were lots of them brought in with an eye out or an arm off. There is not much chance for that kind of an accident here at the Western. The machines are well guarded and they furnish us with goggles.

"Well, next month we get our vacations. Well, - now I'm going back to work."

RU

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July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

The interviewer walked some distance with the operator and tried to get the conversation started. The program was explained thoroughly and the operator started talking immediately.

Operator: "This department is crowded now. There are about three or four times as many fellows here as ordinarily. It takes several minutes for us to punch out at noon. There used to be two clocks in this department but they took one out and we have a lot more fellows here now than we had when we had two clocks.

"We can never get any work here unless there is a lot of apparatus missing and we don't get time for installing it on the job. We lose a lot of our time that way."

Interviewer: "I imagine that would slow you up quite a bit."

Operator: "Yes. I lost about an hour on this job this morning waiting around."

Interviewer: The Gang Boss came over and sat down close to us. We moved to another location.

Operator: "I don't think that the boss knew what we were doing or he wouldn't have come over and bothered us. He is a good fellow and I am sure he wouldn't have done it intentionally." }

"Sometime ago the Gang Boss Service was poor here, but the Foreman took one of the fellows off the job and made a Gang Boss out of him and since that time the service has been all right. They just had one boss for all of us fellows. The bosses we have now are all right. They divide the work up evenly.

"Lately, the bosses seem to be in a rush all the time. I don't know why, but I guess it is because there is so much apparatus missing from the jobs."

Interviewer: The operator was in the German Army and we talked about the War for several minutes.

"I guess this is a pretty good department to make money in."

Operator: "We used to have several low rates and the fellows couldn't

RS

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

make any money, but lately, they have raised the rates and it isn't so bad now and we can make good money on the job."

Interviewer: "You seem to be satisfied with your earnings now."

Operator: "If I can keep working on the job I am satisfied, but if I have to stand around and wait for a job it always lowers my rate and I don't like that very well."

Interviewer: The operator started talking about Germany again and about their factories over there.

"Do you like working conditions better in Germany than in the United States?"

Operator: "No. I think that the Western Electric Company is one of the best places in the world. The way they give us a vacation with pay and the benefits when we are out sick and the hospital, are mighty fine."

"I think the A. T. & T. Stock is a great thing for the worker. He cannot lose anything on the Stock Plan even if the Stock goes down. Our family lost quite a lot of money in Germany during the War on German Bonds."

"I used to work nights when I first came to this Company and I didn't like it at all so I asked to be put on days and they were very good about it and put me on as soon as there was an opening."

Interviewer: "Everything seems to be going along quite smoothly for you now. I believe you are what they call a satisfied employee."

Operator: "Yes. I am satisfied with almost everything around here at the Western Electric Company. I work hard and make as much money as anyone else. I guess I am perfectly satisfied."

RS

21.

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

6134

The customary, introductory, explanatory remarks were made.

Operator: "I don't know a lot here; I've only worked a year. I'd like to get a chance for lathe work or on automatics. That is what I am trying to get at. I have already asked them a few times for a transfer."

Interviewer: "What sort of an answer did you get?"

Operator: "He says I have no chance now because they're pretty busy here. I was ready to quit already, but my job is a better one now. The hour rate is too small. You get short orders and lose too much time setting up again. A lot of these orders I set up, are so short, that the night man runs them out, and I have to start the morning by setting up another; so what can you do? Fifty cents an hour is not enough. All the machines are on the bum. If you should make one hundred percent on your job, your machine must be in good condition; even if they are fixed up; they need it again in a couple of days. Another thing, our stock is rotten. The rubber is crooked, and the hole goes over the side."

Interviewer: "Do you set up your own job?"

Operator: "Yes, a lot of fellows wait for the boss, but that's where they lose so much time. They are slacking up on the overtime lately although we still work to quarter to six. It gets pretty tiresome, and especially when it was so hot. A lot of these jobs are too oily. The black stuff sticks on my arms and legs, and I can't get it out, no matter how hard I wash. I have used kitchen klenzer until the blood almost came, and yet I couldn't get away from that black-head effect. I think the oil is no good because oil is supposed to clean your skin. That is about all that I know. If they don't change my job when I come back from my vacation, I'm going to quit. I have had two years training in school on lathe, and if I don't go on it soon, the two years will have been lost. Anyway, I can go any place and get seventy-five cents an hour for sure, where here I'm never sure. I told the boss I wouldn't work for fifty cents even for two days."

Interviewer: "Can you tell me about anything around here that you think is good? For instance, the conditions around the plant, and your department."

Operator: "Oh, I like everything all right like that. It's clean. There is one thing I don't like. We have to stand in line fifteen minutes for sandwiches, and we have to pay ten cents for milk."

EAD

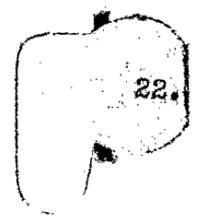
July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "You've had very little to say so far about supervision."

Operator: "Well, I don't think the bosses figure the time right. They ought to take the time when we start and when we stop on a job. Instead of that, they give us straight piece work for the whole day, and the only time we get day work, is when our average is high enough. They've got a lot of nice girls around here. You can mark that down. I really don't think of anything else."

Interviewer: "All right, I'll see you next year."

EAD



July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

6135

The interviewing program was explained in the usual manner, and after a lapse of three or four minutes, the operator started.

Operator: "They ought to give each employee a chance to make out anything he wants to. Take, for instance, on my job, I make things and don't have any idea of what I'm making, or what they're called. I think it would be a good idea to give the employees a chance to work in other departments."

Interviewer: "Have you said anything to anybody about a transfer?"

Operator: "No, I haven't yet. I don't know whether it would be a good idea or not."

Interviewer: "What is your idea in working in several departments?"

Operator: "I want to learn what different things are used for; then too, if they're slack in one department, I could have some place to go to."

Interviewer: "Have you always worked on this job?"

Operator: "Yes, It's been three years now. I suppose you would like to know about bosses?"

Interviewer: "I am interested in knowing anything and everything which concerns you and Western Electric."

Operator: "Well, our gang boss isn't very much of a help. He doesn't explain the work to you. The Big Chief bawls me out for poor work, and the gang boss tells him that I just don't want to do the work right and doesn't give him a fair story at all. Well, I don't know what else I could tell you about. Everything else is suitable to me."

Interviewer: "Can you tell me what makes it suitable?"

Operator: "Oh, I get along with the fellows pretty good. I get a bawling out once in a while. Some days they're crabby, other days they are not. They get up wrong some days I guess."

Interviewer: "Did you do this sort of work before you came here?"

Operator: "No, I used to work on a farm."

Interviewer: "How did you happen to land in this department?"

EAD

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Operator: "Oh, I was just hired out as a laborer and was at it for about three months. Then I thought molding was pretty good, and I'm getting along pretty well; furthermore, I kind of like the trade."

Interviewer: "But you like to know what you make."

Operator: "Yes, I was talking to another fellow, and he said he had been working on one piece for hours and didn't know what it was used for. It seems to me that if we work in another or other departments, and sort of follow this work through, we would know what uses it was put to, and this would give us a better chance of knowing how to make this piece better and perhaps easier."

Interviewer: "Well, this is not much like working on a farm here, is it?"

Operator: "Well, summer is O. K. on a farm, but dead in the winter."

Interviewer: "You work on piece work, do you not?"

Operator: "Yes, some of the jobs are O. K., others you have to work like h--- all day; then you can't make nothing."

Interviewer: "You mean some are just harder to do?"

Operator: "Well, lots of them are, and they are heavy too. It's pretty hard on you when you do it all day."

Interviewer: "You don't get the fresh air here like you do on the farm."

Operator: "Yes, it's pretty hard to get the air here. I'm going out there next Saturday on my vacation. Well, I can tell you some other good things about Western Electric. If you want to, you have a mighty good chance to save money with the plans that they have, and then they take good care of the men. If you are sick or hurt, they take care of you."

Interviewer: "How much do you make in an hour?"

Operator: "I get sixty-five cents an hour day rate. On the job I have now I could do pretty good if I had a good machine, but mine is an old one, and I have a hard time making her go."

At this point an elderly gentleman passed by us on the way into the shop.

END

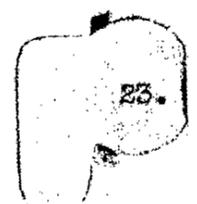
July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Operator: "There's a mighty nice man. He is the laborer's boss. I don't believe that there is a man in there with a kick against him. He helps them along with their stock and he will show them how to do things right and not yell at them. Anything he tells them to do, they are willing to do and do it right."

Interviewer: "You haven't had much to say about the conditions under which you work. We all spend at least a half of our hours while awake at work, and naturally the fellow who likes these conditions works harder because he is satisfied with them."

Operator: "Well, I wouldn't know what to say about them, as this is the only place of this kind I ever worked in; other places might be better or they might be worse. I know I wouldn't care to look around. I have a hunch I'd like to stick with Western. I can't think of anything more to tell you."

Interviewer: "All right, I'll see you next year."



July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

46-2022-155-2 e 6 e

The interviewer explained the interviewing program to the operator.

Operator: "I don't know what to say."

Interviewer: "Suppose you tell me something about your job."

Operator: "I don't find anything wrong with it."

Interviewer: "I suppose then you are satisfied with your job?"

Operator: "If I can better myself I will stay with the Company. I would not be content to stay as I am now. What I mean is that I am willing to work along now for a while, but if I don't see myself improving I won't stay."

Interviewer: "Have you ever thought about what kind of work you would like to do?"

Operator: "No, I haven't. Work is work to me. I can get used to anything."

Interviewer: "Just what did you mean by improving yourself?"

Operator: "A man's wages ought to increase until he reaches that age when his earning power begins to decrease."

Interviewer: "It is solely a matter of earnings then?"

Operator: "Yes. If I don't get a raise at raise time I will feel that I am staying on the same level. A man usually judges a job by what it pays. It's poor consolation to have them tell you it don't pay any more. I was taken from a lower grade of job, and put on a higher grade of one. I was told at the time, the reason for the change was because the other job would never pay any more. Naturally, I expected more money on the new job, but did not get it at the last raise time."

Interviewer: "Were you told why you were not getting a raise?"

Operator: "No."

KB

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

XL-2022-115-2e6e

Interviewer: "How long have you been with the Company?"

Operator: "Three years last April."

Interviewer: "You will get two weeks vacation this year, won't you?"

Operator: "Yes."

Interviewer: "Are you planning to go away?"

Operator: "Yes, I'm going to visit my mother at ---- town."

Interviewer: "Is that your home?"

Operator: "Yes, I have been in Chicago for about five years. I would bring my mother up here, but she thinks it is too noisy."

Interviewer: "From what you have told me I take it for granted that you like your work."

Operator: "I understand the job, and another thing, my Gang Boss leaves me alone. That is, he is always not driving me about efficiency."

Interviewer: "You get along very well with your Gang Boss then?"

Operator: "I have never worked for better men than the last two Gang Bosses I have had."

Interviewer: "We are just as anxious to know the good qualities of the supervisors as their faults. Perhaps you could tell me other things you like about them?"

Operator: "When my Gang Boss knows I am doing the best I can, he never drives me for more work."

Interviewer: "Have all your Gang Bosses been as fair as your present Gang Boss?"

Operator: "No, they haven't. That's why the last two stand out in contrast."

Interviewer: "Perhaps you could tell me what you did not like about your former Gang Bosses?"

KB

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

x6-2022-115-2 e6@

Operator: "I came here as a solderer, but the Gang Boss I had at the time, put me on stamping. It was a job that nobody liked. When I asked him to put me on soldering, he always said he did not have any soldering irons. I know this was not true because he kept putting new men on. I did a bad job good. That's why he kept me there."

Interviewer: "Did he ever commend you on doing a good job?"

Operator: "No, but all the operators around here told me the work was good, not only that, I could compare my work with the work that was done before I came there."

Interviewer: "You said "there", was that another department you were speaking of?"

Operator: "Yes, I was transferred in here about two years ago."

Interviewer: "At the time you were transferred did you consider ~~the~~ ^{it} promotion?"

Operator: "I considered it a demotion."

Interviewer: "Why?"

Operator: "I suffered a loss of about five dollars a week in my pay. Right now, after about two years in this department, I am just beginning to earn what I was getting down there. That's what I mean by staying on the same level. After three years I haven't got anything more to show than what I started."

Interviewer: "What was the cause of your losing so much money when you came to this department, was it a change in the piece work system?"

Operator: "No, the system is the same; it is gang piece work. For some time I was kept on day work; my day work pay netted me less than what my average earnings were. This work seemed to be ^{when} the experimental stage at the time, ^{but} I was in piece work; we could not make very much percentage."

Interviewer: "How is your percentage now?"

Operator: "We make about thirty-eight per cent. It always seems to stay at the same level regardless of how hard we work."

KB

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

X6-2072-1K5-266

Interviewer: "What seems to be the trouble?"

Operator: "I think we earn it, and don't get it. I'll tell you why I don't think we get it. When we were first put on gang piece work, we earned seventy per cent. New gangs were put in with our gang, and the percentage immediately went down to thirty-five. The output now is approximately twice as much as it was then, but the percentage don't seem to go up."

Interviewer: "Has anyone explained to you why your earnings have not increased in accordance with increased output?"

Operator: "They have tried to, but they told us it was one of the other gangs that was dragging us down. When raise time comes, this other gang gets all the raises."

Interviewer: "Is the work the other gang does a higher grade work than yours?"

Operator: "No, they inter-change the men in the gang when they run out of work."

Interviewer: "Have you purchased any A. T. & T. Stock?"

Operator: "No, I have been too busy paying off the mortgage on our home."

Interviewer: "Have you ever attended any evening classes conducted by the Company?"

Operator: "No."

Interviewer: "Have you told me everything you wish to say about your working conditions, job, etc.?"

Operator: "Yes, if it had been a year ago I could have told you something about over-time."

Interviewer: "You might tell me now."

Operator: "We got too much of it. We were forced to work whether we wanted to or not. It seemed pretty raw. We were told to work - never asked. If we protested we would be bawled out, and given to understand that we would be layed off if we did not work."

KB

24.

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

The Section Chief arranged for the gang to be interviewed in order. The operator was taken in his turn to the roof of building forty-four. The interviewer and the operator seated themselves on boxes in the shade. There was no introduction.

Interviewer: "I guess you know that this is in connection with the interviewing program. Do you know what it is?"

Operator: "Well, I think so. You want to know how we like our job."

Interviewer: "That's about it." (The interviewing program was explained).

Operator: "As far as being treated well, I am being treated all right. The supervision isn't so very good. They get a new fellow and break him into the job for a couple of weeks, and if he doesn't understand something he will ask the supervisor, and the supervisor will say, "How long have you been on the job?" The fellow will say, "Two weeks." The supervisor will say, "You have been here long enough to know that." Like we ask him to do something for us. For instance, the toilet. We don't get no air in there, and they solder the windows on us. They disinfect it about once a month. We have complained about it several times. We get a lot of smoke from the stack. We complained about that, and they said that the engineer would fix it, but it has been that way for several years. When the smoke comes in they tell us to close the windows. There is no heat in the toilet in the winter time. We freeze in there in winter, and roast in summer. Some of these Gang Bosses, as they get on the job, they like to display their authority too much. They try to make a fellow do more than they can, and then there are rejections on the job, and they expect a fellow to make up his lost time on that."

Interviewer: "Do you have spot inspection?"

Operator: "Yes, when they find so many out of a hundred they throw the whole lot out, of course, these supervisors argue with the inspectors, and instead of rejecting a lot, they argue about it. The foreman there, if one of the supervisors tells him what to do, he won't listen to him, you know, even if it is beneficial to all in the whole place, he won't listen to it; he has got to have his own way about it. Like sometimes when we work over time, and there isn't much to do, you know, we barely do anything during the day, they tell us they will lay us off for a week unless we work over time, just to scare us and make us work."

KB

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

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KB

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "I wonder why they want you to work over time if they are not busy?"

Operator: "I don't know. There dosen't seem to be much to do, perhaps it's for the supervisor's benefit. Then again, you know, they come around and tell us to stay at home for a day, tell us there is no work."

Interviewer: "It must make your pay somewhat irregular."

Operator: "Yes, it makes pay irregular all right. When you ask them what it is they won't answer you. There is no alibi. You know, they come around and ask you if you want to work over time, and most of the men say no, and later they come around and say you have to. First they ask you and then they say you have to, or you will get a week off. Another thing is about those tools we work with. Sometimes there are some missing, and we tell the Gang Boss and he says, "Go get somebody's else. We have to steal somebody's else. There ought to be a place to lock them up. It is up to them to see that they are put away, but they don't seem to care. You know, there is a lot of new people come to work here, and don't speak up because they are afraid to lose their jobs, and the supervisor has got them bluffed."

(At this time there was an interruption by a chaser who came out on the roof to loaf a while, and had a smoke.)

Operator: "The job there that I have is pretty hard to learn until you get the knack of it. It takes quite a while. Some fellows get it sooner than others, and then they ride the other guy. When I first got the job I have, I was discouraged. The Gang Boss came around driving me to get more work out. I had the intention of quitting several times. I told him to be more patient with me until after I got on to the job, and after I got on to the job I could turn more work out. The way they come around they don't talk to you as man to man. They come around with a big frown on their face and jump on you and holler at you. If they would come around with a smile on their face you would feel like working and turn out a good job, but the way they come around yelping at you, it discourages you and you don't seem to care for the job."

Interviewer: "Do they take into account your lack of experience in setting your rates?"

KB

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Operator: "When the rate setter comes around he times the experienced men. Of course, as you get on to your job, you get a raise, but they forget about it; you have to remind them then and argue for it. You may get it if you argue hard enough for it when raise day comes around."

Interviewer: "Do you find that you are able to make payments on A. T. & T. Shares with what you earn?"

Operator: "Yes, I have got several shares. The Gang Boss used to come around and talk this Ready Money Plan and the A. T. & T. Stock Plan, and if you told him you couldn't afford it, he would say you ought to, and the people around there don't know much about the Ready Money Plan, the Building & Loan Plan, or the A. T. & T. Plan, and they take it out if they can afford it or not for fear they will lose their job."

Interviewer: "It is nice if you can afford some of those things, particularly if you have a family, but I suppose having a family makes it all the more difficult to carry them along."

Operator: "Yes, and some of these insurance men come around, and even if you are carrying all you can they still try to stick you for more. They don't realize, you know, that you have to have money to live on. There are some of the windows that are soldered up, that's the toilet. Down at the other end of the building they have got the same thing. I think every department has one of these fellows they call a monitor who is supposed to look after these things. We have a new fellow, and he doesn't do anything about those things. He could do something - at least report it. You know there is a lot of people who don't work here who call this place a jail, a hothouse, or a madhouse, or something like that. I find the place to be a good place to work, but the supervision is what makes the place a good place to work. If there is rotten supervision, the place will lose its reputation."

Interviewer: "I guess you will be going on a vacation soon."

Operator: "Yes, next week."

Interviewer: "I don't believe there are very many companies that give their working men a two-weeks vacation."

Operator: "No, there isn't. There's the Crane Company that doesn't give you one for five or ten years but they give you a five or ten per cent bonus at Christmas time. Well, I guess that will be about all."

KB

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "You think I have written down everything you would like me to, do you?"

Operator: "Well, unless you have some question to ask. If I can explain it I will gladly do so."

Interviewer: "I usually find that the things a man says of his own accord are those which are really most important to him, so I guess I do not have any questions to ask you."

Operator: "Well, I guess that's about all I have to say unless I started all over again."

KB



July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.
92-14755-312-2D3-C

Interviewer: "You haven't been interviewed yet, have you?"

Operator: "No, I haven't, but I don't see where it does any good to be interviewed. I don't think it helps anybody."

Interviewer: "You probably don't understand the purpose of interviewing. Maybe when I will explain it to you, you will look at it a different way."

Introduction.

Interviewer: "Now that I have explained the program, do you understand it better?"

Operator: "Well, now I expect before things will come to an end, it will help, and maybe they will find out more about the supervisors; probably that is the reason why I was changed around so much from one job to another because I wouldn't stand for a lot of things. Of course I can't kick now. I feel pretty well satisfied, but a few years ago I was pretty well disgusted. I was always changed around from one job to another. You know that gets an operator pretty well disgusted. Every time I was just beginning to learn a job, and I was getting along fine, I was taken off that job and put on another one. In that way I couldn't make my bogey, and I never got a raise. One time I was put on a high hourly rated job, and the girls that were doing the same kind of work were getting from five to seven cents per hour more than I was. When I asked for a raise, they told me I wasn't making my rate, but how could I? They never kept me long enough on one job."

Interviewer: "Did they keep you long enough on that job to make your rate?"

Operator: "No, they put me on another job. I like it real well, and I seem to be satisfied because it was more interesting, and I could make my rate, but I don't see why they didn't raise me anyway, like they did the other girls, every half year or every year. I worked on this job pretty steady, and I made my rate, but I didn't get a raise then either. My gang boss thought I was entitled to a raise. He thought I deserved it. I used to work in back of the department, and my work was piled up pretty high in front of me. My Section Chief always liked to come there and put his arms around my waist, and tell me what he thought were nice things. Sometimes I would twist myself around and away from him, so I could get out and work near the aisle where the people could see me; then he wouldn't bother me. That is why I think I was transferred around so much. Listen, do you think

EAD

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

42-14755-3112-223-C

a supervisor has any right to swear at an operator?"

Interviewer: "Absolutely not."

Operator: "Well, I worked for a supervisor that was terrible. He would get excited and irritated over the least little thing, and sometimes he would just swear blue streaks at me. Many times I had to cry. We were never brought up at home to swear at one another, and when I came to work here I heard the girls swear, but they didn't swear at me. I didn't mind it, but I couldn't get over it when a supervisor swore at an operator for no reason at all, just because things didn't go right with him."

Interviewer: "Don't you see it's hard for the Company to find out what is going on in the gang?"

Operator: "Yes, I understand it is hard, and there isn't anybody to tell these things to, for fear that one would get fired if they say anything. I worked for another supervisor that showed partiality to his own nationality. He was an officer in a foreign army, and he didn't have any use for the American girls, but girls that were his own nationality, he treated them very nice. I should think if he was an American citizen, everybody should be alike to him. The girls that treat the Section Chief and the Foreman in our department nice and the bosses take a liking to them, are the ones that get frequent raises of two or three cents at a time until they get the highest hourly rate. I don't believe the gang boss has much to say about that because my gang bosses always treat me nice especially the one, we have now. He treats everybody alike. I did get a raise the last time because I spoke about it enough to my Foreman, and he finally raised me. You know it is pretty disgusting when you work for a few years without a raise. You must work on some of the jobs that the girls get paid much more than you do, and they get frequent raises all the time, but I feel better now when I got a raise. Do you think, I have told you enough hard luck? I bet you think I am a great kicker."

Interviewer: "I only want you to walk away with the confidence that interviewing will help to improve conditions."

Operator: "Well, if everybody will tell the truth, it will help in the end, but if nobody admits anything, I don't see how it will help any. If I thought it wouldn't help, I wouldn't have told you as much as I did because I never 'snitched' at anybody so much, and I wouldn't want to hurt anybody through this."

Interviewer: "You know this is very confidential, and nobody knows

EAD

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

42-14755-3112-203-C.

where this story came from, and I don't want you to go back and tell any of the operators what you told me."

Operator: "Yes, I understand that. When any of the girls that weren't interviewed in our gang asked the other one what it is all about, all she said is, 'You will get there some day yourself.'"

Interviewer: "You feel pretty well satisfied with your work now, don't you?"

Operator: "Oh, yes, I don't expect to be satisfied with all my jobs, but there is always one that comes in between, and I don't think I can kick. I did like one job, but that was sent away to Kearny. I was anxious every morning to come down to work, when I worked on that job."

Interviewer: "Do you feel that you have told me your views and opinions about everything?"

Operator: "I don't think there is anything else to say, and right now I am satisfied."

Interviewer: "I am very glad you are satisfied, and I thank you."

Operator: "Good-bye, and I am glad I met you."

EMD



July 8, 1929.
N-Operating Branch-M

I explained to the employee some of the things the Management is interested in knowing.

Operator: "Well, everything is going along very nicely with the exception of one thing. Our gang does as much work as any gang in the department and we get a lower bonus than any gang in here. My bonus last week was four dollars and I saw kids' checks from other gangs and their bonus was sixteen and eighteen dollars. That does not seem fair to me. I just figured it up the other day what it has cost me to work in that gang a little over one year. It has cost me around six hundred dollars. If I had been working in another gang where the percentage was good my bonus you see would be much more."

Interviewer: "That seems like a lot of money."

Operator: "Yes, it is. You know when you work across the aisle from a gang that is making a good percentage and they stand around half of the time while you work like ---- and do twice as much as they do and then get a small percentage, you don't feel very good. Last Thursday the whole gang was sore when they got their pay checks. They were all going home. I told them the thing to do was to come in and see the Foreman. You know, he probably has been trying to get the rates fixed up. It has been three months since he took all the poor paying jobs and sent them up for a rerating. I would not say anything if this were new, but the condition has been here for several years. The fellows across from us all squawked and now they have their rates fixed and they are making around thirty per cent."

Here we talked about the rate department for several minutes and what some men could do with the rate department and other bosses could not.

Interviewer: "Your Foreman is a new man in the department?"

Operator: "Well, he has been in here about a year and a half. Oh, I tell you we have a good scrappy boss. He sticks up for his men. That is why I can't understand it. We had Mr. X for a boss before. He did not do very much for his men. I have only been in this department a year in April, but I worked in the department before that for one year or so. All told, I have worked in this department two and one half or three years. When our work was slack in the other department, they would always send me in here. At one time I had a heck of a time to get transferred to this department."

We talked for several minutes about the kind of work he had been doing in the other department.

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N-Operating Branch-M

Interviewer: "How was working in the other department."

Operator: "Well, I had a little 'run in' with the Assistant Foreman. One time when work was slack they came around taking the names of the men that they were going to transfer to other departments. They took everybody's name but mine and one other fellow's. So one day, I said to him, 'Say, how about me going to work in the ---- ---- department.' He said, 'They have all the men they want.' I said, 'Well, give me a pass to the Personnel. I want to get over in that department.' He said, 'I can't give you a pass to the Personnel department today.' The next day he said, 'I got a pass for you to the Personnel. You can go up there now.' I said, 'I don't want to. I am going right in and see the Foreman,' so I did. I told him that I had worked in the other department and I wanted to go back there. He said, 'Oh, you did. Why he hasn't got you on the list.' I said, 'Maybe he forgot about me.' Anyway I got the transfer. It was just time for me to go on my vacation and the Foreman told me when I returned from my vacation I should report to this department that I am working in now."

Interviewer: "Does that Assistant Foreman that you speak of still work here?"

Operator: "The Assistant Foreman was transferred just recently to another department. The Foreman in there was a man that could tend to his own business. He didn't need an Assistant. I believe that fellow would have been killed one day if it hadn't been for me. A great, big, strapping Lithuanian was so mad at him he said he was going right up and punch that fellow all over the floor. I said to him, 'Now listen, you know that fellow is not all there and he is sickly and you may kill him. You better calm down.' I told the fellow if he wanted to quit to go up and quit, for some day he might want to come back. I talked to him for about twenty minutes. Finally, he did cool down and went up and quit. The bosses in our department are all white men. When the Foreman does call a man in to tell him about his work, he is very pleasant about it."

Here the conversation seemed to end as far as the Company was concerned. The man started to tell me about his home life and a few wild stories about some snakes.

Interviewer: "Are there any other items you would like to put in your interview?"

Operator: "I don't believe there is. I think everything is pretty fair in there outside of what I said about wages. I am like the Jew. I kick about the money first. When I work Saturday and Sunday

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and overtime I used to get a check for sixty dollars. I see other gangs getting checks for eighty dollars. There should never be that much difference in a gang of men."

By this time it was getting late and he started to talk about golf and other outdoor sports. I told him I would walk back towards his department with him. While walking I explained to him about putting his time on special K order. When we were near the entrance of his department, I shook hands with him and he expressed his desire to see me again some time.

PR

27.

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.
X 4-14077-8K1-10A6A

Interviewer: "Did you shut your machine off?"

Operator: "Yes."

I explained why I asked her.

Operator: "I never run any chances. It is much cooler to-day than yesterday."

Interviewer: "Yes, yesterday was very warm."

I explained the Interviewing Program to her.

Operator: "X was telling me all about this. Do you know her?"

Interviewer: "X who?"

She told me the girl's name.

Interviewer: "Yes, I know her."

Operator: "I have nothing to say. The bosses know their job and the operator knows hers. The only thing I can talk about is the paper; that red paper. I have been working on that red paper for about a year and a half. The other colors are better than the red."

Interviewer: "Are there many other colors?"

Operator: "Yes, green, white and blue, but the red is the worst of all. I guess they are getting next to themselves. They have noticed that we girls don't make the money other girls do. They were around checking us this morning. There is about five or six dollars difference in our wages. I only make about thirty dollars a week."

After a minute:

Interviewer: "How long are you with the Company?"

Operator: "Well, I worked here about six years and when this paper gets so bad I get so disgusted I could just scream. Otherwise I like my job."

LA

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.
X 4-14077-8K1-10A 6A

Interviewer: "I suppose this is the only department you have ever worked in."

Operator: "Well, I am only living in this city about seven years, and I came here when the Cable Plant was so awfully busy."

Interviewer: "Did anybody ever explain the Company's savings plans to you?"

Operator: "The only thing I have is stock."

Interviewer: "Do you ever take an active part in any of the Hawthorne Club activities?"

Operator: "Their bowling. That's how I met K. I got acquainted with many of the girls on the other side. It is only within the last three years that I have been bowling. The first year I bowled we won the championship. The second year we won it again, but last year we lost on account of some of the bowlers being out. I got lots of publicity through the Western Electric. They surely give their employees enough publicity."

Interviewer: "I think it is nice to bowl with the girls down here."

Operator: "Oh, yes. This year we had a banquet and after that we played cards. The first year I got thirty-dollars for prize money for bowling. The second year I got twenty-five dollars. You only pay seventy-five cents a game. You have to pay that no matter where you go, and you don't get any prize money. Other leagues you belong to you have to pay a dollar or a dollar and twenty-five cents, and they don't give prizes. They give the bowling alleys to the Western Electric for sixty-five cents and we pay seventy-five cents. That ten cents goes for the banquet at the end of the year, and the Hawthorne Club gives the prize money."

Interviewer: "Where do you intend to spend your vacation?"

Operator: "Well, my husband doesn't get his vacation now. I suppose I will play tennis or golf. My husband is busiest in the warm weather. He gets his vacation either in May or the latter end of the year."

Interviewer: "Is there anything you would like to talk about around the shop?"

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Operating Branch-W.

X 4-14077-8K1-10A6A

Operator: "Well, I work in the restaurant at noon, and I don't have much time to talk to the girls.

"The lockers are a little crowded, but I suppose they can't help that. We have to put up with something. We have to work so the best thing to do is get right down and do it.

"Do you get tired writing?"

Interviewer: "No, not with a pen. You don't have to press on the pen very much."

We both talked about the fountain pen.

Interviewer: "Is there anything else you would like to tell me about?"

Operator: "No. I am not afraid to tell you anything. Some girls are, and some girls are not. I am pretty well satisfied with the Western Electric. When I first came here I went to night school. I took up a business course and I finished it at the Hawthorne Club Evening School. When it came time to quit I changed my mind and now that I am married I don't care. Some time I might be able to make use of my course. Do you have your vacation yet?"

Interviewer: "Next week I will have mine."

Operator: "Why do they let everybody go at once now?"

Interviewer: "I explained the new vacation schedule."

Operator: "Well, I had one week last April, and I only had one week coming. We really have had no summer yet. When we worked in the old building; that was when it was warm - over one hundred. We almost baked. You did not have to go on a diet then. You got thin without it. The ceilings were so low the heat was terrible."

Interviewer: "Are you on a diet?"

Operator: "No. I work in the restaurant at noon, but never diet when I get my eats for nothing."

We talked about her father's illness and family affairs.

Operator: "I have not had a sick day in my life."

LA

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.
X 4-14077-8 K1-10A6A

Interviewer: "Well, you keep physically fit."

Operator: "Well, I can't sit still. I always want to be doing something. Some girls get so tired, but bowling or anything else never bothers me. Office girls who just push the pencil get tired, but our work is different. We have a lot of reaching, and I am used to moving around. I suppose you get different stories every day."

Interviewer: "Oh, yes."

Operator: "When I first heard about the interviewing there was a girl on our bowling team and she said, 'Well, if they interview me it will take me a whole day.' She had it in for Mr. X. Do you know him?"

Interviewer: "Yes, I know him. He worked in the same department I worked in."

Operator: "Do you know Mr. Y?"

Interviewer: "Yes, surely I do."

Operator: "Well, he is my boss."

Interviewer: "He was my boss too."

Operator: "Well, Mr. Y is a new man. I don't know him very well. Everybody talks about Mr. Z, the Section Chief, and tells what he does and what he doesn't do, but he has always been nice to me. You see, I was in the bowling league and he used to come and talk to me. Some of the girls over here are very ignorant. Many are foreigners, and so many of them are married. I don't have much to do with them. For instance, I will tell you about one of the girls. I was talking to her, and I told her she ought to get her citizenship papers. I meant her first papers. She said, 'For what?' 'Well,' I said, 'If you want to get married you will have to have your first papers,' and she said, 'Do you think I will spend my money that foolish? If I would commit a crime they can't do anything to me because I don't know the law.' You can see for yourself how ignorant they are. You can't blame some of the men on the floor."

I looked at her and said nothing.

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X 4-14077-8K1-10A6A

Operator: "Now if you do your work they will never bother you.
If you are satisfied that's the main thing."

Interviewer: "Guess what time it is - four thirty."

Operator: "Four thirty! And I am here that long! When you are at
your machine the time drags."

I gave her a ticket and I said:

Interviewer: "Well, I don't think it is worth while taking anybody
else now. It is too near quitting time."

Operator: "No, not unless they are washed up. They don't allow us
to wash up before quitting time."

Interviewer: "Do they say anything?"

Operator: "Oh, yes. Our work is so dirty. I put this apron on
yesterday, but you would never think so, and we change our shoes.
I don't see why we don't get a rest period like the girls on the
other side. Are they allowed to wash up?"

Interviewer: "You mean before quitting time?"

Operator: "Yes."

Interviewer: "Not unless they sneak a wash, but as far as I know
the rules are the same around the shop."

Operator: "Well, I guess I had better go. I have said plenty."

Interviewer: "I am glad I met you, and I enjoyed the time you were
here with me."

