



Finnish
American
Historical
Archive
and Museum

**FINNISH FOLKLORE AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE GREAT
LAKES MINING REGION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT 1972-1978**

(Funded in part by the National Endowment For The Humanities)

F.F.S.C.G.L.M.R. DIGITIZATION PROJECT 2010-2011

*(Funded in part by the Keweenaw National Historic Park Advisory
Commission / U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service)*

CONDITIONS FOR USE OF .PDF TRANSCRIPT:

Finlandia University, formerly Suomi College, holds the exclusive copyright to the entirety of its Finnish Folklore and Social Change in the Great Lakes Mining Region Oral History Collection, including this .pdf transcript which is being presented online for research and academic purposes. Any utilization that does not fall under the United States standard of Fair Use (see U.S. Copyright Office or Library of Congress), including unauthorized re-publication, is a violation of Federal Law. For any other use, express written consent must be obtained from the Finnish American Historical Archive: archives@finlandia.edu.

PREFERRED FORMAT FOR CITATION / CREDIT:

"Maki, John", Finnish Folklore and Social Change in the Great Lakes Mining Region Oral History Collection, Finlandia University, Finnish American Historical Archive and Museum.

Note: Should the Finnish American Archive be a resource for publication, please send a copy of the publication to the Archive:

Finnish American Historical Archive and Museum
Finlandia University
601 Quincy St.
Hancock, Michigan 49930 USA
906-487-7347 - fax: 906-487-7557

Foreman, Willard
August 1, 1972

Wallace Anderson

<u>TOPICS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Family History	1	
Fulton Exists before Mohawk	1	
Willard works for \$2 per day in a Lumber Camp	2	
Works for C&H Mine at 16 yrs.	2	
Reminiscing about old Teachers and Faculty	2	
Not much Discipline in Schools	3	
Stillwall Wars	4	
Education - Not Backed	4	
Details of 1913 Strike and 1921 Recession	5	
Cutting Copper - First Job	6	
Depression - 30's	6	
WPA	7	
Willard hurt in Mining Accident - Cave In	8	
Runs for Mine Inspector - 58	8-11	
Future for Keweenaw County	9	
Taverns and Moonshinge during Depression	9	
Stealing Coal - Common	10	
Politics	11	
Amusements in 20 and 30's	12-15	
Sports	13	
Boarding Houses for Miners	14	
Conglomeration of Nationalities	15	
Churches	15-16	
Pastors - laymen	15	
Fringe benefits from Mining Companies	16	
Silver Theft in the Mine	16	
Exploration Pits	17	
State and Federal Property	18	
Copper Falls Mining Company	18	
96 Taverns - 18 Churches	19	
Holidays	19	
Peddlers	20	
Close Relationships between Neighbors	21	

Interview with WILLARD FOREMAN, Keweenaw County Mine Inspector,
Allouez, Michigan, 1 August, 1972 by Wallace E. Anderson

Wally: Willard, as we were talking before, let's get a little bit about your background, family, and what have you. Was your dad born in this country?

Willard: Ya. Manhattan. On the old road, near the creek.

Wally: Over near Phoenix.

Willard: well, no, it'd be close to the Cliffs, the town of Manhattan, it was right near a bluff.

Wally: I think you said he was born in 1862, during the Civil War.

Willard: Ya

Wally: And your mother?

Willard: Born in Hancock.

Wally: And what nationality?

Willard: My mother was English and my father was Irish and English.

Wally: And your grandfather had been in this country originally also?

Willard: No, they weren't, they were from Europe.

Wally: Your grandfather, you were telling me, was a mailman.

Willard: He was a mailman. He worked for Copper Harbor/ ^{horsebacking.} And the other ^{grandfather} ~~guy followed~~ the blacksmith.

Wally: I think it was the pony express then.
I wonder, that road you go in, where 41 is now, is that the same route that they used to use in those days?

Willard: No, that route from Mohawk down to the Cliff, that route was put in after, it was the old road, you had half-way house on the old road, you had Shoyers Half-way House there.

Wally: Just follow where the Cliff road is now.

Willard: Yes, where the Cliff road is.

Wally: How about it north from there, towards Medora and Mandan?

Willard: well, they were all ridge up there only now they re-routed it in some places, you can see that.

Wally: Your dad, you said, or you were born in Fulton?

Willard: Ya, Fulton location

Wally: And that was the old lumbering.

Willard: Ya, that was existing before Mohawk ever existed.

Wally: And your dad was working then?

Willard: Ya, for Baldwin. Driving team

Wally: Fulton was in existence before Mohawk?

Willard: Sure. The original road would cut off where 3 and 4 mine was and cut through it's original road into Fulton. And it wasn't until way after Mohawk was started that that road goes through Mohawk to Ahmeek.

Wally: In what year were you born then?

Willard 1910.

Wally: Did you go to school then in Fulton?

Willard: Mohawk

Wally: And from Mohawk, then where?

Willard: I started to work when I was 15 in the woods, I couldn't get a job for the C&H or the mining company because I was too young; I started to work in the woods for \$2 a day. Get up at 4 o'clock in the morning, we'd leave Mohawk with the horses at 6 o'clock, I'd drive a single horse, and we'd quit half-past 4 in the night and I'd get home about 7 o'clock; they'd fill up that box of wood, I'd bring it around to Bumbletown or Ahmeek or somewheres, I couldn't leave it just there; I had to deliver the wood and I'd get home about 7-8 o'clock at night, go right to bed and get up at 4 o'clock in the morning. It was a long day!

