

**[Pause 00:00:00]**

**Stanley Grizzle:** Side two, continuation of interview with Harold Eastman. Continue, yes, so you were saying?

**Harold Osburn Eastman:** So is the- is the same thing all over.

**Stanley:** Yeah, so you're saying you're back right- right- right back to square one because these women are hired as attendants to supervise the porters or the, uh, the--

**Harold:** The-- What they do, they- they advertise that they want so many- so many service managers.

**Stanley:** Do they su-- do they supervise porters? Are they over there?

**Harold:** Yes. They're-- when they are on the train, they're the supervisors. Yes. Yes. You see them walking through from train to train, and from car to car.

**Stanley:** Well, there's no- there's no other thing in the contract providing for promotion of- of, uh, of, uh, what do you call a Black person, man. Attendants? A new classification, attendants? What are they called?

**Harold:** Well, as- as of you know, there's no more porters.

**Stanley:** No more porters. Yes. So, what do they call like--

**Harold:** I don't-- They- they have names for all of them nowadays. They rename all of them.

**Stanley:** But is there no provision in the contact for them to be promoted, based on service? Uh--

**Harold:** No, not like- not like before. The most you can be is, um, is a Dining-- Well, they only have about two Dining Car Stewards because dining car is eliminated.

**Stanley:** So they're Black-- So they're- so they're into blind alley jobs again?

**Harold:** Yes.

**Stanley:** Can't move up forward.

**Harold:** No, the-- only service manager jobs they let you apply.

**Stanley:** Yeah.

**Harold:** But when the final come, they say that-- They find something to rid you out.

**Stanley:** A good case with the Human Rights Commission, I think. Sounds like an excellent case for a human rights on the federal level.

**Harold:** And I feel if the Black fellows will get together, get into politics, they can li-- They can beat this.

**Stanley:** That's right. That's right. Sounds very unfair.

**Harold:** Yeah. You- the only way-- This is why I have to give it to United States. United States have to get action because they have lots of Black fellows in politics. And if you can get into politics and then you tell, "We gonna give you something and so forth," they have to give you some of the action. Like you can go to Via Rail because they have the Minister of Transport.

**Stanley:** Has anybody documented this situation and reported it to our only Black Member of Parliament in Ottawa? Dr. McCurdy. I know he'd be interested 'cause he's been very active in human rights and, uh, discrimination in the Windsor area, you know?

**Harold:** No. Yes. No, not that I know of.

**Stanley:** But you're not in the field anymore. The job so--

**Harold:** No, no, but I was-- This is why I told you the other day when Moroni was on the radio, I wanted to get on and tackle him about this particular thing.

**Stanley:** Anyway, we better move on now, Harold, because this- this is very enlightening. I hadn't had any in discussion of this situation before.

**Harold:** Yeah.

**Stanley:** Um, so, uh, one question when you, uh, were on the CPR, just before you left the CPR, before the merger, what dues were you paying to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters?

**Harold:** The br-- the dues was \$18 a month.

**Stanley:** And when you went over to Via, what were the dues?

**Harold:** \$18.

**Stanley:** Same.

**Harold:** Yes, but when I left there, it was \$21.

**Stanley:** I see, right.

**Harold:** Now I hear it's \$25.

**Stanley:** I see. Mm-hmm. Well, as you reflect, uh, since you're retired now, what did you think of portering? Did you enjoy it on the whole? Did you find it a good experience? Or did it teach you anything?

**Harold:** Is portering was a great experience and I have no reason-- I am not sad that I was a porter because it made me a livin', and my family a livin' and I was able to retire as a Dining Car Steward and have a pretty good pension. Which, although, I feel the pension should be indexed, you know, with the high cost of living.

**Stanley:** Of course. Oh, yeah.

**Harold:** Yes.

**Stanley:** How much money did you make more as a Dining Car Steward than you did as a porter? Or was it the porter you finished as?

**Harold:** No. Dining Car Steward.

**Stanley:** Yeah. But what was the other classification you moved from?

**Harold:** I moved from porter to, um--

**Stanley:** Dining Car Steward?

**Harold:** No, no. The, um, the name, you know, like it was like servin', like on the train that you see there. You use like the people that they have it their--

**Stanley:** Waiter?

**Harold:** Not a waiter. I was never a waiter. The steward waiter they called it. Steward waiter.

**Stanley:** Oh, I see. Got it.

**Harold:** Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, and from a Steward Waiter, I moved-- I sat the examination, became a Dining Car Steward.

**Stanley:** So how much more money did you make as a Dining Car Steward than a- than as a porter?

**Harold:** Well, about over a hundred and some odd dollars a month more.

**Stanley:** Now, how-- When did the porter class- porter classification cease to exist on the Via? When did they discontinue it?