Operator: "Oh, thank you. Good-bye."

LA

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.
X4-14074-8K1-10A6A

Interviewer: "Did you shut your machine off?"

Operator: "Yes."

I explained why I told her.

Operator: "I turned off power and all."

While walking down the aisle I said:

Interviewer: "Isn't it nice and cool here?"

Operator: "Yes."

Interviewer: "We have to go to the restaurant so we can sit down. You sit here while I clean off this end of the table."

She helped me. I told her what my name was and then I explained the program to her. She looked at me a few minutes and did not say anything. I went on and explained some more.

Operator: "I am working here a long time. If I had not broken my service I would be here seventeen years. I worked here when Mr. X was the Foreman and also Mr. Y, but I never had any trouble with anybody but one man, and that was the night Foreman. He wanted to get rid of me and he told me I was to be laid off. He said I had three more nights to work. I asked him why, and he did not know what to tell me so he said, 'You don't make enough.' I said, 'I won't take a layoff from you. I'll see Mr. Z, the day Foreman.' Why I make from thirty-three to thirty-four dollars a week, but I found out from another woman that there was a woman down here telling the Foreman tales about me so I came in to the day Foreman. The day Foreman told me to come on days Monday morning. He told me not to tell anybody, and I didn't. Friday night the night Foreman came around and said, 'You are to go on days Monday.' I said, 'I know it.' He never said a word but walked away. Before the night was over he came over to me and said, 'Say, what's the matter with you. Do you have to go around telling everybody you were going on days.' I said, 'I never told a soul.' He said, 'You did.' I said, 'I did not.' He said, 'You're a liar.' I said, 'You'll have to take that back. He said, 'I'll prove it.' He went from one to the other until he got to the one who spread the news and he asked her how she knew and she

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Operating Branch-W.

X 4-14074-8K1-10A6A

told him she could tell what he was saying when he was talking to me. She watched his mouth. Did I cry at my machine! So he came back and apologized to me, but since then I have never had any trouble with him because he found out I was honest and on the square and was not afraid to speak up. Why, if Mr. Z, the day Foreman, thought I was not telling the truth he would never bother with me. I was rehired so many times - about thirteen times - and the General Foreman said when he was giving me my five-year service certificate that one thing about me was that I never changed the date on my application.

"It was the same thing when I was out sick. My husband called up and told the Assistant Foreman I was sick. It was the day after Decoration Day, and the Assistant Foreman said, 'Too much decoration,' but three days later my husband called again and told him I was operated on. I was so sick. My husband is a sickly man, and I have to work because I have one child. I am glad I am working days. When my husband is home sick it doesn't look nice for people coming to see him and nobody is home at night. My girl goes to school."

She stopped a few minutes until I finished writing.

Interviewer: "Is your husband able to work at all?"

Operator: "Well, last year he was out seven months."

Interviewer: "How do you feel now?"

Operator: "I feel swell. Sometimes when the weather changes I feel it, but as a rule I feel good. When I was out sick the doctors at the Company hospital wanted me to come back to work and when I told the nurse she said to the doctor: 'Say, what's the matter with you? Don't you see the condition of this woman's leg?' He told me to stay home for another while. When I thought I was well enough I told the doctor I thought I could come to work now, but he said, 'No, not yet. You heard what the nurse said to me.' He was pretty nice. I even got a basket from the Service Department with coffee flour and several other things. Oh, it was a great big basket. I guess the nurse saw how sick my husband was, and she told the people in the Service Department. I appreciate what she did for me. She was a wonderful woman. She used to come after me and bring me to the hospital whenever I had to come in because I was not able to walk."

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Interviewer: "Was that around Christmas time?"

Operator: "No, it was in the - " She could not think just when.

Interviewer: "That's all right, don't bother. Don't try to think."

Operator: "Then my husband had to have an X-ray. I was running out of money. I was back to work then. I told the Assistant Foreman I wanted to have my savings cancelled. He said, 'No. You don't have to do that.' He sent me over to the Building and Loan and I borrowed the money."

Interviewer: "Was it hard for you to pay the money back?"

Operator: "No. They told me I could pay any amount - one dollar, two dollars or five dollars - just whatever I could spare. They were lovely to me."

Interviewer: "Well, that was nice that they helped you out."

Operator: "I have had so much bad luck. I went through a whole lot. Nobody ought to say a word about the Western Electric. They were good to me, when I was out sick. They never paid me any money while I was in the hospital, but when I came out I got a check for ninety-nine dollars, and I had some pay coming to me. That money paid my doctor bill.

"Do your glasses seem heavy?"

Interviewer: "No. What makes you think so?"

Operator: "Well, they look heavier than mine."

We both handled each others glasses and talked about the frames a minute or two."

Interviewer: "Have you always worn glasses?"

Operator: "No. When I was a young girl I worked in a tailor shop and I strained one of my eyes so now that we have to wear glasses I wear these. The Company's glasses are too heavy."

Interviewer: "While I was waiting for you at your machine I thought I would like to try and run your machine a day or two."

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X 4-14074-8K1-10A6A

Operator: "I don't think you would like it."

Interviewer: "I would like to try it sometime."

Operator: "Well, if the paper runs good it is all right, but if it is rotten you would have an awful time. My average piece work rate is about seventy-one cents, but the week before last I didn't make very good. I had a toothache and my face was swollen, and the Fourth of July came in."

Interviewer: "You must be a good operator. I bet the work you are doing never bothers you."

Operator: "No, I don't care. This week I am on specials. We all have to take our turn for a month. Young or old, good-looking or not, we get our turn just the same so I don't complain."

Interviewer: "Do you feel that nice breeze?"

Operator: "Yes, like now. This building is so much better since they reconstructed it. The air is different; it is much nicer here now."

Interviewer: "I suppose this is the only department you ever worked in."

Operator: "Yes. I would feel lost if I went any place else. I am right at home here. I know the girls so well. They are all nice."

"Gee! That was some writing. Look how long I am in here."

Interviewer: "Oh, don't worry. Some girls are here longer than you. I am just trying to think of one of the things you told me. It was about somebody on nights."

Operator: "Oh, I know who you mean - X. He is as quick as a flash."

Interviewer: "Oh, now I remember what you said."

Operator: "X is so nice. He will do anything for you. All you hear is X, X, X. He gets excited when everybody hollers at him, but anybody would."

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X4-14074-8K1-10A6A

Interviewer: "Well, I wonder if there is anything else you would like to tell me."

Operator: "No. Not now. This thing has always been on my mind. When you think somebody is bucking you trying to get the bread and butter out of your mouth."

While she was waiting for me to finish writing she said:

Operator: "Don't you get tired of writing?"

Interviewer: "After you write a while you get used to it."

Operator: "I suppose it is just like running my machine. I love to write letters. There goes my boss."

Interviewer: "I don't see him."

Operator: "He is telephoning. I wonder what he thinks I am doing here so long."

Interviewer: "Oh, you don't have to worry about that. I have had other girls in here as long as you."

Operator: "From our department?"

Interviewer: "Yes, I believe so."

Operator: "I wonder if they will ask me what I was talking about."

Interviewer: "I am sure they won't. They know what we are doing."

Operator: "Well, he is pretty good; he never bothers the girls. I think he is on the square." (Silence for a few minutes)

Interviewer: "Well, I am glad I met you. There are some very nice girls in your department, in fact, every girl I interviewed was just as nice as she could be."

Operator: "Well, I want to tell you the trouble I had with that Foreman was three years ago, but we are good friends now. I never told a soul about it but you. The Foreman told me to keep my mouth shut and I did. I don't talk much to the girls down here. I don't

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trust anybody because the girl who told the Foreman tales about me was my best friend, and since then I never had enough faith in anybody to tell them about this affair. I have had lots of family trouble. I have had five children, but only one is living. She is a lovely child. Even Miss X said that. I had her down to the Employment Office with me."

While I was writing she said:

Operator: "How long have you been here?"

I told her how long and the department I worked in; then she asked me if I knew her sister who was lost on the Eastland. She worked in the same department as I did.

Interviewer: "I don't remember whether I do or not."

We talked over a half an hour.

Operator: "I am glad I am well and able to work. When I am working overtime I earn as high as forty-eight dollars a week. That is as much as my husband brings in for two weeks. He kids me. He says, 'You brag about all the money you make, but you don't bring it home.' I have twenty-one dollars taken out of my pay every week. Isn't the stock going up swell?"

Interviewer: "Yes indeed."

Operator: "I am paying on stock, Building and Loan, and the Ready Money."

"Are you sure you have had other girls from our department as long as me?"

Interviewer: "I don't know just what department they are from, but don't worry about that."

Operator: "Will you be here to-morrow?"

Interviewer: "In the afternoon because I am going to work to-morrow night."

Operator: "I will bring my sisters picture down to see if you know her."

Interviewer: "All right."

Operator: "Don't forget now. Come over to my machine."

LA

29.

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

After explaining the interviewing program to the operator the operator had nothing to say.

Interviewer: "What do you think of the Western?"

Operator: "Everything is all right with me."

Interviewer: "Well, what are some of the things that are all right?"

Operator: "I get along with the bosses all right; I can't kick about them. On the job I am working on they have set the bogey too high; it is so high that we can't get it out. They will come around and tell us if we don't get it out they will get someone that will. Nobody ever got it out yet. That's all I can think of to tell you."

Interviewer: "Well I guess everybody is thinking about his vacation this week."

Operator: "I can't wait myself; I am going up to Wisconsin for two weeks. I don't get a paid vacation but I have a few dollars of my own saved up so I can go with the rest of them."

"The only thing that is wrong is the bogey on the job; nobody has ever made it yet. You might make it if you sat all day without even going to get a drink of water; but a fellow can't do that."

"The Western is a nice place to work; they pay good money. The other place I worked I only made \$23.00 a week and worked 9-1/2 hours a day while here I work only 8-3/4 hours and make \$27.00 a week. This will be the first time I have ever had a chance to get away for a vacation. Any other place I worked I could not get a vacation. I get a paid vacation in November but I think it will be pretty late to go anywhere then."

"I think they should give a fellow five minutes to wash up before quitting time; they did this where I worked before. I expect when we come back from vacation we will have to work overtime. I don't mind it very much in the winter but it is too hot to work overtime in the summer."

Interviewer: "Is that hard work that you are doing?"

RU

July 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Operator: "No, the job is very easy; nothing hard about it at all. When I was working on it alone I only used to get from six to eight repairs back a day; now we have a new man on the job and we get back as high as eighty a day. This makes it pretty bad as we work gang piece work. This is about all I can think of, everything else is all right."

RU



July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

After telling this man what the program was all about and what it would mean to him and the Company, I asked:

Interviewer: "What do you think of the Western Electric as a place to work?"

Operator: "Well I will tell you. I worked in another part of this department and then I was transferred over here. At one time I asked the Assistant Foreman how it was that a man was entitled to a raise every six months according to the Company rules, and that some of the old-timers over there had received a raise three times in a row and I never got any. All he told me was that he would see what he could do the next time, and that is all the satisfaction you can get out of him. You can't get any satisfaction out of either the Foreman or his Assistant; one will tell you to see the other and then when you see him he will tell you that you have to see the other fellow; you can't get any satisfaction at all."

Interviewer: "What is the matter, is the percentage low over here?"

Operator: "I don't know how this department is run but we never make any percentage over here at all; wherever it goes I don't know but I have seen a man that used to work here go out of this department during working hours and I was told that he was going to polish a machine for someone, and he was being paid by the gang. Another thing that I saw myself is that I have seen men sent after material and have it worked on in the shop and whoever it was for I don't know but it was paid for by the gang because it was done without an order."

Interviewer: "Is that the only way your percentage was cut?"

Operator: "No, there were jobs that came through that part of the department and these jobs had no order or no price on them and they would run for quite a while. I told the Gang Boss that we had then that we ought to get paid for these jobs, and he would say, 'I am getting mine, I don't care about you fellows', but this man was transferred to another department.

"Another thing, if you are liked by the bosses around here you will get a raise and go up but if they don't like you they will hold you down and never give you a chance at it."

RU

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "What do you mean by that?"

Operator: "Well, a friend of mine that worked over in another department asked the Assistant Foreman for a raise, and he asked him what he would do with a few dollars, and he said that his family would be very happy if he got a few more dollars a week. That is the kind of a man he is, he will take all he can get but he won't give a man a cent."

Interviewer: "I suppose you are all ready to go on your vacation?"

Operator: "Well I was figuring on going to St. Louis but I don't know whether I will or not because my boy is going up to Minnesota and I don't know if I will make the trip or not."

Here the operator talked about where his son had gone for the last few years, for about 15 minutes then he said:

Operator: "Well, I think that will be all."

Interviewer: "What do you think about your job?"

Operator: "I like this job because it is close to home and I don't have to bother with street cars. The hours are reasonable and the only thing I would like to get is a little more money."

Interviewer: "When did you get a raise last?"

Operator: "I haven't had a raise since the Foreman that we have now came here. A few more men and myself went up to him and asked him for a little more money because the work was hard and we thought we ought to have a little more; he flew up in the air but after a while he cooled down and was all right, and the next raise day everybody got a raise as it was general raise day; some of us got more and some got less."

Interviewer: "Do you change your clothes here?"

Operator: "No I don't, but the locker doors are in need of repair. When I go to get my clothes at night the doors are all open and you can't close them; it seems that the hinges are broken and you can't close them right. Some night I am afraid I am going to get hurt by a locker door."

RU

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Interviewer: "Are there any other conditions wrong around here?"

Operator: "Only the toilets, but they are not so bad but once in a while the bowls are stuffed up and the men come up and fix them right away, but the seats look very dirty; I don't know when they have been washed but over in the other department they used to wash them every day; they might do it here at night I don't know, but at one time they had some of those bums from Madison Street working here and you could never use these toilets at all."

Interviewer: "Do you use any of the Company's savings plans?"

Operator: "No I don't use them now but one of my boys has some shares. I had some Building & Loan at one time and I owed a friend of mine some money and I had to repay him, then I have a home of my own and it takes all I can make to pay for everything besides the education of the children. One of my sons is studying to be a minister; he likes that kind of life so I told him to go ahead. I tried to give all of them as much education as I could. I have three sons working here; two of them have trades but I don't know what the other fellow will turn out to be because he is making as much as he ever will make."

Interviewer: "How does your Gang Boss treat you?"

Operator: "The Gang Boss that I have is a little hard but I think that is his way; he doesn't mean anything by it. At one time I worked for a man outside of here that was like him and at times you could not come near him, he would bawl the life out of you and about five minutes after he would be different altogether."

Interviewer: "Is there anything we have not talked about?"

Operator: "There is one more thing, the men doing that job over there sometimes cut up the apparatus so that a man will have to work all day before it is fixed up, and we have no rates on this job."

"At one time, the fellow that takes the Gang Boss's job when he is away, tried to get a rate on the job and he had the Rate Man down here and everything but I think the Assistant Foreman killed the job. I don't think that we even get day work for doing this job. I think that is about all we can talk about now."

RU

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Operator, Continued

"Will anything ever get back to my Gang Boss of what I have told you? If it does I suppose I will get fired."

I told this man that he could rest assured that his Gang Boss or no one else would ever find out who gave this interview.

RU

July 8, 1929.
N-Operating Branch-M

I explained to him some of the things the Management would like to know.

Interviewer: "Anything you have to say I will take notes on it."

Operator: "I have been with the Company twenty-three years last Saturday. I have been in this department twelve or thirteen years, and before that I worked in the Inspection Department."

The operator seemed to stop and sat there thinking as though he was arranging a story.

Interviewer: "You know this is not a life's history."

Operator: "I think for a big concern, our department is running along about as well as could be expected. As far as the Foreman, Assistant Foreman, and Gang Boss are concerned, I have always been treated very good. I believe we are going to get new machines. You know that is a new machine I am working on tonight."

Interviewer: "Do you believe the old machines slow you down?"

Operator: "Yes, I do, for when the machine breaks down, we leave it down until it is repaired."

Here the operator seemed to switch his conversation and talk about his daughter who was looking for a transfer from the Bell Telephone to the Western Electric. The daughter was suffering from a nervous breakdown caused from her job.

Interviewer: "You seem to have a pretty easy job."

Operator: "I handle four machines with a helper. Without a helper I handle three machines. I like to work around machinery and I have been well satisfied ever since I came to this department. I asked to be transferred to this department."

Interviewer: "Did you ever work around machinery before?"

Operator: "Yes, I operated a small machine years ago for a Wool Carding Company, but it was only a small machine. You see, my wife wanted me to go back to New York. I transferred from New York here in 1913. I did not want to go back before I had learned something so I told my wife I would transfer to some machine department and when I had learned the machine good I would go back to New York. Well, in the meantime, I did learn the machine well and my wages got better and my family got

PR

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-M

bigger and I am still here. We both like it real well now."

Here the man started talking about his daughter again.

Interviewer: "The view from your window is pretty good here."

The man showed me from the window where he was living and spoke of how long it took him to get to work.

Interviewer: "What advantage do you gain in living near the Plant?"

Operator: "Well, sir, I think there is a lot of advantage in living near the Plant. The street car service is very rotten in the morning and evening. It is because of the great number of people coming and leaving the Plant all at once. I never am late, maybe once in two or three years. I had a record at one time for not being late in five years. I did live eight miles from the Plant when I was in New York and I said when I came here I would move near my work, and I did."

I was busy taking notes.

Operator: "Pardon me, but I want to ask you a question."

He did ask me more questions about his daughter and how she should go about it to get a transfer here. He talked about her for fifteen minutes again, and also about the rest of his family.

Interviewer: "Is it always this warm in your department?"

Operator: "Most all summer it is, but it varies with the weather. I believe our building is cooler than our other building out there. It always did seem that way to me."

The man started again to talk about the possibilities of his daughter getting a transfer.

Interviewer: "Well, I do hope your daughter gets her transfer. Is there anything else you wish to include in your interview?"

Operator: "No, I believe not."

Interviewer: "Well, I hope your daughter regains her health and gets her transfer to the Western Electric Company."

I shook hands with the man and bid him goodbye.

PR

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.
1-17354-315-203-B

After explaining the interviewing program to her she said:

Operator: "I am very pleased with the job I have now as long as I can make my rate, only I do not like the way some of us girls are treated. Some of the newer girls get steady jobs while I am given so many different jobs; that is what I do not like. Of course, I do not mind waiting for work once in a while, but when I have to wait very long I cannot make my bogey. Some of these jobs I cannot make because the bogey is too high and the rates are too hard."

Interviewer: "At any time do you remind your Gang Boss that you are waiting for work?"

Operator: "I am told to mark my bogey sheet if I feel I have waited too long."

"One thing I do not like about the department is that there are too many pans and boxes standing in the aisle. When I go to punch the clock I am not able to see these pans and then I bump my shins and my stockings are torn."

"I think my Foreman is a very nice man. He seems to want to please us all. I know he wants the Gang Bosses to treat us all alike. I was transferred from my old department because there was no work, but the Foreman told me I would have to work for less money. He said all he would be able to pay me would be thirty-one cents. I said, 'My! That is little money. I cannot get along on that.' After I had talked to him a while he said he would give me thirty-three cents so in this way it makes me feel that he is a fair man to work for. I have had one raise since. I am made to feel that because I am from the old country the Gang Boss does not like me. I cannot speak as good English as some of the other girls do. Maybe he thinks I take too much of his time, but when I don't understand I have to tell him so don't you think so? Sometimes when I say the wrong word or I do not understand what he says like last week: He asked me if I had been up to see you or if I had been - what do you call your work?"

Interviewer: "Interviewing."

Operator: "I did not know that word or what it meant and he laughed at me. When he saw he had hurt me he explained your work and what you wanted me for. Another time when my father was sick and I was

LA

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.
1-17354-316-203-13

home for a few days I asked him if he would please get my pay for me. He said he would get it for me. That afternoon when the pay man came into the department I asked the Gang Boss if he had my pay check. He said: 'Oh, I forgot all about it,' but he promised faithfully to get it for me the next day. Well, the next day was exactly the same. He forgot. I could not wait any longer for my pay so I asked him if I could go during working hours and he said no but that I could go at five o'clock. Well, some of the girls told me I could not go at five o'clock because then it was too late. I was afraid I would not make it so I asked the Assistant Foreman and he gave me a pass to go at four o'clock. This was nice of him. Then when I came back to my bench my Gang Boss asked me where I had been, and I told him. Oh, he bawled me out something terrible because I did not ask him if I could go. I tried to tell him I had to have my money and that we needed things at home, but he would not listen to me. This made me feel so bad because I had so much trouble to get my money."

Interviewer: "Does your Gang Boss treat you better now?"

Operator: "He treats me real nice lately and this makes me feel much better."

Interviewer: "Are you pleased with the thought of your vacation?"

Operator: "I am looking forward to my vacation, and I want to have a real nice time. I am going to Ohio and I expect to have a real nice time. It is very nice that the Company is so interested in me to give me two weeks' vacation. I haven't been here a very long time, and they are going to pay me for it. I could not afford to take two weeks if I did not get my pay for it."

Interviewer: "The Company has a nice hospital hasn't it?"

Operator: "Sure! I was there two times. Once I had a little accident and another time I had a bad headache. The girl in white asked me if I wanted to go home or if I wanted to stay there and rest. I stayed there a little while and then I went home."

Interviewer: "Do you like the music the Hawthorne Club has at noon time?"

Operator: "Oh, Yes. The music and singing is so nice. I can buy what I want in the Club store in my noon hour too, so I do not have to ask my Gang Boss for time off to go."

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July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

1-17354-3A5-2C3-B

Interviewer: "Are you happy on your job now?"

Operator: "I am glad I am working for the Western Electric Company because I hear from the other girls that in other places they have worked in they have to work much harder than they do here and they did not make much money. I am glad I was laid off and transferred to this department. The girls are so nice to me and help me to speak English. They all talk so nice to me."

Interviewer: "Are you satisfied and contented on the job now?"

Operator: "Oh sure, everything is nice now. I have no more trouble. I would not like to be transferred any more. I like Mr. X so much; he is a good man."

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July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

After explaining the Interviewing Program to operator.

Operator: "I don't see anything bad about this place. I don't see why we have to wear the glasses or the hairnets. I don't see why I must wear them."

Interviewer: "You took your hairnet and goggles off when you came to me, didn't you?"

Operator: "Oh sure, I don't like to wear them. I just keep them on at my place. (Silence-one minute)

"The Forelady seems to be all right. Only sometimes they stick to their own crowd. You know, they think more of some girls than of others."

Interviewer: "Gee, I believe there is a mosquito in here. It has been pestering me all evening."

Operator: "You bet there is. At night they come in here so thick, and they like to get around my legs and arms. And I don't like night work. I don't see why I have to work nights. (Silence-two minutes) I don't know what else to say. (Silence-two minutes)

"They have plenty of truckers here."

Interviewer: "What do these truckers do?"

Operator: "They bring us all of our parts. (Silence-two minutes)

"The rest periods are helping me. All the other times, I would only go to the washroom once in a while but now of course, I must waste more time. (Silence-one minute)

"Sometimes I have to wait pretty long to have my machine fixed. Not always but once in a while."

Interviewer: "How are you going to spend your vacation this year?"

Operator: "Oh, I am going to Loon Lake. I get two weeks but I am going there for one week."

Interviewer: "You must have saved up a lot of money to spend on your vacation."

MK

July 8, 1929.
Operating Branch-W.

Operator: "I give up all of my money to my mother." (Silence-three
minutes)

"I don't know what else to say."

Interviewer: "I don't think you have said anything yet."

Operator: "No?"

Interviewer: "Your job looks like there is quite a bit of work to
it."

Operator: "Oh yes, there is, especially the job I have now. It is
so hard. The girl next to me, her job pays \$39.80 per hundred, and
mine pays \$28.80 and I work just as hard as she does. I don't see
how they figure that out. She makes ten cents more on everyone she
makes." (Silence-two minutes)

Interviewer: "Do you think you are learning anything on your job to
help you in any other way?"

Operator: "No. I might be learning more jobs, that is, when I don't
know how to start a job the instructor shows me how to do it."
(Time so far, thirty-five minutes)

Interviewer: "Do you think you have told me everything you would
like for the Company to know?"

Operator: "I don't know. If you would ask me questions, I would
know better what to say."

Interviewer: "I am not a questionnaire and don't make a habit of
asking a lot of questions, so don't wait for me to do it. I ask you
again not to be afraid to talk."

Operator: "No, no, I am not afraid but I don't know what to say."
(Silence-one minute)

"I am treated pretty fair. Sometimes the Forelady don't
bring the parts I need, so then I have to tell her three or four
times."

Interviewer: "Have you ever been sick while you have worked here?"

Operator: "No, not sick that I could get paid for it."

MK

July 8, 1929.
N-Operating Branch-W.

Interviewer: "Do you live near the Plant?"

Operator: "Yes, I can walk here and back, but my sister won't walk so I have to ride with her. (Silence-two minutes)

Interviewer; (hearing the clink of milk bottles): "Are they starting to dish out the lunch already?"

Operator: "They are not going to have the lunch counter in this room any more. The lunch is pretty good. You can buy anything you want. (Silence-one minute)

"The girls around here are all right. They are all real nice to talk to. (Silence-two more minutes) When the girls go to the washroom before five o'clock, the matron chases them out. She won't have anyone in there after four thirty. (Silence-one minute)

"The street cars are so crowded. They ought to have some system so that the people would not crowd so much. It is terrible the way they push. Everybody is in a hurry it seems and that is what makes it. (Silence-three minutes) And I have to wait so long before I can cross the street in front of the gate. The automobiles go past so fast that I can hardly get across the street. (Silence-one minute)

"I think they ought to have elevators running at night where the girls come up. When I walk up all those steps I am all out of breath, (Silence-two minutes)

Interviewer: "Well now do you think you have told me everything you want the Company to know? (Silence-two minutes) I don't want you to go away from me with any sorry feelings and when you get back to your place you will be thinking this over and you might think, 'Well, why didn't I tell her that, or that, and a half a dozen other things'. I don't want you to be sorry and I want you to take advantage of this time with me."

Operator: "There is another thing. I don't like these chairs. I can't rest my back on them at all. When I work I like to have my back resting on something. These chairs are too straight. (Silence-one minute) I suppose these things cannot be helped. In the summer time my machine gets so warm, it throws off too much heat. (Silence-one minute)

MK

July 8, 1929.
N-Operating Branch-W.

Operator: "That is about all. I can't think of anything else.
(Silence-one minute) Do the girls stay here long?"

Interviewer: "The time is all different. Anyway none of the girls
in this department were afraid to talk." (Silence-one minute - -
Time-9:25 P.M.)

Operator: "The rest period comes at nine thirty."

Interviewer: "Do you want to go on a rest period?"

Operator: "Oh, I guess I do. I want to have something to eat."

Interviewer: So I left her to ^{go} back to work because she was watching
my watch for her rest period. Interview: Sixty-five minutes.

MK

September 24, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

X10-10750-OK7-3E7D.

Gang Boss: "Mr. Campbell, I want you to meet Mr. Dickson. He wants to interview you. You can go off in a quiet place and tell him what you like or don't like about the Company, and you can give the bosses h--- if you want to." (I shook hands with Mr. Campbell)

(As we were walking down the aisle) "Are you going out on the roof?"

Interviewer: "No, they had the door locked so I guess we will have to go out to the top of the stairs."

Gang Boss: "You can go in the crib if you want to. Only the supervisors are allowed in there and the door is locked. You will have to sit side by side though."

Interviewer: "No thank you. I think we will go out here." (As we were walking along) "These aisles aren't as crowded as they were about a month ago are they?"

The employee said nothing. We reached the head of the stairs and sat on a couple of boxes facing each other. The employee seemed rather frightened and sat looking at me without saying anything.

Interviewer: "You have probably seen me around here before and know what I am doing? I am sent here by the Company to see how you are getting along."

Operator: "Yes, some of the fellows have pointed you out to me and they said you were the interviewer."

There was a pause.

Interviewer: "How long have you been with the Company?"

Operator: "I have been with the Company three years, but I have only been on my present job six months. I used to work at tightening relays."

Interviewer: "So you have been here three years. A lot of things can happen in that time."

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September 24, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

X10-10750-OK7-3E7E.

Operator: "I'll say they can! I have been sick two times." (He paused.)

Interviewer: "Is that so?"

Operator: "Yes, I had appendicitis and I had my ankle broken. My mother died just after I got out of the hospital from my appendicitis operation last January. It left us in a pretty bad fix." (He paused about half a minute.)

Interviewer: "I suppose you were paid sick benefits while you were off."

Operator: "Yes, they paid me about thirty dollars a week."

Interviewer: "I imagine that would come in pretty handy."

Operator: "Yes, it did in my case. We had hospital and funeral expenses to pay and on top of that we got into trouble over our house. There were some liens on it we did not know existed and we had to get enough money to pay them off."

Interviewer: "Were there any other children besides yourself?"

Operator: "Yes, I have three younger brothers. Two of them are working and one of them is going to school." (He paused again for about half a minute.)

Interviewer: "How does the job you are on now compare with the one you were on before?"

Operator: "I like it much better; it pays more. I used to work nights when I was tightening relays. I was doing that when I got appendicitis. Since then I have been transferred in here, and I like the work very well. I could have got on adjusting if I wanted to work nights. That is the hardest job in the department because you have to be so accurate. You have to know all about the different kinds of relays."

Interviewer: "Your transfer might be looked upon as a promotion then."

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Operating Branch-M.

X10-10750-OK7-3E7E.

Operator: "Yes, the last step is adjusting, at least, that is the way it seems to me. I know that most of the fellows who were assembling when I came in here are adjusting now." (He paused)

"Where do these interviews go to? to the supervisors?"

Interviewer: "No, the supervisors do not see them at all. Some of them go up to the Works Manager."

Operator: "What do you use them for?"

Interviewer: "Some of them are used in supervisory training work. The man who conducts the conferences will select one at random and read it to the group. No one knows whose interview it is because there is no way of identifying them. The interview represents what an employee of the Western Electric thinks. Certain points are brought up for discussion. Besides that, the Company is interested in knowing just what you think of the Western Electric. You have been working here three years now and we realize that you have some ideas that are worthwhile. This gives you a chance to speak your piece."

Operator: "Then there is no way of this getting back to the supervisor?"

Interviewer: "None whatever."

Operator: "During lunch hour one time I heard some fellows talking about the program. They thought the interviewer was trying to get something on them and that it would come back to the supervisor. That was only a few of them though. Most of the fellows think there is no such danger. I happen to know one of the men pretty well, and he said he did not tell the interviewer anything about the bosses."

Interviewer: "I do not know what made them think that. This is not a spy system or anything of the kind, and we want to assure all of you that it is not. However, as I understand the Company's policies, a supervisor could not do anything to a man even if he did find out."

Operator: "No, we can always go to the Personnel. They are supposed to look into such matters, but I have never had an occasion to go to them." (He paused again.)

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September 24, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

X10-10750-OK7-3E7E.

Operator: "The supervisors that I have had are all right. I can't remember that I ever had any trouble with them. The way I look at it, you should try and do your work as you are told and just as well as possible. If you do that the bosses will treat you all right.

"You are raised here when you make a certain percentage. The rates are pretty high now on this job and they are difficult to make, but I think I can. I got a two-cent raise on raise day and I sure was surprised. I didn't expect any at all because I had been sick so much. Several others were raised too. Two cents is a pretty good raise."

Interviewer: "Yes, I guess the Company's raise policy works out all right if you make your percentage."

Operator: "Sometimes there is a shortage of piece parts and that holds us up a little. We may be working on a certain type of relay and our piece parts will run out. Then we will have to work on another type, but we lose time that way. When I was working at tightening we had to make ninety-three per cent before we could get a raise, but I could make it quite easily."

Interviewer: "You work in gangs don't you?"

Operator: "Yes, this is all gang piece work in here. I like it. When you work on straight piece work you are always trying to beat every one else and it seems you are never satisfied."

Here he stopped and watched me write.

Interviewer: "My shorthand isn't as good as it might be."

There was a pause for about a minute.

Operator: "They seem to be awfully busy in here.. I wanted to go to night school this year, but the Gang Boss said that none of us could get off. We work overtime four nights a week. The only night we get off is Wednesday."

Interviewer: "I thought the Company encouraged all of its employees to go to night school."

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Operating Branch-M.

X10-10750-OK7-5E7E.

Operator: "I think they do it, but they just seem to be too busy now. I was going to take business English and mathematics at a regular high school. I went to the Hawthorne night school two years ago and took up some electrical work. I didn't get much out of it."

(Pause)

Interviewer: "Were you treated by the Company hospital when you were sick?"

Operator: "No, I went to the Saint Bernard Hospital. It is Catholic. They treated me very well over there. When I first came here the Employment Office gave me a letter explaining the Company's Sick Benefits, but I had forgotten all about it. It surprised me when I received a thirty-dollar check for the first week I was sick. I have always been afraid of an operation before I was operated on for appendicitis. I was so sick then I did not care. I went home from work one Friday night and went to bed feeling a little sick. I had a pain in my side. It got worse during the night. I took some medicine and that was the worst thing I could do. They took me to the hospital the next morning and operated immediately. The doctor said that if I had come two hours later my appendix would have broken. Then my mother dying right after that made it pretty tough."

Interviewer: "Yes, you had some bad luck."

Operator: "It all came at once. They say it happens to every one sometime so I guess we are no different than anyone else." (Pause)

"I bought some stock during the first year I was here. I was paying on six shares when I got sick. My father did not want me to take any out because he thought I was taking a chance and he needed the money at home, but the boss told me about it and I signed up for some. When my mother died I had to sell it in order to get enough money to pay that lien on our house. In six months I would have had it paid for."

Interviewer: "Couldn't you have borrowed some money on it?"

Operator: "I thought of that, but you cannot borrow on your shares until they are paid up. Before I sold it I went up and had a talk with the boss. He asked me if I wanted to borrow some money from

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September 24, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

X10-10750-OK7-3E7E.

Operator, Continued.

the Company on the shares. I said, 'Sure,' but he afterward found out I could not do it. If I could have held on to them I could have made a lot of money. I have taken out four more shares now. My father does not like the idea very well, but I do not think he understands the plan at all. They pay you good interest."

Interviewer: "Does your father work here?"

Operator: "No, he works for Company X. They manufacture a sort of a cement that is being used in place of asphalt. Asphalt is laid while it is hot and if any rain falls on it, it is no good. This stuff can be laid while it is cold and water does not affect it. My father is a foreman. I worked over there two years after I got out of grade school. Have you ever been in one of those mills?"

Interviewer: "I have been in a cement mill."