Wally: 2 bucks a day. What kind of wood were you hauling?

Willard: Cordwood for people's homes.

Wally: For burning in stoves and things.

Willard: Yes. AT 16 I got a job in the mine for C&H. At first I worked 2 months on surface digging that ditch from Kearsarge 4 to Allouez here. In 1926 I was up there breakwater. Up until that time you had to walk probably for one block, the people all had to carry their water, from Allouez to this block.

Wally: Until 1926?

Willard: mm hm. If you were living in this house then, you'd be carrying your water from up by Hebbard's, that's where the well was. Everybody in this block had to go there and get their water.

Wally: Let's go back just a minute to when you were going to school. Was there any one school that you can remember? The teachers that struck you?

Willard: Well, Mrs. Gill, she was about the oldest one, she just passed away a few years ago, and Mrs. Waters taught me.

Wally: That's Mrs. Waters, the one that lives in Allouez now?

Willard: Yes.

Wally: She retired here?

- Willard: 7th grade. And then we had this Mr. Daley, was a Superintendent and Mr. Winters was a principal and he had one leg and they claim he was part Indian. He was quite a man though.
- Wally: He was, huh?
- Willard: Good man in the bush on snowshoes
- Wally: I'll be darned! With one leg?
- Willard: you bet! He could travel
- Wally: What'd he have, a wooden leg?
- Willard: He used a wooden leg out in the woods but then around school he never used it
- Wally: How was discipline in the school back in those days?
- Willard: Well, there wasn't much discipline; in the morning we'd come in and dump the ink out of the inkwell, out through the window, and we'd use it for a spittoon all day.
- Wally: A spittoon?
- Willard: Ya. Most of us chewed right in school!
- Wally: How big of a school? How many students did they have there? In Mohawk?
- Willard: Well, in Mohawk we had 2 schools filled right up and then they had the old Apostolic church, that little church that used to be in Mohawk, later on they turned it into a restaurant and we used to have to go there and there was no bathroom or nothing and no water or nothing; if you wanted a drink you had to throw on your coat and hat, or if you wanted to go to the bathroom you had to run over to the big school. And every room was filled to capacity. Because there was a lot of people in Mohawk and Fulton in them days. In one school in Mohawk we had 14 rooms with them both schools. Very huge rooms.
- Wally: Did you have any students that were starting in the school system^{up}/there that couldn't speak English?
- Willard: Ya, you'd strike some, off and on.
- Wally: Either Finns or Swedish?
- Willard: Well, there were some Germans came there, Hungarians, and stuff like that.
- Wally: Did they have any kind of a formal program to teach them English or did they just have to pick up English on their own?
- Willard: Pick it up on their own!
- Wally: It must have been pretty rough!
- Willard: The teachers didn't have too much time with all them kids and they were pretty rough kids in them days!

- Wally Do you think they were as rough then as they are today?
- Willard: Well, no vandalism, you know, we have our stillwall wars and Fulton and Mohawk always had their dividing line, the railroad tracks.
- Wally Did the different nationalities get along in school? Or did they have fights between-
- Willard No, the nationalities always had falling out in the part of Fulton I lived, they used to call it Hungarian town, I think there's about 15 houses and 10 different nationalities and I think they got along better than the Upper Fulton because that mostly consisted of Finnish people. I'd say 75% of upper Fulton were Finnish. They had 2 streets where you had mixed nationalities and all the rest of the streets were all Finnish people.
- Wally: I've talked to a number of people about it and it seems like the students who were of different nationalities all seemed to get along pretty good together but there was more fighting between students from different towns.
- Willard: Oh, yes, you see that. Yes. Like I say, Fulton and Mohawk. That was considered 2 separate towns because the railroad track was the dividing line. Dinnertime we still had our wars; Mohawk would come down to that dividing line and we'd stay on our side, we'd get late for school when we couldn't cross the track, they'd hold us back or something like that.
- Wally I know Hancock and Houghton is something like that--fighting on the bridge there.
- Willard: Well, either lot of times your kids, you'd go to Ahmeek you'd wind up in a fight or stillwall wars or something, you stepped out of your own community--
- Wally: Within the town or within the groups or nationality, they seemed to get along alright, they didn't seem to have much of a problem that way; how about parents in the homes and that at that time, do you think they were stricter?
- Willard: Oh, you had the rivalry more than you get today
- Wally: Did they have many newspapers, and what have you, back in those days coming around?
- Willard: Not too much, no, there weren't too much newspapers. We didn't have lights in our house until 1921 or '22; never did have running water.
- Wally How about books and stuff?
- Willard Well, yes, we had books and stuff, a big family Bible.
- Wally Did parents "tend to back" the education program?
- Willard: Not too much in them days. Kids quit school young; they started late and quit young.
- Wally Everybody looking for a job then?
were for
- Willard: Well, lots of them/advanced/their age, you know, kinda' big, if they're 7 years old when they got in school, they'd put their age up to 8 or 9, that way they could quit at 14 and get a job. They'd really be 14 but would be 16 otherwise.
- Wally: Ya, I imagine a lot of that went on.