**Harold:** When I leave there, there was still porter but only after new-- They form new and they gave them new names.

**Stanley:** Oh, I see. What's the biggest tip you ever got as a- as a porter?

**Harold:** The biggest tip I ever get as a porter is-- I think it is \$25.

**Stanley:** Traveling from where to where?

**Harold:** Between Montreal and Vancouver.

**Stanley:** I see. That's not, uh, that's not such a great tip. [laughs].

**Harold:** No.

**Stanley:** If it I [unintelligible 00:05:52] to follow you so, right?

**Harold:** That that's from one customer. Don't forget that. Yeah.

**Stanley:** Yeah, yeah. That would, uh, all right. If everybody got \$25 for that distance [inaudible]--

**Harold:** No, that's- that's for one room.

**Stanley:** Yeah. A lot of money, too.

**Harold:** Yeah. Yes, yes.

**Stanley:** Now, uh, were you a member of the, uh, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters?

**Harold:** Yes.

**Stanley:** And, uh, so you were-- Did you join this right after you- you uh, became a porter?

**Harold:** Yes, I joined, I think in-- the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters started in when?

**Stanley:** '43.

**Harold:** '43.

**Stanley:** What the-- Uh, the first contract was '45, actually.

**Harold:** '45. Yeah. Well, I was from the beginning.

**Stanley:** Did you join, uh, uh, with, uh, great joy in your heart? Or--

**Harold:** Oh, yes, because, uh, although I object with certain things against the Brotherhood--

**Stanley:** I remember that!

**Harold:** Yeah, yeah.

**Stanley:** [laughs] I think you do.

**Harold:** Yeah. I ob- yes, I object with certain things of the Brotherhood, but I still say that the union was great.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm. Right.

**Harold:** Yes.

**Stanley:** Now. I don't know how much you know about the history of the union in this city, Montreal. Look, do you-- have you any idea-- have you ever heard any discussion who were the chief organizers of the union?

**Harold:** Well, I heard the chief organizers was um, Sandy Louis, a fellow called Dow [?] Jones?

**Stanley:** Oh yes.

**Harold:** Yes, Bartholomew.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Harold:** Yeah. SR Lewis.

**Stanley:** SR Lewis?

**Harold:** Yes.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm. Alright and how about, uh, Marcus Dash? Was he-- Did you ever hear?

**Harold:** Yeah, he was. Yeah, he was there too.

**Stanley:** How about the Toronto area? Have you ever hear who the key organizers were?

**Harold:** No. I-I never heard the Toronto area, but I thought, um, that Chevalier was one.

**Stanley:** Oh, yes.

**Harold:** Yes. He's about the only one I knew that was one of the Toronto--

**Stanley:** Right. Pioneers. Yeah.

**Harold:** Yeah.

**Stanley:** Um, What about the Ladies' Auxiliary? Did you have any relative in the Ladies' Auxiliary? Did you [crosstalk]

**Harold:** No. No, I didn't.

**Stanley:** Did you know anything about the Ladies' Auxiliary?

**Harold:** Yeah, I heard, because I know Velma King was one- one of it and, um, the same Evelyn Braxton, Evelyn Marshall, and a few more. I can-- And the fellow that you showed me, his wife, um, this fellow wife here, she was-

**Stanley:** Simmons.

**Harold:** -Simmons, yeah.

**Stanley:** Do you think having a Ladies' Auxiliary to the union was a good idea?

**Harold:** Oh yes, I thought so.

**Stanley:** Why?

**Harold:** Well, they were able to functions and organize different things when the officials were coming up here and everything.

**Stanley:** Right. Getting back to these key organizers, we only touched on Montreal and Toronto. Did you know anything about the key organizers west- west of Toronto?

**Harold:** No.

**Stanley:** Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver?

**Harold:** No, I don't know who was the key organizer in Winnipeg and Vancouver.

**Stanley:** Right? Um--

**Harold:** Oh, yeah. I thought in Vancouver there was a fellow named McLaughlin.

**Stanley:** Oh, yes.

**Harold:** Yeah, because he- he came to Montreal, a couple, and he was-- And at that time, Blanchette was in Winnipeg. I don't forget that. Yeah, Blanchette was in Winnipeg when the- when the Brotherhood was organized. He- he worked out of Winnipeg and he was from Winnipeg.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm. Right.

**Harold:** And- and there was Tommy Simmons--

**Stanley:** Right.

**Harold:**--and there was another big fella by the name of Simmons. He--

**Stanley:** Oh, yes, yes. He was a good friend of Blanchette's?

**Harold:** Yes. Yes. Him and Blanchette were buddies. I can't remember his name though.

**Stanley:** Tommy Williams, not Simmons.

**Harold:** Tommy Williams.

**Stanley:** Yes.

**Harold:** And-and this big fellow Simmons.

**Stanley:** Simmons, yes.

**Harold:** Yeah. He was a good friend of Blanchette's.

**Stanley:** He's passed on now.

**Harold:** Yes. Yes.

**Stanley:** What did you think of, uh, over the years, over the years of the, uh, getting past the key organizers at the beginning, over the years, give me the names of the men, and if there were any women across the country, who you think were consistently working to hold the organization together?