Operator: "It is awfully dusty. My father must breathe about two pounds of dust a day. This is a much better place to work than that."

Interviewer: "It looks like it might rain to-day doesn't it."

Operator: "Yes, I suppose it will. It is a good thing I had my vacation when I did. I just got back last week. I go around with a fellow who works downtown. He was going back to college this fall so he quit and we took our vacations together. We did not go any place in particular. All we did was play golf."

Interviewer: "You must be quite interested in golf."

Operator: "It is a fine game. I used to caddy when I went to school. I made enough money to buy my books that way."

Interviewer: "It is quite a tough job isn't it? I do not think I could locate a ball if I had to."

Operator: "You can't always, and some fellows surely bawl you out. The best way to locate a ball is by some tree. If it is a straight-away, you can locate it by the flags."

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Operating Branch-M.

X10-10750-OK7-3E7E.

He paused again.

Operator: "Have you ever seen a copy of the 'Hawthorne Worker'?"

Interviewer: "No, I have never seen one, but I have heard something about it."

Operator: "Has the Company ever tried to suppress it?"

Interviewer: "Not that I know of."

Operator: "They could if they wanted to couldn't they? They are handed out in front of the Company buildings. They say some pretty raw things in there about the rates, the bosses, and how they treat new men. I heard that some of the men in the Plant write in to them about conditions."

Interviewer: "How true do you think the statements are?"

Operator: "There may be some truth in them, but they surely do not apply to this department. I have not seen anything like that around here."

Interviewer: "I wonder who publishes the paper."

Operator: "I do not know, but I think it is a money-making scheme of some kind. They used to give them out for nothing, but now they charge for them. When I was in the hospital, a friend came to visit me and he said that they were taking up contributions to help publish the paper. He thought that some one was just trying to make money."

Pause.

"Did the Company make anything by having the vacation that way this year?"

Interviewer: "I do not know. Do you think they did?"

Operator: "I cannot say either. I think it is a good plan though. They chose two of the best weeks in the year, and you did not have to take them if you did not want to. I broke my ankle the week following the Fourth so I thought I would lose my vacation, but I got it anyway."

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Operating Branch-M.

X10-10750-OK7-3E7E.

Interviewer: "Well, it is nice to have a vacation after you have been sick. A person is ordinarily pretty weak."

Operator: "You know, I thought I had to be injured while working for the Company before I could get sick benefits. I was hurt in an auto accident, but they paid me anyway."

There was another pause of half a minute.

Interviewer: "Did you get out to see the Cubs the other day?"

Operator: "Yes, that sure was some crowd wasn't it? I do not see how so many people could get jammed into such a small place."

Interviewer: "Neither do I. I notice some of the iron bars out there were bent almost to the ground."

Operator: "They were a pretty good looking bunch of men weren't they?"

Interviewer: "Yes, they seemed to be in good condition."

Operator: "Are you going to the World Series?"

Interviewer: "No, I think not."

Operator: "Neither am I. I think it costs too much. Six dollars is a pretty high price."

Pause. Interviewer got up and walked to the rail.

Operator: "Well, I can say that the Company has treated me very well. The work is all right, and they treated me fine while I was sick. The supervisors are good too. Of course, they bawl a person out once in a while but you have to expect that."

Interviewer: "They do?"

Operator: "Well, you can't blame them very much. Pressure is brought on them from above and they have to see that the fellows do things right. They always treat a new employee with consideration because he does not know just what to do."

September 24, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

X10-10750-OK7-3E7E.

Operator, Continued.

"There is no excuse for an old hand dropping piece parts on the floor all the time though. If the Foreman sees the parts lying around on the floor he goes and tells the Gang Boss about it. All he can do is tell us about it and make it strong."

Interviewer: "Yes, I guess the supervisors do have their problems."

There was a pause.

"Can you think of anything else you would like to tell me?"

Operator: "No, I think that is about all."

Interviewer: "I guess ^{we} you may as well go back then."

We walked down the aisle together. I told him I was glad to have met him, shook hands, and left.

Note: This man seemed to be a little afraid when I first met him. He would not talk while I was writing, and consequently, I had to reconstruct most of this from memory.

Time - 70 Min.
Dictation - 50 Min.

35.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MILWAUKEE

October 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10677-2KO-8A4CD.

I: "Are you stationed regularly on the ~~working~~ machines?"

E: "Yes, I work there most of the time unless a machine breaks down and they put me some place else."

I: "I suppose you won't mind taking a little rest and walking down to the restaurant for a few minutes."

E: "No, that will be fine."

While walking:

I: "You know, you are just about the last one in your gang to be taken down here. I have spoken to most of them before this."

E: "Yes, I saw a lot of the men going away with you."

I: "Have you ever had any experience out here in this cable room?"

E: "No, my first job was mixing compounds, but I would much rather do something else."

I: "How long have you been with the Company?"

E: "One year this month."

After taking seats in restaurant:

I: "Do you get a vacation then this month after you have been here a year?"

E: "I took a vacation this summer for two weeks, but I didn't get paid for it. Some of the boys were telling me that I will get a week now and I will get paid for it. I suppose the boss will tell me about it though." ?

I: "Have any of the other fellows mentioned what goes on when they are taken away from their bench down to the restaurant here?"

E: "No, they don't say anything."

LA

October 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10677-2KO-8A4CD.

Explanation of program.

E: "That's fine. I think everything is all right now, but I didn't like night work when I had to work then."

I: "I wonder why."

E: "Well, I don't know myself. I guess maybe it was because it was long hours and hard work, and then I didn't like the bosses at all. They would get mad if you asked them any kind of a question, and they weren't nice to the men at all. If a machine broke down and I told the boss about it, he would get mad at me, and I couldn't help it that the machine broke. He is always fresh and never nice. You know, they call him -- down here, but I don't know what his real name is. Sometimes if we would wash up early in the morning before leaving he would come in and he would holler at us for doing that, but if we had another boss and we washed up early, he would tell us in a very nice way that we shouldn't do that."

I: "Well, do you think that the fellows work for him the way they ought to?"

E: "I guess they work just about the same."

I: "You don't think then that if they had a nicer boss they would feel more like working?"

E: "You bet your life they do. If they have a nice boss they work much harder."

I: "Is he a Gang Boss?"

E: "No, I guess he is a department boss."

I: "Would you mind night work now if you had a different boss?"

E: "Well, I don't think I would like it, but I couldn't go now because I go to school every night."

I: "Where do you go to school?"

LA

October 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10677-2KO-9A40D.

E: "Where I live. It is a public evening school."

I: "What subjects do you take there now?"

E: "Well, I am learning to write English. I can talk it a little, but not very good, and I want to learn how to write it now. You know, I have only been here one year and a half."

I: "Well, you just continue right on, and by the time you are here another year and a half you will be just as good as a lot of fellows I have heard. In fact, I think you are as good now in speaking as some who have been here for five years."

E: "Well, I always try to learn how to speak. When I first came here I couldn't speak a word of English. I would like to know how to talk real well."

I: "Where did you come from?"

E: "---. You know, I am a ---."

I: "Have a shake on that. You know, my mother came from -- too."

E: "Is that so? Well, from what part, the east or the west side?"

I: "I don't know, I guess it was the town of ---."

E: "Oh, yes. I know about that place. I have been there many times. I used to work there."

I: "Did you work in a factory there or were you on a farm?"

E: "No, I worked in a factory where they made these big round things of wood to keep fish. I don't remember what they call them here. That was just a small factory and I didn't like that very well. Maybe because I wanted to come to America, but we had to work in a small room there and we couldn't get any air."

I: "Well, how do you think that position compares with this?"

E: "Well, I like this one better because you make more money. You

LA

October 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10677-2KO-8A4CD.

know I mean the money you get here, if that was sent over to --, it would be a whole lot more than what you get in pay in --, but I don't think it is any more in American money."

I: "Well, what you mean is this; that if you had ten thousand dollars in American money and went over to --, you could live comfortably for a long while, isn't that it?"

E: "Yes, I'll say you could. All the rest of your life, but I don't think anybody that has ten thousand dollars here would want to go back there.

"You know, I don't like this job that I am on either. There is no air here and too much dust for me. I am too young to work in there and I would like to get a transfer to some other department."

I: "Have you mentioned anything about a transfer to anyone?"

E: "No, not yet, but I think I will."

I: "What else is there that seems to trouble you?"

E: "Too much noise and it is too dirty. It seems to stink of -- and the smoke from the machines."

Pause.

I: "That's fine. You just keep right on now and I will keep right on writing here and then with all of these things we will probably be able to find that there is something that can be done to make you enjoy your work more."

E: "Well, that's all I can think of, but that's enough."

I: "Maybe I can suggest some things such as the washrooms or lockers."

E: "Oh, the lockers are crowded here, you know. There are three or four men in my locker and that's too many, but I guess they are all right. It is the same all over."

IA

October 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10677-2KO-8A4CD.

I: "Back further you mentioned something about the pay. I wonder if that pay is satisfactory to you."

E: "Yes, I think it is. I guess they pay me pretty good here. I have had two raises in the last year and that's nice. There are a lot of fellows that I know that haven't got any raise at all, but I work hard and then the boss likes me."

I: "What do you think of the bosses themselves?"

E: "They are fine. If they had some like that on nights I think it would be a lot better. My boss never bothers me at all now."

I: "Have you ever been in any other department since you have been with the Company?"

E: "Yes, I worked in the -- room a couple of nights."

I: "How did you like that work?"

E: "I liked that much better than where I am now."

I: "Well, you can't make as much money there as you do in your department can you?"

E: "I don't know, but I like the department much better."

I: "What is there that you like about that more than where you are now?"

E: "It was clean and there was no dust flying around the way there is where I am."

I: "Do you suppose you would like to work in the -- room all the time?"

E: "I'd like that much better than to work where I am now. I don't like this place."

I: "Are you a single man?"

E: "Yes."

LA

October 9, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10677-2KO-8A4CD.

112-122-32(6)-51

I: "Where do you stay here in Chicago?"

E: "I live with friends of ours out on the north side."

I: "Have you made any connections with any societies in Chicago?"

E: "No, I haven't. I often think that I would like to, but I don't know where they are or how to find them. I think that would help me learn to talk English better and also help me know more people. I went out to the ski meet last winter to Cary and I saw a lot of men from the ~~Club~~ Club."

I: "I think it would be well worth your while to try and make connections with an organization of that kind."

Slight pause.

I: "I wonder if there is anything else that has been on your mind in connection with your work down here."

E: "No, I don't think so."

The radio started playing in the ~~station~~^X and the interviewer mentioned the possibilities of hearing the ball game this afternoon. The operator immediately made inquiry as to whether or not the interviewer was interested in baseball, mentioning at the same time that he was not, but he was a real enthusiast for ice skating. A little more was said but in closing the interviewer said good-bye and mentioned that he hoped the operator would feel much better about his job the next time they got together for a little talk and that perhaps he would be on a different kind of work at that time. The operator immediately acknowledged this remark and exclaimed that it certainly would be wonderful if he could get on something else.

LA

36.

October 10, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10678-2KO-8A5D.

112-122-32(4)-51

I: "I wonder if you will take just a few minutes and take a walk with me down to the -- where we can sit down and rest and have a little talk between us."

E: "That is all right with me. I suppose I will have to clean up though before I go down there. I will blow the dust off of me."

While walking to the --.

E: "It doesn't make much difference, you know, about resting because the machines are broken down in there and we haven't any -- to work on, so I might just as well be away from the bench as to be there."

I: "Do you mean the -- machines are broken down?"

E: "Yes, there are four of them there and three of them are broke down now. The one that is going can't do enough work to keep all of us busy, and when there is no work then there is no pay."

I: "Well, if you will just come along with me and take all the time you want to talk, we will see to it that you are paid straight time anyhow."

E: "It is all right with me just so they don't make me work overtime for it."

Arriving at our destination and taking chairs the interviewer explained the program briefly and asked the operator to start by telling him of his duties since starting with the Company.

E: "I have only been here since 19-- and I started on the --, and I am still there."

I: "Have you had any experience working in any other factory prior to your coming to the Western Electric?"

E: "Yes, I came from -- right to Michigan and I started to work there in an automobile body factory. They make bodies now for the Auburn automobile. I worked there one year and then I came down to Chicago and worked a summer on a farm, and then I started here at the Western Electric."

LA

October 10, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10678-2KO-8A5D.

112-122-32(A)-31

I: "How did you like conditions in the factory you worked in before?"

E: "The factory was all right, but you couldn't make enough money. The factory wasn't so bad. All I quit for was just the money."

I: "Well, did you get more money?"

E: "I didn't get it on the farm, but I came to work at the Western Electric and I make more here than I did there."

I: "Is the fact that you are making more money here the only reason you like it?"

E: "Well, I like to advance myself, but I can't speak English good enough so I suppose I have to wait."

I: "Have you ever gone to school to study English?"

E: "Yes, I went in -- and I went at the factory last year. Then we started to work overtime so I had to stop, and I couldn't go any more."

I: "What do you think of this overtime?"

E: "Well, it is all right, but I wouldn't like it now myself. Sometimes they have to work on Sundays and I don't like that at all."

I: "Are you married?"

E: "No, I am single, but I guess I have just as many expenses as a married man. When I came to America I decided that I would have to save some money to take care of myself so I do that now, and then I have to pay eleven dollars for room and board with friends here, and I don't have very much. I would like to advance so I could make more money."

I: "Apparently you are satisfied with the pay you are getting now as an operator."

E: "Yes, I guess I couldn't be boss. I get forty-nine cents an hour now. I am satisfied but not in every way. I guess the longer you work here the more pay you get. I started at forty-one cents an hour and then in a couple of months I learned from my partner that the regular pay for that job was forty-seven cents so I went to the boss

LA

October 10, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10678-2KO-8A5D.

112-122-32(1)-31

and I asked him how it was that they paid forty-seven cents an hour for that job and I was only getting forty-one, and he said that he would take care of it. They gave me forty-seven cents an hour then and the next raise time, I guess that was in May or June, they gave me two cents an hour more."

I: "At forty-nine cents an hour you ought to be able to save a little bit out of that all right."

E: "If I save ten dollars a week that is all I can do. You see, I make thirty-three dollars a week and I don't have a chance to save much."

I: "Supposing you were promoted to boss of some kind, say Gang Boss. Do you think there is anything that you could do in the handling of men that would be better than the way your bosses handle you now?"

E: "No, I couldn't do better with the men. Our bosses are pretty good. I am afraid I would be too hard on them if I was boss."

I: "If you were hard on them, do you suppose you could get more work out of them?"

E: "I think they work just as hard now as they can and I couldn't get any more out of them than what our boss is getting now. He is very nice to us and he never bothers me at all."

I: "Have you taken any interest at all in the things the Company does for the employees around here?"

E: "Yes, I bought some shares from them. I signed up for seven but they sent me a notice that they were going to give me twelve. I suppose that is a mistake though because at first I wanted five and I told the boss about it and he didn't have any slips. Then later I thought it over and decided to take out seven so he made out another slip and I suppose he sent both of them in to the Company."

I: "Did you subscribe to the Ready Money Plan or carry any insurance?"

E: "No, I don't know what the Ready Money Plan is, but I don't carry any insurance. I have enough money though in case I should

LA

October 10, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10678-2KO-8A5D.

112-122-32(L) 31

take sick that I would be able to pay for it. I started to save for them when I first came to America. I have enough money that would pay for a funeral if I should die."

I: "I suppose that as long as you are saving this way you are satisfied to keep on doing the work you are."

E: "Well, I don't know about the work. It is a dirty job and I don't like that so much. Then, you know, the bonus isn't as much as it was in the summer. We were making almost fifty per cent sometimes and now we don't even make forty per cent."

I: "What is the reason for that? Are the fellows slowing up in their work?"

E: "No, they aren't doing that, but they have so many men in the department that they aren't all busy and they are standing around. Then the machines break down a lot so that they can't keep us working all the time."

I: "Whose fault is it that these machines are always breaking?"

E: "Well, I suppose because they are all old machines and they work them all day long and all night long except at noon time."

I: "If you were kept busy would it be satisfactory to you down there?"

E: "Well, I suppose, but I don't like to do the same job all the time and I have been on this work for pretty near a year now."

I: "I wonder if there is anything else that is particularly troubling you in that department?"

Pause

E: "No, I don't think so. We don't get much air, but all of the fellows say that that will be all right when they get the new roof."

I: "Well, it will be interesting to talk to you some time next year after you have this new roof on and see if everything is satisfactory to you then."

E: "Yes. Maybe I will know more about the Company too."

LA

37

October 15, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

24-10680-8K2-2D7A.

112-113-436

I: "I wonder if you will take time to give me your clock number and name before we start out on this little talk."

E: "My clock number is -- and my name is spelled as follows:"

Here a conversation followed in connection with names and the peculiarities of them, etc. That in turn led to the discussion of automobiles. This person's interests seemed to be centered on automobile driving and not the general make-up of automobiles. Then the discussion led back to work again in this way:

I: "Do you take your family out when you go driving?"

E: "Oh, sometimes. Most of the time I have a full car without them. I couldn't fit them all in anyhow. We have about ten kids in our family."

I: "Are all these children younger than you are?"

E: "No. I have got a bunch of them older than I am. Some brothers and some sisters that are married. A couple of my brothers work down here and a brother-in-law too. It was my brother-in-law who has been here ten years who got me the job."

I: "Did you start in that department you are in now?"

E: "I started doing the same work, but we weren't in that same place. We were moved around. I think we have been moved three times in the last month. Now we are in a place where we haven't got hardly any room..

"Why is it that they put so many machines and operators in such a small space?"

I: "I really don't know unless it is because they are crowded right now for room and you are put there just temporarily."

E: "I suppose that's it. We will probably get moved again before long. We will never know where we are."

I: "Do you have any trouble of any kind when you are being moved?"

LA

October 15, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10680-8K2-2D7A

112-113-434

E: "No, we don't have any trouble, but we don't know where we are going to work, from one time to another. Of course, that don't help you make a lot of money when you have to get used to things all over again."

I: "Aren't you fellows able to make any money up there now?"

E: "Oh, you can make some money but not very much."

I: "What seems to be the trouble?"

E: "I don't know. You get three dollars for one of those things all completed and then you have to split that up between fifteen or sixteen men."

I: "Well, how many can you make in a day's time?"

E: "We can make about thirty-six of them I guess."

I: "Well, that ought to be pretty good pay for the fellows to be divided up between sixteen."

E: "Yeh, that would be fine if we got all of that, but some of it has to go to the Gang Boss and some to the Section Chief and some to the Foreman so we don't have so much left after it is all over."

I: "What is your day rate down there?"

E: "Oh, all we get is thirty-seven cents an hour. When I started here I was working on day rate work and I got fifty cents an hour, and then they cut me down to thirty-seven and that isn't so good."

I: "Don't you make a bonus down here of any kind?"

E: "Yeh, We make a bonus. Sometimes we get it at the end of the month I guess, but it don't amount to very much. We get a percentage down here too."

I: "What do you mean, percentage?"

E: "Oh, we get about fifty-five percent more than our day rate, so that helps a little bit."

LA

October 15, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10680-8K2-2D7A.

112-113-436

I: "Oh, I see. You mean you make around sixty cents an hour then with your percentage. Is that right?"

E: "Oh, yeh."

I: "Did you ever have any experience in any other plant before you came here?"

E: "Yeh, I worked two years for a place out in Clearing, and I worked two years for another place on the south side."

I: "I hope that two year mark doesn't stick with you."

E: "I hope so too. It won't stick with me unless I get fired or laid off down here."

I: "I don't think they do that very much do they?"

E: "I don't know, but my brother says that when they do they lay off plenty. I think that when they get slack in one place they transfer you around to another one."

I: "How are they up in your department now, slack or not?"

E: "Well, we haven't got so very much work. We did have plenty. We used to work overtime every night. Last week one of the fellows in the gang was away and the boss made me work four nights straight. That's not so good."

I: "When you are working overtime you are making more money aren't you?"

E: "Yes, I made about five dollars more last week, but then they took out one dollar and fifty cents for stock that I never got a chance to see."

I: "Would you rather that they were giving you this one dollar and fifty cents or not?"

E: "Oh, no. I am satisfied to put it into shares. I also pay five dollars a week for Building and Loan out in the neighborhood. A bunch of people I know are running it, but that is better because I at least have a chance to see the money before I give it to them."

LA

October 15, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10680-8K2-2D7A.

112-113-434

I: "Haven't you ever had any Sunday work to do?"

E: "No, I never get any Sunday work. My brother does though. He gets plenty of it."

I: "Well, would you like to have some of it?"

E: "Yeh, I wouldn't mind. You get double time then. You could make a lot of extra money."

I: "Apparently the only thing you are interested in is getting more money down here, is that it?"

E: "No. The only thing I am interested in right now is being sure of working all the time."

I: "You are not afraid of anything like that around here are you?"

E: "You never can tell, you know. Still, I see there is a lot of work here and they are always advancing somebody so maybe they won't be slack. A fellow who was Gang Boss when I came here was made Section Chief and another fellow who was working on a machine near me was made Gang Boss."

I: "How is this Gang Boss."

E: "Oh, he is all right. He is a good fellow, but he isn't rough enough or hard enough with the men. You know, the other fellow we had, he was tough and could talk a fellow out of anything. He used to be able to talk the inspectors out of almost anything they complained about."

Pause.

I: "I wonder if there are any suggestions you could make to the Company that would help improve conditions here."

E: "No, the only thing I could suggest is that they give me more money."

I: "That's like a story I heard some time ago from one of the fellows who said he wanted more money with less work and fewer hours."

LA

-5-

October 15, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10680-8K2-2D7A.

112-113-431

E: "I don't care about the ^{hours} ~~work~~. I would just as soon work a long while. I want more money with the same amount of work. That's the main thing."

I: "Well, maybe some day things like that will come into this organization."

E: "Yeh, I suppose, but not as long as I am here."

LA

38.

October 14, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10679-8K2-2B7A.

112-111-(13)2a

After a brief introduction by the Section Chief the interviewer suggested taking a walk to the conference rooms for a discussion.

E: "If you will excuse me just a minute I will get rid of the chewing tobacco I have in my mouth and rinse it out."

I: "That is perfectly all right. Just make yourself as comfortable as you want. You can keep the chew if you care to."

E: "What is the idea of these interviews?"

I: "Oh, it is merely an opportunity to let the employees express themselves the same as the bosses have a chance to do."

While walking to find a suitable place to sit down:

E: "Are you interested in baseball at all?" (This question undoubtedly came to his mind as we passed one of the Plant score boards.)

I: "I'll say I am; very much so. How about yourself?"

E: "Boy! I'll say. I never felt so bad in my life as I did Saturday when the Cubs let that lead slip away. You know, I think they have got the best team yet even though I did bet against them. They surely have a bunch of sluggers there. It ought to mean trouble to anybody."

There followed quite a discussion on baseball and the discussion in turn led to the possibilities of making money out of playing baseball, and hence the following question.

I: "Have you taken any interest at all in baseball down here?"

E: "I haven't taken any myself. I play on Sundays and make a few extra bucks, but I don't play down here any. There are a lot of the fellows from back of the yards in our gang that are playing. A bunch of them had a chance to go with semi-pro clubs, but they either fell down or couldn't go or something. I know a lot of them who are going to go next year though. Then they will probably be able to make some real dough.

"You know, there is one thing about this Company though. They give a fellow a real break on those A. T. & T. shares. We can

LA

October 14, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10679-8K2-2B7A.

112-111-(13)R2

buy them for one hundred and fifty dollars and sell them at three hundred dollars. Some of those dough blocks in our department don't seem to get the drift of this thing. As I understand it, even though they don't stay long enough to pay for those shares they get a certain percentage on their money."

I: "Yes, you get about six per cent I think."

E: "You can't make those bozos understand that. I guess the boss had a hard time getting them to sign up for anything. He almost had to force them to sign up for two of them. I took as many as I could get just as soon as I was here six months. I know a fellow downstairs who has seventeen shares of this stock all paid up. If I had that much money or if I had stock worth that much money, boy! it wouldn't take me long to get out of this place and start in some kind of a business for myself. You know, I wouldn't go into business alone like a green-horn or with somebody else who didn't know anything about it. I would like to go into a partnership with some guy who has had a lot of experience and knows how to handle things so that we wouldn't be taking too much of a chance.

"One of the fellows in our gang did this. He bought a bowling alley and pool room out in the neighborhood and he is making all kinds of dough on it now. He went into partnership with a Greek. This Greek had had a lot of experience with running pool rooms. I don't say I would necessarily like to start a pool room, but any kind of a business as long as somebody else had had some experience in that line.

"One of the fellows in the gang started a men's furnishings store, you know, a toggery shop. He was born and raised out there and all of the young fellows go to him to get their clothes. He is making lots of money too. I don't live out in this neighborhood any more. We moved away from there, but I think that I could still make good at some kind of a business out there. We moved because where we were before was too damp. If it would rain why the moisture seemed to stay right in the building and it wasn't healthy. Now we moved over and we are in a frame building on the second floor, and Boy! it is swell. The building faces north and south and we get sunshine in the place from about ten o'clock in the morning 'till three in the afternoon. We have a glassed in porch and that sunshine is real stuff for the children."

LA

October 14, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10679-8K2-2B7A.

112-111 - (13)20

I: "Are you married?"

E: "No, I don't think I am old enough yet. I am having too much fun being single. Of course, I go steady with a girl, but we have a heck of a time going out to parties and dances now and I don't have to bother about thinking of getting married. A fellow has enough worry as it is without that.

"I live with my mother and stepfather and I am happy and satisfied where I am. You know, my stepfather has a habit or fancy of raising birds and we have canaries all over the place. It is sure dandy to hear those birds sing, sometimes as early as five o'clock in the morning. Especially when we turn the radio on, then you can hear birds singing all over the house. Have you seen these little mechanical birds. They look like a real bird and you wind them up on the bottom. They are in a cage and then they start singing. They are the deadringer of a live bird. It moves its head and looks just like a real bird. I saw one at the Capital lately and I thought it was a real bird until the thing ran down and then the bird's head stopped all of a sudden. The only time I don't like the birds is when they wake me up early in the morning after I have been out to a party or a dance or something.

"Like this morning. Boy! was it hard to get up. I was out to a dance and then the fellows from the club threw a little party after the dance. You know what that means for a guy on Monday morning."

I: "What club is it you belong to?"

E: "Oh, I belong to that club called the --. You know, that's a gang from out there back of the Yards. They are a bunch of real good scouts. They have been going about fifteen years or so. We have a keen time all the time. Boy! We have some of the swellest parties you ever saw."

I: "I suppose most of them out there are Irish and they are able to fix it up with the police force all right."

E: "Yes, we have police up to our parties. Saturday night we had one up there and Gee, we had to carry him out and put him in the car.

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He couldn't stand up any more in there. We know quite a few of the politicians out there and they fix it up for us all the time. [redacted] is one of our ward men and he takes care of things. You know, I knew [redacted] when he was nothing but a bum and [redacted] got ahold of him and now he has all kinds of dough. He married [redacted]'s wife and I suppose when he married her he married Tim's insurance too. He has one of the swellest florist shops out in the neighborhood you ever saw."

Description of this florist shop followed.

E: "We have got a lot of these fellows out there that the paper writes about, but they aren't half as bad as the paper says. I remember when I was working on a truck, I came into the saloon one time and big [redacted] was there, and when he buys a drink for himself he always treats everybody in the place. He bought me something and I ordered a glass of beer. Then a tramp came in and came up to [redacted]. He asked him for the price of a cup of coffee. [redacted] questioned him a little bit and got the story out of him and then he dug down in his pocket and gave him fifteen bucks. You don't find many fellows that will do that for a person. Boy! [redacted] has the cars too. He's got six Cadillacs and two big Lincolns. He keeps two of them at home for family use and four of them he keeps at another garage. He always buys these cars that have two windows, you know, and a lot of steel work on the body in the back."

I: "I suppose this is bullet-proof stuff."

E: "Yes, I suppose he has got the whole thing bullet-proof, windows and everything else. Sometimes when he goes out riding he can sit in the back seat in the corner and you would never know anybody was riding there at all."

I: "How long ago was it you were working on a truck?"

E: "I worked there before I came to the Western Electric and I came here in December 19--. I used to work in a bottling works. I was with this company about four and one-half years, and making all kinds of dough too. I used to work inside right on the bottling machine there 'till I got hurt and then they asked me if I wanted to take a truck and I said, 'Sure.' Boy, that was the swellest job I ever had. I used to work like a slave in the morning and finish up my

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route and then I would have the whole afternoon off to myself where I could do anything I wanted. It wasn't hard work either, when I was working inside. Sometimes we would be busy and then we would work until eleven or twelve o'clock at night and other times we wouldn't have anything to do. I don't know, all of the fellows seemed to cooperate down there, and if there was anything we could find in the plant to do, we did it even if it was only to pick up a broom and sweep the place out. I had to leave there because it was so damp. I started to be bothered with rheumatism."

I: "Where did you go from this place?"

E: "Oh, I looked around and I found a job with a radio company. The trouble with that was it wasn't steady. You know, they would go into production at certain times of the year and work like fury and then when they were all through and stocked the stores up and everything, they would lay the fellows off. I decided I wanted to get a steady job and came down here. I have had a number of calls from this radio company to come back, but I wouldn't go there under any circumstances now."

I: "How do you like it here?"

E: "Fine. You couldn't get me away from here now. You know, before I came here all the fellows used to talk about what a lousy place this was and they called it all kinds of names. I decided then that some day I was going to work here to find out if all these things were true, and the first few weeks I was here, Gee, I thought they were right. I hated the place, but after a while when I got to know the fellows why I liked it better and better all the time. Boy, I had one boss that was a heck of a boss. You know, one morning I came down to work here and I got something in my eye on the street car. It bothered me and I went up to him and asked him for a pass so I could go to the hospital just as soon as I came down. He said, 'Wait a while.' Then I went and got my coat and hat. He came up to me and asked me where I was going and I told him I was going down to the office to get a pass so I could go to the hospital. Of course, he knew he was in the wrong then and so he didn't say anything to me. I went down to the hospital and had it fixed up and when I came back he played a lousy trick on me. I was working on a good job down there until that time and then when I came back he put me over washing the grease off of springs. I asked him what the idea was and

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told him that I wanted that job I was working on. He said they needed me more on this job here. He took me off of this work though and then he put me back on one almost as bad, back in that dirty old hole in the corner where there is all kinds of smoke and dirt and, boy, that made me mad. I went up to the Foreman and asked him about it and he said he would look into it. If I was right he would make a change, and he sure did give me a break. If there is anything I can do for that Foreman, boy, I will do it. Two weeks later he took me off of the job and put me down here in the department where I am now."

I: "What kind of work is that you are on now?"

An explanation of the job followed.

I: "You are not on a piece rate scale then are you?"

E: "No, they couldn't hardly put us on a piece rate down there. They tried it a number of times, but it is almost impossible. Sometimes a job takes a long long time and another time when you go to do that same thing you can do it in just a couple of minutes. This work is swell and I am able to get along and take care of myself on it fine. I certainly haven't got anything against the boss for putting me down here."

I: "How are the bosses down there?"

E: "Oh, they are all right. The Section Chief is a pretty good scout, but I don't like him because he called off a bet I had on the Athletics, but I couldn't argue with him, you know, because he is the boss and he is liable to give you a cigar if you say too much.

"We have one bird down here who was a Gang Boss over on a certain gang and he used to be terrible. You know, the regular Gang Boss was sick and he was put on there to take his place until he came back. He could hardly talk English or write English, but he knew the work and that was the only reason he was made Gang Boss. Just as soon as they told him he was boss he started to ride the fellows and swear at them and everything. Now he has been put back on the bench because the regular boss came back and he is sore about it. They told him the other day that if he wanted a transfer he could

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be transferred to any department. He wants to go on a machine in a machine shop somewhere."

I: "Do they transfer you around any place you want to go here?"

E: "Oh, no. You've got to be here about six months before you can be transferred. If they didn't a fellow would be asking for a transfer every week I suppose. When he didn't like a certain kind of work he would probably ask for a transfer."

I: "Well, I suppose there is something to that. It usually takes a fellow about six months before he can learn the work and get to like it."

E: "Yes, I remember when I started upstairs. Boy! I thought the days would never end. It got so monotonous it was terrible. I felt like quitting a number of times. I was doing the same thing over and over again all the time, but after while I got to know the fellows and I got on to the work, and I didn't mind it so much.

"I wish a lot of times that I could be a copper and go out and make the dough that these fellows can. You know, there are a bunch of them in our club that are coppers. They were raised in the neighborhood and they are stationed right out in our territory there. I know Captain Mooney came from out there. He is down town now. Gee, I would like to be with the squad."

I: "Supposing you were made a boss down here. Do you think you would still feel the same about it?"

E: "Oh, no. I guess that would change things a bit. I guess I would stay here then. You know, I used to be terribly bullheaded and stubborn, but I learned down here that it doesn't pay to be that way. Now before I do anything I always think about it and then go ahead and do it."

I: "Well, maybe your chance will come some of these days."

Short pause.

I: "You know, we are around here trying to talk to you fellows to see if there aren't some improvements we can make."

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E: "Oh, there is only one improvement I have made around here and that was up on the old job. You know, they used to take a mallet and pound the material first before they would be able to use it. A friend of mine came around with a tool one time that I saw, and I thought that could be used, and asked if we couldn't use it. Now I know they are using it themselves. I am glad they can use it though because I used to do work up there that they use it on and I know how tired your hand gets from it. I like to do anything that can help another fellow out."

I: "Apparently there is nothing you are dissatisfied with down here."

E: "Well, the only thing I am dissatisfied with is my pay; that is my salary. I would like to make more money. Of course, I have only been here a short while. I expect to get one this December. If I don't, believe me I am going up to the Foreman and find out why, but I don't think it will be necessary for me to do that. I am getting twenty-seven dollars a week now and that isn't bad, but it isn't good either. A fellow likes to feel that he is getting ahead and making more dough now than when he started. I guess I will get it all right in December."

I: "Well, if you don't I suppose you will have plenty to say when I come around to see you and talk to you next year."

E: "Oh, I don't know. I won't holler so much, if I don't get one, but I feel like I ought to have one."

Note: At the start of this interview the operator noticed the note book on the table and inquired as to why it was there. The interviewer merely mentioned that it was there to jot down memorandums so that a report could be made up when getting back to the office as to the improvements that should be made. The operator then stated that certainly it couldn't be expected of him to say anything as long as things were going to be written down, so the note book was discarded and a free conversation resulted. The only thing necessary in promoting a free conversation here was a smile throughout the entire interview and merely nodding of the head in agreement or some such expression.