- Willard: I remember one jubilator, he was only 15 when I was 16, he was quite large for his age and they advanced his age in school that time, before the company would hire us we had to go to the superintendent of schools and get our release from him. So if the age was advanced in the school, the superintendent didn't know anything about it and get a job. There was no workman's compensation, if you got hurt or killed, you were out on your own!
- Wally: Ya. None of that came along until later
- Willard: You weren't allowed to be jubilator until after you're 18 and after 18 then you could go on different jobs in the mines and up to that, you just a worker.
- Wally: Let's talk about your jobs here in a few minutes, but before we do, you weren't old enough during the strike, the 1913 strike, to be involved, I know that you've talked to an awful lot of people that were involved in it, so you've got some ideas about it.
- Willard: I was only 3 years old. My dad was involved. I have a faint memory of them, police or what, but they had their camp right by our house, not too far from our house and they'd be parading around, I was only 4 years old. they'd be parading around with the horses in the towns.
- Wally: Another thing that I wanted to find out was, after this 1913 strike was settled, things kind of started to go down hill.
- Willard: Well, that's when the people started leaving the Copper Country.
- Wally: A lot of people left the Copper Country, I know, for different areas of this country, and in interviewing some people I've also heard a number of them went to Canada and Sudbury and the mines up there to work.
- Willard: During the '13 strike?
- Wally: The 1913 strike, ya.
- Willard: Well, that year, say, your Hungarians and that, they went to Gary, Indiana.
- Wally: To the steel mills?
- Willard: To the steel mills. And some of them wound up in the Iron Country.
- Wally: In talking to these people, have you ever heard, did a number of them go back to the old country?
- Willard: I doubt it, not too many of them. Some of them might have made a trip and came right back again.
- Wally: Again we were talking to some of those people and they said some of the families moved back to Russia, for instance, Finnish and from that northern area of Russia where the Finns were mixed up with the Russians, that some of the families from this area had gone back there.
- Willard: I never---
- Wally: I know a number of them did go back during the 1930's, the depression.
- Willard: Then you had another recession in 1921 when we lost a lot of people around here, it never affected Mohawk mines; they continued to work the C&H mines until close. It affected a lot of people.

Wally: In 1921?

Willard: Ya.

Wally: Well, what did these people do when they were living up here and those mines shut down, we didn't have the welfare programs back then that we do now--

Willard: Well, my dad during the '21 shutdown made that road from Gay to Lake Linden and he was driving team down there and he got a dollar-a-day clear.

Wally: A dollar-a-day!

Willard: Sure, and he'd "bum" a ride home on the train on Saturday nights and hitch-hike back to Gay on Sunday nights. He stayed at Dion's lumbercamp. And then later on he went into Kimmunen's Boarding house in Gay.

Wally: must have been a little bit rough on people!

Willard: Well, most people had their gardens, their pigs and chickens, and your cows and you sort of tried to help yourself in them days, vegetables --

Wally: About everybody in Allouez had a cow, or two, back in those days

Willard: There were a lot of cows even--well, I've been in Allouez since '41 or '42 and there were a lot of cows in Allouez.

Wally: To get back--you started in as a drill boy, in the mines?

Willard: Mm hmm, cutting copper. That was my first job

Wally: Cutting copper?

Willard: Cutting fissures, mass copper.

Wally: And how do you have to go about doing that?

Willard: Well, there's your separate machine. You'd open up this ore, or mass copper started right from surface and we'd drill 5,000 feet, that's one continuous piece of mass and you'd open it up and then you'd take your width for your shaft on where you figure you could hang and then you'd drill it out and You had 4 separate miners on each shift doing that. Most of the time you were in an abandoned area that a miner or nobody else around. One time I worked 800 feet away from

Wally: And then did you work in the mines continually until --

Willard: Well, I worked from '26 to '32 when I got laid off.

Wally: That was during the depression.

Willard: And I got re-hired in--just about starting '36 and then I worked right until '56 when I got hurt.

Wally: Back in the depression years, back in the '30's, how did people made a go of it?

Willard: Not very well, but we never starved but it wasn't the best. Like I said, we always had our gardens and

Wally: How about WPA and that?

Willard: Well, WPA days, that wasn't too bad. We were getting back to prosperity then, I think I was getting 44-a-month on WPA and then I got, I was a tool clerk, I think I got 48-a-month or something like that. That's before I went back into the mine.

Wally: You went back in in '36?

Willard: Ya, when C&H started laying-off in '31, they had 8,000 employed I think and when I started work, there was only 600 of us. When the boss would come around, he'd say, Willard, step on them, there's 7,000 men up there waiting for a job. They'd turn around and tell you, well, that skip where the grease is freezing on the wheels there, it was rough on the guys when they start, no unions or nothing! All the miners looking for work, just fortunate to be one of them who got a job. Well, when you figure it out, why I only gained about \$20 a month by working, the wages were small, and I was still a tool clerk for WPA. They figure all your extras you got on WPA, like clothing, your fuel and everything, I think I gained about 20-25 a month just by working 26 days a month.

Wally I figure that's working for less than a-dollar-a-day. Not much to gain.

Willard: To gain, ya.

Wally: Of course you had to work on WPA, too

Willard: Well, WPA wasn't too bad. The depression was rough work when I first started, they treated us worse than cattle, you get about 40 guys in an open truck and put a snowplow in front of it, you'd ride to Copper Harbor in about 25 below zero, it was rough!

Wally: What were they going to use all of them up there for?