**Harold:** Well, I can say that, um, Marcus Dash. I can obviously say the same Blanchette, AR Blanchette. I can say the same. McLaughlin from out west. Yes. And the women I know was Velma King.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm

**Harold:** She-she-- Her and Maizy Dash was there, too.

**Stanley:** You haven't mentioned anybody in Toronto, though.

**Harold:** I don't know anybody in Toronto. The only anybody I told you in Toronto, that I knew is Chevalier.

**Stanley:** Yeah, but I'm talking, getting you past the key organizers. Who-who over the years worked to keep the union together. Did you ever hear of a fellow by the name of Grizzle, who worked at [crosstalk]

**Harold:** Oh, Stan Grizzle. [laughs] yeah. I forgot. How about you? Yes. Yeah. Stan Grizzle was one of the men in Toronto. That's right. Yeah. You were President, that's right. You-you bring me up to date, right. That's right. 'Cause you and I had that's quite right.

**Stanley:** All right. You can't see the forest from the trees, lookin' right at me.

**Harold:** Yes. That's true.

**Stanley:** And no, you can't name any others though, eh?

**Harold:** Like, uh, Chevalier and-- Chevalier was the President. who was the- who was the- who? Who was the Secretary there?

**Stanley:** It was Less Cromwell?

**Harold:** Less Cromwell. Yes.

**Stanley:** He was the Secretary.

**Harold:** Yeah. Yeah. Chevalier was Secretary, yes.

**Stanley:** Um, alright. A couple of names that you haven't mentioned about which there's some questions raised as to their role in organizing union. I wanna call their names and tell me which if you think they were all union-union organizers. Um, Charlie Baldwin, remember him? Do you know Charlie Baldwin?

**Harold:** No. I don't-- He is from Toronto? I didn't know him.

**Stanley:** Uh, Harry Gairey?

**Harold:** Yes. Harry Gairey.

**Stanley:** Now, was he a union organizer, or was he a--

**Harold:** I can't say much about him and the union, yeah.

**Stanley:** I see.

**Harold:** Yeah.

**Stanley:** Now, what do you think about the leadership given to the union? Uh, by Blanchette? Do you think he gave good leadership to the union?

**Harold:** Oh yes, I very much. He was a very capable man. Although we didn't see eye to eye with lots of things, but you have to give credit where is due. He was the-the most capable man in Canada for that position.

**Stanley:** How about, uh, Randolph?

**Harold:** First-class. He was the most brilliant man. I always talk about him. Randolph was a, an eloquent speaker. He was-- everything he did was A-1.

**Stanley:** Right. Benny Smith?

**Harold:** Well, I can-- for me my opinion about Benny Smith, he hang, he was there because of Randolph. This is my opinion about him.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm

**Harold:** I am not saying he wasn't a good union man, but he wasn't like the eloquent speaker, like A. Philip Randolph.

**Stanley:** Um, of course, speeches don't always make the man...

**Harold:** No, that is quite true because I remember once they have ah, we had a convention down here about for a week and, you weren't at that convention, I don't think...

**Stanley:** Minister training conference?

**Harold:** Yes. Were you here?

**Stanley:** Yup. Mm-hmm.

**Harold:** But I remember that particular day I was there and there's-- they were all-- there was the speakers and Blanchette as usual, with his elaborate words, you know the way he talk, and Blanchette spoke before Benny Smith and Benny Smith was the next after Benny Smith got up and said, "Our good friend here, only the chief can understand him in a few more because he swallowed a dictionary." [laughter] But me, I am simple. I want to tell you the-- All the way simple as it is, you know, I never forgot that. [laughs]



**Stanley:** I thought you remember that.

**Harold:** Yeah, that's right.

**Stanley:** Do you think the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters can be faulted in any way for, uh, the porters not having the right to be promoted without giving up their seniority, the situation, which arose in respect to the conductor issue?

**Harold:** No. I cannot say that because I think from my opinion that the Canadian Pacific Management was the one to be faulted for that, because they never intend a porter to be no more than a porter. That, for me, the bosses of Canadian Pacific were ruthless men. The most they want would let you get is a Porter Instructor.

**Stanley:** Alright. Um, there were White porters. Did-- What did the attitude of the White porters in your experience, their attitude towards the Brotherhood of Sleeping Care Porters?

**Harold:** Well, the White porters, because the, they had to be in the union and they never really discuss, I never hear them discussing anything about the-the Brotherhood, about the union. The-the out to here there was only about there was Maxy Kushiner, he was a Jew, he quit after-- and then there was Fisher and [inaudible]. They're retired. The- they-- we-- in fact, Fisher retired. They're retired from CPR.