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Interviewer: "Well, are you all set now?"

Operator: "Yes, let's go.

"It sure is going to be hot when they start tearing off the roof. This building is a remarkable piece of engineering. The Company doesn't spare expense when they build."

Interviewer: "I wonder how much it will cost."

Operator: "I understand that it was to cost two and one-half million and that in order to get the work done before the cold weather set in, the Western had to appropriate another half million. I understand they are going to build a big foundry building over on Twenty-sixth Street."

Interviewer: "Is that so? I knew they were going to build a building, but I didn't know it was going to be for the foundry."

This conversation took place while we were walking from the operator's machine to the place where we were going to sit."

Interviewer: "I guess we may as well sit here. I presume you have heard a good deal about these interviews."

Operator: "Yes, you have talked to a good many men in our gang."

Interviewer: "Then there is not much for me to tell you, but you may want to know that the Company is making a study of conditions in the Plant and that they are very anxious to get everybody's opinion. They feel that if they can find out what every one thinks about their job they can do a lot of good because they can analyze them and then they will know the exact conditions of the shops."

Operator: "That sounds like a very good idea."

Interviewer: "How long have you worked here?"

Operator: "I have been with the Company seven years."

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Interviewer: "You should have had a great many experiences in seven years working for the Company."

Operator: "Yes, seven years seems like a long time, but the time passed very quickly for me."

The interviewer told how long he had been with the Company and he explained something about the work he had been doing. He ended by saying that the time had passed very quickly for him.

Operator: "Yes, a fellow comes to work every day and it doesn't take long before another year is passed."

Interviewer: "Have you worked in this department all the time?"

Operator: "No, I started in the office and later was transferred to the storeroom, and then I got my present job."

Interviewer: "They keep the men in the storeroom pretty busy don't they?"

Operator: "I'll say they do. That's the big trouble with that job; some one is after you all the time. I had to please the chaser and my boss, and sometimes it was very hard to get the orders out. Almost every order I would start to fill there would be something short. Towards the last I got tired worrying about shortages and I got the chasers to make out 'Non-X's' whenever I did not have the material."

Interviewer: "You worked gang piece work in the storeroom didn't you?"

Operator: "Yes, when I got transferred I was working gang piece work. They tried every kind of piece work in the storeroom. They had us working straight piece work and then they changed us to gang piece work and now I understand that they are working on a straight day rate."

Interviewer: "How do the men like those changes?"

Operator: "Well, I guess they are pretty well satisfied now. Some of them are getting over a dollar an hour. Gee! On that job I used to be so tired at night that I would go home and flop on the

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Operator, Continued.

bed. I was climbing up and down ladders all day long."

Interviewer: "I guess it is pretty hard to climb ladders like that, especially when you have to carry your apparatus down with you."

Operator: "It surely is. The cement floor in the storeroom made my feet burn badly."

Interviewer: "How did you happen to get a transfer from the storeroom? Did they run out of work?"

Operator: "No, I asked for it. I like this job much better."

Interviewer: "What parts are you working on now, mouth pieces?"

Operator: "No, I am working on receiver caps. We are having trouble with them. It seems as though we can't get them to running right. Most of them come out of the press with either light spots or blisters. No one seems to know what to do about it. I know what is wrong, but I can't see how we are going to fix it. When the bakelite heats a gas forms inside of the mold and as soon as we release the pressure on the mold to cool them, this gas raises the plate. It only takes two seconds to turn this mold around, but that seems to be enough to make these blisters. I also think that maybe they ought to drill a hole in the die so as to let the gas out, but I can see that that wouldn't work very well."

Interviewer: "I should think that they might put some kind of a valve on there that would open it to let the gas out."

Operator: "No, when bakelite gets hot, it runs just like water. It would not harden until the mold starts to cool. If you had a valve in there, the bakelite would run into it and clog up the hole."

Interviewer: "I guess it would take a smart man to fix up a difficulty like that."

Operator: "I guess they will have to find some way of clamping those plates together, or else they will have to fix these presses like some others they have in the department so that they can cool the molds without removing pressure."

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Interviewer: "What happens to all the parts that are spoiled?"

Operator: "They go to the crematory and are burned up. The caps they are making cost the Company plenty of money because four out of every five are junk. If they are a little too heavy in one spot, the 'Flying Dutchman' comes running over because they break the pins in his perforating machine."

Interviewer: "It is too bad that they don't make these out of rubber."

Operator: "Yes, then they could grind them up, but bakelite cooks so hard that it can't be used again. The plastic quality in the bakelite is lost as soon as it is heated."

Interviewer: "How do they pay you when so much of the work is going bad?"

Operator: "I am working on a special day rate. They can't put a piece rate on the job until the engineers get the presses working perfectly."

Interviewer: "I suppose it won't be long before they get it going right."

Operator: "Yes, we have had trouble with almost every job they started, but they always manage to get it running some way. There was a funny thing about this job. We had the work going pretty good and then we had to send the dies over to be polished, and after it came back we couldn't do any work with it at all."

Interviewer: "The Company keeps this restaurant nice and clean doesn't it?"

Operator: "Yes, they have a nice place here, and they do a big business. At four minutes after twelve there is a line almost all the way around the room."

Interviewer: "I suppose you have a hard time finding a place to sit don't you."

Operator: "I get a pretty good break that way. Our Gang Boss runs over here as soon as the whistle blows and saves a place for me, but I see a good many others walking up and down the aisle with their trays, and they can't find any place to put it."

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Interviewer: "I suppose the Gang Boss can get to the clock before you can."

Operator: "Yes, he stands right alongside of the clock and as soon as the whist blows he gets over here as fast as he can."

Interviewer: "You are lucky to have a boss that will save a place for you."

Operator: "Yes, he is a nice fellow. I don't think anyone has trouble with him. He is willing to help a man out any time he can."

Interviewer: "I had a boss that used to run upstairs to get me milk every noon, and a fellow surely appreciates things like that."

Operator: "I have had nice bosses since I have been working with the Company. I guess I have been lucky because I have not run into any bad ones."

Interviewer: "We are getting a nice breeze here."

Operator: "Yes, this feels good. I thought we were going to have a cool place to work next summer, but I understand that they are going to transfer this job to Baltimore and Kearny."

Interviewer: "I heard the same thing, but I don't know whether it is true or not. It seems to me that they will need a good deal of bakelite here. The Movietone uses plenty of bakelite."

Operator: "Those Movietone machines must be a wonderful piece of work. If some one had told me a few years ago that I could go to a moving picture show and hear the actors talk, I would have thought they were crazy. They do some wonderful things nowadays. Did you see the Zeppelin?"

Interviewer: "Yes, I got a big thrill out of that."

Operator: "The paper said that ship was going between fifty and sixty miles an hour. It didn't look to be going that fast, but it was sailing along very nicely. It must have been very high because they say that the Zeppelin is a hundred feet high, and it did not look that big from the ground. I read that they were making a bigger one some place in Ohio."

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Interviewer: "I heard something about that."

Operator: "The Germans are going to send a big aeroplane over here before long. Those Germans seem to do things right. It seems as though they are ahead of the rest of the world when it comes to inventing things."

Interviewer: "The manufacturers in the United States seem to be trying to make things so that they can sell them, but the German people try to do things that other countries can't do."

We got up to look at an automobile parade that was passing the window.

Interviewer: "That is a pretty good advertising stunt."

Operator: "Yes, that car is not so bad, but you couldn't give me one of those Essex. They have a high speed motor. That Whippet car is an awful piece of machinery too. I went out with some fellows last Sunday and we got in a little sand and I thought the car was going to burn up. We all had to get out and push the thing before we got very far. There isn't much fun in going for a ride like that."

Interviewer: "Those cars have a pretty good speed on a level."

Operator: "Yes, they can go fast enough. I rode with my brother about a week ago and he had his Auburn up to seventy-six miles an hour. He told me that he didn't have it wide open, but I don't know whether he did or not. It make me a little nervous to go that fast."

Interviewer: "I suppose you were spending most of your time hanging on."

Operator: "I guess I was, and then I was looking for something to hit us from the cross roads."

Interviewer: "These new hard roads are fine to ride on."

Operator: "Yes, but they cost too much money. There is too much graft in that kind of work. I see that a lot of the city employees are going to get laid off. Well, that is better than not getting paid for the work you do."

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Interviewer: "Yes, I saw that in the paper."

Operator: "I have a friend on the Sanitary District pay roll, and he doesn't work at all. All he has to do is go down to the office for a few hours one day a week and he gets good money. The city government is terrible. When they need a little more money for graft, they raise the taxes. Cicero has about the best government of any of them. They were thinking of making Cicero a city, but when the officials got to figuring it out they found that if they made it a city they would have to raise the taxes so they decided to leave it as a village. We got our paving done fifty per cent cheaper than Evanston and forty per cent cheaper than any of the other towns around here, and the same contractor did all of these jobs."

Interviewer: "It seems to me that Cicero must have pretty good men at the head of their government because they use prohibition to their own advantage. I understand that the saloon keeper has to pay one thousand dollars to get a license and after he pays that thousand they don't bother him any more."

Operator: "Yes, I know they do that, but I believe the city might as well get that money as to let the saloon keepers give it to a lot of grafters. I belong to the Republican Club out there and we have a lot of nice meetings. The head of the town comes over to those meetings and he is just the same as you and I. It makes me sore the way the Chicago papers try to give Cicero a bad reputation. It seems as though every time they talk about gangsters and holdup men, they always have to mention Cicero."

Interviewer: "Well, I guess we will have to admit that the Western Hotel was full of Al Capone's men at one time."

Operator: "Yes, I know they are there, but those fellows don't pull any of their stunts in Cicero, and if the State's Attorney has anything on them, I don't see why he doesn't get them in jail. It is not up to a town like Cicero to put those men in jail when they behave themselves when they are out there. A man that can go around with a bodyguard the way Al Capone does, doesn't have to worry very much about coppers."

Interviewer: "Did you ever see him?"

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Operator: "Yes, I saw him at one of the ball games. I also saw him riding down Twenty-second Street one day. There was a car load of men ahead of him and he was in the middle of four men in his car, and then there was another car behind him. I think it would be just bad luck for anyone to start trouble with him. I know a fellow who is a bodyguard for the man who runs the Anton Hotel. He gets five hundred dollars a week."

Interviewer: "I don't think I need five hundred dollars bad enough to be a bodyguard for any of those fellows."

Operator: "No, I guess it is better to work for a living."

Interviewer: "Are you married?"

Operator: "No, not yet. I am still happy. I guess I can hold out another two years."

Interviewer: "You don't seem to want to get married very much."

Operator: "Well, I am not crazy about it, but it has to come some time I suppose."

Interviewer: "I don't think it will be as bad as you expect it to be. I find that I don't mind being married at all."

Operator: "No, I guess it must be all right if you get the right girl. My brother has been very happy since he has been married. He has two dandy children now. He surely pulled a good one on us. He came home one thanksgiving and said, 'Hello Ma. Meet the wife.'"

We had quite a discussion as to whether it was better to let the family know that you were going to be married or not, and the operator finally decided that he would let his family know before he was married. There was a pause for a few minutes with no conversation.

Operator: "Do you know how much pressure we have on those presses?"

Interviewer: "No, I don't believe I do."

Operator: "We have two hundred and fifty ton on one and one hundred and fifty ton on the other."

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Interviewer: "Two hundred and fifty pounds is quite a bit isn't it?"

Operator: "I said, 'Two hundred and fifty ton.'"

Interviewer: "I didn't understand you. Two hundred and fifty tons is an awful lot. How do they get that much pressure?"

Operator: "They have pressure pumps. I understand they are installing a press in Baltimore that is going to have three hundred and fifty tons pressure. Since they have been tearing up the building we have been getting a lot of rejections because the pressure gets low. When the pressure is below what it should be, that makes the parts blister. There are a good many things that can happen to our job. Sometimes the steam is not right and the bakelite does not cure properly. It is too bad to make junk, but an operator can't tell what is wrong until after he makes a couple of heats."

Interviewer: "It seems to me that it would be hard to get just the right amount of dust in that measure that you use."

Operator: "Yes, it is hard until you get used to it, but after you have worked on a job a few days you know just how much to put in. On my first heat in the morning, I fill the measure level full. If some of those parts come out light, I give the measure a tap and that makes the dust settle so that I can get a little more in each measure. Then I can go along the rest of the day putting that amount of dust in and my parts come out perfect."

Interviewer: "Your job must be very interesting."

Operator: "I worked in the buffing room when I first came into the department. I had that job for a long time, but I didn't like it very well. I had to do the same thing all day long and the work got very tiresome. I have been on almost every job in the press room. I used to work in the gang that is working straight piece work. I made about ninety cents an hour over there. That work was a little tiresome too because you have to work steady to make good money."

Interviewer: "Do they make that much in your present gang?"

Operator: "No, but I have got a pretty good rate. I am getting eighty-three cents an hour. I was out bowling last night. I didn't get home until ten minutes after five this morning."

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Interviewer: "I didn't know that they kept the bowling alleys open that long."

Operator: "Oh, they don't keep them open, but we were out bumming around and the owner of a bowling alley happened to be with us. About three o'clock he went over and opened his place up and we surely had plenty of fun."

Interviewer: "Doesn't your family say anything when you get home as late as that?"

Operator: "They would if they heard me come in."

The interviewer told him a few of his experiences trying to get into the house early in the morning without waking up his mother.

Operator: "Well, I usually manage to get in without waking anybody up. If I turn the key very quietly, they don't hear a sound."

Interviewer: "I would like to get your name and clock number. It is used only to keep track of those who have been interviewed. The Company is very anxious that we don't miss anyone."

The operator gave his name.

Operator: "I think this interviewing program is a fine thing. I believe this Company should get a lot of new ideas after they get all of the interviews together."

Interviewer: "Yes, we have found them very interesting. They have done some good already, and I am sure that the Company will profit when they get an interview from every one. Well, it is almost eleven thirty and I guess we will have to be getting ready for lunch. I have enjoyed our talk and I hope we can get together again soon."

Operator: "Yes, I enjoyed it too. I am very glad I met you."

Time - 90 Min.
Dictation - 1 Hr. 15 Min.

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7-6334-2KO-8A7B.
131,022,3266011

Interviewer: "You're almost the last man in your gang aren't you?"

Operator: "Yes, I guess I am just about the last one. The Gang Boss asked me about two months ago if I had been interviewed and I told him no. The next week I was transferred on nights so I didn't get a chance to see you."

Interviewer: "I suppose you know all about this interviewing program."

Operator: "Yes, I have heard a good many of the fellows talk about it."

Interviewer: "The Company is interested in getting everybody's ideas. They think that they can make the Plant a whole lot better if they get everybody's ideas together."

Operator: "I imagine that they will know just about what is wrong by the time they get through."

Interviewer: "Have you worked in this department long?"

Operator: "I have been here about two years, but I worked on the other side over four years."

Interviewer: "What department did you work in over there?"

Operator: "I worked in --. I had a swell job over there. I used to get so darned interested in my work that I would forget to go to lunch. Towards the last we got pretty slack so it was hard to find enough work to keep busy. The boss told me that the only thing I could do was to get a transfer. I did not like the idea, but I realized that if there was no more work there I would have to get another job."

Interviewer: "What kind of work were you doing in that department?"

Operator: "I had a handy man's job. I did all kinds of odd jobs in the department. I had to repair the tools and do some work in the storeroom. Almost every job I had to do was new and I had to figure out the way to do it. This made the job very interesting. As far as the work goes, my present department is all right. I have a certain amount of work to do every day and I try my best to get it done."

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7-6334-2KO-8A7B.

Operator, Continued.

I don't mind what kind of work I have to do just so it isn't nights. That night work pulls me down."

Interviewer: "Didn't they work nights in your old department?"

Operator: "No, this department is the only place I ever worked nights. Last year I worked nights for seven months. That was pretty tough."

Interviewer: "Some of the fellows don't seem to mind night work very much, but I guess they get plenty of sleep."

Operator: "It seems as though I have to have lots of sleep. There are not many things I like better than a good night's sleep. The only thing that I ever felt hurt about since I have been with this Company is when they gave me a transfer; otherwise everything is all right with me."

Pause for a few minutes.

Operator: "I did not make as much money on my old job as I am making here, but I like the work a lot better. I don't feel the same since I have been in this department. Sometimes I would be so busy in the old department that I didn't know where to turn and I would have to figure a way to get caught up. They had men working gang piece work in this old department. I couldn't let them stand around and wait for me."

The interviewer told him of a job that he had at one time and how bad it made him feel to have the job transferred to Kearny.

Operator: "Yes, I guess we have to work on the jobs they give us. I don't really mind it here as much as I did when I started in this department. I am getting used to the work now. It was kind of hard for me to get started on this job, but I learned how to do the work by watching some of the other fellows. Whenever I see a man going faster than I am I watch him and see how he does it; then I go back to my machine and see if I can do the work the same as he does. There is a funny thing about my job though. I have watched two or three men do the work and we all do it a little bit different. One man goes a little faster than I do, but when I try to do the work the way he does it I lose a lot of time. I guess we all have to stick

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Operator, Continued.

to their own way of doing the job and just try to work steadily. I understand there is lots of work on the other side."

Interviewer: "Yes, most departments over there are very busy. A good many of them have a night shift."

Operator: "I understand my old department has a night shift now. I might have to be working nights if I was over there. I have stuck it out about two years now and I guess it is not as bad in this department as it would be in one of those."

Interviewer: "Did you have a day rate in your old department?"

Operator: "Yes, that is one of the things I like about that job. I could take time to figure the work out."

"I wish they would bring that tray of apples over here. They look good."

Interviewer: "Yes, I guess we could make a pretty good hole in them. When I go on a long automobile trip I usually take a bag of apples to eat on the way."

Operator: "I like any kind of fruit. When I went on my vacation I used to buy a bag of fruit and eat it for my lunch. I would eat a little breakfast and then I would eat fruit the rest of the day. By supper time I was hungry enough to eat two meals. I think it is better when a fellow is riding a long distance to eat that way."

The interviewer told him of some of the experiences he had on his vacation. He said that two weeks was not long enough.

Operator: "I didn't mind coming back. I enjoyed every bit of it, but when the two weeks were up I was glad enough to come back to work. I drove between sixteen and seventeen hours the last day of my vacation. I think it is pretty nice that the Company pays us for these two weeks. I enjoy thinking about them. I spend a half a year thinking of where I am going to go and the other half year thinking about where I have been."

Interviewer: "What kind of a job are you running now?"

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Operator: "I am working on plates. There is a ridge left in the middle of them when they come off the press and I have to smooth this ridge off and then even up the humps and the hollows that are left by the die."

Interviewer: "Is that your steady job?"

Operator: "Yes, I work on it most of the time, but when they run short of parts or when some one else gets behind with another job I have to help them out. They gave me a terrible job when I first came into the department. They put me on a bench scraping handles. I worked on the job for a little while and then I told the Foreman that I didn't want to stay on that kind of work. It seems to me that a ten-year-old kid could do that job. The Foreman told me that he didn't have anything open at the time, but that he would take me off the job as soon as he got some other work for me to do. I told him that I had run a lathe in the old department and asked if I couldn't get a chance to run the new lathes they were installing. He told me that he would see what he could do. After about a month I got on the lathes and I have been there ever since."

Interviewer: "It is nice to have a steady job when you are working gang piece work."

Operator: "Yes, that makes the work go easier. After a fellow gets used to his job he can go pretty fast and the work is not so hard."

There was a pause of about three minutes. Then the interviewer asked if he were going to see the World Series.

Operator: "I would like to go but I can't afford it. Six dollars is a lot of money to spend to see a baseball game. My brother and I have a lot of arguments about baseball. I have been with the Cubs all season. He has always been a Sox fan. We have some pretty hot arguments."

Interviewer: "Arguments are a lot of fun as long as neither one of you get mad."

Operator: "Oh, my brother gets pretty sore once in a while, but I know when to lay off and I usually let him alone before he gets too mad. The Sox are terrible this year."

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Interviewer: "Yes, the only thing that keeps them out of the cellar is that Boston can lose games faster than they do."

"Did all of your family go with you on your vacation?"

Operator: "No, I went alone. It seems as though there is something different in the air up in northern Wisconsin. The nights were cold and I felt good all the while I was up there. I could sleep about four or five hours a night and I would wake up the next morning feeling fine. That's the trouble with working nights. I wake up in the afternoon and I feel dopey all the time."

Interviewer: "Working nights is pretty hard if you can't get enough rest."

Operator: "I don't kick about working nights. The work has to be done and somebody has to do it. I don't mind taking my turn, but I would hate to have to stay on night work all the time."

Interviewer: "How does it happen that you didn't get married?"

Operator: "There is plenty of time for that after a while. I am going to wait a few years. A good many fellows make the mistake of getting married too young and then they want to run around with the fellows the way they used to do."

Interviewer: "I find that a man can't afford to run around very much after he is married. I used to play cards and bum around quite a bit before I was married, but I can't afford it now."

Operator: "I played poker about three nights a week two years ago. I had a lot of luck then, but somehow or other it changed and I started to lose every time I played cards and so I quit. I play a little rummy now and then - about twenty-five cents a game - but that is as much as I gamble now. We have a pretty good bunch of fellows. Everybody is friendly and nobody gets sore. We usually have some home brew while we are playing cards, but no one drinks too much."

Interviewer: "Home brew tastes pretty good on a hot night."

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Operator: "The only thing I ever drink is a little wine and home brew. I don't touch the moonshine unless I have a cold and then I take a little whisky and grease."

Interviewer: "That moonshine causes plenty of trouble especially when a fellow drinks too much and then tries to drive an automobile. I saw a fellow yesterday and he could hardly hold his head up. I was just lucky to get out of his way."

Operator: "I got it from that kind of a fellow about a month ago. A kid that was drunk came around the corner. He didn't seem to be able to handle his car at all and he took the whole street. I saw from the speed that he was coming that I would never be able to get out of his way and so I pushed over to the other side of the car so that I could keep my girl from getting thrown out. He caught the front wheel of my car and drove it clear up into the center of the car!"

The interviewer told of an experience he had in trying to collect damages from an accident.

Operator: "I haven't been able to get anything out of this fellow yet. The coppers pinched the kid, but his father won't settle the bill. I didn't know how to go about collecting it and so I went to the Company lawyer. He told me that he couldn't help me collect the bill, but he told me which lawyer to see downtown. I think this lawyer is pretty good. He says that this fellow will probably settle in a few weeks without taking the case to court. I hope he gets it settled all right because I hate to have this kind of trouble. I have always tried to be careful when I am driving, but you can't help those kinds of accidents. If I had been real smart I would have taken the girl to the hospital and then I would have had a real suit against him, but I wanted to try to be square and not charge them any more than I had to."

Interviewer: "I hope you get that trouble straightened out in a hurry. I didn't enjoy collecting my bill any more than you do yours. Well, we have wasted quite a bit of time now and had a good rest. Can you think of anything else that you want to get in your interview?"

Operator: "I am pretty well satisfied with everything in general. I guess I have told you all that I can think of."

Interviewer: "Well, I am very glad to have met you."

Time - 70 Min.
Dictation - 60 Min.

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7-6333-2KO-9A6B.
122,022,32(a+c)21

Interviewer: "This is going to be a nice place to work when they get through with the building."

Operator: "I watched them build this building from the start. There is a lot more air circulating now than there used to be."

Interviewer: "I guess there will be a lot more air than you used to have in that small room."

Operator: "I guess I had better throw this chew away."

Interviewer: "I guess you had better unless you can chew without spitting. We are going up to the restaurant and I don't believe they would like to have tobacco spit around on the floor there."

Operator: "That restaurant is a nice clean place."

Interviewer: "Yes, and it is quiet there. We can sit and warm the chairs and have a nice talk. I can always talk better if I am comfortable, and your boss don't care how long you stay away from the job because he has an order that takes care of your time while you are gone. It pays your average earnings so that you will not lose any money and the percentage of the gang will not be lowered. Let's sit here. I don't think anyone will bother us."

"The Company is interested in your likes and dislikes on anything you have come in contact with. They are going to analyze the interviews when they get them taken in the entire Operating Branch. They believe that they can make the Plant a lot better if they get everybody's ideas on these things. They also use these interviews in training the supervisors. The bosses all go up to the conferences every two weeks, and they read them parts of interviews so that they will know how the men in the Plant feel about different things."

Operator: "I think that is a good idea. That ought to make things a little better in the Plant."

Interviewer: "What kind of a job are you working on?"

Operator: "I am grinding horns. There is only one thing I don't like about that job and that is the smell of the turpentine we use."

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Operator, Continued.

We use turpentine and vaseline when we are grinding, and some of the fellows say that breathing this stuff hurts your lungs. I don't notice that it bothers me very much, but it might be hurting me some and I would not know it."

Interviewer: "Do they have enough work on this grinding job to keep you busy all the time?"

Operator: "They are rushing me now. A lot of parts came back from the Inspection and I have to go over all of these and then I have to keep the schedule up on the new parts."

Interviewer: "Well, I guess it is much better to have too much work than not to have enough."

Operator: "I would have been all right, but during July they took me off the job for a while. These boxes have been scattered all over the department now and I am wasting a lot of time hunting for them. Some of these old horns had holes in them and some had lumps on them because the dies were not perfect. It is hard to work on these, and when I have to waste a lot of time hunting for the boxes it makes it pretty bad."

Interviewer: "Have you worked on these horns all the while you have been in the department?"

Operator: "No, when I started here I was polishing mouth pieces. They used to grind all the corners and then we had to polish them. They don't do that any more. Now they only polish the worst ones. I have been grinding these horns over a year. The last man they had on the job had to quit because he was in poor health. He was in pretty bad shape when they took him off the job.

"I like sports pretty well, and I won't be able to play if this turpentine spoils my lungs."

Interviewer: "What kind of sports are you interested in?"

Operator: "I play basketball the most. I did play baseball, but I have something wrong with my instep and that game is kind of hard for me now. I wish I could afford to play football. I like

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Operator, Continued.

the game very much, but it costs too much money to get hurt. It is all right for a fellow who is going to school to get hurt, but when a man has to earn a living, he can't afford to be laid up two or three weeks. I only went to high school two months and then I had to quit."

We had a long discussion on high school athletics, and how much some of the colleges pay the football stars to get them to go to their school. He thought Iowa's athletic scandal was a lot of foolishness because every college is doing the same thing.

Operator: "I played basketball on one of the teams in the city, but I don't like it very well because when we go away from our home gymnasium the fellows are pretty tough. In my home town they play basketball more for the sport of the thing than they do in the city. Here, if they don't beat you on the basketball floor, they try to trim you up after you get out of the gym, and sometimes we are afraid to win a game."

Interviewer: "What town are you from?"

Operator: "I came from Terre Haute."

Interviewer: "Did all of your family move to the city?"

Operator: "No, my mother is still in Terre Haute, and my brother is living in Detroit now. My father died a little over seven years ago. My mother married again in a short time and my stepfather made things pretty tough for me at home. He made me quit school and go to work in the coal mine. The court found out that I wasn't going to school and the judge asked me why it was that I didn't go. I told him that I wanted to go to school very much, but my stepfather refused to let me go. He told my stepfather a few things and he had to let me go to school after that. He was so mean that he went to a lawyer after the court had decided I had to stay in school to find out if there wasn't some way he could make me go to work. One day after I was sixteen he tried to make me work when I was sick. I was upstairs in bed and I heard him and my mother having a big argument. My brother and I got so mad at the way he used to treat us that we both tried to beat him up. He was a great big fellow and we didn't do a very good job, but we both left home after that."

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Interviewer: "How does your mother get along with him?"

Operator: "Oh, she divorced him shortly after we left home. She is married again now.

"I have been wanting to go to night school for a long time but I haven't started yet. It makes me mad when I think of my stepfather because I could have gone to school. They weren't poor and they didn't need my money, but he was just mean enough to want to make life miserable for me. In order to get along nowadays a man needs an education."

Interviewer: "It is too bad that you couldn't go to school when you wanted to so badly."

Operator: "Yes. I get a letter from my sister once in a while. She is in second year high school now. It makes me feel bad because I can't write as good a letter as she does. She must think I am an awful dumb-bell."

Interviewer: "I should think that if you went to night school you could finish your high school course."

Operator: "Yes, I know I could, but I really work too much overtime to go to school now. I have been working overtime on another job all summer, but now my job is so far behind that I am going to have to start working overtime on that."

Interviewer: "Does your overtime interfere with your playing basketball?"

Operator: "I am going to work all the overtime I can now and try to get my job caught up. Basketball season doesn't start until the latter part of November. One man in our department is going to ask to get off to play football. He told me he is not going to work any overtime for two months. The boss will holler his head off when he hears that. I worked overtime steady all summer and I don't think he should say very much if I ask to get off during the basketball season."

Interviewer: "It will be very nice if you can get off."

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7-6333-2K0-9A6B.

Operator: "It seems as though I can't save very much money whether I work overtime or not. I go around with a bunch of fellows and I can't be a piker when we are out."

Interviewer: "Yes, if a fellow hangs out with a gang you have to keep your end up."

Operator: "Some of the fellows started going around drinking beer and that costs money. I don't mind a glass of beer once in a while; I don't think that hurts me at all, but some of the men are drinking whisky now. I can't go that stuff. Last year we played basketball and the winner was to get five dollars a man and a barrel of beer. We won the basketball game and we got the five dollars, but the barrel of beer was missing. They have some pretty good basketball teams at the Western. My cousin and I thought we would like to play on the Operating team. We went over there one night and the man in charge told me that they had enough men for the Operating team, but that the E of M Branch needed men and we could play with them. Those fellows didn't seem to want to play with us very much. They stuck by themselves and found fault with our playing whenever they could. We came out for the first game and they made us sit on the bench all the time. I didn't go out there to sit on the bench so we quit."

Interviewer: "I heard some other fellows say that they had that kind of trouble over there."

Operator: "Oh, I suppose we weren't good enough for them. I didn't care very much about playing anyway. The Western Electric is a good place for all kinds of sports. That is a dandy gymnasium they have over there. In my home town we didn't get much chance to use a good gymnasium. I don't think there are many companies that provide a nice gym for their men either. When we were home, we used to sneak into the high school gymnasium. They wouldn't allow us to play there, but we used to try it anyway. We tried to play very quietly, but every once in a while one of us would forget and holler and then the marshal would come in and chase us out."

Interviewer: "You work a long way from the rest of your gang don't you."

Operator: "Yes, the room is too small for all of the machines and they had to put mine along with another gang. I don't see very much of the Gang Boss. He usually comes around in the morning and sees

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7-6333-2KO-9A6B.

Operator, Continued.

that I get started on the job and then he doesn't say anything to me unless he finds that I didn't get very much work done. There is another gang boss that stays around my machine quite a bit and I guess if I talked and fooled around very much I would hear from him. When I come in on the job in the morning I like to work steady. I can tell what time it is by the amount of work I turn out. I could do the same thing on my other job too. When I used to get a box full of parts it was always within fifteen minutes of noon or five o'clock.

"They must have lunch about ready. I can smell the soup."

Interviewer: "Yes, that soup smells pretty good."

Operator: "To-day is the day for soup and fish. I don't like fish at all. Say, it didn't take that window washer any more than five minutes to wash that window. I wonder what he gets for that kind of a job."

Interviewer: "I don't know, but I guess they make pretty good money. That soup is getting me pretty hungry. I guess if there is nothing more you want to get in the interview we had better be moving. I am very glad to have had this talk with you and I hope I can see you again."

Operator: "I enjoyed talking to you very much."

Time - 80 Min.
Dictation - 40 Min.

LA

42.

October 2, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

SPECIAL

7-6335-2K0-8A7A.

Interviewer: "I guess we can stay right here. There is no use walking a long way when you have a place to yourself like this."

The Gang Boss went to bring a chair and we sat near the operator's machine.

Interviewer: "I suppose you have heard all about this interviewing program."

Operator: "Yes, I know what it is all about."

Interviewer: "I think the Company can learn a lot about shop conditions from the men. I believe that they will be able to do a lot of good when they get this information together."

Operator: "I don't know whether they will or not."

Interviewer: "Well, I don't know either, but I hope they can. If they are able to improve conditions a little that will be something anyway."

Operator: "Well, I guess they ought to be able to do that."

Interviewer: "Have you been in this department long?"

Operator: "I have worked here twenty years. I have worked in the same room and I have never been in any other department."

Interviewer: "I'll bet you have seen a lot of changes since you started here."

Operator: "Yes, there have been a great many changes. I have worked under five different foremen. Each one of them did things a little different, but I got along with all of them nicely. I think a working man has to learn to get along with the bosses. Every foreman was a little different. Some of them were glad to have you talk to them and others I had to wait until they were in the right mood before I could say anything to them. If you went up to a fellow like this when he was in the wrong mood he would bite your head off."

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7-6335-2KO-8A7A.

Interviewer: "If a man knows when to talk and when to keep quiet he has learned a lot."

Operator: "Well, I have had enough experience. I have been here for twenty years and I was a metal polisher for twenty years. I came to the Western when I was thirty-nine years old. I was surprised that they hired me. I guess they must have needed good men pretty bad at that time."

Interviewer: "I suppose they did. You wouldn't stand much chance of getting a job now if you were thirty-nine years old."

Operator: "No, I guess not. When I started here the rates were very low. I started for twenty cents an hour. There is quite a difference between the pay I was getting then and what they start men for now."

Interviewer: "Yes, every one is making more money now. How long have you been on this particular work?"

Operator: "I have been doing this between four and five years. I used to repair the wheels and then work on the floor, but they have so many men in the gang now that all I can do is to repair the wheels. Once in a while I get a chance to do an odd job, but that isn't very often."

Interviewer: "I imagine it must have kept you pretty busy when you had to work and keep the wheels in shape too."

Operator: "Yes, I was kept busy, but I always took good care of myself. I have only been to the doctor once since I started with the Company. That was when I had a skinned place on my hand."

Interviewer: "A man is a lot better off if he doesn't go to the doctor."

Operator: "Yes, you can never tell whether they are going to fix you up or whether they are going to make you worse than you would have been without going to them. I think some doctors try to make you feel sick so that they can do a good job making you well. These young doctors they have now don't know very much."

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Interviewer: "How long does one of those wheels last an operator?"

Operator: "It all depends on the weather and the kind of material they are working on. Some of the bakelite we get is very hard on wheels. Sometimes they make the bakelite soft and then an operator doesn't use very many of them in a day. There must be something in the bakelite that destroys the wheels because when I clean them off it comes off in a fine powder just as though there had been acid on them."