Willard: Well, first you had to take 3 hours to find where you're going to put the ditch, shovel the snow, and then it would take 2 hours to break the frozen earth, by that time it was getting close to quitting time. We start doing the same thing all over the next day. Digging ditches, in mid-winter.

Wally: and they hauled you all up there by truck?

Willard: Open trucks. And I rode on an open-bed trailer that Keweenaw County Road Commission got yet, about froze standing up on that open bench

Wally I imagine it could get pretty chilly.

Willard: Chilly and pretty rough riding, too! They can keep them good-old days for my part! They weren't so good.

Wally: How about some of the people, though. Some of them must have had it pretty good there in those days, they had a little money.

Willard: Well, if you have a little bit of money they wouldn't give you any work. You had to actually use up all your money.

Wally No, but I mean if some of these people who were a little wet and a little better off and had a business of some kind that didn't go with depression, money being scarce if you had any money, they must have lived pretty well.

Willard: If they did, they never showed it, much. Although some of them in Keweenaw there worked on different jobs and when WPA come in, they couldn't get a job with WPA, they had to use up this money they had coming I think we were getting \$11.25 a month to live on, 4 of us, and then they

and a dollar-and-a-quarter a month cash.

I walked up town every day to buy a ham so I could save 15¢

Wally: That's what, about 3 miles?

Willard: No, that's from Fulton, 6 miles.
So we walked 12 miles to save 15¢.

Wally: That reminds me when I first got in the army making \$21 a month. We never had enough money either after they took everything out of our pay, laundry and we'd walk 5 miles into town all the time to save a dime streetcar fare.
Well, how long did you work in the mines, Willard?

Willard: '26 to '32 and '36 to '56, then I got hurt. I was off work for 2 years.
Back injuries and head injury, ribs busted.

Wally: That was in a mining accident?

Willard: Ya, cave-in. No. 3 Ahmeek.

Wally: Was anybody else hurt with you at the same time?

Willard: 2 other guys but they weren't hurt bad as I was.

Wally: What happened anyway?

Willard: It was a cave-in, just fortunate that it caved in the right way, I got left in like a doghouse, one rock that was on top of my back was 6 ton, they measured it, the weight was all on me; when it started caving in, it knocked me down, there was a huge rock there and another huge rock came down and rested on top of the one so I was left in there, until they dug me out.

Wally: And after going through a cave-in you still go down in all the mines as an inspector.

Willard: Well, in '58 I ran for Mine Inspector

Wally: Aren't you leary about going back down?

Willard: Oh, yeah, it was pretty rough to start but I got used to it.

Wally: I don't know if I'd go back if something like that happened.

Willard: It never bothered me. I been in a lot of cave-ins, helped to dig them out and men out of them.

Wally: Well, what do you think about the future up here? Think mining will ever come back?

Willard: Well, it'd never come back if we go back to the old method and the ore really ain't

high enough around here to be feasible to mine, I think if they'd come into this liquid mining, which I hope to see, I should think there's only 15% of the copper taken out of Keweenaw County.

Wally: Think there's any other industry that could get started up here?

Willard: Not too much because your timber is all used up

Wally: Ya, I think the only thing you hear talked about in that respect is tourists,

Willard: Not too much a future for the people in the county, though

Wally: What have we got in the county now?

Willard: People.

Wally: About 2,000? A far cry from what it used to be

Willard: Ya. Mohawk has had 11,000.

Wally: I know we were talking about Eagle River a couple weeks ago, what Eagle River used to be.

Willard: Well, they claim there were between 26 or 27 taverns, 6 breweries, but you know, it's strange how the town of Allouez never did have a tavern.

Wally: Never?

Willard: Never! Phillipville had it, the mining companies put restrictions on their camps "no taverns". Mohawk never had a tavern as long as I can remember.

Wally: What was the reason for that, do you think?

Willard: I don't know, Wolverine, Kearsarge, never had a tavern, Ahmeek Village had taverns but that was village property, deeded land, but you take like Painesdale and Trimountain, Baltic, all of them, they never had a tavern, all property

and there's no taverns like in Osceola, or Swedetown or Rambaultown, lot of blind pigs, I mean you could buy a drink during depression, they say in Rambaultown the only place you could buy a keg of moonshine was the schoolhouse. I can remember--I can name a lot of places in Mohawk where you could buy moonshine but you never went to a tavern there, there were a lot of blind pigs in Fulton and Mohawk.

Wally: I wonder what the reason behind it was?

Willard: I don't know, they never allowed it

Wally: Of course, the mining company has always been that way about anything coming in and starting a business

Willard: They restricted the business like Petermann controlled Keweenaw, like Petermann's Store in Wolverine, Allouez, Mohawk and Gay. I don't know if they control that store in Pheonix, too. They'd have a little candy store where they sold just candy and pop and stuff like that, didn't have any markets or anything. In Mohawk they allowed the Foley's to have that meat market, outside of that, all you had was ice cream parlors.

Wally: Did they have company stores?

Willard: No, they were just operated by Petermann.

Wally: It's funny that they allowed just one man like that.

Willard: Different mining companies would allow different stores to come, there probably was some company stores, I don't know, we never went to Keweenaw, not that I know of, back in the '90's, could have been before. Its' Fulton, the shipping point, that's where the railroad came in. Mohawk got the supplies and Petermann's supply store got all that freight from there and then your fuse and all this came in from Eagle River, fuse factory,

roundhouse, big coal dock.