**Stanley:** Oh, yeah. I see. But did they attend meetings to support the union in your opinion?

**Harold:** Oh, well the odd meeting there were the [inaudible], they have any, a grievance, they had meeting, but they were never frequent at the meetings.

**Stanley:** Oh, I see. Well, I guess they were like most of the Black porters, too.

**Harold:** Yes. Yes.

**Stanley:** Most problem. They showed up.

**Harold:** Yes. Yeah. And the only showed up for when they had a problem.

**Stanley:** But you, did you find that they resisted the being members?

**Harold:** No. No. Well, at least even if they wanted to resist because after a while there was the [unintelligible 00:17:07] that they had to pay the dues, you know? So, they had to be members.

**Stanley:** Um, do you think that the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters contributed anything to the community beyond, uh, increasing the pay cheques and improving the working conditions of the Black, uh, porters? Do you think the Brotherhood contributed anything to the- to the Black community?

**Harold:** Oh yes. I-I think so. I-I think that, as mostly in the States, but the reason for that-- because the Black population in the States is a vast majority over here. The population is small and not so much in Canada.

**Stanley:** But you, as I think of it now, I've never thought about this before. But my first reaction to what you're saying is that proportionately, the porters were-were fewer in number in the States than in Canada.

**Harold:** What do you mean? I said they had a bigger porter population in the States than in Canada. You don't think so?

**Stanley:** Yeah. I think the maximum number of porters they had in the states with 18,000 to 24 million people equal to the Canadian population.

**Harold:** Oh, well.

**Stanley:** Yeah. But their impact seemed to be more, uh, as you say, I-I see what you're- you're saying they have a greater impact than the Black people over there--

**Harold:** Yes, yes.

**Stanley:** --than in Canada. Yeah. Mm-hmm. But numerically, I don't know if they were any stronger. Alright, that's an interesting point too. It can be-- It can be debated. Well, what I was getting at is do you think the Brotherhood provided-provided any momentum in the Black community in Canada to-to organize in other areas?

**Harold:** Oh, yes. Yes.

**Stanley:** In other words, did the-the Brotherhood was responsible, or were Brotherhood members organized other community organizations because of the inspiration they got from the union.

**Harold:** Oh yes. The-the, from, although the, um, UINA was here before, but after the Brotherhood came in, it strengthened the UINA more.

**Stanley:** Is that so?

**Harold:** Yes, yes. Yeah. Yeah. Most of the ladies from the Brotherhood came function in the UINA, U-U- UINA.

**Stanley:** UNIA.

**Harold:** UINA.

**Stanley:** Universal Negro Improvement Association.

**Harold:** Yeah. Yes, yes, yes. And it became stronger.

**Stanley:** Oh, I see.

**Harold:** Yes.

**Stanley:** And not only women, the men.

**Harold:** Yeah. The men too. Yes.

**Stanley:** That's never been mentioned before. That's interesting. Yeah.

**Harold:** Yes.

**Stanley:** And any other organizations strengthened by the-- how about the Black church or any other organization?

**Harold:** Well, not so much.

**Stanley:** Not so much, eh, I see. Alright, um, um, I'd like to give this book, I'm workin' on some light spots, and, uh, I've heard some interesting nicknames. So I'm wondering if you have any interesting nicknames of porters- [laughter] that you can add? Some name-nicknames. I don't know whether we can publish, but, uh-- [chuckles]

**Harold:** Well, the Apha they use it to call him legs.

**Stanley:** Who?

**Harold:** Apha.

**Stanley:** Oh Brother Apha, yeah.

**Harold:** Yeah. Legs and that's about the only nickname I can give you.

**Stanley:** What was his first name?

**Harold:** Clyde. He's gonna be there at the meeting with yesterday- with Dash today.

**Stanley:** That's the only name? Well there was Chicago?

**Harold:** Chicago Thompson.

**Stanley:** They also called him another name. Another nickname. Didn't they call him Pig Meat.

**Harold:** Yeah. Pig Meat.

**Stanley:** Why is that?

**Harold:** I don't know.

**Stanley:** Did he like pork or--?

**Harold:** No, I don't know but Chicago. He always, he, yeah, he was a good friend of yours. [laughter] Yeah. You and him were good friends.

**Stanley:** He called me before he died, you know, not too long.

**Harold:** Not too long?

**Stanley:** Yes.

**Harold:** Yeah. You and him were very good friends, [inaudible] he always complimented you. Oh yeah.

**Stanley:** Oh yeah. He, he was a nice guy. I loved him as a brother, you know?

**Harold:** Brother. He, yes. Yes. You and him used it to have some very good conversation with the unions and everything. Yes.

**Stanley:** Yes, he called me just before he died, some months before he died, about somebody who had an immigration problem.