Interviewer: "It must take a lot of experience to keep those wheels in good shape. I wonder what they are going to do when you old-timers are gone."

Operator: "I suppose they will be able to get along all right. There is one man in the department that can do a good job now, and when I quit he can take my place. There are only a few of us old-timers left around the Plant. I think there are four men who started with the Company when I did who still work here. Only one of these men is left in the gang. You know [redacted] don't you?"

Interviewer: "Yes, I talked to him quite a while ago."

Operator: "The rest of them are scattered around in different departments. Once in a while they get an order for material that has been discontinued. The new fellows don't know how to work on this kind of stuff and either [redacted] or I have to do this job."

Interviewer: "It must seem good to see some of the old work come back."

Operator: "Yes, I like to see it come in. The only trouble is that I won't be able to stick around here for another twenty years. The General Foreman was talking to me not long ago and he told me that I could take my pension any time. I guess they will make me take a pension when I am sixty-five. Well, I guess I will have worked long enough by that time."

Interviewer: "Yes, I hope I can be fixed so that I won't have to worry when I get to be your age."

Operator: "Well, I would hate to have to take my pension right now. I am kind of pinched for money. There is something the matter with my wife and I have been spending a lot of money for the doctors."

LA

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7-6335-2KO-8A7A.

Operator, Continued.

They tell me that they are pretty sure that she has cancer. We are giving her radium treatments now, but I don't imagine they are going to help her very much. My motto is that when you get a thing like that you just get it. You have to die some way or other so it isn't much use worrying about how you have to go."

Interviewer: "No, it doesn't do very much good to worry."

Operator: "Worry is worse than being sick. If a man wants to worry he can make himself sick in no time. I have learned to take things as they come and not worry about them. I think I get along a lot better."

Interviewer: "Do you own your own home?"

Operator: "Yes, I have my own place, but I don't get much income off of it. I am only getting twenty-five dollars for a six-room flat. I have my daughter in there so I can't charge her much more than that. Well, what is the difference anyway. When I die I have to leave it all here anyway. They might as well have some good out of it while I am here. The last place they lived in the landlord was always raising hell with them. They have a boy, and as soon as he started to make a little noise the landlord didn't like it. I decided that I would fix them up in my place and then if there was any hell raising to do I could do it myself. I have a boy that is married too and they all come over every Saturday night and Sunday. Sometimes on Sunday they go out for a little ride in the afternoon, but they always get back here in time for supper. Well, what's the difference anyway? If they eat everything up now I can watch them enjoy it, but if they eat it up after I am gone I won't get any kick out of it. Those kids sure do tear that house up."

Interviewer: "A bunch of kids can wreck a house in no time."

Operator: "Well, when my boy and girl were young they used to tear up the house and so we are used to it. I enjoy having them over a whole lot. Every Saturday evening I get out a deck of cards; then we start. After the game starts no one pays any attention to the kids."

Interviewer: "It is very nice that you have a place so that they can to just as they please."

IA

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Operating Branch-M.

7-6335-2KO-8A7A.

Operator: "Well I raised my own family and I enjoyed it, and now I am getting enjoyment out of raising theirs."

Interviewer: "It was a little cool this morning. I don't suppose we will have very many more warm days."

Operator: "This cool weather is all right. I have to wear a sweater in the morning. It has been kind of bad since they have started work on the building. I have all the wheels from the night men waiting for me in the morning. I usually work up a sweat before I get these done. I have to keep my sweater handy because it doesn't do any good to be sweaty and then get cold too fast."

Interviewer: "How long does it take that glue to dry?"

Operator: "Well, it is best to use a wheel three or four hours after it is finished, but it is much better if they leave them all night. When the weather is damp it is impossible to keep enough wheels ahead so that they can keep going, and they have to take wheels that haven't set very long. These don't last any time at all. I always put numbers on the wheels when we finish them so if the fellows come for them when I am not here they know which ones to take."

Interviewer: "Why is it that the wheels won't work in the damp weather?"

Operator: "I don't know what it is, but the glue doesn't dry the way it does on a dry day. It works the same way when the weather is cold. Sometimes a wheel won't last a man over an hour if the weather is very bad."

Interviewer: "What is that you have in that box?"

Operator: "Those are aviators' mouth pieces. I have worked on a great many of those, especially during the war. I don't know just how those aviators use these things, and I don't suppose I will ever see them. I don't care much about going up in aeroplanes. When my daughter was in California they took her up and she didn't know anything about it. One of the pilots got her to sit in the plane and the next thing she knew they were up off of the ground. She got all excited and wanted to get out, but when she saw how far she was off of the ground she decided to sit quiet until they came down."

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7-6335-2KO-8A7A.

Interviewer: "I think I would have done the same thing. Aeroplanes aren't as dangerous as they used to be."

Operator: "I guess the big trouble with aviation is that some of the pilots are too daring. They try to do a lot of stunts and the planes won't stand that."

Interviewer: "Well, they have a few accidents that can't be avoided, but most of them are caused by carelessness."

"Is polishing rubber much different than polishing metal?"

Operator: "Rubber is a lot easier than metal, but you have to be more careful. Polishing rubber is just about like polishing nickel. If you push too hard you take off too much material."

"I never had any trouble working all my life. I started out when I was a young boy and worked hard. I have noticed that when a boy starts out with hard work he is able to do any kind of a job all his life. I can do a lot more work to-day than my boy can. He never did any work at all. All he does is push a pencil. He has been with the Graybar Electric twenty years. He started there as soon as he came out of school. He was pretty good at athletics so he should be strong, but a boy doesn't get strong from that kind of stuff. You have to go out and work hard if you are going to develop muscle that will last very long."

Interviewer: "Let's see you fix one of those wheels."

Operator: "Well, all I have to do is put the glue around the outside and then dip them in the sand. If I do this to a wheel a few times I have to take all the surface off and start a new one. That causes quite a bit of dust. The blower on this machine isn't big enough to carry off all of that dust. The dust flies right up in my face and that bakelite is hard to get off. It goes right into the skin. There are places on my hands that I can't get clean no matter how much I wash them. They couldn't fix this blower any better than it is because if they made the hood larger it would be in my way. I only have to straighten up about three pair a day so that is not so very bad."

Interviewer: "This job seems to me to be very interesting."

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Operator: "Yes, this job is pretty good. We had a lot of trouble with the sand not long ago. It seems as though there was something wrong with the sand, but we couldn't tell what it was. It was the right size, but it didn't seem to do the work. I went down to the Carborundum Company with one of the engineers and we tried to get some material from them, but they didn't have a thing that we could use. We finally got the right kind of sand and now I check every new batch I get to see that it is right. It costs the Company a lot when we get bad sand because the operator has to change his wheel every little while and I have to repair it. Yes, I like this job all right, but when I go on a vacation the other man that they put on here does not enjoy it very much. He told me when I came back that I had better stay around because he didn't want to have that job wished on to him steady."

Interviewer: "I see you have quite a bit of work waiting for you now. Maybe I had better not take up any more of your time."

Operator: "Well, that is up to you. I won't get behind and if I do I can step on it a little bit and catch up. There is nobody around here who tells me what to do and what not to do. I do the best I can and I guess they are all satisfied. I don't even have to make out time tickets. I keep all the special wheels under lock and key, and I have to stay on the job pretty close because I never know when one of the men is going to want one of those wheels. The Foreman told me when he put me in this corner that I shouldn't let any of the men from the floor fool around here at all. I let them come in and joke a little bit, but if they start wrestling or pushing each other around, I throw them out in a hurry."

Interviewer: "Well, I guess I will have to be going now. I am very glad that I met you."

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Operating Branch-M.

Z4-10676-2KO-8A4D.

112-144-42 (be) 32

I: "How do you do, sir? I wonder if you would take a little time and we will walk down to the restaurant and have a little talk."

E: "Just a minute. I will blow the dust off of my clothes first."

While walking down the aisle, the interviewer started this way:

I: "Are you working on rubber mixers back there?"

E: "Yes."

I: "How do you like it?"

E: "It is all right, but it is terribly dusty. This room here (referring to the Cable Plant) is nice and light. Ours will be better when we can get a new roof like this."

After walking through the Cable Plant and sitting down on one of the chairs in the restaurant. The operator sort of sighed as he sat down.

I: "It sounds like you are somewhat relieved to get a chance to sit down like this occasionally."

E: "Yes, it feels good to sit down once in a while. You know, we can't do that over in our department."

I: "I suppose the boys out there have talked to you about what we do when we come around here to see you fellows haven't they?"

E: "Yes, they talk about it, but they don't tell me very much."

I: "Well then, I will take a little time and explain to you just what the idea is. We are taking time to come around and talk to you fellows to find out just exactly what you think of the Western Electric Company. If you like it we would like to know why you like it, and if you don't, then we would like to know that also, so that we might have an opportunity of giving those complaints consideration and perhaps remedy them. So, in getting started in this little talk I wonder if you will just take a few minutes, or

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112-144-42(hc)-52

if necessary, a few hours to tell me of your experiences since you started with the Company. By that I mean the departments you have worked in, etc."

E: "I have been with the Company thirteen or fourteen months. I think it must have been a year on August third because I had my vacation then. I only got one week because I was only here one year. I started in the Acid Department across the tracks and I worked there three months. Then they transferred me to this department and put me on shells, then on buffing, and then in the Rubber Department."

I: "You have been on the mixing machines for a few months then haven't you?"

E: "Yes, I have been on them about six months."

I: "Is your only objection to that job the fact that it is dirty?"

E: "Well, it isn't hard work. It is just terribly dusty. I don't suppose there is anything they can do about it though because they use dust in making the rubber."

I: "Was there anything about the other jobs you had before coming here that you liked better?"

E: "No, I liked all of the jobs. I am a married man, you know, and I have to like them. I guess maybe this is a little better because you have a chance to rest once in a while on this job. I would like to be sure of having a steady place though. I don't like to be shifted around on all of the jobs here because that's hard. When our machines break down then they put me on some other work and I don't like that. I would like to have my machine and work on that all the time."

I: "What is the cause for your machine breaking?"

E: "I don't know. Maybe it is because they run them night and day, and maybe it is because of the dust they use. The motors burn out or something, but they break down a whole lot."

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Operating Branch-M.

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I: "Had you ever worked with rubber before you came to the Western Electric?"

E: "Yes, a long time ago I worked for the Goodrich Rubber Company. We were making shoes there or boots or something like that."

I: "How did that Goodrich factory compare with this factory and the department you are working in?"

E: "It was all right, but it was terribly warm. Sometimes you couldn't hardly stand it there; otherwise, I guess it was about the same as this place."

I: "I understand that some of the boys here think this place is pretty warm in the summer time."

E: "I don't think it is so bad here. I know it is a lot warmer in the next room than where we are."

I: "Is the Goodrich Company the only other place you have ever worked besides the Western Electric?"

E: "No, I worked in other factories, but not in Chicago."

I: "I wonder if you would object to naming off those various places you have worked."

E: "Well, I worked in the American Bridge Company at Joliet, and the American Wire Mill Company at Gary, and the American Bridge Company in Pittsburgh. I worked at the American Bridge Company in Pittsburgh for about seven years. That was my first job."

I: "Were you born in Pittsburgh?"

E: "No, I was born in what they call Austria. Now it is called Czech-Slovakia, and I came here when I was fifteen years old, in 1913 just before the war. I was lucky to get out when I did or I probably would have been called to fight."

I: "How is it that they happen to call that country Gzeehe-Slovakia now?"

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112-144-42(he)-52

E: "Well, Czecho-Slovakia was the biggest country of them all and after the war why they just took over the whole territory and called it all Czecho-Slovakia."

I: "Do you ever have any desire to go back there to see your relatives or anything like that?"

E: "No, I don't care to go back at all. My wife is from this country and I have a two-year-old boy here, and I don't ever care to go back."

I: "Does your wife speak the same language as you do?"

E: "No, she speaks only American. She wants my boy to speak only American."

I: "I suppose you get a lot of comfort and happiness out of that little boy of yours."

E: "Yes, he is a dandy. He is getting older now and is starting to get smart. When he was small everybody said that he was just the kind they would like to have. When I come home at night and I knock on the door, he always says, 'Who is there?'. When I sit down to play my accordion, he dances and runs and gets his little accordion. He plays it a while, but then he wants to take my big one."

I: "Do you like to play the accordion yourself?"

E: "Yes, I get a lot of fun out of it."

I: "Did you take lessons here in America or over in Austria?"

E: "I didn't take any lessons at all. I learned to play all of this music myself."

I: "Well, that is certainly something worth while and I hope your son can pattern after you and become a talented musician."

Pause.

I: "Do you take any interest in any athletics or sports of any kind here in this country such as baseball?"

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E: "I used to when I was single, but I don't any more. I used to come home then and give my woman the paper and then she would explain the things to me, but we don't have time for that any more. All we do now is play with the little boy and read the paper and go to bed."

I: "Don't you take time to go out to a show or dance or something like that now?"

E: "No, we haven't got time for that, and we can't afford to. We have to save our money as much as we can."

I: "Do you find it any trouble at all to actually save money here in America?"

E: "Well, you can't save very much, but we always manage to save a little something from each pay. Most of the time you have to buy this and you have to buy that, and you haven't anything left."

I: "Well, do you find the salary you are making down here is enough to take care of you and your family?"

E: "Yes, it is all right when we get our overtime in, but when we only work eight days, then you don't make so much. If we were only going to get our regular pay it wouldn't be very much at all, but that bonus helps a whole lot. Sometimes it amounts to thirteen or fourteen dollars a week."

I: "How much overtime is it necessary for you fellows to work out there?"

E: "Well, when I first started here we didn't work overtime very much at all, but now we work two hours every night, and all day on Saturday. We used to work on Sunday too, but they don't let us do that any more. When I work six days a week I usually make about forty-five dollars, and when I work seven days a week I make about fifty-five or fifty-seven dollars."

I: "I suppose your wife objects when you have to work overtime, doesn't she?"

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112-144-42(6c)-5

E: "No, she doesn't care. She doesn't mind if I work all the time just so I bring home the money, and we are able to get more money. What we want to do, you know, is put some money away for when we get old and to take care of our boy and educate him."

I: "How does the salary you are getting here compare with what you made at these other places you were employed?"

E: "You mean with the overtime or not. Without the overtime I make more than what I did at the other places, but at the other places I used to work more overtime than I do here and then, of course, I made more money."

I: "I suppose that of this little bit of money you find it possible to save, you are buying some A. T. & T. shares."

E: "No. They asked me to buy some a few weeks ago, but I didn't want to. I don't make enough money to do all of those things."

I: "Well, I suppose your boss explained these shares to you when he asked if you wanted to buy them didn't he? and the possibilities there were of your making money?"

E: "Yes, he did that, but we save our money down in Gary in some bank there. I was down there just a couple of weeks ago and I went and talked to the priest and asked him if the money was safe, and he told me that all the people in the church are putting their money there and it is safe all right. You see, we belong to a society in church and we all put our savings together like this and then they put it in the bank for us and we get seven per cent on our money. I guess the bank gives the money out to people who want to build houses."

I: "Have you ever taken time to think of the various things this Company does for the employees? If so, I wonder what you think of them."

E: "I don't know much about what the Company does. I only know I work every day and I like my work."

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112-144-42(bk)-52

I: "How do you find the bosses down here as compared to these other places you have worked?"

E: "Oh, they are all right. [redacted] is a fine fellow; I like him all right."

I: "I understand that some of the fellows out there have a little trouble getting along with him."

E: "I don't think they are fellows in our room. Maybe some of them out on the other floor do, but we all know what we are supposed to do where I am and then we do it and he never bothers us at all."

I: "How are the bosses you have had in the other departments?"

E: "They were all all right."

I: "Do you ever have any desire to go back to any of these other departments you worked in?"

E: "No, I like this department better than any of the others."

Extended pause.

I: "Now I am just going to take a little time and ask you to think of various conditions around here that have either annoyed you, or made you mad, or that you think could be improved upon."

Slight pause.

E: "There isn't anything that I can think of now. Everything seems to be all right."

I: "How do you find the washrooms?"

E: "They are all right."

I: "How about the lockers?"

E: "The lockers, they are terrible. I think that is something the Company ought to do for the employees and that is put in new lockers."

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I don't have any locker for myself now at all. I am in with, oh, about three more fellows and you just can't hang any clothes up in there. You have got to lay them in, and then, you know, we have to change all of our clothes. We wear dirty clothes down here when we are working with the dust and have to change when we go home, and that is bad. I used to keep my cap in my locker, but they stole two of them from me so now I put my cap in my pocket and I carry it with me all the way home and all the way back to work so they can't steal it."

Slight pause.

I: "That's fine. You just keep right on and I will listen to everything you have to say."

E: "Well, that is all there is. I haven't any more to say."

I: "Do you think that if I went along and suggested things like this that it would help you think of something?"

E: "Well, maybe, but I can't think of anything now that I should complain about. You know, when they get that new roof in our place I think everything will be fine. That might even take care of a lot of the dust that is flying around."

I: "Apparently this dust proposition bothers you considerably."

E: "Well, I don't like to work in dust. I don't know that it bothers me now, but maybe some day it will."

I: "Is there anything you can suggest that would do away with this rubber dust?"

E: "No, I guess there isn't. You have to work with the dust when you mix it as I told you, and I don't suppose there is any way of getting rid of it."

Extended delay

I: "Well, I am certainly pleased to have had this opportunity of talking with you and getting these expressions from you. Perhaps when you see me around in the department you will be able to think of some other things to tell me about."

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SPECIAL

213-12(31)-526

I: "How do you do, sir? I wonder if you will just take a walk with me into the next building and we will sit down there, or we will go up to the hallway here if you care to and have a little conversation."

E: "It makes no difference to me. I will go any place."

I: "How come your hand is so sticky? Is that rosin or shellac that you have on there?"

E: "No, that's rosin and oil. It is hard to get that stuff off. You have to wash your hands with turpentine. That's why mine are so sticky now. I didn't have a chance to wash."

I: "Well, I guess we can sit down here and make ourselves comfortable."

E: "Yes, and we will be away from the smoke awhile too. I don't like that very much."

At this particular point we were interrupted by a person that apparently knew the employee. After he had gone the employee mentioned the fact that that person's brother-in-law was their family doctor. A story then followed in which he explained that this doctor had served in the World War and was a very able and capable fellow.

I: "Did you happen to serve with him? Is that how you came to know him?"

E: "No, I was exempt from the World War, but I worked in a factory where they made supplies for the United States Army."

I: "How was it you were exempt? Was there something wrong physically?"

E: "No, I was helping my parents then and supporting them. I worked in a little factory out south there. It is just one story and they have heavy machines in there. I was a machinist. That was a good place to work and I probably would be there yet, but they got slack and were sending their work out to some cities in Wisconsin and Indiana and some of it was going East."

I: "How is that? Could they get it cheaper outside?"

E: "Yes, I guess they could. They didn't have any union men and then I think the real reason was that they could ship it much cheaper."

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213-12(31)-52c

If they had parts for a New York railroad then they would have the parts made down East, and it wouldn't cost them so much to haul them."

I: "Was your shop on the south side unionized?"

E: "No, not now. I understand though that about twenty years ago they were, and the management broke the union up down there."

I: "How did you happen to come to the Western Electric Company?"

E: "Oh, I had worked here before about twelve or thirteen years ago, and I knew that this Company was a good company to work for because they had steady jobs. When this place got slack I came down here."

I: "How long ago was that?"

E: "Just January of this year."

I: "January? Perhaps there has been some mistake made here. I have a list with your name on and it shows your service date as being April, 1928."

E: "That must be somebody else. It isn't me. Yes, that is somebody else because my initials aren't the same as those initials you have there. Maybe it is my cousin's boy. I don't know where he works, but it might be him."

I: "Maybe it is a twin brother of yours that you don't know anything about."

E: "No, I don't think so, but I would like to know who it is anyhow so I could find out where he is from. Maybe my wife and I have some relatives we don't know about."

I: "Well, that's possible. Ordinarily we don't talk to the employees that haven't been here a year, but then it might help you to get a rest from your work so we will just continue. How long have you been married?"

E: "About five years."

I: "Is that so?"

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E: "Yes, I am married and that is why I like to have a steady job. Sometimes a man might get laid off and then their wives can go out and work, but my wife wasn't so very strong. She is better now, but she couldn't go out and work anyhow."

I: "I think a wife's place really is at home, don't you?"

E: "Yes, when I was single, I used to run around and have a good time and save a little bit. Now I am married and I have settled down, and I have to save a whole lot more now. She helps me do that."

I: "Well, I guess that's the way it is with most of us. I remember when I was single I was spending a lot of money and not able to save very much either, but I was fortunate enough in getting a wife that could help me out the same as you."

E: "We have to save. I just bought another home and we have debts now so we must save to pay them off."

I: "Is that so? Did you have a home before this one?"

E: "Yes, I had one but there were too many repairs to be made on it. It was too old so I sold that."

I: "Now you have a nice new home that you have moved into."

E: "It isn't exactly new. It is in an old neighborhood and there is plenty of work for me to do around there, but it is a lot better than the other one. I like to work around the house and keep busy because to me that's interesting."

I: "In what section of town is your home?"

E: "Around Fifteenth and Harding."

I: "Well, that isn't so far from here. I suppose it is in a settlement where a certain nationality has built homes. Is that right?"

E: "Well, there are a lot of Jews and Bohemians there. I am Bohemian myself."

I: "Is that so? You were born here weren't you?"

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E: "No, I was born over there and I came here when I was thirteen. That was about twenty years ago. I had most of my schooling over there and not very much here."

I: "Well, you certainly do remarkably for the length of time you have been here."

E: "I want to go to school though. I did want to start now, but I have so much to do around the house that I couldn't, but after Christmas I want to go to school and take English. Do they teach English here?"

I: "Yes, I think they do have a number of classes with some very able instructors."

E: "That's what I want to take. I think that that is what I really need to help me. I would like to study drafting too. I used to be able to draw real well when I was going to school, and I think I would like to learn that and then do drafting down here. I would like to have a trade. What I am doing now is just ordinary work and most fellows can do it. Before I came here I was a machinist, but I didn't like that work so well."

I: "Is your wife Bohemian also?"

E: "Yes, but she came here when she was a real little girl. She had all of her schooling here, and then she went back to the old country with her parents before the World War and returned here alone."

I: "She ought to be a very able and intelligent woman then with all of that experience in traveling, etc."

E: "Yes, she is all right, but she can't travel any more now. It is too expensive. We have to save our money."

I: "I imagine your wife can help you out quite a bit that way, if she helped you buy that home before."

E: "Yes, she helps all right. She has to. She is a dressmaker you know. She makes her own dresses and makes a lot of things for me and for the baby. That helps us to save." . . . "I wouldn't have bought this new home only for the baby. We wanted him to have a home where he could be free and run around and get a good training."

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213-12(31)-52c

I: "Are you located near some schools?"

E: "Well, the only one I know of that is around there is a public school. I guess there is none better than that for education."

I: "Do you think that they are better than parochial schools?"

E: "What is that?"

I: "I mean the regular Catholic schools."

E: "Oh, I think so. My cousin went to a Catholic school here for seven and one-half years and I went to a regular school for two and one-half years, and I think I learned more in that time than he did. He sent me a letter when he was on his vacation and the grammar in it was awful."

I: "Well, all those things help, of course, to raise children in the proper way. I suppose there are a number of churches in the neighborhood."

E: "I don't know if there are or not. I never go. I was raised a Catholic in the old country, but I don't go to any church at all now. I think that if a man lives right and does right things that they don't need to go. I know some people that go regular and they are not any better than I am. My wife goes every Sunday though."

I: "I believe that some people get considerable satisfaction out of going there."

E: "Oh, it does some good all right. I have nothing against them. My wife goes all the time and I never say anything, and when our little boy gets bigger he will go too. They teach them there to be good to their parents, and not to kill, and have right thoughts."

I: "That's one of the most necessary things we have to do in raising children."

E: "One thing that is nice about our home is that you don't have to transfer so much coming to work."

I: "I suppose it doesn't take you as long to get here now either. Is that right?"

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213-12(31)-52c

E: "No, it only takes me twenty minutes to get to work now."

I: "That helps because you can sleep longer in the morning now."

E: "No, I can't. I have to get up at five thirty every morning."

I: "Five thirty!!"

E: "Yes, I have to get up and chop wood and bring in the coal and take the ashes out and everything. You know, my wife isn't very strong yet and she can't do all of those things."

I: "No, that's right. You have to do those things I expect when you own your home. You have your wife and baby to look after."

E: "Do you have a little boy or girl?"

I: "No, not yet, but I hope some day to have one."

At this point the operator told a rather detailed story of his wife's illness prior to having the child and after.

I: "Well, I rather imagine that with a little fellow just about a year old that you have something to think about while you are down at work here."

E: "Yes, I can think about him, but I only think about being at work steady down here."

I: "Do you have reason to think that the work isn't steady?"

E: "Yes. They are slack up here and they figure on laying some of the fellows off. I know that downstairs where I regularly work they are slack too. They figure on changing some of the things or cutting them out and using less men."

I: "I don't know. I have never heard anything about that. Perhaps you like the work upstairs just as well as down there."

E: "Well, I have to work. It doesn't make any difference where. Of course, I like it down there much better because that is my regular kind of work."

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I: "Do you get the same rate up here that you did down there?"

E: "Yes, I get the same rate and the same pay and that's satisfactory. Of course, I would rather be downstairs because it is quiet there and not so much smoke, and there aren't so many kids playing around and fooling around like up here. All there are are kids from about seven-teen to twenty-two. They are making all kinds of noise that they shouldn't."

I: "Doesn't the Gang Boss say anything to them if they keep on making noise like that?"

E: "No, if they get their work out I guess he doesn't care at all."

I: "Do they have a bogey that they have to make up there also?"

E: "Yes, they have a bogey there just the same as we had downstairs. You know, sometimes it used to be hard to make that bogey downstairs because they would send us poor parts. We used to complain but they never did care about our complaints anyhow. They used to tell us that the parts would get better, but they were getting worse, and that used to take us longer to work on them. Now they are slack and I don't know if they are making those parts any more. That's one thing about the other place I worked, they used to have to make things right all the time, and you didn't have bad parts to work with."

I: "Do you think that was a better place to work than Western is?"

E: "No. This place is much better. It is cleaner and warmer, and they have better ventilation. I like to stay at one place all the time. It is bad, you know, when you work at a place and you are not sure if it is steady. You are afraid then and you really can't depend on a salary." . . . "The hours are much better here too. We used to have to start there at seven o'clock in the morning and we start at seven thirty here. We only used to get a half an hour for lunch and then we never used to get paid time and a half for overtime like we do here."

I: "Do you get very much overtime down here?"

E: "No, not very much now. I would like to have more. I have only worked overtime two nights since July. I guess there won't be much more overtime if they are going to be slack up here and downstairs too."

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I: "Well, I guess they will have to build a lot more theaters so that we will be able to install these -- oftener."

E: "I hear Western lost almost all of the -- business over in Europe for some reason or other. You know, that would help if they could get that business over there, especially the business from England."

I: "Is that so? I hadn't heard anything about that?"

E: "That's what the boys were saying out there. I don't know where they got it from." . . . "I would like to know who that is that has the same name as mine in our department. I guess I will have to ask B. about it."

I: "Who is that?"

E: "That's that Gang Boss out there."

I: "Is he the same one that you had downstairs?"

E: "No, he is a different one. We only have the same Head Foreman here that we had downstairs. The other bosses are different."

I: "How do they compare with the fellows downstairs? Do you like them just as well?"

E: "Yes, they are all all right. I have only been here about two weeks, you know, so I don't know very much about them." . . .

I: "I wonder if there is anything you can think of that might be suggested to help this Company in any way."

E: "I am not here long enough to tell you. They have things pretty good over here so far on these -- machines. The only thing is, they could make those parts better that we have to work on downstairs. I would like to go downstairs. I hope I will soon and be on steady work, though I have nothing against this job."

Note: My feeling in connection with this interview is that the comments and remarks were at first reserved. At some point or other this feeling left the employee and he gradually felt freer and spoke accordingly. This man also appeared to be worried, and yet could not be judged as one easily worried.

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SPECIAL

A few remarks were made before the actual interview started. The remarks made were concerning the weather and such. Then a brief explanation of the program was given.

E: "Well, I think that is fine. I think something like that is a real idea and very beneficial to the men. I don't know that there is much to talk about though because the Company has treated me fairly, and the bosses are all right if you are all right with them. I have been with the Company about a year last August. That is, I finished my year at the end of August, and I got a week's vacation the first week in September."

I: "Is that all of the vacation you had coming?"

E: "No, I had two weeks' vacation in July and just one week's vacation in September, but I am back now. I am all through with vacations and raring to go."

I: "Have you been in this department all the time you have been with the Company?"

E: "No, I haven't been in that same department. We started down on the second floor. I was with the same job all the time, but we have been moved around quite a bit." *moving around*

I: "How do you like working on X?"

E: "Why, I think it is a very interesting thing, but a fellow doesn't get a chance to learn very much, but just do the same thing over and over again. You learn how to wire and solder wires, but you never learn the principles of the thing. There isn't much chance to learn as long as you have to work so steady in there like that. Those things that they have there in the boxes that you saw right across the aisle from me are something I don't know anything about, even though I would like to. They are reproducers of some kind, but I couldn't tell you what kind." *W*

I: "Where did you work prior to coming with the Western here?"

E: "Oh, I spent some time on the farm and I worked for the B. E. Company here in Chicago before that, and I liked it there real well. I perhaps would have been there still if they hadn't moved around so much. They used to lease their building for short periods. Then when

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the lease would run out they would move all the time. Now they have their own building and I understand they are working overtime every night they are so busy and rushed."

I: "Do you ever have any desire to go back there with them?"

E: "No, I am well satisfied with what I am doing and where I am now. It is close to my home and this other Company is way out north. Another thing, you don't get a chance to buy stock or shares there like you can here to help out."

I: "What do you mean by the statement, 'To help out.'?"

E: "You know, you can put two or three dollars a week away without noticing it, and then in three and one-half years when you get your shares you have quite a bit saved up. Believe me that means something when you are married."

I: "By George! I didn't know you were married; didn't have any idea you were. How long have you been married?"

E: "Oh, about five months I guess. You know it makes a difference when you are married. When I was single I was getting just as much money as I do now and I didn't seem to have a penny. I was broke all the time, but now even though I am married and have a lot of expenses and responsibilities, I seem to be able to save a little bit anyhow each week."

I: "Well, you are perhaps fortunate in having a wife that can take care of the money like that."

E: "Oh, she is not so careful with the money. If she had her way, she would be buying new stockings and dresses all the time, and I would have to buy a horse and wagon to move them around."

I: "Well, perhaps she is working and feels that she is entitled to those things."

E: "No, she isn't working. She did work up until about a month ago, but I used to be so crabby and cranky that I told her she had better quit and since she quit she feels much better and I feel much better too. When I get home now I have my meals all ready for me. I don't have to step and do any house work the way I used to and I get more sleep. I think that is better for any married man. I used to wish I wasn't married sometimes. You know before I was

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married I used to go out with the fellows all the time, and we used to have good times. About the second month we were married why I felt I wanted to go with them nearly all the time, but I am sort of getting out of the habit now, and I won't let myself feel that way. I know that as long as I am married my duty is to stay at home, and I really think it is better for me that way."

I: "Who were the fellows you used to pal around with? some of the regular bunch?"

E: "Yes, they were the fellows I was raised with from the neighborhood. We used to have a ball team and I used to play ball with them all the time until I got married, and my wife doesn't care about baseball, so I was only able to go out about once a month or maybe twice a month to play."

I: "Well, didn't you ever get interested in baseball down here at the Plant?"

E: "Yes, I signed up for baseball down here, but I never heard from anybody about it after I had signed up. I didn't know when I was supposed to go and practice or where so I didn't go out with them. You know, I didn't know the bosses here the way I do now. I was talking with a couple of them about a week ago, and next year I will be all right. I will be fixed up, and I will play regular with them."

I: "Well, are the bosses in your department interested in baseball that way?"

E: "I don't know so much about them, if they are interested or not, but I have a friend here who plays ball and he knows some of those bosses that run the thing. I'll probably play with him."

I: "Well, it might be worth your while to mention something to your own bosses about it too."

E: "Well, I don't have much chance to do that. We work overtime most of the time and they probably wouldn't be interested in that anyhow."

I: "It wouldn't hurt to ask, however. You might find that they will be a real help to you."

E: "I don't know so much about our bosses. I bowl regularly on Tuesday night and I asked if I could get off last night and bowl."

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I explained the whole thing to the boss, but it didn't make any difference. He said no anyhow so I just reminded him that some time I might want a favor and as long as I stayed and worked for him last night I hoped that he would give me the favor next time."

I: "How often do you fellows have to work overtime?"

E: "Oh, we work every night. Sometimes we get too much of it. About two weeks ago we worked up until nine forty-five every night and then they changed it and we started to work until about seven o'clock every night. Now next week we have got notice that we have to start working until nine forty-five every night again."

I: "Well, doesn't that mean more pay to you fellows?"

E: "Yes, it means more pay, but it runs a fellow down to have to work 'till nine forty-five every night. I don't mind working until seven o'clock at all; that is fine. I am glad to do that because if we are going to go out in the evening why we don't usually go until eight or eight thirty anyhow, so that gives me plenty of time to get home and do whatever I want and then go out, but I don't like this nine forty-five work at all."

I: "Perhaps if you were in some other department you wouldn't have so much overtime."

E: "Well, I don't say that I don't like the department and I don't like the work, but you know, it gets tiresome for a fellow to have to do it so much."

I: "Do you feel that the work you are doing up there gets tiresome in any way?"

E: "No, I don't mean that. I work with the gang and we all work steady. We have to in order to get our rate out so that you don't notice the time so much, but it tires a person out plenty working so long."

I: "Have you ever felt that there is any other work here that you would like to do better than what you are on now?"

E: "Well, yes. I don't know what it is, but a fellow always likes to feel that he is getting ahead and working for something. I guess some day I will go up to the boss and ask him if I can't do some other work when I feel that I am able to take care of it myself. I always plan on getting ahead and promoting myself and some day I

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will see to it that I do. I always work hard and do the best I can, and then I feel that the bosses will notice me and maybe give me something when they have a chance."

I: "Well, there isn't any particular job you have in mind then that you would like to do rather than this?"