Wally: Well, there's nothing left there anymore, is there?

Willard: I remember Mohawk when they had at least 4 coal docks, one coal dock for each mine there, thousands of tons of coal there, for the whole year, then when they'd fill up this car and push

4-5 boilers, push, fill that car and push it by hand, A lot of people got their fuel for nothing them days because the coal car was pretty handy,

Wally: This wasn't the only place that this happened.

Willard: I can recall one ^{family} ~~time-we~~ moved in Fulton there, when ^{they} ~~we~~ moved in there they had bought 2 ton of coal and lived there for about 15 years and they moved out, they had about 12 ton.

Wally: Never bought anymore in between.

Willard: Their fence was right against the coal car. They had 11 kids, just keep passing them chunks and you get a big pile in a hurry.

Wally: Ya, we did the same thing when we lived in the suburbs of Chicago, during the depression years. The Illinois Central ran right in back of our house but it was on an embankment, about 50 feet up there, and kind of sloped sides, well practically everybody who lived there and had a yard along that embankment, used to go couple miles down the track and these long coal trains would be coming in to Chicago into the different plants, and we'd get on the coal car and line up the big chunks of coal, the great big chunks, on the edge of the coal car, and you got off near your backyard and started pushing it over and it rolled down the embankment right into your yard and you'd jump off the train, run down and throw it down in the basement. Those cars would be getting into Chicago they'd be half-full, by the time they got into the manufacturing areas, with everybody taking coal as it went down the line off the darn things, at

I'd call

Willard: I can recall, after Mohawk shut down, /Petermann and get their coal in to the schools and that and the cars would come in in the afternoon with a big heap on but you go there the next morning, you couldn't see that big heap. That was it.

Wally: We had to do the same thing

- Wally: I can remember my dad doing that. But then they started to put railroad detectives on riding those trains and they got a little bit risky because they'd shoot before they'd ask any questions, just chase everybody off. Willard, when did you first vote for president, do you remember?
- Willard: '22 or something like that.
- Wally: And when did you first run for public office yourself?
- Willard: I started in '48, I got defeated, then I got defeated in '52, and then I got in in '58 when I won.
- Wally: For the same job--mining inspector? And you've been mining inspector ever since '58?
- Willard: Yes, this is my 14th year.
- Wally: Did politics have a lot to do with running these towns up around here back in those years?
- Willard: Politics? The mining companies run it.
- Wally: Well, the mining companies but/the mining companies and local elected officials more or less mining company men?
- Willard: Oh, yes, always your supervisors, they were almost always controlled by your mining companies.
- Wally: County supervisors?
- Willard: They controlled it
- Wally: That's one thing we got away from anyway.
- Willard: I remember the first time I voted, the ol' mining captain in Mohawk, he was on the election board that time, supposed to be out their mining, officials were on the election board, and I asked for a Democratic ballot, I said "Gimme a Democratic ballot", he looked at me and said, "your father voted Republican all your life, your brother voted Republican, who are you, you little 'bum'", he said, "the first time you're voting, you're voting Democrat", I said, "gimme that ballot" and he had that against me for a long time because I worked for him afterward on depression and he still had that against me because I voted Democrat.
- Wally: Did you hear the one on the radio a few days ago, that said that, when you had to ask for the ballots, that the mining company had a guy sitting there and if you didn't vote the way they wanted, ask for the ballot, that you got "canned" the next day?
- Willard: I heard my dad say that, he voted in Mandan and they never called him a Superintendent of Mines, at that time, they called him a "mining agent" and there was a democrat ballot there but your time was right on top of it so if you asked for it, you automatically got your time right with it. You were out
- Wally: They really controlled the elections!
- Willard: Well, I think up until 1932 I think you had about 4 Democrats in Keweenaw County. When the Democrats in that '32 election for Roosevelt, well, they started sweeping the Democrats.

Wally: That's when the big change came. During the depression years. How about the attitudes up around this area, about crime and police and what Have you, back in those years? You know what it's like today.

Willard: We didn't have much crime in them days, you might have a guy get arrested for getting drunk or somebody for selling moonshine or something like but actually crime, I can't remember too much of that.

Wally: Did most people have respect both for the law, judges,

Willard: They had a lot of respect for the law.

Wally: And a woman sheriff, didn't they in Keweenaw County for awhile?

Willard: Yes, she just died, buried 2 weeks ago.

Wally: I heard

Willard: Her husband died and she took over and I think she had 2 terms on her own

Wally: I think she had about 10 years or so, something in total like that

Willard: 4-5 terms probably, she was sheriff up until '46

Wally: That was kind of strange, wasn't it, lady sheriff. She didn't have to do much patrolling or anything like that herself, did she?

Willard: No, but she had her deputies, well, them days, there weren't too many cars.

Wally: Did they ever have any other big controversies up here, political things, over roads, or --

Willard: No, not too much

Wally: What did most people do for amusements up here? In the '20's and '30's?

Willard: You had your dance halls.

Wally: You didn't have the television to watch

Willard: Ahmeek had a dance hall, we had a dance hall Ojibway Pine Grove, the ol' school house in Ojibway, the dance hall in Eagle River, Gay,; you had a dance hall in Fulton.

Wally: Did they have local orchestras, or band?

Willard: Sure. A lot of fights. Each town had their own corner to sit in.