**Harold:** Oh.

**Stanley:** Yeah. The next thing I know, he died. I was so shocked.

**Harold:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Stanley:** He passed away, there was another one.

**Harold:** Yes, yes. Yeah.

**Stanley:** Did he have a Nickname Patsy?

**Harold:** No, not to my-

**Stanley:** Do you mean? Do you have a nickname?

**Harold:** No, not to my know.

**Stanley:** Doesn't matter.

**Harold:** You know, he's still alive.

**Stanley:** I know.

**Harold:** And he's doing well. Well, I- currently he's still have his mentality.

**Stanley:** No, I hear he is losing well, that's what I I've been discouraged from going to see him.

**Harold:** It. Oh, you hear he's losing it now?

**Stanley:** Well. He's, he's depressed.

**Harold:** Oh.

**Stanley:** He's going blind.

**Harold:** Oh, I didn't hear.

**Stanley:** I heard that yesterday.

**Harold:** Oh yeah. If you hear that, it's quite true.

**Stanley:** How about, do you have any interesting or humorous stories you want to tell me about the, you know, you really, really experience, anything that was amusing or that happened to you or to anybody else?

**Harold:** Well, the only good story I have to say, like, as you say, you know, Andy Hawthorne, everybody said that he was a vicious inspector. But for me, in all my railroading life, I think Andy Hawthorne was the most honest inspector that CPR had. The reason why I'm going to say that, you know, running on 21 and 22--

**Stanley:** That's a train, which train was that? To where?

**Harold:** --from Montreal to Toronto. Yeah. I-- you know, we not, we weren't allowed to sleep, you know, but the conductor, you know, if you have a room or something and there was, is usually, you know, we use it to get a red light, you know? The train man would always give you the red light, if an inspectors get on. And I'll never forget this particular night, that Hawthorne was able to beat the con- the train man. And he was able to get on the train and they didn't know. And he got on at, I think it was Smith Falls. We were coming into Montreal and I was in bed. This particular as usual.

**Stanley:** That's your job.

**Harold:** Yeah. And the sleeping car conductor, I don't know, but he was far asleep. He was up and him and Hawthorne came through the train. And they went to the back of the train and the sleeping car conductor was able to slip from Hawthorne on and came back and knock at my room and said to me, "Eastman, get up Hawthorne is on the train, get dressed fast." You know, by the time Hawthorne came back, I was dressed and in the washroom. But, and he opened because the conductor had to give him the [concess?] with all the rooms that were taken. And he opened my room and he came to me and he said, "Eastman, I know you was inside that room sleeping." But one thing I said-- he was an honest man. He said, "I'm not going to write you up" because if he was going to-- if he was going to write you up—he'd tell you, he wasn't like the other inspectors and lie on you. And he'd tell you that. And he said the truth, exactly what happened. He said, "I'm not going to write you up because I didn't catch you sleeping. But I know he was in that room sleeping." [laughs]

**Stanley:** I didn't think he was that considerate.

**Harold:** That's right.

**Stanley:** Well, Harold, I think we've had a very good interview. Thank you very much.

**Harold:** Yeah.

**Stanley Grizzle:** End of interview Harold Eastman, uh, at, uh, about one-minute past one o'clock. [Tape recording transitions to new interview] Interview of Clarence Est on the 21st of November on the, uh, at the home of, of the interviewee commencing at four, uh, 10:00 PM, uh, PM. What is your full name, please?

**Clarence Nathaniel Est:** Clarence Est.

**Stanley:** Do you have a second name?

**Clarence:** Yes. Nathaniel.

**Stanley:** Clarence Nathaniel Est is your full name, correct?

**Clarence:** Yes.

**Stanley:** All right. Where were you born Mr. Est?

**Clarence:** I was born in the, in the island of Antigua.

**Stanley:** Huh. And, uh.

**Clarence:** V-W-I British West Indies.

**Stanley:** What, when is your birthdate?

**Clarence:** My birthdate is, uh, my birthdate is, uh, April the 8th 1903.

**Stanley:** Right. And when did you come to Canada?

**Clarence:** I came to Canada in 1926.

**Stanley:** And, uh, what was your first job in Canada?

**Clarence:** Actually, my first job of any worth was with the Canadian Pacific.

**Stanley:** I see. What date did you start with the Canadian Pacific Railroad?

**Clarence:** I started with the Canadian Pacific Railway in November- the November, the 18th, 1926.

**Stanley:** My birthdate. That's my birthday. [laughs]

**Clarence:** Mm-hmm. Yeah.

**Stanley:** And, uh, you worked for the Canadian Pacific until when?

**Clarence:** Until the eighth of, uh, April, 1968.

**Stanley:** And during that period time, you-you-- your- your proper, uh, title was Sleeping Car Porter?

**Clarence:** Yes.

**Stanley:** I see. Yes.

**Clarence:** Um, and In-Charge Porter too.

**Stanley:** Too. I see. Did you, uh, in 1926, so you started before the, uh, Canadian, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters arrived on the property of the Canadian Pacific Railroad?