E: "I don't know how to answer that. You know, I have a trade; that is, I was an apprentice in a trade, but I don't like to do that work. That was a machinist so I can't say I would like to get on there at all, but I think a fellow ought to decide what he would like to do. I know that I am doing that now myself, and I think I would like to study electricity and other things like that. Just as soon as I make up my mind and I start studying that, I am going to go up to the boss and tell him that, and I think maybe some arrangement can be made where I can work right into that line that I decide to take. I don't think there is any place better than the Western Electric to work at any trade. I think here they can use almost anybody that is any good at any trade at all. I like the Company so I think when I do this I will just mention it to the boss and get a transfer."

I: "Well, I don't believe it will hurt you to spend any time on anything. Any time you spend studying is worth while."

E: "Yes, that's the way I feel about it. I am interested in these things I am working on quite a bit, you know, and I wouldn't mind even studying them." . . .

I: "I wonder if there are any improvements that could be made out there on your work that would make it more interesting, at least, for the time being."

E: "Well, I don't know. I think that the Company makes improvements faster than I can think of them. They have given us a jig to set the things in and it makes it easier to handle. They have made some kind of a contraption so there is no chance of your burning yourself on these things and the heat is all under the bench. I don't think there are any improvements that could be made except for me to design a new pair of trousers. You know, when you are working with solder like this and it gets on your trousers you can't get it off unless you pull the goods right along with it. That's why I always wear gray trousers now so that this solder don't show up so much."

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October 28, 1929.
Operating Branch-M-N.

SPECIAL

I: "Come with me, Mr. ---, and we will sit and have a rest and talk together."

E: "What did you say? I am going to get arrested?"

I: "No. I am an interviewer and I am over here to talk a while to you. Just a friendly talk, that's all."

E: (smiling) "Oh, all right."

Explained the program to the employee.

E: "I haven't anything to say. I work here for a long time, over six years and never had any trouble. I like the boss and the boss likes me. Just my wife makes me trouble."

I: "Is your wife sick?"

E: "No. I am not living with her for over two years. Since 1927. She put me in the crazy house. I stayed five months in there and then I got out."

I: "She ran away?"

E: "No. I was working nights here and she fixed it with her brother. While I was sleeping, three police came and got me. I didn't know anything about it until the police came. My case is still in court. I have to go next week."

I: "You had bad luck."

E: "I don't know what they will do with me."

I: "If your wife didn't do that, everything would be different."

E: "She said to the doctor that I was a sick man. I never was sick in my life so she told a lie."

I: "I suppose you are glad to be alone."

E: "No, that isn't good. I'd have her back anyhow because I like to live with my family, but her brother says 'No'."

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Operating Branch-M-N.

I: "Is she afraid of her brother?"

E: "No. But he says he will spend his last penny to keep me there in that place or jail."

I: "That's bad. Do you see your wife at all?"

E: "Yes. Every month. She takes me in court. I have to pay for her and the children and then I have to pay separate for my board and room. This costs me about \$100.00 a month. That's hard for me. She's got my two story house and her brother is living with her."

I: "It's pretty hard when you have trouble like that."

E: "Maybe it won't kill me (smiling), I don't know."

I: "Maybe some day everything will be all right again."

E: "I would like to have it that way. Her brother wanted to have me shipped back to the old country. The doctor said, 'No. He has lived here a long time and made no trouble for anyone.' The doctor was a good friend of hers. She and her brother paid him to have me sent away. The doctor didn't even examine me and he made out the papers for her."

I: "That was bad."

E: "I have a congressman's son for my lawyer and he has got a paper to bring and see the Western Electric. My wife and her lawyer claim that the Company gave them a paper that said I made \$52.00 a week and I should pay her \$25.00. When I make a straight week, it's only \$34 or \$35. Last year, I worked a lot overtime and I made bigger pays. I never know how long that will keep up. I was working seventy-five or eighty hours a week, Sundays and all."

I: "Maybe your lawyer will straighten it up."

E: "I don't know. I wanted to settle it with the property, so much for the wife, the children and me, and then I will pay. Two weeks ago, she said, 'Yes, that's all right,' and now she don't want to."

I: "You have lots of trouble all right."

E: "Yes."

MK

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Operating Branch-M-N.

I: "Do you like this night work?"

E: "I don't mind, but I would sooner work days. I worked days before but the boss told me one day to work nights for a week. That was four months ago and I am still on."

I: "Did you ask him if you could go back days again?"

E: "No, I didn't ask him."

I: "Why do you like working days?"

E: "I can't sleep so good. In the day time there is a lot of children around and you can't sleep like you can in the night time."

I: "Do you work Sundays too?"

E: "Sometimes. Not all the time."

I: "Are you working gang piece work?"

E: "Yes."

I: "How long were you working here?"

E: "Since 1923."

I: "Were you always in the same place?"

E: "Yes."

I: "You like this kind of work?"

E: "Yes. I like it."

I: "Do you make good percentage?"

E: "Not the same every week."

I: "It goes up and down."

E: "Yes."

I: "Is there anything else you want to tell me?"

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Operating Branch-M-N.

E: "No. I have nothing to tell only next week I might be in jail."

I: "Why do you think so?"

E: "I don't know why she does it."

I: "Well, I hope you won't have to go to jail. I hope you have better luck."

E: "Me, too. (Pointing to note book) Is that going in court?"

I: "No, not at all Mr. ---. As I told you before, nobody else will know what you told me."

E: "Oh, all right. Well, good bye."

MK



WORKING CONDITIONS

Likes

"I find the Company very clean and orderly in all their departments."

Dislikes

No comments.

THE JOB

Likes

"I am only eighteen years old and I make about thirty-five dollars a week. I think this is pretty good money for a kid my age."

Dislikes

"I don't believe that there is any future in this job. Seems as though a fellow can work here for ever and not get any more than a few cents raise every year.

"I would like to find out how they figure the raises in this department. I didn't get a raise last time and I have been trying to figure out why. I think it is because they have changed my job so often. When I started in this department they put me on one job and as soon as I made the required rate they took me off and gave me other work. This other work was a little different and it took me about three weeks to get speed enough so that I could make the rate on that job. Now they have me on a job and it is impossible for anyone to make the rate. There are two of us on this job. The other fellow has been on it over a year and he can only make seven hundred parts a day. The required rate is nine hundred. I have been on it about three weeks and I am making about six hundred and fifty parts now.

"The fellows that have been working on the same jobs all the time got raises in June but I didn't. I complained to the Assistant Foreman about this and he told me that he was going to give me a five cent re-rate."

SUPERVISION

Likes

"The first Gang Boss I had understood the work very well. He taught me how to handle the tools and I think he gave me a very good start on the job."

Dislikes

"I worked nights for a little while and I did not like the Gang Boss that I had there. He did not bother me very much because I did not talk to him, but he was continually trying to show his authority. He had the gang fighting among themselves most of the time.

"My present Gang Boss was given charge over our work but he had never worked on this job. The first week he was on the job he came over and told me that I was not doing the work right. I was pretty sure that I was turning out a good job and so I argued with him and told him why I was doing the operation this way. He did not like it at all but finally he looked up the layout and found that I was doing the job properly. He has not bothered me since that time, but I did not think he liked it very well. I would have felt much better if he had come back and told me that I was right and explained that he was not going to hold that little argument against me."

cf. preceding interview

SPECIAL

The employee who gave the following story had been interviewed previously. He arranged with his supervisor to be interviewed again. The supervisor notified the interviewer, the employee was introduced and the request granted.

E: "I would like to talk with you about several things that I didn't think of mentioning to the other Personnel men. At that time, I was a little bit timid and I look at things a bit different than I did at that time."

I: "All right, let's walk over to the restaurant room where we can sit down and talk things over."

E: "Who do you think is going to win the football game tomorrow?"

I: "I just wonder. I would sure like to see that game."

E: "I was to the Drake game last week." (Employee then talked about football for ten minutes)

I: "What would you like to tell me, Mr. -----?"

E: "Well, what I call stool pigeon work, especially where the fellows working on the bench in the other gang go up to the chief of the department and tell things so that we get bawled out. I don't see why the bosses listen to those fellows. We got bawled out several times for talking because these fellows behind us who work in the other gang had gone back to the boss and 'knocked' on us. These same fellows are doing a lot of fooling around and getting away with it. Nobody says anything to them. There is one fellow in the same gang who I don't think does four hours work a day. The rest of the time he is fooling around and watching the fellows to see whether they stop talking."

I: "Is he a Sub-Gang Boss?"

E: "No, just a bench worker. I don't see why any of these fellows have any business spying on us or anybody for that matter. There are plenty of bosses around to watch us. Wherever you turn there is a boss. They are all over. Now, on the work I am doing there is a certain amount of eye strain from looking at the parts and the machine all the time. They gave me a rush job to do yesterday which I had to put on extra speed to get out in time. Well, I was working away on it and my eyes became tired so I had to look up every once

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in a while. I noticed then that one of the bosses was watching me but I didn't pay any attention to him. I went on with my work. The next thing I knew, he was over beside me and he said, 'Listen, you will have to quit looking around or I will have to take you up to the boss.' I said, 'What for? My eyes get so tired from looking at these parts that I have to look up to relieve them.' Then he walked away. This same fellow watches our movements closely all the time. Sometimes, we find it necessary to get a piece of cloth to wipe certain parts with. The girls have some cloth and as soon as we go over to them, this Gang Boss comes over and tells us to go back to our places and quit talking to the girls. Now, he himself is worse than any of us. He is always hanging around them and only the other day I noticed him getting too familiar with them. He is always getting familiar with some one of them. I don't think he has any right to call us about talking when he does worse things himself. Another thing, I can't see why these fellows are always sucking around the bosses. I am acquainted with one of the higher-ups at Hawthorne, in fact, he is a personal friend of mine, but I wouldn't want to think of asking a favor of him. If I couldn't get it by my own effort, I wouldn't want to get it otherwise. I, at least, wouldn't go up and beg for a stand-in or cheapen myself in any way.

"Another thing is about our percentage. It used to be much higher. At present, it runs a little over thirty per cent. The last time, my monthly balance was sixty-three cents. If the work was coming back, I could understand it, but for some time past we have gotten very little back so far as I can see, so there is some question in my mind as to why it is so low."

I: "Did you ever ask the supervisor about that?"

E: "Well, we have been called up to the office and told that the work was coming back, but I have never gone up personally and talked to them about it.

"There is something else I want to tell you about. I was talking to a girl. I like this girl pretty well. She lives south of here and I live miles away from her house so I only get to talk to her down at work here at noon time. The other day, while I was talking to her, the monitor came up and ordered me to stop talking to the girls or he would turn me over to the boss. A few minutes later, the five minute whistle blew and I returned to my bench. There, this same fellow was standing and 'cutting up' with the girls himself. It made me sore to think that he ordered me away

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and then had a gay time with them himself. I don't know why he has any more privilege than the rest. When I am with the girls I never use any insulting remarks, no matter how they talk themselves, so I have no reason to feel guilty being seen with them."

I: "Possibly this man is 'sweet' on one of the girls."

E: "Not that I know of. He shouldn't be, he is older. These girls are only eighteen and nineteen years old. If he was 'sweet' on them and told me so, that would be a different story entirely. I don't think the girls even know who he is because later I told this girl I wouldn't be able to talk to her at noon time any more and why. She was surprised because she didn't even see him come over to me at all. I wouldn't want him to catch me again because I can't afford to lose my job, being the oldest in the family and having my mother and a younger sister and brother to support.

"Another thing, there is a lot of cheating going on about the output. Many of the fellows put out a lot less work than they show on their time ticket. I know that that has been going on and that there is more than one of them doing it. Some of the fellows there only work about six hours or so of actual work while the rest of us have to work the full time to get out our bogey. I have always made my bogey since I started here and I can do that work as fast as anybody there. The bosses know there is something wrong. In our gang they have the operators give their work to a special man now. Each time they count the work and mark it down. Then at the end of the day, they turn in the count and compare it with the count turned in by the operator."

I: "That ought to help some."

E: "I think it ought to."

I: "Did you have anything else to talk about?"

E: "No, I think that is all."

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November 24, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

7-6338-9K9-3A7E.

I: "Well, I guess you know all about this interviewing program now."

E: "Yes, I know about it. I am one of the truckers here. I have to do all the work." . . . "I was a trucker upstairs and they said they would give me a better job so they gave me a truck downstairs. Then I ran a drill press upstairs, but they made me take a truck again. Then I ran a drill press again. Then I was a spot welder, but they can't get good truckers. They don't pay them enough money. They only get twenty-two dollars to start. Then the men quit because they have to work too hard, and they don't get enough pay.

"I only get twenty-six dollars a week. I do twice as much work as the rest of those fellows." . . . "There is too much work around here. There is trucks standing all over the aisles. They want one truck out of the middle of the big bunch of them and then I have to move a half a dozen trucks to get that one. I have to do too much work to-day. Mr. ← has lots of trucks he wants moved. Everything is all blocked up around here. The boss hollers when I get things blocked up. He calls me 'dumb' and everything. Sometimes he helps me, but when he does, he says he has to do all of my work. I don't like that because I do two men's work. That's why they don't care if they don't get enough truckers around this department."

I: "Is that so?"

E: "Over a year ago I have to work too hard. I have to take care of one room. That was too much work, and then, they made me help out in another room. I have so much work to do that I have to work overtime sometimes. Sometimes I could not finish up when I work overtime and then I have to finish it next morning. I have so much work to do and then the boss bawls me out because I go so fast with the truck."

I: "Do you have to go very fast?"

E: "Sure. Then the boss bawls me out if I go too fast. Sometimes he bawls me out when I don't get the work done. Sometimes when I don't have a helper I work so hard I catch a cold in my arm. About two or three years ago I catch a cold and I have to stay home."

I: "That's too bad."

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November 24, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

7-6338-9K9-3A7E.

E: "I don't like to stay home because I don't get enough money. Gang Boss in the other room gets sick all the time. One time he was sick three months. I can't even afford to be sick twelve days. I have to stay home two weeks to get paid. I wish I could get paid right away when I am sick."

I: "It is a lucky thing you are here long enough to get paid at all."

E: "Oh, I have been here a long time. I started six years ago June twentieth. I was nineteen when I started, and I am twenty-five now."

I: "You weren't very old when you started to work here then."

E: "Oh, I worked before that. I worked ten years already. I started working for -- company then. I worked in a union tailor shop. They only paid me eighteen dollars a week. I didn't work there long. I was supposed to get a raise, but I didn't get it so I quit. I came over here then and I got a job right away. I didn't go back to the tailor shop for my pay. My sister went over and got it for me."

I: "That was nice that you could get a job right away."

E: "Oh, I can always get a job. I worked in the -- company about a year and then I go to the tailor shop. Then I worked in a bicycle shop three days. I quit school when I was in seventh grade. I would like to go to night school, but if I go to night school I go to sleep because I have to work so hard. I have to move heavy trucks all day and I am tired at night. If I had an easy job then I could go to night school; then I would feel good when I quit work. I am so tired at night that when I have to stand on the street car my legs hurt. Sometimes I get a chance to sit down. Then I am so tired that I go to sleep. Sometimes I ride to the end of the line and then I have to come back again. Sometimes I go to sleep on the way back. When I get home at night I have to take a bath and wash my face with cold water or I will go to sleep as soon as I sit down. I guess I should go to bed earlier. I need about eight or nine hours sleep. I don't go to bed sometimes till eleven o'clock. Then I don't get enough sleep."

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Operating Branch-M.

7-6338-9K9-3A7E.

"Sometimes I feel very bad. I get headaches. Then I have to take a physic, but then when I do that I can't work very good. I feel so weak."

I: "That's too bad."

E: "I have so much work to do. I go upstairs and get stuff from the storeroom and then I have to bring a load from the storeroom down to the department."

"They put too many things on these trucks and sometimes the load tips over on the bridge. When I get a big load I have to watch my feet. One time I almost got my foot caught under some iron when the load tipped over. I have to wear safety shoes, but I don't like them. I have to wear shoes a half size larger when I wear safety shoes and then my feet get sore. I haven't got any safety shoes now, but I guess I will have to get some."

I: "Safety shoes keep your feet from getting hurt."

E: "When gang five was here, I had to work hard for them. Now they are in another building and they send all of their material here by truck."

I: "Well, that's one good thing. You don't have to work for them now."

E: "Oh, I have to work just as hard anyway. I have to go upstairs and then downstairs a good many times. Sometimes the men in the other gangs holler at me. I have to handle rejections all over the department. At first I only had to handle the rejections upstairs but now I have to handle them upstairs and downstairs too. I don't get enough money. Sometimes I only get one dollar raise. Other men in the department can wear good clothes and they get more raises than I do. Those fellows don't do any work either. I have to work so hard my overalls get torn all the time. These men that get good raises, they don't do anything to spoil their clothes."

I: "If you tear overalls very often, that costs quite a bit of money."

E: "Oh, I wear khaki pants now. They don't get torn so much."

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7-6338-9K9-3A7E.

I have to change clothes before I go home at night. I wear a grey suit to work. I have oxfords. I have to wash myself good before I go home. I had one locker before, but two or three men used to steal my soap. I have two lockers now and I keep them locked all the time."

I: "I guess they won't bother your soap now that you keep it locked up."

E: "That's all right now. Sometimes I keep a lot of tobacco in my locker. I sell it to the men so that I can make a few pennies. Sometimes I don't even make enough for spending money. Sometimes I only get enough for car fare."

I: "Well, that helps you out a little bit anyway."

E: "There is two Irishmen that worked in that other room. They make more money than I do and then they sell milk. One of the Irishmen's bosses got a transfer and then they gave the Irishman the boss's job. He makes five dollars a week more than I do, and then he sells milk. I guess he makes about thirty-eight dollars a week altogether. The other Irishman is too lazy to work. He had a lazy helper and I had a good one. Pretty soon they took the good helper away from me and gave him to that lazy Irishman. This helper I have is no good. He bumps into loads and spoils things sometimes. I have to do most of the work myself because if he has a big load sometimes he tips it over."

I: "That's too bad."

E: "I am the best trucker they got in the shop. I teach all the new men, but I don't get anything for doing that. I have been here long enough to be a trucker boss, but they won't give it to me. They have got it fixed so that you have got to be Gang Boss, then Section Head, then you get to be trucker boss. After that you get to be Assistant Foreman and then Foreman. They want you to do too much studying to get a boss's job. I am too tired at night to study. I am too tired to do anything but trucker work." . . .

"I am a fast walker. I take ten mile hikes."

I: "Gee, that's a long way to walk."

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E: "That's not hard for me. Sometimes I go with the men in our church. We go for hikes every year - about three or four miles. Last year we went along the Chicago River. Sometimes I go for ten mile hikes three or four times a year."

I: "How long does it take you to go ten miles?"

E: "I can walk ten miles in about three hours."

I: "That's making pretty good time isn't it?"

E: "Sometimes I have to walk so fast when I pull the trucks that I run over people's feet. I get bawled out every time I run over somebody's feet so now I go a little bit slower, but if I don't see somebody's feet in the way I just run over them, that's all. They want me to wear safety shoes all the time, but I don't buy any now. They give me corns. I wear size nine shoes, but I have to wear nine and one-half safety shoes. That's what makes my feet sore. One time a pan that I was carrying dropped right down on my toe, but I didn't get hurt because I had safety shoes on."

I: "It is a lucky thing that you had those shoes then."

E: "I guess I will have to get some more. I have three pair of shoes that I wear to work now. I got two pair for Sunday and two pair of house slippers."

I: "You surely have plenty of shoes."

E: "I got one blue suit for every day and I got one grey suit for every day. Then I got one grey suit for Sunday and two blue suits for Sunday."

I: "You have got plenty of clothes, haven't you?"

E: "I got nice clothes." . . . "I have to work very hard because I have to save money. I am paying on five shares of stock and then I got Christmas savings club. Last year I saved two hundred dollars. I wanted to save four hundred, but I couldn't do it. I guess I will have to stay away from that drug-store if I want to save money. I have worked ten years and I got three thousand dollars saved."

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I: "Do you ever go to picture shows and dances?"

E: "No, I don't go out with the girls. I haven't got an automobile either. The only place I spend money is in the drug-store. If I would stay away from there I would be all right." . . . "I have to get up at six o'clock in the morning. Sometimes I come late to work. If I miss the street car I come late. Sometimes I get a late street car; then I get to the outside gate of the Plant when the whistle blows. I feel better when I come real early. Then I don't have to worry. One time the Gang Boss told me that they got his name and mine on the list for being late, but I am not late very much. I only come late once or twice in three or four months. Other men in the department come late all the time. Married men come late lots of times because they stay in bed too long. . . .

"I took a job collecting money in the church. I am a good fellow; I don't steal their money. The man they had doing this job before took a lot of money. I go to the Moody church. One time somebody stole my overcoat. Another time somebody stole a lot of women's fur coats. They broke the locks on the lockers and then they ran away. The minister was a good fellow. He took up a collection so that they could buy the women new coats. Then he had somebody watch for the fellow that stole the coats, but they couldn't find him. They have three and sometimes four ministers at that church. One minister has one part of the service. Another minister baptizes all the babies. Then they have one minister that preaches the sermon. They got a hundred thousand dollar organ there."

I: "I bet that makes good music."

E: "They want everybody in the church to buy chairs. They charge them five dollars and then you can put the name of somebody that died on the back of them. The minister said that he wants to get everybody in the church so that they have a chair."

I: "I think that's a pretty good idea."

E: "I like to sing loud. Sometimes when I sing I hold the last note as long as I can; then everybody looks at me."

I: "Did you ever sing in the choir?"

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E: "No, I am a loud singer, but I didn't sing in the choir. My sister sings in the choir. Sometimes my throat gets dry when I sing loud and then I cough and spit up blood. One time this was so bad that I had to go to the drug-store and get some pink pills. I don't know what they were, but I got all right pretty soon.

"I get hot very easy. I put on my winter underwear last Sunday. When I was in church last Sunday I got hot and took my coat off. My sister came over and told me to put it on, but I wouldn't do it. I sweat even in the cold weather when I have to work so hard. When I sweat a lot then I cough up yellow phlegm. If I get a cold then I cough up blood.

"I am bothered a lot with gas. My mother and I have a lot of trouble with gas. One time gas came out of my throat for five minutes. The boss told me to go to the hospital, but I didn't want to."

I: "What do you suppose makes that gas."

E: "I don't know, but I guess I just have it. Sometimes I get gas when I chew gum, and sometimes when I drink water. City water is not so clean as the water in the shop. That sewer over there backs up every time it rains and then it floods the whole floor."

I: "That's too bad."

E: "They put too much stuff on these trucks that I have to pull and sometimes when they are too heavy I slip and fall on the cement floor. I always get up quick and then I give the truck a big pull and I make it go. I get stuck sometimes on this wooden floor. Sometimes the blocks aren't even, and when I get stuck it is twice as hard to make the truck go." . . .

"One time when I went home, the street car line was flooded so that the car couldn't go very far. I got out and started to walk home. When I got to the railroad tracks there was so much water under the viaduct that I had to climb over the top. I had to walk four miles to get home, but it didn't take me very long. Some of the other men I know didn't get home until eight or nine o'clock. They stood around and waited for somebody to empty out the water so the cars could run."

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I: "You had a pretty long walk after working so hard all day."

E: "Oh, I can walk easy. I learned to walk from a big man that lived near us. He lives down in Joliet now. He could walk a block in a half minute. I can do that too. I can walk three blocks in two minutes. I can't do that when I wear an overcoat. That slows me down. I can run pretty fast too, but when I have to run to work with an overcoat then I come late. One time I took the Cicero car and it stopped at Twelfth Street. I had to walk the rest of the way to work. I came late that day.

"I have to get up early every morning and make my own breakfast. Sometimes I forget to wind the clock. One time I wound the clock and everything, but it didn't go off. Then I had to buy another clock. I have to get my father up every morning. I have a lot of trouble with cold feet. I sleep with my father and he keeps my feet warm. Sometimes he can't get them warm and I have to put them in hot water. I have trouble with sweaty feet. I have to wash them all the time, but sometimes I don't do it. . . .

"All of my family got cars but me. I only got a bicycle. My brothers and my father both got good jobs. I got the worst one of all of them, and I am the oldest fellow. . . .

"The men in this department tell me that if I don't go out with girls I will get a lot of boils. My mother tells me that she don't want me to go out with them. She told me that I must try to save a lot of money. If I do that, I guess I will have to stay away from the drug-store. I guess I could save money if I did that."

I: "What do you do in that drug-store?"

E: "Oh, I go in there to cash my check and then I spend a lot of money."

I: "What do you spend it for?"

E: "Oh, I buy ice cream and then I buy candy for my mother. If I could save enough money, maybe I could have an automobile some day. One summer the men in our department had a picnic at one of the groves. The fellows got me in an automobile and made me drink a quart of whiskey. When I got home, my mother told me never to go in a machine with those

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men again. The last time we went out there I ran away from them and I came home on the street car. I only had to drink a couple of drinks then. They should send the police out to those groves and put all of those fellows in jail. Everybody that comes to those picnics has wine and whiskey and they should search all of those cars before they come into the groves. If they have whiskey, they should put them in jail. I like to go to church picnics. All of my family goes to them. I got nine brothers and sisters. I am the only one that's got a hard job. I work on a heavy job here and then I work at home, and I work in the church too. My father and two brothers are painters. One of my brothers is a machinist. He runs a big machine and makes good money. The neighbors help my father out when he hasn't got any work to do. They give him a job painting for them. Whenever my father don't go to work my mother makes him clean up the house. He has to wash the floors and wash all the windows. I have to do that too sometimes when I stay home. My sister is eighteen and she don't go to work half the time. Sometimes she sleeps till noon. Sometimes she don't get up when I call her in the morning. That makes me come late to work. She makes my brother late too. He wants to take her to work, but she don't get up in time and then he goes late to work because he waits for her. Sometimes when I get up I think I have got lots of time to come to work, but I come late anyway. Every time I ride on the Cicero car they go so slow that I come late. One time it ran into the barn and I had to wait for another car."

There is more talk about street cars.

E: "They need a new floor in our department. They have to fix it all the time, and every time they do, it gets bumpy. You can't pull the truck when the floor is bumpy like that. The shipping room had a good floor and then they put in a new one. The boss over there gets more money than me. He don't do any work and I have to hustle all day. . . .

"I don't like that pipe over there. I have to lean over to get pans out. Sometimes I get the stomach ache from leaning over that pipe."

Story about trouble with his stomach and the clothes he has destroyed.

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7-6338-9K9-3A7E.

E: "There was a man in the tailor shop. He got more money than me, and all he did was to fool around with the girls. Sometimes he tried to put a belt on their sewing machines, but the girls always had to call me over because he didn't try to get the belt on very fast. I tended to business when I went over there and I could put the belt on right away. I was the best belt man they had.

"One time I told the girls that I had a birthday, and they all brought me nice things. I got a silk shirt, nice socks and neckties and everything. Then I had to get up on a machine and give a speech. I was going to meet my mother that night. She was going to buy me a present, but when she saw how many things the girls gave me, she didn't get me anything.

"Sometimes I am slow to catch on to a job. Other times I catch on quick. I catch on to the trucker's job and the belt job right away, but when I get other jobs, I don't catch on so much. I catch on to this job right away. I have to do more work than anybody else.

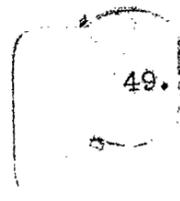
"I had trouble when I first came here. The boss bawled me out for talking to some girls. I stay away from them now. My mother don't want me to have anything to do with them. She says I have to save my money."

I: "How long do you think she wants you to save money?"

E: "I don't know. I guess until I can retire. I have trouble lots of times because the men in the department try to make me go out with girls. Sometimes they get girls to come over and ask me to go out, but I don't go with them. I guess some day I will get an auto and then I will go out with the girls anyway." . . .

I: "Well, it is almost noon. I guess I had better be getting back upstairs."

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December 10, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

9-8143-OK5-2C5A.

242,121,21C

SPECIAL INTERVIEW

Went to Department ---- to interview Mr. X, the last man on my list. The Section Chief introduced me to him and after we talked for a few minutes I discovered that he had been interviewed several months ago.

Section Chief: "Now that you have interviewed all the boys in this department, when are you going to tackle the supervisors? If you interviewed me today I would have some story to tell you."

Gang Chief, sitting about four feet away from us: "Say, Mr. -----, when you come down to interview me bring about twenty-five notebooks and seven or eight assistants because I am going to have some story to tell you."

Interviewer to Section Chief: "What is the matter? Don't you feel good today?"

The Gang Chief got up and walked away.

Section Chief: "I suppose you noticed the expression on my face when you came up to me. I am not sick but I look that way because my Department Chief gets my goat. Last week was raise time and I didn't get a ---- cent. I went up and talked to the Department Chief about it and from the way he talked to me I must be rotten. He sure gave me an earful. According to him, I didn't get a raise this time because I was no good and he even had guts enough to tell me that I would not receive a raise next year. How the ---- does he know how things are going to be a year from today? He don't know what the efficiency of my section is going to be next year. If I can increase the efficiency of my people there is no reason why I shouldn't get a raise.

"You know his brother worked for me before I was transferred to this department and he used to come down to see his brother quite often. In this way we got pretty well acquainted. When he was talking to me he said, 'Don't think for a minute that just because I know you that I am going to show you any partiality or hold you up.' I said, 'For ---- sake! I wouldn't want you

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to help me along. If I can't get by on my merits I don't want any help from anybody.' (At this point an operator came up to him to show him a piece of defective apparatus. While he was talking to the operator I made up my mind to try and change the subject. I noticed that the operator had a cauliflower ear and when he walked away I asked the Section Chief if this man was a wrestler.)

Section Chief: "Yes. He is a wrestler and a pretty good one at that. What made you think he was a wrestler; because he was so well built?"

I: "That's one of the reasons but whenever I see a fellow with a cauliflower ear I know that he is either a wrestler or a boxer and that fellow seemed too clumsy to make a good boxer."

Section Chief: "You don't miss anything, do you?" (Smiled.)

"Did you notice that piece of apparatus he showed me? Well, it is causing us a ---- of a lot of trouble right now. No matter how tight the screws are when they leave here, they are loose when they get to the Inspection Department. That apparatus is put in an oven after we have it assembled and it stays there several hours to dry out. The heat might have something to do with them screws loosening up. I have made a number of tests to try to find out what is causing that. I am making another test today. As soon as that apparatus comes out of the oven I am going to try the screws; then every few hours after that for the rest of the day and then I will try them again tomorrow morning. If they are tight after all them tests I will know the oven has nothing to do with it. I am sure up a tree on that job and it is up to me to find out what is wrong."

I: "I thought you put them cases up to the Complaint Department."

Section Chief: "I never do that unless I can't find out the trouble myself. If I put that case up to the Complaint Department and it turned out to be some simple little thing that was causing that trouble I would never hear the end of it. Last week the Foreman was in here with the General Foreman on one complaint I put in and right in front of the big boss he said to

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me, '-----'. You will have -----.'

"That fellow thinks that the supervisor is supposed to know everything. When I came to this department he expected me to know all about this work and it was about the first time I had ever seen this kind of apparatus. This work was all new to me and if I asked the Department Chief a question on the work he would say, 'You are supposed to be a smart guy. It is up to you to run the section. You have had experience as a supervisor in another department so you should be able to handle this job.'

"He even went so far as to tell the Assistant Foreman to keep out of this room. I think they are just trying to give me a -----.

"The percentage in my section averaged 45% since the first of the year and the best section in the department is only running 50% and I bet I would have run that high only they took some of my best operators and made Gang Bosses out of them and it was up to me to break in new help.

"One of my girls left and they hired a new girl for me. She has been here several months and she cannot raise her efficiency above 25%. I wanted to let her go but the boss wouldn't stand for it. Just on account of him I have to put six girls on that job when five good girls would be able to handle it. These girls are on assembling and that is what is knocking down my percentage. As far as the adjustment goes, all the boys are running above the bogey.

"What are you going to do when the boss don't cooperate with you? As long as that girl has been given a trial for several months and could not bring up her efficiency he should let me transfer her to other work or let her out.

"He is always telling me what a great Section Chief Y is and he always holds him up as a shining example. Them two fellows are just like that"-(to punctuate his remark he crossed the index finger and second finger of his hand.) "I was talking to Y a short time ago and from the way he talked the boss must ride him the same as he rides me. He told Y that I was a good supervisor

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and if Y wanted a few points on supervision to come out here and watch me handle my people.

"Do you happen to know Z who has a section in Building ----?"

I: "Yes. I have spoken to him several times."

Section Chief: "Well, the boss gave him a four cent raise and the other three Section Chiefs got nothing. He is not a d--- bit better than the rest of us and I don't see how he rates a four cent raise. What they should have done was give each one of us one cent and then everyone would be satisfied. If I am not worth more money than I am getting, why the ---- don't they fire me?"

"I sure had it out with the old man. He said he was looking around trying to find another job for me. From the way he talks he is trying to get me transferred up with you fellows or over to the Employment Department. When he told me that I said, 'For ----, hurry up. I can't get out of here any too fast.' If I am so rotten why the ---- is he trying to transfer me to a better job?"

"One day he was out here with the Assistant Foreman and we were all talking about different ways we got in wrong with some of the jobs and I said, in a kidding way, 'Yes. We all step ---- ---- ---- once in a while.' He threw that up to me when I was talking to him. He said the reason I had made that remark was because I did not take enough interest in the work and thought it was all right to get a job in the hole once in a while."

"It is ---- when they pick on you all the time and I think I know the reason for it. Just before I was transferred to this department I had a little trouble and I went right over everybody's head and I went to see the Superintendent. Mr. ----- the Department chief told me not to go up there because if I did I would be in wrong as long as I worked for the Company. After it was all over I realized that I had made a mistake, because the Assistant Superintendent was real sore about it and I come under him at the present time. I suppose he passed the word down the line to have the Foreman ride ---- out of me."

(At this point we were interrupted by an output man who told the Section Chief the Foreman wanted to see him at his desk in Building ----.)

RS

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SPECIAL

October 10, 1929.
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7-6337-2KO-8A5B.

I: "I guess we may as well go to the restaurant building. It is warmer in there and we can be quiet."

E: "I will take this apron off before we go."

I: "I suppose you have heard all about this interviewing program."

E: "No, I haven't heard much."

I: "The Company is trying to improve conditions in the shop and they think that they can do a lot of good if they get everybody's ideas about conditions in the Plant."

E: "I don't know whether they will be able to better conditions very much from our interviews. It seems to me that they are doing a whole lot without them. I think that raising the roof of our building is about the best thing they ever did. I wonder what they are going to do with our vulcanizers. They are set in the concrete and it would be very hard for them to be moved."

I: "I don't believe they are going to try to move them."

E: "I should think it would cost more than it is worth. There is a lot more light in our section since they put the new windows in. Last winter it was so dark that it was just as though we were working nights."