Wally: Their own corner?

Willard: You bet. In Gay dance hall, you'd see Ahmeek in one corner, probably Lake Linden in another corner, it generally wound up in fights, though.

Wally: But it was mainly towns, huh? Rather than nationalities fighting?

Willard: Towns. We had some wild boys, like buffalos,

run around with sawed-off shotguns, they was bouncers there, that was in the late

- Wally: I never heard of that one. I've heard of Helltown there
- Willard: Well, Helltown, I don't know if that's true or not, but they say Helltown was the roughest town this side of the streets, in its heydays.
- Wally: Ya, I've heard this.
- Willard: There was some new homes built in, all the original homes are town down, there is new homes in there, real nice roadway.
- Wally: I'd like to get up in there one of these days.
- Willard: When you make that trip, I'll take you in. Ya, there was few mines in there, they never went into much production, one did, There's a narrow gauge railroad in there, about 18" wide, the rail you can still see about 6' of rails there in Fulton.
- Wally: Leonard Kingstrom down here, he was involved in playing in lot of those bands and stuff in those dances, I guess, back in those years
- Willard: Ya, and then you had the Davidson Brothers from Allouez had their own band and the Kingstroms finally had a band and Nordstrom family, just families had their own bands.
- Wally: Ya, you know, it's hard to picture because everybody today is either, you'd go to a movie, or you watch television
- Willard: Oh, we had movies in them days, in Mohawk we had a theatre; in Ahmeek, we had a theatre; then the next year from there, then we had to go to Calumet. In my days there must have been 2-3, Laurium had a theatre.
- Wally: Dances were the main thing, huh?
- Willard: Dances, dance until 4 o'clock; these mining companies, you go back, well, after the turn of the century, the mining companies were all great for sports. They'd give anybody played sports a little better grade of work like in Mohawk, the mining company built that ice arena, the indoor ice arena, whoever liked the guy, the pay was \$30 rent and that includes their heat, their water, lights and everything.
- Wally: We're trying to get another building up there now for an indoor ice rink in Mohawk, I don't know if it's going to work or not.
- Willard: Ya, I played hockey sweeper
And then when Michigan Tech would come and play there, all of us sweepers had to go sit on their seats to keep warm until the bigshots from Tech come there to sit down. Never got no pay. We were allowed to watch the hockey games for nothing, and practice hockey and play hockey on Saturdays. We had a lot of outdoor ice rinks.
- Wally: Ya, they were scattered all over, weren't they?
- Willard: Actually I think the only outdoor rink today that got started back in the '30's, '30-'31, I helped to build that, is still operating and ^{never missed a} ~~used every~~ year since about the only one that I can recall up here.
- Wally: Where? Which one is that?

- Willard: Fulton. I was living in Fulton at that time. It was built then, on the side street there, never
- Wally: Wasn't Paddy Jaaskelainen involved in quite a bit of sports back in those days?
- Willard Boxing.
- Wally Up here?
- Willard: Ya, he boxed here and in Chicago, all over, Milwaukee. Back in about '27 or '28 a sports promoter come up here, a lot of these guys trained, I seen Dempsey in Calumet
- Wally: He did?
- Willard: He had brothers
There was a fighter from California came up all the way to fight; in 1928 when Jack Dempsey was up here fighting in what they call the Armory today
- Wally: Sports must have been pretty popular then.
- Willard: sports. You'd hire a special streetcar to go to Houghton to watch hockey games, and *on hockey night* there'd be about 3 streetcars
They said the mining companies were pretty good. They built that ballpark in Mohawk; we had a cricket park in Mohawk, if you've ever watched cricket,
- Wally: Ya, I watched it over in England when I was over there.
- Willard: Always make sure you got a lunch with you
- Wally: ^{it} These Cornish miners, did they stay over here, for quite a long time, cricket?
- Willard Ya, it died down between the middle '20's, I think, in Mohawk it was really a top team. I recall when Painesdale come here, they got Painesdale out, we started Saturday dinnertime, we got Painesdale out about 3 o'clock in the afternoon or 4 o'clock, we played right until dark that night, then they continued playing the following day. The mining company put this slab of concrete in there for us,
- Wally That's the first time I heard mention of it, it would be only natural with all the Cornish and everything coming from over there, that they would play.
- Willard: Most of your miners all start off with Cornish, Welsh, different nationalities come in but really your original miners were all Cornish; all your bosses even when I started work were Cornish.
- Wally: Did much of these miners live in boarding houses?
- Willard Well, they claim in Allouez here, on top of Bumbletown there half-way out, there was one boarding house there with 100 men in it. That time the old Allouez worked 7 days a week, and 10-hour shifts. So if you lost a shift during the week, you slept on the floor 'cuz the guy who was working wouldn't get out of that bed for you. You had a hundred boarders
- Wally: Kept the bed warm all the time, huh? 24 hours a day!
- Willard: Ya. They had 10-hour shifts, 7 days a week, there was no stopping. All the

Wally: Well, I spose there must have been a number of those boarding houses

Willard: Well, every town had em.

Wally Did the mining company run any of them or were they all privately operated?

Willard: Mining company never, I would say they actually operated, but they give the people the homes to operate. When the Germans came here in '23, '24, '25, in Mohawk there, and Fulton, they give these people these homes to run, boarding houses. But before that time it was just individual. If it was Italian people, you had all Italian boarders, if they were Austrian or something like that,

Wally: Talking about recreation and stuff like that, did a lot of people belong to different organizations?