**Clarence:** Surely.

**Stanley:** At that time, I understand the Porters' Welfare Committee.

**Clarence:** Yes. We had a Grievance Committee.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm, and who were the, uh, representatives of that committee in Montreal?

**Clarence:** The representatives were Mr. Russell, Charles Russell.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** Mr. JT Huggins.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** And Mr. RL Weaver.

**Stanley:** I see, uh, how was this committee set up? Uh, was this, was it set up by a vote of the porters or, or appointment by--

**Clarence:** Yes, the porters were, uh, it was a matter of voting for these representatives, and the porters cast their vote for the commit- for the representative. He felt would best serve the interest of the porters.

**Stanley:** I see. Was this a secret ballot?

**Clarence:** Yes, it was.

**Stanley:** I see. How, how frequently were the, were the elections held then?

**Clarence:** I think if my memory says right, it was once a year.

**Stanley:** I see, what was the function of the Welfare Committee?

**Clarence:** The Welfare Committee's, uh, function was to protect the interest of the porters with Management.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm. I see. Did they handle, uh, grievances and claims or what? Or were there any such thing?

**Clarence:** Yeah, to a point they were grievances and naturally claims, and these claims were- were dealt with by the management of sleeping car porters.

**Stanley:** I guess, I going to get this straight at the outset. I've just come from the west, and I've been told out the west that the Welfare- Porters' Welfare Committee was appointed by management. There was no election.

**Clarence:** There was election and the west also had a representative.

**Stanley:** Yeah.

**Clarence:** The representative for Winnipeg in the west was, uh, excuse me. What's his name again? He became Porters' Instructors

**Stanley:** Lockhart?

**Clarence:** No tall fellow from Ghana, Blackman. Yeah. Mr. Blackman. He represented the porters in the west. And in that Vancouver, it was Roderick, Rod- Roderick. Roderick. Rutledge, Rutledge, Rutledge.

**Stanley:** R-U-T-L -E-D-G-E. E. Rutledge.

**Clarence:** Rutledge. Yes. Rutledge, Mr. Rutledge. He represented the porters in Vancouver.

**Stanley:** But all these men who you have named, who were representatives on the Porters' Welfare Committee, they were active sleeping car porters?

**Clarence:** Active sleeping car porters.

**Stanley:** I see. All right. Um, Well, was there a collective agreement?

**Clarence:** No, no, no. There were rules, regulat-- And regulations whereby, uh, the porters were governed.

**Stanley:** I see.

**Clarence:** And, uh, the instructors-- I mean the representatives usually instruct the porters as to what Management had issued. The issues of Management.

**Stanley:** Oh, so there was no collective agreement, just rules and regulations?

**Clarence:** Yes.

**Stanley:** As were policed by...

**Clarence:** As provided by the company.

**Stanley:** I see. Uh, hmm. Was there- was there ever any such thing as filing a claim for money, shortage of pay or--

**Clarence:** Yes. That was done occasionally when there was a valid claim, the porter was paid.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** And in most cases his claims-- as far as money was concerned, his claims were disallowed.



**Stanley:** I see.

**Clarence:** You-you had to had-- It had to have a very strong, positive case of injustice before he was compensated.

**Stanley:** Yeah. Okay. Alright. Uh, did you ever share for this committee, Porters' Welfare Committee?

**Clarence:** No, I did not.

**Stanley:** I wonder how long did this committee, uh, exist? When did it die?

**Clarence:** The committee died, uh, the-- with the intervention of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

**Stanley:** And what year was that?

**Clarence:** That was about 1956.

**Stanley:** Uh.

**Clarence:** 1954.

**Stanley:** Just a moment there. Uh, may I remind you, Brother Est, that the collective agreement, uh, this collective agreement signed by the BSCP with the CPR was effective June 1945. Would that be the-the date that you-you had in mind?

**Clarence:** Well, yes. I think that you'd have the proper date.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** I, uh, I wasn't too sure on the, uh, date I gave.

**Stanley:** Yeah, um, when the Brotherhood, uh, came upon the scene, uh, the CPR property, uh, how did that happen? Was there a vote taken of, uh, the porters across the country?

**Clarence:** Yeah. There was-- There was a- there was an incident that really brought about which aroused the porters to seek protection by the B-- Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters.

**Stanley:** Yeah.

**Clarence:** It was an incident in which one Mr. Kendall, a porter, was accused of-of interfering with a female passenger.

**Stanley:** Yeah.

**Clarence:** And this-- From this accusation, Mr. Kendall was dismissed from the company.

**Stanley:** Oh, yeah.

**Clarence:** The Grievance Committee handled the case of Mr. Kendall and found that Mr. Kendall, a man of his integrity, a man with his integrity, a man of his stature, a man of his ability and-and honesty would not have gone to that extent. And therefore, the representatives asked the Brothers at their meeting, asked the porters at the meeting to choose-- make a decision then to choose whether they would want the Grievance Committee to represent them or they would want to be with the union.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** And that-- this meeting, the man unanimously consented to have the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters represent them-

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** -instead of the Grievance Committee.