"This is the first time I have been in this lunch room. It is real nice here. Do they keep this place open for the night men?"

I: "I believe they keep it open until after twelve o'clock."

E: "I brought my lunch three times since I have been working here, but I did not like eating sandwiches. I usually run about three blocks for my lunch. If I run over there I get plenty of time to eat."

I: "Well, the exercise doesn't do you any harm."

E: "I need exercise, especially with my job. It isn't the amount of work a man does, but the way he does it that counts. Some men can do a job and they get more exercise than others just because

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they make a lot of foolish moves. I have my boxes arranged around the machine so that I don't have to do anything, but my hands do the work. The only thing I do on my job is to put the shells over a machine to see that they are the right size. I was off last week, and the man they had on the job didn't care how he did the work. I have had a hard time since then because I have to go over all of the work that he did. He could have done a good job if he wanted to, but he didn't seem to care whether he did the work right or not."

I: "Well, I don't suppose the boss gave him much credit for doing that kind of work."

E: "The boss didn't seem to notice that he wasn't doing the job right. The men that had to handle the parts after he got through with them were the ones that had to suffer. That kind of work could be avoided if the boss had a little better system for watching our work. It isn't good for the Company to have a man doing a bad job."

I: "Work that is rejected costs the Company just about as much as the good parts do."

E: "I notice a lot of things that would save the Company money in our department. I work on the same part two times and so I get a chance to see a good many defects in the material we are working with. The men that are mixing the rubber are not always careful to see that small pieces of wood are not ground up with the rest of the dust. These wood spots show up when I am doing my work. Defective machines also cause a great many rejections. I had a cracked die on my machine and it was two months before I could get it fixed. About half of the work that I was turning out during that time was rejected. I believe they should have some system so that we could keep our machines in perfect condition. I think a lot of this trouble has been due to the condition of our building. It was so dark and dusty in there that I don't believe anybody was anxious to do good work. I look for things to be a lot better when we have more sunshine."

I: "The sun certainly does cheer a man up."

E: "I'll say it does. After I left school I was a life guard for a long time. I felt better than I ever have since. I never had a grouch on while I worked on that job. I have some trouble

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with my nose since I have been in this department. I had an operation and the membranes are very tender. The dust in this department doesn't seem to do it any good."

I: "I imagine that you would notice the dust if your nose was sore."

E: "When I came back from my operation my nose was quite sore. I think I went to work too soon. My nose still bleeds very easily. I had one of the best specialists in the city operate on my nose. I was broke at the time I had it done and I went to the County Hospital. I broke my nose playing basketball in the first place and I didn't have it set properly. I have had trouble with it since that time and at last it got so bad that I couldn't breathe and I had to have an operation.

"I made the biggest mistake of my life when I left school. I was kind of mixed up with my studies at the time. I was very much interested in mechanical drawing and I put all of my time on that subject and let the rest of them slide. As I look back now, it would have been best for me to finish school and I am sorry I didn't do it.

"I have been writing songs lately. My mind isn't on the work I am doing down here. Music seems to be the only thing I want to do right now. It takes a lot of time to be able to make any money with music, but I just like to write songs for my own pleasure.

"This is a fine job for me. It is the only one I have had that I did not have to think about. I guess every job gets to be routine work after you have been on it a while. Mine is especially easy because all I have to do is to put the shell on the machine and take it off again."

I: "If you like to think of music it is fine to have this kind of a job."

E: "I guess that is the only reason I stay at this work. Of course, I have to get my work out, but when I am working along thinking of something else I don't notice the time. Sometimes my mind is miles away. I am not much for talking when I am on the job. I do all of my talking at home. I am glad that I have always had a nice home. When my folks died my brother and I managed to keep the place going.

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We have to do quite a bit of house work, but that isn't very bad. I believe that if a fellow has a nice home he can do his work better because he gets a real chance to rest. That officer out there doesn't have very much to do."

I: "If you had his job you would be able to write twice as many songs as you do now."

E: "It is hard to get your songs published. One of the composers in the city seemed to be interested in my work, but it takes money anyway. It costs fifty-nine dollars to have professional copies printed for a song. I have my sister to support and I don't get very much money to throw away this way."

"I am not telling you very much about the Western Electric."

I: "Well, I write down everything you tell me anyway. The Company wants to get your ideas and not mine, and if I go to sorting out the things you say I may leave out some things that are very important."

E: "You should know how to write shorthand."

I: "I am learning Speed Writing."

E: "I saw one of those books and that system seems to be very simple."

I: "The system isn't hard but it takes a lot of practice."

E: "I know. Any kind of shorthand takes practice."

"I get a kick out of this Communist party. They have some queer fellows in that gang."

I: "I have read some of their literature and I can't figure out what those fellows really want."

E: "Well, they don't know either. It seems as though they want one thing and when they get it they are after a little bit more. This Plant has a good system. It couldn't be improved by any of the Communist's ideas. If they would take hold of a plant like

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the Western Electric they would run it into the ground in no time and then another factory would start up with the same system that the Western has now and take all of their business away from them.

"The building we were working in was especially bad for our kind of work, but the Company saw that and changed it just as soon as they could. I do not mind the noise at all. That is music to my ears, but the dust and the heat are very bad. Eight hours is the standard day isn't it?"

I: "It is the standard day as far as the pay is concerned. You are paid straight time for eight hours and overtime for the three-quarters."

E: "I have wondered about that. I know we have to work eight and three-quarters hours every day and I can't understand why they pay overtime for the three-quarters of an hour."

I: "Well, I don't know why they do it either."

E: "Montgomery and Ward is a terrible place to work. They don't have the system that the Western does. I worked at the radio department as an inspector. A friend of one of the big bosses got a job in our department. He was supposed to put in a system and all he did was to cook up every system that we had going. He got his job through a drag. He was just making a big bluff. He did more damage there than he did good. They don't have much of that kind of stuff here.

"Most of my friends laugh at me for working at this kind of a job. I could get a lot better work, but I couldn't think about my music on these other jobs. I learned quite a bit about radios from a friend of mine. I suppose I could get pretty good money if I wanted to go into that line.

"I should think it would be very interesting to talk to the foreigners in this Plant."

I: "Well, I have talked to a good many of them."

E: "I suppose you have. I bet you get a kick out of the way they try to express themselves."

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I: "Sometimes they do say funny things, but I don't laugh at them because I would not like to be over in Italy and have the people laugh at me because I could not talk Italian."

E: "I don't suppose I should laugh at them either, but they do go through a lot of motions and have an awful time trying to express themselves."

"There is one thing that I miss around this Plant and that is a swimming pool. I understand that the men from the Plant can use the Morton High School tank."

I: "I guess that's what a good many of the fellows from here do."

E: "I haven't done very much swimming in tanks. I have done all of my swimming outside. I go to Channel Lake every Sunday during the summer. I made use of my life guard experience up there twice. One fellow was trying to swim out to the raft. I was quite near him and he looked funny when he was going down. It just seemed that he got tired swimming and he turned his face up in the air and down he went. I got over to him right away and pulled him out. The first thing I asked him was what he thought about when he was going down. He told me that he wondered whether he had paid up his insurance policies and then he thought about the times he didn't go to church."

"I have always had hard jobs. I worked in a coal mine when I was thirteen years old. I used to get a good workout there. They made us kids do almost as much work as the men did. I have tried office work also, but I don't like it at all. I am interested in machinery. I like to work around machines and figure out improvements. I don't believe that a man has to have a college education to think of improvements in anything. A good idea is liable to come to the fellow who thinks about those things the longest."

"As far as the bosses go in this department, they are about as good as they could be. I have a friend that is very good at drawing. He is about the same kind of a fellow I am. He can do things pretty well for an amateur, but he hasn't got get-up enough in him to make something out of himself. I like to know a little bit about everything. I have a friend who is a chemist and I have

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another that is an artist. I find those two fellows very interesting. I can learn a lot of things from talking to either one of them. I know a man that has invented a new ignition lock for automobiles. One of the large lock companies infringed on his patents and he has four suits against them. He just won the third one about two weeks ago. He is a dandy fellow. He is quiet and you could be with him for a whole day and you would never know that he ever thought of anything unusual. I run around with a lot of smart men, but I am the dumbest one of the bunch. I wonder that they don't tell me to go home and learn something, but they seem to be willing to put up with me and I am glad to have them for friends.

"Well, I suppose you are tired of listening to me and would like to get started over to the other side."

I: "Well, before I get started I want to get your name and clock number."

E: "Oh, you want me to sign on the dotted line."

I: "Well, you can call it that if you like. We don't use your name on the interview though."

E: "Just what do you do with these interviews?"

I: "I will tell you. We have them typewritten on a plain sheet of paper. Your name and clock number are only used to keep track of those who have been interviewed. There is no mark on the interview to show who says it. We use the interviews in training the supervisors. Excerpts from several interviews are read to a group of the supervisors at one of the conference rooms. This gives them an opportunity to see how some of their mistakes effect the operators. We also have a group of analyzers who look over these interviews and check the complaints on working conditions. If they receive a great many complaints about a certain condition, I believe they are going to see what can be done to remedy this."

E: "Well, this is the logical way to make a study of this kind."

I: "It seems to me that they should have a pretty good idea of shop conditions when they get through."

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E: "Well, I don't hear many men complain in this department. The heat and the dust are the only things that I hear the fellows talk about."

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The night Foreman took me over to this employee and said in a joking way, "Well, what have you been doing now?"

E: "Nothing that I know of."

F: "Well, go along with this man. He wants to have a little talk with you."

As we walked along to where I was going to interview the man, we just talked about things in general. He told me a story about a plumber friend that was working here at the Western. Then I explained the program.

E: "Well, I don't know as I have a lot to say. I have not been here such a long time. It will soon be a year."

I: "You'll get a vacation then?"

E: "Yes. Christmas week. I'll shoot ducks and rabbits I guess. Here the other day I had a talk with the Foreman, that is the day Foreman, and I asked him how I was getting along. He said that he had no complaints from my Foreman about any of the men. I know one thing. I have a lot of trouble with the Gang Bosses on nights. Again in a half-hour's time, they come around, and they are just the same as they were before. Here's the way the trouble starts. If I take them a job, and they don't happen to like it or I am a little late in getting there with it, it makes them pretty sore. I have to get the jobs out. If I don't, I get h--- the next day. I have to get the work out, and those Gang Bosses know it. I know I am getting along pretty good. I have lots of friends in the department. I work around the men in all the gangs, and they all have a good word for me, and I know a lot that this night Foreman in here don't think I know. These fellows tell me different things.....

"Say, what's on your mind? What is your name again, Sir?"

I: "-----. I want to know what's on your mind."

E: (Just laughed.)

I: "How long have you worked nights?"

E: "Since May thirteen."

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I: "That is an unlucky day for some people."

E: "Well, maybe it's an unlucky day for me, but I don't know it yet. You know, I would like to go East. I have travelled around quite a bit in my time, and I would like to go to Point Breeze, Maryland. I like that country."

I: "I used to live in the East myself, and I don't believe that I would care to go East, as most of my relatives and folks live here in this country."

E: "Well, my folks live in this country too, but not in Chicago. I came from Beardstown, Illinois."

Personal conversation about the flood. This employee had been there during the flood.

E: "You know, that is a nice job you have."

I: "Yes. It is. What is there about your job that you don't like?"

E: (Laughed heartily and said:) "Well, that's the funniest question you asked me yet. There is really nothing about the job that I don't like. You know, before I came here I worked around a lot of different places. I worked as a railroad man, travelled around and did odd jobs, and worked at the machinist's trade. It is nothing at all for me to operate any of these machines in here, and lots of them in the other departments."

I: "You don't follow that trade now?"

E: "No. I don't, for if a man wants a job now as a machinist, he has to be a darned good one. I have a union card, but I don't know. I never did follow that trade much.

"One thing I would like to see them improve is the locker situation. It is pretty crowded."

I: "Well, I think the Company is doing all they can to improve that situation."

E: "What is your name again?"

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I: "-----."

E: "It's nice and quiet in here. You know, some times when I have to talk to the fellows on the job, there is so much noise and I have to talk so loud that my throat gets all in. I passed a lot of tests, and most all of them were 98%. The only time my eyes ever bothered me was when I took the test here. I missed one letter. Then he gave me the same letter in a larger size, and I got it."

I: "Do your eyes bother you?"

E: "No. They never have."

I: "Well, Mr. -----, I wonder if there is anything more that you would like for the management to know?"

E: "No. I don't believe so."

I closed my book and bid the man good night. As he got up to leave, he said:

E: "Say, now, Mr. (What is your name again?)"

I: (Repeated his name again.)

E: "I want you to tell me exactly why you had me come up here. I know you haven't told me why you have had me come here. I have worked here for a year, and there's never been anybody come to talk to me like this before."

I explained to the man that we had interviewed everybody in the department, and even showed him the list of names that had been crossed off.

E: "Well, I just can't believe that's your real purpose, but I'm going to tell you something anyway. You know, here about eight days ago, I had an argument with that night Foreman in there. Now I don't report to him. I don't work under him at all, but more or less he has charge of me. I am ----- (output clerk.)"

I: "Well, you don't need to be afraid to tell me anything."

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I explained again the confidential part of the program, and tried to make the employee know that I was on the square.

E: "You know that when you came down there for me, I thought you were a man from the Personnel that had come down here to try to get the low down on me, but I believe pretty well now that you are on the square. This argument all started one night about seven o'clock. This night Foreman came along and gave me a number of jobs to hand to a certain Gang Boss. They were jobs that would have to be out that night. Well, I took them down and gave them to the Gang Boss in the section that they belonged in. He got real sore about it, and said, 'This is a h--- of a time to be bringing me those jobs. Don't you know that I have the men all working already?' I said to the Gang Boss, 'Well, I can't help it. The jobs were just handed to me, and they have to be gotten out.' After I went away, the Gang Boss went up to the night Foreman and told him about it. He said that I had just come down with the jobs. The time the Gang Boss gave me until the time that I delivered the jobs was not more than a half-hour afterwards. This night Foreman came over to me and started to bawl me out and said, 'What do you mean, giving this man jobs at this time of the night?' What he was trying to do was to cover up his own self, because he had slipped and did not give me those jobs at the beginning of the evening. He wanted me to take it and say nothing. That is the kind of a fellow he is. If I was a Pollock, I would get along with him all right. You can't say anything back to him. You have to take everything he says. He has these fellows in here all scared to death of him, but I'm not scared of him. He'll have to sit up on the fifth or sixth floor in a private office before I will be afraid of him. I don't report to him anyway. Well, since that time he has not spoken a word to me until tonight when you came down to our department to get me. You know, I work around among all the men, and in this past week they have told me different things that this night Foreman has said about me. It doesn't worry me though, because I tell you, Mr. (What is your name again?)"

I: "-----."

E: "I do my work here, and I get along well with all the men and Mr. ----, the day Foreman. He likes me and knows that I do my work, so why should I worry about this d--- Pollock here at night?"

I: "Well, I hope you will get along all right."

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E: "Yes. Well, I just tell you I was looking for a job when I came here. So if anything happens, you know I can be doing the same thing again."

I: "Well, I don't want you to feel that I came to the department with the intentions of interviewing you. I came with a list of men, and not one or two. Your name was picked from the list, and he gave me you."

E: "Well, I believe you are on the square."

After I left this man, we came out of the conference room where I had been interviewing him. I shook hands with the man. He stood by the door and watched me until I came all the way up the aisle to my desk. He seemed to leave me in doubt as to whether I had won his confidence or not.

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Operating Branch-M-W.

Supplement to Xl-3170.

E: "Well, Mr. -----, I finally found you at your desk. You know, I have been up here several nights before looking for you, and I never could find you here."

I: "Sit down, Mr. -----."

E: "All right. I guess I will. You know, I got through with my work pretty early tonight. Most generally at this time I am going like a race horse. I was up here the other night, and some ladies here told me that you were working. I came back, and I stood by the clock there about ten o'clock, but I didn't see anything of you."

I: "No. We go home at 9:45, so you just missed me."

E: "Well, you know, Mr. -----, when you were interviewing me before, I didn't think you were on the square; but since that I have been talking to a lot of the fellows down in the department, and they have convinced me that I needn't worry about anything I said. I know that night you tried plenty hard to make me think it was confidential, but I just couldn't see it."

I: "Well, I'm glad that you believe it now. How are you getting along?"

E: "Oh, I'm not getting along so bad, but I'll tell you one thing. If you are a Pollock, you get along a whole lot better. Since that night you were down there, he has talked to me; but he is not very sociable yet. I have asked Mr. ----- (Day Foreman) if he will put me on days, and he said, yes. He would, but he told me that right after vacation, and I'm still working nights. Mr. ----- seems to be a man of his word, and I am pretty darned sure if I go and ask him that he will put me on days right away. I am not going to worry about it, until after Christmas. I'm not really so anxious to get on days, and I know that if I had a boss that I could get along with at night, I would prefer night work. I am used to it now. This fellow really don't boss me though, but he has a lot to say about what I do. If I sit at my desk at all during the night, and I have a desk too, he is always looking at me and saying something about how soft a job I got."

I: "I have been in this department a couple of times, and I know that I never saw you."

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Operating Branch-M-N.

Supplement to XI-3170.

E: "No. You never see me sit at my desk very much. My work takes me out into the other department an awful lot. I'm out there rummaging around through the stock all the time. I know I never saw you either until he came out there that night and introduced you to me. I never sit at my desk unless it is absolutely necessary, and that is when I have my records to fill out. I go out and talk with the men if I have nothing else to do. I go around where they are working on their machines and talk to them. I find out a lot about this fellow by doing that, and I know that he is not so well liked. I have quite a few friends in there."

I: "The time passes quickly when you are with your friends, doesn't it?"

E: "Yes. I'll say it does, but I am always glad to go home in the morning at that. You know, when I sit at my desk, this fellow stares and stares at me. He does not say much to me either. I really think he is trying to make me feel as though I am not wanted around here, and maybe I'll quit; but I'm not going to do that, because I know that work on the outside right now is pretty darned scarce. At least, everybody tells me that. I have some friends that are in business now, and I know that they are just almost on the rocks."

I: "What kind of business are they in?"

E: "They are florists. You know that in the florist game if you don't get your flowers to bloom just exactly at the right time, they are a loss. It requires a great deal of work too. I would never care for that kind of business for myself, although I like flowers. I like to raise them, but I'd never want to depend on their blossoms for a living.

"You know, Mr. -----, I remember now that when you talked to me before I mentioned something about a flower that my mother had. Here a while back I was down there, and I sure wish that I had brought you back some of it. It was in bloom then. I don't know what kind of a lily it was. I heard my mother say, but I can't remember. Those people down there have a hard time of it. You know, they are in the flood district. My mother used to have this flower outdoors, but now she has it in a tub and takes it in the house. She thinks more of that flower than any other flower she has ever seen I guess. A couple of times we were flooded, and the thing almost died. Now she is prepared. You know, those people down there have a heck of

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a time. There's thousands and thousands of acres along the Mississippi River that are flooded. These same acres used to produce great crops. Here the last few years, they have not been able to farm them. I think it's all due to the fact that they are filling in this lake here so much."

I: "Yes. Every basement in Chicago is out in the lake."

E: "I'll say it is. The first time I ever came to Chicago, I got off of the Illinois Central Station, and the lake was just the other side of the tracks. Now they have acres and acres that are filled in, and building after building out there.

"You said something about you were going to do some interviewing tonight, so I think that I'll be going back to the shop now, Mr. -----, and let you do a little work."

I: "Well, don't be in any hurry at all, Mr. ----- . I think I'm going right down to your department. If you'll wait a while, I'll walk down there with you."

E: "I guess my Boss is coming up here to a conference tonight." (As we walked past the conference room, he said:) "Well, I don't see him in there, but I guess he will be in there if he is supposed to, because they get bawled out if they don't come up here. I seen one of the Gang Bosses in there."

I: "Yes. They want everybody to attend these conferences. We are even told about it if we don't attend ourselves."

E: "Well, I guess it's a good thing. Well, I'm back to the old hole now, but I haven't anything to do right away. I guess I'll go out here and talk to ----- for a while, and see what he's got to say.

"Well, I will tell you again, Mr. -----, that I sure did think you were from the Personnel when I first saw you; but now I know you are not a Personnel man and you are not down here to get any information from that night Foreman here. I just wanted to come up and tell you about it tonight."

I: "Well, that's fine, and I'm glad you did come up. Good night!"

CMG



November 21, 1929.
Operating Branch-M.

SPECIAL

I: "We are going to take a little walk."

E: "I hope that's all it is because when they called me down I thought I was going to get laid off."

I: "No. You are not going to get laid off. You are just going to get interviewed."

E: "I thought it was funny that I had never been interviewed. I have been here five years and no one has interviewed me yet. I saw ----- one day and asked him why they didn't interview me. It makes a fellow feel funny when they are interviewing men all around him and a man's been here five years like I have and they don't interview you. I have been here five years last Saturday. When I asked ----- about it he said he would try to fix it up for me so I suppose that is why you came down. He sure is a good sport. He used to be a boss over me. He was one of the fellows around here that knew how to treat people who worked under him. It was more like working with him than working under him.

"----- looks pretty hard-boiled but he is a pretty nice fellow. That guy down there in ---- that you were talking to is real tough. He thinks he is hard-boiled anyway. I found out that a good sock is what they need. The harder they are the harder they fall. ----- is all right but he doesn't say much. He just stands there with a chew in his mouth. Our Department Chief is a nice guy; he won't say 'boo' to you."

I: "Yes. He seems to be a pretty nice fellow.".....

"You understand, of course, that this interview is confidential. That is, no one knows who it is after it gets up to the office. The only way we can tell one interview from another is by the system of letters. Each man might know one letter but no one man knows all of the letters so he can't tell whose interview it is."

E: "I'd like to know how often we get a raise. It's every six months, isn't it? The fellows are talking and asking and some of them say every six months and some of them say once a year. It doesn't make a fellow feel right if he doesn't know when the raise period is. He just keeps working on and doesn't know when he is

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going to get a raise or laid off or when anything is going to happen. I thought I could find out from you."

I: "I don't know enough about it to be able to tell you."

E: "The way it seems to me, the good men in the Plant don't get a raise and the poor men always seem to get a raise. I asked the boss and he said he can't do anything about it. I have been here five years and I only got one small raise. There are lots of fellows that I know of that have done a lot better than that. Even now I am only making fifty cents an hour. A man who has been here five years ought to get more than that. Some guys are here two or three years and some just start in at sixty-one cents an hour. I think I ought to get as much as those fellows when I have been here five years. There is one fellow I know real well who has been here five or six months and is getting around sixty or sixty-one cents. I'm going to school evenings now though and I think that will bring me up to something."

I: "That seems to be the right thing to do."

E: "I'm studying 'matematics' and blue print reading. 'Matematics' on Tuesday and blue print reading on Thursday. I like it a great deal. It makes me feel I am doing something worth while."

I: "Blue print reading is away over my head."

E: "Well, I got a lot of it in Inspection. Up there you have to know a lot about blue print reading; most all the jobs have got something to do with it. If you don't get blue print reading and 'matematics' you will never get anywhere."

I: "Sometimes it doesn't help but it sure doesn't hurt a fellow."

E: "Yes. That's the way I feel about it. When I saw the notice on the bulletin I asked Mr. ----- how to go about joining it. He told me to go to the Restaurant Building. I enlisted the first night it opened up. I didn't have much to do at home so I thought I might as well do that and get some benefit out of it."

I: "You are not married then."

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E: "Yes. I have been married two years. I've got one nice kid; they are lots of fun. They sit on your lap and play and everything like that."

I: "That's a part of married life all right."

E: "I'll tell the world!"....."How many interviews do you take in a day?"

I: "About four or five."

E: "That must be a lot of work too. The only thing wrong with me is that I can't make enough money. When you make about twenty-eight dollars a week and have to pay forty dollars a month rent, it doesn't leave you much. My wife can't work because I can't let her work and then let the kid stay home alone. I'm not really a high spender either. The money just seems to go. It was the same when I was single. I couldn't hold on to it then either. I don't know why it is but money is a very hard thing to keep. It is hard to get and then after you get it you can't keep it. I never spend any money for booze or foolishness either. Spending money for things like that after you've worked hard for it is no good. I think every fellow ought to save up. I know I feel that I am going to get old some time and I am going to save as much as I can now. That is, I would save some if I could make enough money besides just bare expenses.

"When I was in ----- building I was making thirty-two dollars a week. I was single then and I spent nearly all I made. Now I am married and I can't make thirty-two dollars. If I was still single I suppose I would be making thirty-two dollars a week. It seems like when you get married you can't make as much as you can when you are single. I can't get transferred either. I have been transferred too many times now. That won't bring me no place. I should have stuck in one place like my dad says. He has been twenty-two years in one place. He has been in one place a long time and he is still satisfied."

I: "Does he work in here?"

E: "Yes. In ----. He started with the Company on Clinton Street;

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then they put him in ----. He has been there ever since. He was on ----- a while and now they made him a Gang Boss. He likes it more than ever now.

"How do they give raises? Do they look it up in the Personnel or do they ask your Section Chief?"

I: "I couldn't tell you much about that."

E: "In ---- department we went by the rate men. The rate man rated me up to a certain rate, the Gang Boss came around and rated me higher. What I would like to know is which one are you supposed to follow; the rate setter or the Gang Boss? It seems a funny way to do - send a man around to set the rate and then have your boss change it. Supposing you do two hundred springs according to the rate man; then the Gang Boss came around and raised you higher, what I want to know is how do we go, by the rate man's rate or the Gang Boss's rate?"

I: "I couldn't tell you anything about that. I should think it would be according to the rate setter's rate."

E: "I should think so too, but I got bawled out. The rate man set the machine about so much and then the Gang Boss came around and set it over again. The Gang Boss said, 'Step on it'. Then he sits on a box in the corner and looks at a watch and raises the rate because he told you to go fast. I don't think that is proper. When the rate setter comes around you are supposed to work the way you do all day long. Then he sets a rate on your work. The Gang Boss comes around afterwards and bawls you out and tells you to work as hard as you can and then he sets you according to that rate. The rate is too high for you to keep going like that all day long."

I: "It seems as though the Gang Boss didn't care."

E: "Well, I don't know about that. What I am trying to get at is whose rate shall we go by, the Gang Boss's or the rate setter? The Gang Boss comes around and changes the rate. I don't think that is fair. That is what I am trying to settle.

"How often are you going to interview us?"

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I: "We're not sure yet."

E: "When I was in the ----- I had a pretty good job. I didn't care about leaving it. It got slack and then they put me over in ---- at forty-seven cents. Last June they raised me three cents. I went in to see the Section Chief and asked him for a better job where I could make more money. They put me on ----- machine. I didn't stay there long though; I don't know why. Then they put me on ----- at fifty cents the same as I was always getting; then I was transferred over here and I am still getting fifty cents an hour. I might get a raise now in December, and I might not. You never can tell about raises around this place. I hope I get a good raise if I get one at all.

"Up on the ----- floor where I am working now, I have to work overtime and Sundays to make thirty-one dollars a week. Over in ----- I made thirty-two dollars all the time; I never worked overtime at all. My wife asks me lots of times when I am going to amount to something. I always have to tell her, 'Wait until I get a chance.' A fellow can't get anywhere unless he has a chance. She keeps asking me when I am going to get raised. I told her, 'I don't know anything about it and I am not running the Company.'

"She has a brother who is only nineteen years old and he knocks out thirty-five dollars a week straight salary. When he works overtime he makes as high as thirty-seven dollars. I know he really does because he brings home the check and I have seen it. I have two brothers-in-law over in -----, One is a monitor and the other is a checker. They are making real money over there; they are both young fellows but they are making more money than I do. I am only making fifty cents an hour and that is where my wife gets a chance to kick. Some ways you can't blame her because those two kid brothers of hers are making more than I am."

I: "Do they ever give you any advice?"

E: "Yes, but I never listen to them. If I don't amount to something now I will later on. If you listen to everyone you don't know what to do. Why should I quit? I've got five years' service. If I just stay here I think I can make more later on. That is the mistake lots of fellows make, I think - is to quit their jobs after

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they have lots of service and the fellows that are left generally get better jobs.".....

"They laid off quite a few over here now. I don't know why they are slacking off or what they are doing. I think a fellow is foolish to quit this Company. They give you a chance to buy stock, insurance and a lot of things like that. Have you got any shares?"

I: "No."

E: "I've got five shares."

I: "Your wife ought not kick about that."

E: "Yes, but she does anyway. If I don't save some money she kicks and if I don't bring it home she still kicks. It doesn't make much difference to me now though because I think this A. T. & T. is a d--- good thing."

I: "Well, the sun is shining anyway."

E: "Yes. That is a good thing too because it is getting pretty cold. I went to a show last night and pretty near froze. It was pretty cold this morning too walking twelve blocks to work. I am glad I don't live where I used to though. I used to live at seventy-three hundred south. I like this a lot better. I think I did a good thing by moving closer to the Plant. Do you know -----?"

I: "No."

E: "He is a good boss too. He is a fine fellow. Do they still make panel dials now?"

I: "I think so."

E: "I used to work with them before. I used to put the numbers on them. I liked that pretty well; it wasn't a bad job at all. I think I made a little more money too. I don't remember what I was making up there now. The only way you could find out now

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would be through the Personnel records upstairs. I remembered before what I was making but I forget now.".....

"What was your name again?"

I: (Gives his name.)

E: "Oh, yes. I'll remember now. I could not understand very well over there, that's why I had to ask once more."

I: "Well, I hope your wife doesn't make you give up your A. T. & T."

E: "No. There isn't much chance of that. I was going to buy it a long time ago when I started to work here but my dad said it was too high. It was only one hundred and thirty then too. If I would have bought some then I would have it all paid for by this time. My wife keeps saying, 'Why didn't you buy some before?' It sure is a lot better system than the way the people next door are doing. They buy a lot of stock on margin and then when the market went down they expected their broker to call every day. It is a lucky thing he didn't call and ask for more money because they would have lost their house and all the property if he had."

Note: The Gang Boss said of this employee, "We had to jack him up one day. He looked like he was going to sleep. Another time he suddenly jumped out of his chair and waved his arms. He stands in the bridge with a pipe in his mouth and sometimes laughs at things that are not funny at all."

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SPECIAL

I: "Have you heard about the interviewing program?"

E: "Yes. I've heard about it."

I: "You know we are going around and asking the employees how things around the Plant could be improved. The Company has got the idea that the men that work on a certain job know more about it than anyone else in the Plant.

"I suppose you have been here a year."

E: "Yes; a little over a year. Of course my job isn't very much. All I have to do is to get certain ----- to the girls on time. I have to keep the good and bad ----- separate. They generally teach a couple of men to do your job to take your place if you are sick or anything. There are two men taking my place now and there are three men who know my job a little bit.

"What way do you think a man can get any better, by school knowledge or by experience around the Plant?"

I: "How much education have you got?"

E: "I've got two years of high school."

I: "Studying certainly won't hurt you any."

E: "That's the way I feel about it. I am taking up blue print reading and a little mathematics. I like to study because I think that is the only way you can get anywhere. I go to night school over at ----- High. It is not very close to where I live but it is worth a little effort to get the things they teach you over there."

I: "How long have you been going?"

E: "Just this year. You can't go when you are under sixteen. I have just been going to night school a while."

I: "How old are you anyway?"

E: "I am only seventeen."

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I: "Well, you certainly haven't got anything to worry about."

E: "That's the way I feel about it. I've got so much time that I am bound to finish at least a couple of courses. That shows I am trying to get along. I haven't missed any courses yet. Lots of girls start but they don't keep at it. One of the girls asked the dean if they should take blue print reading and he said, 'Yes', that it would be a good idea but he didn't think they would keep at it until they learned anything. I heard they started aeroplane mechanics for some of the girls. Some started it but wouldn't go through with it. They don't learn how to fly but they learn about the construction of an aeroplane, that's about all."

I: "How did you happen to come to work here?"

E: "My sister worked here in the office at Western. She got me in. I had to come here because I wasn't making enough money on my old job. I worked for Western Union. I learned everything pretty fast. I learned how to count telegrams and how to handle things around the office and the boss gave me a chance to be a clerk. I didn't know then that you can get ahead in that kind of an office but I needed more money. My parents were in debt and I had to help them. I thought I ought to earn more money and give my parents a break."

I: "Does your father work here?"

E: "No, but I've got two brothers here. I've got another friend here and he won't go to school. He says it is foolish to go to night school. He says there are lots of fellows around here got Gang Boss jobs that never went to school at all. I think there is always something new coming up that you should know about. You can't be too old to learn."

I: "I suppose your brothers live at home with you."

E: "Yes. I've got a brother in ----- that lives at home but he doesn't help much. He doesn't bring home much money at all. He spends pretty near all his money on clothes and he thinks that is the way to get ahead. The other one goes to night school though. My father works at ----- . He tells us when he went to school he

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had to walk about ten miles. He went to ----- High in Cicero a long time ago. He says people are foolish not to go to night school when they can learn for a very few cents. It seems like they don't want to take the chance they have to learn.

"My parents did not have much money when I graduated from grammar school or I would have gone to high school. The way I feel about it I wouldn't want my father to slave just so I could go to high school and not do anything else. I wouldn't have good enough clothes to go anyway. I got two years of high school but my parents thought it would be better if I go to work and help them out of debt. I thought that would be better too. I decided I would go to night school and learn while I worked and earn money to help the folks."

I: "That is the best way to learn."

E: "Yes. I'm getting experience all the time about how to get along with people and at the same time I am learning things in school. When they try to argue with me I just smile at them and then they stop. That is the only way to do because they can always argue better.

"One time I heard a girl swear when the wire broke. That was the first time I heard a woman swear and when I got red in the face all the girls laughed at me. I never heard a woman swear before but now I know enough not to get surprised when they do.

"There is a big fight between Morton and Oak Park High about Red Cross Stamps now. They asked the night students to help them out. All the fellows should help the soldiers out.

"One guy came late and we told him he ought to give five dollars and he said, 'Oh, I haven't got that much.' He did give two dollars though and he was the second highest in the bunch. When he found out about it afterwards he sold a dollar's worth of stamps that he had bought. It is a good idea to help the soldiers out.

"I think Western has got a good idea in their thrift plan savings. Lots of fellows don't want to go to the bank and the

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Company makes it easy for them to save a little money. It's a good idea saving a little for the future. I've got five shares of A. T. & T. that I am going to pay up as soon as I can. When I get it all paid up I will be able to sell it to the Building & Loan and pay up on my mother's house. It only amounts to three or four dollars a week but in three years you've got a nice little bunch of money saved. My brother just got married and had his shares paid up. Boy, did that come in handy!"