Willard: Well, you got a lot of lodges. I recall as a kid the Hungarian lodge there in Fulton, Mohawk, they'd parade the streets, all day Sunday in uniform, and then you'd have the Sons of St. Georges lodge, hell, these different nationalities had their own parks, there's a Hungarian Park between Mohawk and Ahmeek. They had a bandstand there.

Wally: I dādn't realize there were so many Hungarians.

Willard: Allouez had a lot of Hungarians up until that '13 strike. In fact the original people that started Bumbletown were the Irish. They were up on the hill before the Finnish people. When they took off then the Finnish people got in.

Wally: Of course Hungarians are supposed to be pretty close to Finns anyway!

Willard: I think there's what they call pig street, 5th street now, actually it was called pig street at that time, they had a lot of French in Allouez. It was a mixed-up town, this Allouez, French, English, Finns, Swedes,

Wally: Yet everybody seemed to get along pretty good together.

Willard: Yeh, they're mixed-ups now.

Wally: Did they all go to different churches? Or the same?

Willard: No, they all went to their own churches, there's 2 where I go, I can recall only 1 on top of the hill, that was the Apostolic Church, they claim that they used to have 2 up on top of the hill, and then you had the Methodist Church down below the hill; Ahmeek never did have a church until the early '30's, about 1930, they started building that Catholic Church in Ahmeek and it took the old boarding house from Allouez down here to build it.

Wally: Did they have a lot of pastors going around visiting homes, in those days, holding services in homes?

Willard: Well, I can recall even when I was a kid, in Mohawk, they had one Minister from Mohawk and Ahmeek, but each of them towns had 3-4 laymen as a pastor, there was so many people that a pastor couldn't take care of them all; I remember when my mother died in 1941, or '42, the day we buried her, the pastor was so busy. The pastors, I mean the laymen, would officiate at funerals.

Wally: Can you recall the names of any of the early ones?

- Willard: Well, you had Pastor Tink, Pastor Odgers, Pastor McGatten, he baptized me;
- Wally: What denominations were they?
- Willard: Methodists
- Wally: It must have been a real conglomeration, the different nationalities, the different religions,
- Willard: Only thing them days, Catholics and Protestants never got along -- religious-wise -- parents would try to steer you away, either one wasn't any good, you know.
- Wally: There's still a little of that today. It's not as bad. I can remember when I went to school, too, I went to a parochial school, the Lutheran School, a block away. There were fights all the time. Did the mining company ever lease land to the churches?
- Willard: Gave it
- Wally: Just gave it!
- Willard: Mining companies were pretty generous them days, for sports, churches,
- Wally: Actually when it comes right down to it, they had quite a few fringe benefits; the miners, didn't they, they had a library, swimming pool up there in Calumet, things like that, I imagine things were rough in one way but they tried to help.
- Willard: Whenever you wanted a piece of land to plant potatoes, they always gave you a piece of land to plant potatoes and never charged you for it. And like if you worked in the mine and needed tools, or after, you could go in any house and look up the bathroom, they're all for C&H pipes, all the fittings.
- Wally: I often wondered why there wasn't more theft of silver and stuff from the mining company,
- Willard: There was plenty! I recall even in the '20's, you'd see them cars coming up from Gay they always had the best cars
- He had a chauffeur's hat, big white gloves on, he had better car than the officials of Mohawk Mining Company, they were getting theirs all through the silver.
- Wally: Because some of that silver outcropping, was
- Willard: It never went through the mill, they had the best choice to pick it out,
- I don't know if that's the truth but I think it was just around 1919 or 1920 when there was a bunch from Ahmeek, stealing silver, bosses and all,
- Wally: Were they getting as much silver lately, when they shut down, as they did in those early days?
- Willard: No. See, usually the silver was closer to the surface. Seneca Mine did have a little bit of silver, they got 34 levels, but Mohawk, No. 5 and No. 6 was quite rich. And Ahmeek was rich. Kearsarge
- choice. *the people in the mill had the best*

that property today. And Allouez No. 1 and No. 2 had to go down 5200 feet to hit the lode. And this family, I think they're called Finnegan, owned that 20 acres of land. They could have started these mines right with the lode and worked down to the road and avoided the vertical shafts. That's when it became costly in the old Calumet conglomerate, they ran into the Tamarack property; when Tamarack started they had to start from their property, that's why they had to go down 4-5,000 feet to get the lode.

Wally: This guy from West Virginia you were telling me about, did he

Willard: Well, he sold out but he had gotten this through the war. property in Keweenaw County. family right near the Mountain Drive, right on the old military road,

Wally: Is there any more government land up here? in Keweenaw County available?

Willard: I wouldn't know, there's some state land in Keweenaw County off and on, there's patches here and there,

Wally: It'd be interesting to write to the federal government to see whether there is any, wouldn't it?

Willard: I don't know about federal property,

Willard: I do know that state-owned land, there is some state-owned land on that Phoenix road, I think there's

Wally: Is it available for sale?

Willard: I couldn't answer that question. I know on the Phoenix-road there's 2 exploration pits and that's state-owned land C&H had it up for exploration pit.

Wally: Quite a difference, half-a-century.