**Stanley:** Do you know what the percentage of the vote in favour of the BSCP representing the porters was?

**Clarence:** It's about-- I think it was about 95% voted in favour.

**Stanley:** Uh-huh. Right. Did you vote?

**Clarence:** Yes, I voted.

**Stanley:** All right.

**Clarence:** In favour.

**Stanley:** Uh-huh. And you became a Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, did you?

**Clarence:** Yes.

**Stanley:** All right.

**Clarence:** Right about that time.

**Stanley:** Uh-huh. Alright, um, what, um, you joined which Division? Which Local of Brothers?

**Clarence:** I joined the Montreal Local.

**Stanley:** What was the-- what was the joining fee? Do you remember the joining fee?

**Clarence:** The joining fee was a dollar and a half when we started.

**Stanley:** And what were the monthly due?

**Clarence:** No, the joining fee was \$5 and the \$10. Joining fee was \$10 and the dues were a dollar fifty per month.

**Stanley:** All right. Now, um, once the CPR, uh, signed a collective agreement with the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, uh, I guess you were able to, uh, see a contrast in the working conditions and hours of, uh, hours of work-

**Clarence:** Yes.

**Stanley:** -and the wages? Can you describe for us the transition, the changes that took place once the collective agreement was signed?

**Clarence:** Yes, after the collective agreement was signed, uh, Management and the unions were able to negotiate, and then the-- and an increase was granted to the porters. Originally, the porters' top salary was \$105 provided he run in-charge as a conductor in-charge. He was an in-charge porter and he obtained the maximum amount of \$105. Ordinarily, his salary would be \$95 a month after three years.

**Stanley:** Was that your starting salary?

**Clarence:** No. My starting salary was 75-- \$78 a month.

**Stanley:** All right. Okay, we're speaking of the changes then.

**Clarence:** Yes. So, there were drastic changes after the Brotherhood intervened.

**Stanley:** Yeah.

**Clarence:** After the Brotherhood became the representative of the porters-

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** -which was a very difficult period for the Brotherhood and the porters.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** There were all kinds of obstacles and obstructions, impediments placed in the way of the porters and there are some...

**Stanley:** By?

**Clarence:** Management. And some were even threatened with dismissal if they joined the Brotherhood.

**Stanley:** I see.

**Clarence:** It was a very tough fight for the Brotherhood-

**Stanley:** Uh-huh.

**Clarence:** -but they succeeded when this law granting workers to become members of the union of their choice.

**Stanley:** Federal law, wasn't it?

**Clarence:** Yes. And this was--

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** This-this was the end of Management interfering with-

**Stanley:** Uh-huh.

**Clarence:** -the man becoming unionized.

**Stanley:** Uh-huh. I'm wondering if you've exhausted the changes in conditions? Uh, how many hours did, um, did you work before the union came in and after the process?

**Clarence:** Well, uh, ordinarily we worked-- should I say approximately 24 hours-- 23 hours-- 20 hours a day and three hours we got for, to sleep, you were subjected to be called, in the event that something to intervened.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** So sometimes a porter was kept up all night, depending on the circumstances.

**Stanley:** So, when the-the pay increased, the hours of work were reduced then? Were there any other benefits of having the Brotherhood?

**Clarence:** Well, sometime later after union was able to develop a-a-a working program-

**Stanley:** Yeah.

**Clarence:** -and management had signed it. The, uh, the porters' wages were increased and the hours of work were lessened.

**Stanley:** Okay. We'll cover that.

**Clarence:** Yes.

**Stanley:** I'm wondering if there were any other areas of change? For instance, uh, I have in mind, did those companies, uh, their treatment of the porter, were any different after the union came in?

**Clarence:** Yes. After the unions came in-- the union came in one of the-- One of the, uh, one of the crowning features of the agreement was that a porter should be given a fair trial.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** If you are charged with committing an offense the agreement stated that we should be given a fair and impartial trial.

**Stanley:** Yeah.

**Clarence:** And that meant a lot of benefits to the porters because in most cases they were charged and dismissed without havin' a hearing. The Management listened to the case and

dismissed according to their thinking, but in this case, after the Brotherhood came in, he had to give a-- Be given a fair and impartial hearing.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** And this management objected to vigorously.

**Stanley:** I see.

**Clarence:** But eventually they exceeded to the-the-

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** -wishes of the union.

**Stanley:** Was there any intimidation during the organizing period on the part of the company?

**Clarence:** Yeah.

**Stanley:** To discourage organization?

**Clarence:** Well, I have- I have not really had-- I have not been involved with any, uh, threats, but from others, I've heard several complaints about being threatened with dismissal.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm.