I: "The one that works here?"

E: "No. Counting him that makes three brothers. You see we don't count him in the family now because he went and got married. When he got married he has to take care of himself.".....

"I'm crazy about sports. I have been in leagues since I was nine years old. I was captain twice. I like to play all the games. I am pretty good too because I only practiced basketball twice and they picked me out of four other fellows to be the captain. I don't go out for basketball here because I haven't got any suit. I don't go out too because I don't see much about it. I don't think they advertise it enough around here either. My father likes sports and tried to teach us boys to like them. Sometimes he goes out and plays football with us."

I: "Paderewski couldn't play football but he could sure play a piano."

E: "I'll say he could. My father used to tell us about the time Paderewski played for a big audience. He struck ten notes with his ten fingers and then he would strike another one and for two hours the audience didn't know how he did it. They found out afterwards that he struck the eleventh note with his nose."

"I like to hear talks on those great men. I heard a lecture on Edison the other day. They said that a college professor came to Edison and wanted a job and Edison gave him a job and paid him the salary that he wanted and then he told him to measure the amount of water that would go in a light bulb. About a week later Edison came around and asked the fellow if he measured the water yet and the fellow said, 'No. I haven't finished it yet.' Then

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Edison showed him how to do it with a water glass. He did the whole experiment in about half an hour.

"I've got a friend that studied up a subject until he thought he knew all about it. One night he went home and started to talk to his dad about it. His dad knew so much more about it than this fellow that this fellow said he would never open his mouth again until he was sure.

"The teacher at night school keeps telling us to save a nickel out of every dollar. Some of the fellows laugh at that and say that it is foolish to save a nickel out of every dollar. I think it is a pretty good idea because you spend a nickel for a package of gum or an ice cream cone or a drink or something. If you save a nickel out of every dollar, at the end of the year you will get fifty or one hundred dollars saved up and then you can buy your mother a present or something. My brother and I always try to save as much money as we can and then on Christmas, for a Christmas present we pay up a bill for the folks. Our older brothers and sisters say that is foolish but I think that is better than buying a chair or a davenport or a radio or something like that. If you can go to the grocery store and pay forty or fifty dollars for a bill that the folks might owe for some groceries, I think that makes them a lot more happy than to buy them a piece of furniture or something that they could get along without.

"When I worked for Western Union I used to make quite a bit on tips. I delivered messages around the hotels and lots of times I would deliver a message to some of the big movie actors. One day I delivered a message to Harold Lloyd and he gave me ten dollars and told me to keep it. A little while afterwards I delivered one to Mrs. Lloyd and she gave me a five dollar tip. Lots of fellows won't believe that when I tell them.

"When I worked down there my mother used to give me three dollars a week for lunches. Instead of spending the three dollars I lived on tips and sometimes I would only spend fifteen or twenty cents for a sandwich and a glass of milk. That way by saving all the money I could and making so much on tips, I was able to give my mother two hundred dollars as a present. She was

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sure surprised and she wouldn't believe it until I showed her my bank book. Two of my friends said I was foolish to do that but I don't think I was. I think my folks had a pretty hard time of it and I know they did a pretty good job. You see there were nine of us in the family and my dad supported the nine of us and my mother and himself on twenty dollars a week. He started as a janitor but he worked up to a good job.

"He used to do chores around the church. One time the priest said, 'Bruno, why don't you get a home of your own?' My father said he didn't have any money and he couldn't be thinking of getting a home. The priest said, 'Why don't you go around and ask your friends and see if they will help you out.' My father went around to all his friends and they loaned him two thousand dollars in cash. I think that was pretty good for a fellow that was working for twenty dollars a week as a janitor. Then the priest fixed it up so that my father was able to borrow thirty-five hundred dollars from the Parish Building & Loan Association. By that time two of my brothers were working and in two years they paid back two thousand dollars. We had renters upstairs then and they used to get drunk and make a lot of noise so my mother said she thought we better move. When they talked it over my father decided she was right so they sold the home and bought another one. My father sold that home for eight thousand, five hundred dollars. Now the fellow wants eight thousand just for one lot and the house that he remodeled and put on.

"When they bought the second house the building and loan helped them out again and he kept on working and he wasn't making much money. He was still going to school though. It took him an hour to walk to school and he learned how to talk and write English. He was a good speaker in Polish but he couldn't talk much in English. He paid off a little on this house and then he decided to buy another house. They bought a bungalow; it was near the church. They got the bungalow pretty cheap so I guess that is why he bought it. He said it was just through going to school and learning English that they made him a little boss down where he works. He knows how to write out reports and answer questions and things like that because he went to night school. If he got along that way I can too.

"Now we only owe a little bit and will pay that up soon.

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"People like to come to our house because my father always tries to show them a good time. He is a good dancer and all the neighbors like to drop in and see him dance. He likes people who enjoy themselves. He got all that just on what he learned."

I: "He ought to be satisfied."

E: "Yes. He's got a nice family and he raised them all right and he did everything he could for them. My mother helped him out though. I know lots of times my father was sick and my mother would do anything to try to help him out. I think one time she even went to work.

"He's got a way of making friendship with people. Everybody seems to like him and he goes out of his way to be nice to people. He's got two daughters that are married and one son. They married quite satisfactorily. Sometimes we sit around the table and he tells us of the olden days. He tells us how far he had to go to school and how he happened to get started. There was one fellow there who could not learn at all. They would tell him and tell him and they couldn't get a thing through his head. My father started late to school because he didn't know anything about it until the priest told him. The teacher said he was getting along good.

"He doesn't figure that he is going to work all the time. That's one reason he wants an education. He wants it to help him get ahead. He says he can see things quicker. He tells us that if we don't ever learn anything we will stay away from bumming.

"He says when a professor says a thing he means it. I go with him lots of times to hear lectures and things. Sometimes we go and hear Polish speakers.

"He says we don't know what it is to make friends. The thing is to make real friends. If you have money you can always have a lot of friends but they don't stay by you. The first thing is to make real friends and not money friends. He says if you've got girls bring them to the house. When we do, we have dances and have a good time. People like to see my dad dance. We are not high hat

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because the neighbors aren't so rich. My dad says that is nothing against a person just because they haven't got a lot of money. Sometimes he entertains ugly people that most fellows wouldn't want to be seen with. He will bring them right in the house and treat them just like he would any of his other friends. He even knows some hoboes. They are real tough too. They are the kind that are liable to kill you on a picnic or something.

"Sometimes he goes over to the school and writes on the blackboard and makes the kids laugh. The nuns never get mad and they all seem to like him.

"He is now cashier of one of the Polish societies. It is one of the biggest, the M.Z.P.A. Every time I go to a social affair with him I enjoy myself a lot. He says if you want to make a good family you don't want to quarrel with any of them. You want to start them in school at the right time and see that they put in their hours. When I used to come from school I had to deliver papers to help a little and that way I made church money and a little for a movie once in a while. We always had to sit around the kitchen table and study from six to eight. My father used to come in then and say, 'Do you know your lesson?' He always used to ask us that question every once in a while. One time he asked my sister if she knew her lesson and she said, 'Yes'. He started to ask her a lot of questions about it and she didn't know a thing about it. She had to stay home for a week. He was for that. He wanted to see us stay home and study because then we couldn't do any bumming around."

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SPECIAL

I: "The Company is putting on what we call an Interviewing Program. In other words, we are going around talking to all the employees, trying to find out what they think about their jobs, about working conditions, about home conditions and anything that might affect them."

E: "Well, the bosses are all right down here. They all seem to be a pretty square bunch of fellows. I get along well with all of them, and as far as I can see, most of the other fellows get along pretty good with them.

"They sure got a bunch of rotten jobs down here though. I wouldn't have any of the jobs except the one that I am on. I think if the boss said he was going to put me on another job I would quit. I think a lot of fellows down here feel about the same way about it. There are only a few decent jobs in the whole department and of course all can't have one of those good jobs.

"I like the job I am on except that there is no chance for advancement. The way I see it, all you are supposed to do is just stay there and do that job for the next ten or fifteen years. There doesn't seem to be any place to go if you did get an advance. The only thing you could possibly do would be get a Gang Boss's job.

"The jobs down in the 'lab' are all right but I like this one better. It seems to me if there was any chance for an advancement at all they would pick one of the fellows that work out here where I do. I really don't think they would ever consider any of the fellows that work out here for better jobs though."

I: "That's a pretty big thing too."

E: "Yes. It is and I think I know what I'm talking about. When I came here they put me on every job on the floor. I used to work in the 'lab' but I don't like that. I asked for a transfer and the boss said 'Yes' and then he kept changing me around until I was on just about every job on this floor. It got so I would only be on a job a week or two and then they would come along and put me on another one. They were all rotten jobs too so I

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didn't learn anything by them. It got so bad that I told the Chief that I didn't want to get shifted around any more so they put me on the test set. It is just like I say - the job is all right as far as it goes, but there is no chance to get ahead on it."

I: "It looks as though it is about the same kind of work as in the 'lab'."

E: "Yes. It is. It is just about the same kind of work except that we are rated a little different. That is one reason I wouldn't work in the 'lab'. They are making those fellows in there work just about as hard as we are and they are on day rate and we are on piece work. They were transferred from Inspection and the boss told them that they would be put on piece work. That was a long time ago and they haven't done anything about it yet. I make more money on my job than they do. The only thing I don't like about it is that we can't get as big a raise as you can in Inspection. When you are working in Operating they kind of got you tied down. The raises are limited to so much and you can't get any more than that. Most of the time you are lucky if you get any raise at all."

I: "Do you mean those fellows down there are on day rate and doing the same kind of work that you are?"

E: "Yes and they are all hollering about it too. I don't blame them a bit either. I don't think they are very smart to stick on a job like that. I suppose most of them are married and have to keep at it because they've got to have some money coming in.

"They just got soaked in on a day rate and are doing the same work as though they were on piece work. The bosses expect them to work just as hard as though there was a chance to earn a little more money; but it doesn't make any difference how hard they work, they just get the same rate.

"Where does all that stuff go that you are writing down?"

I: "It goes upstairs to what we call the Analyzing Department.

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They are just a bunch of fellows that take each interview and go over it and see what the employees like or don't like. In other words, if there were one hundred fellows in a department and seventy-five of them thought something was wrong, then the Company would surely know that it wasn't the right thing.".....
.....

"I understand that they won't take anything but high school graduates on your kind of a job now."

E: "Yes; that's true. They won't take anything but four year high school graduates now. It seems like kind of a dumb thing in a way, but then, I suppose if a fellow puts in four years in high school it ought to make some difference when he goes out to get a job. A lot of those fellows down there though that haven't had any high school training are a lot smarter than some of the high school graduates. I think one of the dumbest fellows around here is one of the fellows who has had a year of college. That doesn't make much difference to me though because I am a high school graduate.

"What I don't like about this department is that you have an awful time trying to get out of it. Now, up in ---- they have about this same kind of work but they've got a lot of much better jobs up there. There is a chance for a fellow to make more money up there and at the same time learn a different kind of a job. I don't know, but I think you've got to have a college education to work up there. I should think though that if a fellow worked down here for a while on one of the sets we've got down here that he would be just as good a man up there as though he had been at college for four years. I'm sure they take men from down here if they are educated."

I: "Is this the only experience you've had?"

E: "No. I worked for the ----- Valve Company. I had a kind of a hard job there. That is, you had to know something about chemistry. I was electro-plating parts. A fellow really doesn't have to know chemistry to do electro-plating but I don't think they would hire a man to do a job like that if he hasn't got some chemistry training from high school. I liked the work all

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right but it was a rotten place to work. It was dirty and the fumes from the acid got into your nose and throat because they didn't have any kind of ventilation. It would have been all right for 'niggers' but it sure wasn't a good place for a white man to work. If they would have cleaned things up a little and put in a good ventilating system, I think I would have still been there because I think there was a chance for advancement with the company. At least there would have been more chance for advancement there than there is here."

I: "Don't you have to know some electricity to handle your job?"

E: "No. You don't have to know electricity but it does come in handy to know something about physics. A lot of these fellows around here know enough to press a button or to do this or that but they don't know why they do it. They just do it automatically like a machine but the boss could never tell them why they are doing it or how the test sets were ever worked out.

"Do you see that old fellow there?"

I: "Yes."

E: "I think he has the best job around here. His job is just to do nothing. He has been with the Company about thirty years and I guess they just keep him around here because he likes it. All he does is wander up and down the aisles and roll up his shirt sleeves to make believe he is doing something. I don't know of a thing he does around here though. I guess he does kind of look after the lockers.

"We haven't got enough lockers down here. There are three or four fellows in each locker. By the time you get in a couple of overcoats there isn't room for anything else. That is about the only thing I can see that is wrong around here, outside of what I told you about not being able to get ahead on this job."

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SPECIAL

I: "I am taking you away from your job to be interviewed. By that I mean that the Company is sending me down to get your ideas and opinions on anything around the Plant. Most of you fellows down here have been in the department at least a year."

E: "Yes. That is right; about a year."

I: "Do you work in the test 'lab' or outside?"

E: "Outside. I just got back from a week's vacation so they put me over on the right side. I worked on the left side before I went on the vacation."

I: "Kind of a tough time to go on a vacation."

E: "Oh, no; not at all. I was d--- glad to get it."

I: "What did you do, go skating?"

E: "No. All I did was night hawk around the city."

I: "I suppose you hated to come back to work, didn't you?"

E: "Oh, no. It is all right but it is kind of hard to get up in the morning."

I: "You must be married then."

E: "No. I am not married yet. I will be in a couple of months though. I am going to get married in January."

I: "What are you doing, stepping out on the girl a little bit?"

E: "Yes. I thought I might as well because I have only a little time left."

I: "Are you making enough to get married?"

E: "No. But I am going to try and get transferred. ----- makes about thirty-two dollars and has three kids and another one on the way. That poor guy works his head off for those kids. He sure

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has a lot of hard luck. He is always getting hurt and going to the hospital. The other day he went to the toilet and when he came back he said he hurt his hand. He said he stepped on it and that he got it in the door and a lot of stories like that. The only way he could get hurt would be fooling around. He would tell one guy something and then forget and tell another guy a different story. He had two or three bosses ask him about the accident and he told every one of them a different story. He was gassed during the war though.".....

I: "Do you think you can make more money in another department?"

E: "Yes. I am sure of it, if I can get on piece work. The only reason I stayed in the department I am in now was because we were promised piece work since last March. They keep promising that we will always get piece work. That is one thing I don't understand. If we are not going to get it why don't they come out and tell us. If we are going to get it, why don't they do something about it. It makes me so mad that I think I will get transferred if we get piece work or not, although I don't think we will ever get it. In other words, we are always going to get it. It is coming on wheels. They know d--- well that no one can do any more than the fellows down there are turning out. They are making one hundred and twenty, one hundred and thirty, and one hundred and fifty bogey right along and are working on day rate. They couldn't give us piece work down there though. There would be too much arguing and fighting; I know that."

I: "I suppose they would all want the same job."

E: "No. Not only that but if a guy went for a drink or left the job for a minute for any reason they would all holler. They would say, 'We are not going to work for that guy and give him part of our earnings.'

"Another thing it would take a guy with a lot of brains to rate that job. It would be almost impossible to rate. They could rate it for a bogey because they are not so particular but they couldn't rate it for piece work.

"A university man wouldn't work down there. Just because they are

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graduates they think they ought to get more than the rest of them. Down where my buddy works, university men get as high as one hundred and twenty-five dollars a week. He is a cashier down there and must know what he is talking about. All those guys get their experience here, I believe. ----- does a lot of work for them here."

I: "You mean a university man wouldn't rate your job?"

E: "Yes, in a way. You see I've got three cousins that graduated from Notre Dame. When they go down to get a job they want about three or four times what the ordinary man makes. If they don't get more than the rest of us they won't even look at the job.

"I am not supposed to be in the shop myself, but I can make more money working down here. That's what keeps me down there, is because I've got to earn more money. Lots of these fellows think that I've got plenty of money because I drive an Oakland Sport Phaeton. I wouldn't have that car only it was given to me as a present. It pretty near keeps me broke trying to run it, to say nothing of buying another one. I have a lot of trouble with it too. I like everything about the car but the ignition. I've got to buy a new battery or have my old battery charged every once in a while.

"I've got a friend, ----- . He is a millionaire's son. His old man has that store downtown where they sell you a hat for fifteen dollars and a pair of shoes for about twelve. He drives a Stutz Blackhawk. I go out with him every once in a while. He is an old friend of mine. I went to high school with him. That is the way I happened to know him because we graduated from high school together. I have a lot of fun with him when I go out with him because he has a peach of a car.

"I know a lot of people out in ----- through my relatives who live there. Another one of my buddies had a lot of hard luck not long ago. I told him he could take my car any time he wanted to but he didn't like to ask for it. He went out and rented a car and got drunk or something and wrapped it around a tree. They charged him four hundred dollars to get it fixed up again. I had to make a loan on my car in order to get dough

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enough for him to pay the accident.

"Do you know -----? He works upstairs too. I've got another friend who works with Community Motors over on Madison and he wants me to buy a new Oakland. I don't think I want to buy a car from them though because of some of the stories he told me about how they handle new cars over there.".....

I: "Those birds over there seem to be hard workers."

E: "Yes. They are sure putting in a hard half-hour. That job up there in our department is the most monotonous job in the place. It isn't so bad when you get used to it but it is sure tough for a while. Some fellows come over and work two weeks and get so discouraged that they want to quit. After a while you get so used to it that some fellows wouldn't want to be transferred. If they put that ----- anywhere else he would be so dumb he couldn't handle the job. He is a hard worker though. He puts in plenty of hours and he is faster than anybody else on the job.

"Did any of the boys kick about the fan down there?"

I: "Yes."

E: "Well, you ought to be around there about eight o'clock in the morning. The smoke and the gas is so thick in there that you can't see fifty feet across the room. You think you are out in 'no man's land'. It sure is a swell place for a human being to try and do some hard work. The Company is probably fixing a lot of things around here but if they want to fix something that is bad they ought to start down there. I've got to get out of there before winter comes. When it gets so full of smoke in there that we can't work any more they have to open the windows and the draft blows right in on our backs. That either gives you a cold or makes you so sick you can't do anything for a few days. I was sick two and three weeks at a time last winter. Anybody could walk in there and see what was the matter. The fan isn't big enough to carry away the smoke. If we open the windows the girls holler. If they don't holler they just go right up to the big boss and tell him about it. He never does anything though because he probably knows what it is to work back there.

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"When I go in ---- sometimes, it is so full of smoke and gas that it gets up in my throat and I can hardly talk. A couple of times last year the smoke affected my throat. Every time the smoke comes I get a cough and I spit hard, black lumps from the throat."

I: "It sounds bad all right. Did you ever go to the hospital?"

E: "Yes. I went over once on account of a cold but you can't go over there and tell them about the smoke in the department unless you are sick or something. I was forced to lay off a week not long ago on account of a cold. That place never has a moderate temperature. It is always stuffy down there. I could work here and feel comfortable. It is terrible down there. I suppose you noticed the difference too."

"A girl came down to see if I would drive her home. She said, 'How do you stand it in here? It is a terrible place. I'll see you later', and walked away. It was so full of smoke and gas that she could not even stay there and talk to me."

I: "Your girl works here then?"

E: "Yes, but I knew her a long time before I came here."

"Another fellow came down from one of the offices. He had to take some papers to the Department Chief or something. I was working and he came over and said, 'What is the idea?' I looked up and said, 'Oh, hello Larry!' He said, 'How in ---- can you work down here in all this smoke?' I looked up and then I noticed how bad it was. You see I was getting used to it by that time."

"The boss doesn't seem to give a d--- about the smoke. When it comes he walks inside the 'lab'. Those other fellows inside the 'lab' come out and raise the devil if we leave the doors open a little. It is too bad about some of those fellows. They think they can't even stand a little smoke when we have to work in it an hour at a time.".....

I: "Does your girl work in the same department?"

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E: "No. She doesn't work here at all. She is a nurse; that is, she is a child specialist. Oh, do you mean the girl that wanted the ride home?"

I: "Yes."

E: "She isn't my girl at all. She is just a friend of the girl I am going to marry. They are together a lot. My girl has really got a good job. I don't think she would waste her time around here.".....

"I nearly got in a bad mess this summer. You see I did not buy a vehicle tax and I had driven my car quite a while. When the cop wanted to pinch me I told him my dad worked in a prosecuting attorney's office and that I wanted to get him on the phone and talk to him. That saved me a lot of trouble because I got it fixed up all right and it only cost me ten dollars."

I: "You were pretty lucky all right."

E: "Yes. I was lucky about that but I wasn't so lucky the other night. You see there is kind of a private home that sells beer right across from my girl's house. I went over to see her and then about 9:30 I told her I was tired and that I was going to go home and go to bed. I guess she didn't believe me though, because about 10:30 she came across the street and got me and made me go home. She is generally trying to catch me up on something. Like yesterday, she said, 'Oh, I went to the dance this afternoon.' I said, 'Well, you haven't got anything on me because I went to one too.' Then she said, 'I didn't really go but I was trying to find out if you did. I was over at your grandmother's all afternoon.' She wasn't so dumb about it at that.

"Well, it is about noon so I suppose I better be getting back to the department."

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SPECIAL

I: "I guess all you fellows down here know about this program."

E: "Yes. There was another fellow around interviewing not long ago. He interviewed quite a few of the fellows down here; then I saw you down afterwards interviewing a few more of them."

I: "It seems that all of you men have been here about a year."

E: "Well, not all of them. Some of them have been here only six months. I have been down there a year next month. It doesn't seem like that long but I know it will be a year because I looked it up the other day."

I: "Were you with the Company before that?"

E: "No. I never worked in a factory before."

I: "I suppose you worked somewhere, didn't you?"

E: "Yes. I worked for Woolworth's a month and then I got fired. The reason I got fired was that they generally worked late at night. One Friday I called up and said I couldn't come down. I went back there again Saturday morning and they sent another man over to help me. I didn't think anything of that because it was kind of a rush season and we were very busy. The next Tuesday though I got my check. The boss said I didn't have my heart and soul in my job. I told him I guessed that was right and I didn't seem to be very interested in it. You see they tell you that if you work hard you get to be a manager later. The boss told me though that I could use him for a reference if I wanted to get another job."

I: "It's a long road I guess."

E: "Well, I don't know. The managers make about twenty-five hundred dollars a year. All they have to do is work up the business and they get twenty-five dollars a week to live on. They get the rest of their salary in a lump sum the first of January. My brother works for a manager that made thirty-three thousand dollars in one year. He is now a superintendent of several stores. He makes more now because he gets his salary and a commission, and when you get to be a superintendent you can still go higher

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and be a buyer. They buy in large amounts because they have stores all over the world.

"You've got to slave for them when you first start to work, but when you get to be a superintendent you have it easy and you don't have to do anything then. All the superintendent does is to go around and bawl out the managers. If there is a package of razor blades turned upside down they raise the devil.

"Working for Woolworth's reminded me of the Army. Every time the superintendent came around it was like having inspection in the Army. Sometimes I think it was even worse than that. I would go back to the Army but I wouldn't go back to Woolworth's.

"I had a job before I worked there but I quit that to go to work for Woolworth's. I don't know how long I worked there. I worked from about the first of June until the middle of October. I only made about ten dollars a week. If I could get as much there as I am getting here I would go back to that job. You can't live on ten dollars a week and then I have to help out my parents. It is a good thing I'm not married."

I: "Are both your parents alive?"

E: "Yes."

I: "Does your father work here?"

E: "No. He is a salesman. I'm the only one in the family working here. I've got two brothers and three sisters though.".....

"It sure was cold this morning. I was fifteen minutes late."

I: "I suppose you missed your car."

E: "No. I got up too late. The clock froze up I guess. That's one thing I don't like about my job. I have to come too far. I have to get up too early. I live away out at sixty-nine hundred south. They used to have part of the Plant out there near Ashland. I wish they had it there yet. If they did I would sure ask for a transfer.

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"By the way, I punched in this morning at 7:45. I wonder if they dock you for that. It is only fifteen minutes off. I know they do dock you if you are a half-hour late. I don't know if they do if you are fifteen minutes late. Do you ever get disgusted with your job?"

I: "Yes. I guess we all do."

E: "I suppose most of the fellows you interview think it is an easy job. Maybe it isn't when you get lots of these fellows in the shops; especially the foreigners."

I: "You are right about that. It is hard to do anything with a man that you can't talk to."

E: "Well, I haven't had much education myself but I think I have had more than most of the fellows around the Plant. I graduated from high school down in Iowa at a little town called ----- . My brother and I walked from Iowa to Chicago and stayed with friends until we got a job. We didn't know enough about it then to get a good job. We made it from Iowa in about three days. My brother went back last year and made it in a day and a half."

I: "The town where the tall corn grows."

E: "Yes. It was fifteen below there already. I like it better though. It was drier climate than Chicago. The damp air here kind of sticks to you."

I: "We have a fellow in our department from Rock something in Iowa."

E: "Rock Valley?"

I: "Yes. That sounds like it."

E: "That is where my father first came when he settled in Iowa with his folks. That was a long time ago."

"If I could get a good job back in ----- I would go back any time. I like Chicago in the summer time all right but it is

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too cold in the winter time. It is too damp and unpleasant.

"I was born in a little shack town in Iowa at ----- in my mother's folks' shack. That was when my parents came back from Chicago. They lived here a while when they were first married.

"I see you are taking down my biography. You ought to take up shorthand."

I: "That's a good idea but I don't think I could read it."

E: "The hardest job I ever had was on the farm. I worked around a threshing machine. I never lived on a farm but I helped around them a lot. I used to live with one of my uncles. I've got two uncles on the farm now. Most of them have always been on farms. I've got two uncles on ranches out further West.

"Are you writing all this down?"

I: "Yes. I have to write it down so the boss will know I haven't been sleeping all morning."

E: "How about if you quit your job and give Western Electric as a reference - is the Gang Boss the man that answers the reference or does somebody in the office? For example if a man quit his job, does the Gang Boss say if he did his work right or not? It seems as though the Gang Boss would be the only one that knew if you were doing your job right or not but if the Gang Boss didn't like you he wouldn't put in a good word for you.

"At -----, the Vice-President gives a reference. The vice-president is always head of the department. He doesn't know the person but he knows enough about him to answer a reference. For instance, I worked for Mr. ----- and he told the vice-president how I did my work. Another thing I liked over there was that the man that hired us worked right in our department. If you didn't do your work right he would go right in to the vice-president.

"That's what I would like to get straight, is whether the Gang Boss or somebody else answers your reference."

I: "Was that the first job you had when you came to Chicago?"

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E: "Yes. Well, no, it wasn't. I worked three days in a department store. It was during rush season. They had regular fellows and they laid us off. It was a nice job but there wasn't much advancement. I think advancement around here is pretty slow too. There are so many working around here a fellow has to be here a long time in order to get ahead. One fellow downstairs has been here nine years. I know fellows that have been here even longer and they aren't Gang Bosses yet. I should think they would be a Department Chief or something by that time.

"Did you interview -----? He is shell-shocked and lots of people think he is a queer duck but he has his own ideas. He tells me lots of things. You see he has worked here nine years and isn't getting anywhere. I wonder what ----- would do if he heard about it? Do you know where his office is?"

I: "Yes. Up in the -----."

E: "He is the big boss now. I know he used to be Works Manager. I read in the magazine where he was made Vice-President.

"Why didn't you take down my name and clock number?"

I: "Because this is a confidential interview. We want you to feel that you can tell us whatever you have on your mind and you are not going to get fired for it.

"Do your folks still live in Iowa?"

E: "No. When my brother got work we found a place in the neighborhood where our friends live and then our folks came in to Chicago.".....

"Another thing I was going to say - I can't think of it right now. Oh, yes, this is it! Since last April you know our gang is still in Operating but working as Inspection. Last April the supervisor was going to put us on gang piece work and he hasn't done it yet. Still, we have to put out the work. The Gang Boss expects us to put out just as much work as the other gangs on piece work.

"Here's another thing. This Gang Boss might know me though.

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The Gang Boss thought I had turned out to be a Bolshevik. If I put out 100% I do enough. The Gang Boss said he had a right to expect more than 100% from me. I said he didn't. I told ----- what I told the other boss. ----- said I had to do over 100% to get a raise. I said I didn't believe it. They told me to begin with, that if I got below 60% I would get fired and if I made 80% I would get a raise."

I: "Did ----- tell you that?"

E: "Oh, no. It was the fellows in the gang. I think it was an Assistant Department Chief too, but I'm not sure. I don't see why they would take me off my present job though for only putting out 100%. If a fellow puts out 100% I think that is perfect for him. When they make it 100% they mean that is the amount a man is able to do; otherwise, they would make the bogey higher.

"And then again, there are some things, that is, important things that the Gang Boss isn't strict about but little fussy things he is strict about. Like if I go out on relief and stay two minutes overtime he bawls the devil out of me. He isn't strict enough about some fellows. I don't know how to say it so you can put it down. I have tried to figure it out.

"You know how our department works, don't you? The jigs come down to me and go out to the checker. The checker has a hard time getting the bottom clear and if it is filled up it slows down our output. ----- isn't well enough instructed to tell them what to do. I am not boss myself so I can't tell the fellows what to do.

"There are too many things he is strict about that are absolute silliness from my point of view. As soon as we don't have some work to do we sort of lean on the next bench. You know down there we have to stand up all day. Well, the first thing the boss does is to come around and tell us to get off. When there is a chance to get a little rest he comes around and bawls us out. I should think if we get a little chance to sit down it would be all right as long as we get the work out. The Gang Boss doesn't seem to have his men under control. The way he handles them they go against him just to be stubborn. He

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can't control them at all. We had a boss just before -----.
He gave everybody a square deal. I don't want to say -----
doesn't give us a square deal but things he should be strict
in he isn't.

"Another thing, I don't see why we don't get a fifteen minute
rest period. We have to stand up all day long in one position.
A man can't stand up eight hours a day and do the best kind of
work. I don't say they should furnish chairs or anything like
that but they shouldn't be so strict. What we need is to have a
fifteen minute rest in the morning and the afternoon and a good
place to rest. Something for our back as well as our feet. The
way it is now, if we take a rest we have to go in the toilet and
that's no rest. You can't go anywhere else; there are too many
bosses. If we had some place to sit down and relax the Company
would get more satisfaction out of the workers and get more work
put out. I suppose it would be a big expense and they couldn't
do it in all the departments. Maybe though, the workers would
do enough extra work to get ahead. Sometimes I get tired and I
feel like I drag along and then I get behind. When I take a
fifteen minute rest I make my bogey easy.

"The girls in the department have rest periods. They always
sit down all day; that is, they sit at their work. If the girls
have rest periods when they sit down all day, I should think we
should have them when we have to stand up all day. I wish we
had an interview every day."

I: "Why?"

E: "That seems to be about the only way we can get any rest
down here."

I: "Don't you feel a little better to get some of these things
off your chest?"

E: "Yes. We tell our fellow workers lots of times but that
doesn't help. When we tell somebody like this we feel that it
will get in the hands of the authorities who can help you out.

"Here's another thing the Gang Boss does. He makes threats

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and then doesn't carry them out. He says, 'If you do that again you will get a vacation,' Then they turn right around and do the same thing over again and they don't get the vacation. That way he hasn't got control over them and they won't do a thing when he really wants them to. We've got a lot of kids down there and it would do him good if he would make an example for them. They know he doesn't mean what he says and they cut-up all the time. If he would tell them to keep quiet or they would get a vacation and then send one of them home they would behave. I would send the worst one home and if they wouldn't behave I would send home all of them. What they need is discipline.

"It is all right for the Gang Boss to joke in many ways but he has got to let his word be law. I don't see how they would get along in the Army like that. I don't regret any of the Army discipline that I got. I only had four years of National Guard but it did me good.

"I do things myself that I shouldn't do. The boss says this or that to a man but he doesn't really send him home. If the boss would really send me home when I do something wrong, I wouldn't do it again. The other fellows would feel it just as much as I would.

"Another thing I would like to say is about the language they use. I don't know what kind of guys work here. They are all tough. It seems as though anybody that is a boss should be a gentleman. I don't think any gentleman uses the kind of language some of those bosses use. Of course the employees use it when the bosses use it. If the men would be gentlemen the girls would be ladies. They could make this place a mighty fine place if they wanted to. They talk about sports like tennis and basketball and all that, why don't they make this a place for gentlemen. When I tell somebody where I work they say, 'Oh, yes. That is where the devil works.' If they want to make it the best factory in the city they want to make it so in character as well.

"In the Army there is more character building than in this place. From my experience I know that they have a captain in the Army.

"You can show that little piece to Mr. ----- himself and put

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my name on it. Of course it only comes from a worker but that is the way I feel about it. If the place was more like the Army I would like it much better.

"I like the job but not the people I work with. They could be mighty fine fellows. Some fellows told me what I didn't know about filth I would learn here. There is more than in the army. I suppose it is because we've got both sexes here.

"Like that boat that went down. That wasn't a decent party. They weren't gentlemen and ladies. This place has its ways of helping education and the physical body but not things for character building. If they had more of that I think it would be about the best factory in Chicago.".....

I: "That Eastland disaster was pretty bad, wasn't it?"

E: "Yes. It was. You would think that the officers on a boat like that would know how to handle the crowd. The crowd all ran over to one side and the boat tipped over. The boat wasn't balanced right. I had a friend who was there an hour afterwards. He saw the bodies when they were being taken from the water. I don't call that a decent party or you might say, Western Electric put on an indecent party. If they would just put out rules against those things, everything would have been all right. I certainly believe that the hand of God had something to do with that.

"It is a terrible scene. Some of the big bosses of the Plant might have to answer for those very things. If they would use the right kind of language and cut it out in the shop it would be a better place to work. I don't think I am the only one who thinks that. Probably a good many others have said something.

"It wouldn't do me any good to tell some of those kids. They would laugh in my face and do it all the more just because they knew I didn't like it. There are bosses that will laugh at this if they see it and some of them are big shots too. If they are really in earnest about it they will have to get a lot of new bosses. That will take three or four or even twenty years.

"I know everybody, it is human nature, has to have their fling.

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It is true here in the factory as well as all the time outside.
I think it ruins human lives.

"Another thing, I think every worker here ought to have a complete physical examination. I have been here a year and I haven't had an examination. Some of these fellows go out every night and in a year they can get a disease and spread it in the factory. We had Health Week last week but a lot of workers here wreck their healths that way.

"It's four minutes to twelve. Maybe there would be more to talk about but I guess that's all. I was away quite a while, about two hours and twenty-five minutes."

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