Willard: The most interesting mining, to me in Keweenaw County, has been right in Copper Falls. 45 years without having any buildings on surface, all but your mill.

Wally: That's the one we'll have to go visit, get some pictures

Willard: You built your house nearest where you could find the work. There was no transportation them days. According to the figures you got the that operated for about 45 years. you're down to about 1200 feet per acre,

Wally: Who did that belong to?

Willard: Copper Falls Mining Company.

Wally: Just Copper Falls Mining Company. Where did they haul the stuff to?

- Willard: Right to the mill. right to the mill There was no
or nothing.
- Wally: I know, the mill was right there. But then, their copper, once they got it,
once it had been milled, where did they haul it?
- Willard: I imagine they shipped it out by boat from Eagle Harbor.
Eagle Harbor that mill. The road is still there.
- Wally Probably that big old that they used to have in Eagle Harbor.
- Willard: I imagine, they shipped all that Pheonix
Eagle River; they had a big there, and I imagine that
Lake Manganese Copper Harbor
- Wally: It's really difficult to picture, you come up in this area today, the average
tourist for instance who comes up here, he knows that it was a mining area at
one time but he looks around and doesn't see it, much of anything, and try to
picture back when there were so many people and so many mines going full-blast
Calumet a pretty wide-open town at the time,
- Willard: they had 96 taverns, 18 churches
- Wally all them big stars from Broadway coming up
payday night must have been a rip-roaring night.
- Willard: John Sousa played in Calumet Theatre, C&H band shell there;
They had the best, C&H did, it began right down here;
- Wally: Did they do much parading on holidays and stuff?
- Willard: Well, I tell ya, 4th of July them days was really something! We all got a new
pair of overalls, then we got the train, Mohawk Mining Company had a picnic down
Gay, train with all the coaches, down there,
- Wally: Did the mining company put out free food?
- Willard: Well, yes, all your ice cream, and pop, and crackerjacks, and all that was for
the kids for nothing; we got a bang

Wally Ya but you could buy firecrackers,

Willard: Ya, but I mean your holidays were celebrated different

closely together;

I can remember back in Mohawk when Cornish people go around singing on Christmas Eve; they'd start off maybe 15-20 but as you went along, hit better houses, one dropped out here and have a few drinks, and when you got down to the other end of Mohawk, there weren't too many left in that group; them days when you killed a pig, that was celebration. A big day, especially the Hungarians they'd burn the hair off

Wally: Everybody did their own butchering?

Willard: Ya, most of them.

Wally: Why did they celebrate so much when they killed a pig?

Willard: Well, I went to one, I went there 7 o'clock in the morning, I got home the next day. We had to kill the pig, then we had to clean it, and we had to cut off all the lard and make the sausage, it was a big day.

Wally Everybody had to have a few drinks to keep going, as they were going along?

Willard: Oh, ya, you had the wine there, moonshine; you could smell that hair all over the town Just Hungarians, the rest of the nationalities

Wally: Was there any one particular time of the year that they used to do this?

Willard June to November

Wally: Did they have quite a few mixed marriages back in those days?

Willard: Wouldn't say, not too many, but there was.

come around with a horse, pick up old rubbers and bones and whatever you had, and you'd be all dirty and they'd dig in that bag and give you a big long stick of licorice, handling all that dirty rubber and bones happy for the next week you had to look for another old rubber or something, you get another stick of licorice the next week. And you had your fish peddlers come around blowing their horn, we knew there was a fish peddler out there, your baker trucks would come by the house 3-4 times a week in Mohawk right from Calumet, good for 2 bits.

Wally: You don't see much of that any more.

Willard No, then your local people killed beef, peddled it

Wally: completely different! Would you rather go back to the old days or stay

Willard: no, I wouldn't.

Wally: They weren't quite so good as they used to say

Willard In the olden times, your neighbors were much closer together. I can recall in the olden days, when there was sickness or death in the family, your neighbors

chipped in. In them days they kept the body in the house for 3 nights, there was a lot of food consumed in those 3 nights, coffee, it was hard on the family; if there was sickness, the neighbors would stay there all night with you.

Wally: Can you remember any strange home remedies? For sickness in those days?

Willard: There was a local
bigger and he'd save that for

and he boiled this balsam bark and then he'd put it in jugs and then it was tonic for all winter.

Wally: Tonic, huh?

Willard: A couple spoons of that, I had 4-5 gallons

Wally: I wonder if it did any good.

Willard:

Suomi salutes the people who make this area great

Suomi College
Folklore Album

Father

- a. Abe Forman
- b. ~~Joe~~ Teamster
- c. Deceased

Mother

- a. Mary Ann Redstone
- b. Housewife
- c. Deceased

Father

- a. Frank Hall
- b. Miner
- c. Deceased

Mother

- a. Minnie Nancutt
- b. Housewife
- c. Deceased

Willard Forman

Father

- a. Allouez
- b. City Mine Inspector
- c.

Mother

- a. Allouez
- b. Housewife
- c.

Mary (Hall) Forman

Child

- a. Barbara Kauran
- b. Housewife
- c. Allouez

Child

- a. Willard Jr.
- b. Electrician
- c. White Pine

Child

- a. Edith Fretter
- b. Housewife
- c. Tamarack Mills

Child

- a. Frank
- b. Grocer
- c. Hubball

Child

- a. William
- b. Upholsterer
- c. Calumet

Child

- a.
- b.
- c.