**Clarence:** Or being disciplined if they became members of the organi-- union.

**Stanley:** Mm-hmm. But you're not aware of anybody who lost their job because of organizing the union?

**Clarence:** No. I cannot state-state specifically that someone had lost-- someone had lost his job because of being involved with, um, organizing the porters, the porters.

**Stanley:** Did you--

**Clarence:** I cannot state specifically.

**Stanley:** All right. Did the, uh, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters' presence generate any more respect for the individual porter from management, do you think?

**Clarence:** Yes, it certainly did, because they had to treat you as a worker. Formerly, you were treated as a, just a, uh, an article. An article of, uh, of the company.

**Stanley:** Right. Well, and I'd like to deal with who were the organizers, persons? Can you name the persons who were the key organizers in Montreal?

**Clarence:** Well, the key, one of the key organizers was Mr. Joe Jones.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** SR Louis. Marcus Dash.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** Patsy Wade. And involved two of us. Harry Dyer and quite a number- quite a number of interested porters.

**Stanley:** Were you?

**Clarence:** I was semi. I never got deeply involved as far as organizing them, but I, the porters, but I gave the organization my full support financially. And Thompson, T Thompson, he was one.

**Stanley:** I understand that your brother, Reverend Este, was, uh, very supported.

**Clarence:** Oh yes, he certainly did. He con- contributed a lot towards the accomplishment of the success of the Brotherhood.

**Stanley:** Yes. I understand, he was the only Black minister in Canada who gave the Brotherhood--

**Clarence:** Yeah. Their bless, his blessing- his blessing.

**Stanley:** --unadulterated support.

**Clarence:** Right, correct. That's correct.

**Stanley:** I heard him speak at the Los Angeles convention.

**Clarence:** Yes- yes- yes.

**Stanley:** It was beautiful to listen to him. Um, I—you've named a few...

**Clarence:** I am speakin' of the Montreal area, but I- I would like also to mention that we had some stalwarts in other areas, such as in Toronto, we had Mr. Stan Grizzle.

**Stanley:** Never heard of him.

**Clarence:** We had, uh, Mr. Johnson.

**Stanley:** Mr. Johnson.

**Clarence:** What's his name again? [unintelligible 00:42:34] with the bookstore.

**Stanley:** Eloy Johnson.

**Clarence:** Eloy Johnson, yes. We had Mr. Gairey, even though he was with Management, yet he advised the men, he always advised the Brothers when to join the Brotherhood. 'Cause he saw from the inside what was happening and he would always relate to the- to the Brothers that it would be better for them to become union members because they would be taken advantage of by Management if they did not join.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** We had also Petgrave, Mr. Petgrave.

**Stanley:** Oh yeah.

**Clarence:** And in Winnipeg, the city of Winnipeg, we had Mr. AR Blanchette. We had, uh, Simmons. We had, uh, Mr. Castello and in the Vancouver area, we had Collins, the boys, brothers, and a few others who carried the banner.

**Stanley:** How about Calgary?

**Clarence:** Well, I do not know much about Calgary, 'cause I've never had the opportunity to meet with the members there.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** Brothers there.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** But I think all the districts played an important part. [coughs]

**Stanley:** Yeah.

**Clarence:** All districts con- districts contributed--

**Stanley:** Yeah.

**Clarence:** --to the- to the success of the Brotherhood.

**Stanley:** Right, now, um, [background noise] um, can you, uh, evaluate for me?

**Clarence:** I would like to mention also that in this- in this- in this matter of-of, uh, concerning those who contributed to the success of this-- of the Brotherhood in Montreal, I should have mentioned Mr. Forray, George Forray, Mr. Joe Sealy, Mr. Hog and Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Clark and Sandy Lawrence. And, uh, there's so many of- so many of the Montreal men who took an active part, who wanted to see this thing through.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** Beacu- and so they gave it their full support.

**Stanley:** Alright. Mm-hmm. Can you evaluate for me, uh, oh, yes, before we leave that part. Well, the name has come up that, um, hasn't been mentioned, uh, too many times, and I'm wondering if you can tell me what his role was in the organizing? Charles Baldwin. Charlie Baldwin.

**Clarence:** Oh, Charlie Bald- yes. Charlie Baldwin from Toronto, oh yes. He was, uh, he was very-- he was very alert and fiery, uh, organizer.

**Stanley:** Right.

**Clarence:** He-he had many, uh, confrontations with Management over this, and I- and I don't know whether-- I think he had been dismissed or something because of that. I can't recall fully, but he was greatly involved and we have to give him much credit for his-- for the way he helped in bringing the union to a success.

**Stanley:** Right. Uh, okay. [telephone rings] Rock on Brother! [laughter]

**Clarence:** I would like to make mention also of the role played by Mr. Dash, Marcus Dash, who became very active in organizing the porters of Montreal. He would often meet the Brothers, the porters, and demand of them down payments on their joining fee, and from time to time, he would collect-

**[00:47:01] [END OF AUDIO]**