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**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)*

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

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Nick Hendrickson  
John Palosaari  
July 14, 1972

Art Puotinen

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INTERVIEW BETWEEN:

INTERVIEWER: Art Puotinen

INTERVIEWEE: Nick Hendrickson  
John Palosaari

DATE July 1972 (14th)

- A: I'd like to begin, Nick, by asking you some questions about your family, that's one of the things we are interested in. Where the parents came from in the old country, and both of your parents came from Finland didn't they?
- N: They did. Father came from Kemi, and mother came from Loutaja; that's more down the south.
- A: Oh, I see. Did you say that your dad's-----you had a different name, didn't you?
- N: Pyrie----we went by the name of Pyrie----they changed his name here because they couldn't write it.
- A: Where at the mine?
- N: Ya, at the mills--they couldn't write it and they made him Hendrickson. Like Palosaari-----they made him Erickson.
- A: Oh, and when your dad came to this country----did he work at Tamarack Mills?
- N: No, he worked at first in the woods in Openloge, wherever that is----he chopped cord wood. Then he worked in Hancock in the Osceola Mill. And then when the Osceola Mill was moved over to Tamarack Mills, he moved over there and built a home. He stayed there until he went to Finland.
- A: When did he return to Finland?
- N: He returned to Finland in 1901. That is when he got back. He was down there ten years, so that must have been 1881 or something. He left here.
- A: Why did he decide to come back to America?
- N: He didn't like it. Mother especially didn't like it. She wanted to come back.
- A: And how many brothers and sisters did you have?

- N: I had two brothers and three sisters. And they are all dead except one brother down here by the Ameke Mill. He is the only one I have.
- A: Were you a miner?
- N: No, I was a mill hand, and in the end I was a fire inspector and taking care of the sprinklers, and all the steam and everything around the mill. I did all that stuff.
- A: How about some of the other brothers in your family, did they work in the mining----
- N: Yes, my older brother, William, the one I spoke about, he did; but the youngest one, he did too, but he worked in the office up here. Until the war started----the first world war, and he died in Tanquela, Georgia,----the flu, he was only about 22 or 23.
- A: Looking back to those childhood days---do you have any recollections of how it was? Were those pretty hard times, or was your dad able to have work most of the time so that he could make ends meet?
- N: Well--when my father was out of work, that was the end of the income. And we had cows and we used to make our wood out of the bush, our fire wood----I don't know, it didn't seem to be hard, we got along alright. Everything was cheap---we managed to get along alright. Everything now seems hard because everything is so expensive.
- A: Ya, that's right. How about if you got a real bad toothache or you got sick----did your folks take you to the doctor or did they have some kind of home remedy?
- N: No, we had the company doctors. They would come right to the home, but they wouldn't come for a toothache----but sickness. And if you had a toothache---you would have to pull it out yourself.
- A: Right, pull it out.
- N: We had company doctors and we they used to come right to the house.
- A: Well--that sounds like it was a pretty good deal.
- N: Sure it was----you only paid a dollar a month for the doctor so, that was cheap.
- A: But, if you had to go to the hospital, where did you go then?
- N: Well---we had to go----I had to go once because of a hernia---I went to Calumet and Hecala hospital, up here---it used to be on Calumet Avenue. And I was there for tweleve days and it cost a

me \$23 for the whole thing. It costs you more than that one day now.

- A: That's right---it's really gone up quite a bit. Did ah---you were around here then---how old were you when the copper strike took place.
- N: Gee whiz, I was young----I remember that copper strike well. There were none of them men in the union down there. Nobody asked them to join the union---the smelter workers or the mill workers---nobody joined the union. When the strike started all these fellows up here got help from the union---we didn't get no help from anybody.
- A: You didn't get any benefits at all?
- N: No, no, no. We didn't get anything at all. So when the rocks started to come down, we were ready to go to work. I don't know how old I was. After the strike, I worked down Lake Linden, I remember I got a job down there. I was going to go down there and ask them for a job, but they had indentions at the gate---and they asked me where I was going and I said I was going to look for a job --and they said, "You can't go down there, you have to go to the office and get someone to go down there with you." Well just then a Hadent came, I used to bring girl home who was a Hadent, and he knew me---and he said, "Hendrickson, you looking for something?" And I said, "Yes, I was going to go down and ask for some work." He said, to those fellows, "That's alright, I'll take care of it." And I went down with him--he took me to the superintendent's office, and I started to work that night. I went and got examined and started to work. How old I was 16 or 17.
- A: Well--that was a young age to get that type of work
- N: Ya, I started to work.
- A: Well--let's turn to Mr. Palosaari over here and ask him a few wuestions about his background. Did your parents come from Finland?
- J: Ya.
- A: Do you recall where they came from?
- J: Where they came from---my father came from Budacherity and my mother cam<sup>r</sup> from Divongerchey(sp) .
- A: Now, were those fairly in the same provence?
- J: Well--I don't know. I have never been to Finland. I don't know much about that country.
- A: Do you recall roughly when they came? Was that before 1900, or after?

J: Well--I don't know

A: Ya, and where did they settle? Did they settle in our area? Aura?

J: No, they came to the Copper Country----they came over here to Hancock----my father, he went to working in the woods----that's a long time ago. They was making hard wood, of course he had his family in Finland----and in a few years he had enough money and he ordered his family from Finland----a mother and one boy.

A: Now, that boy wasn't you----it was an older brother?

J: Yes, it was my older brother.

A: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Well--I had two sisters and three brothers, but one of the brothers got a kind of a TB around here in this country and he went down to Finland, and he died over there.

A: Oh, he got TB here, and went over to Finland?

J: Oh, he went to Finland----he never was in Finland. He thought for sure he would get some better doctors over there ----they didn't know much about TB over here in those days. Well, he never had a chance to get into the hospital over there in Finland before it was too late. He got to the place they call s \_\_\_\_\_ and that is the place he died over there.

A: Oh, that's too bad

J: Ya, he was only about eighteen years old, when he left.

A: When you dad was here working in woods-work----did you also have a little farm?

J: Well----afterwards he came from over there to Ripley, while he was working for this Clift's Foundry. Then he moved from over there to Arcadian---they call the place Sunshine. Then he got a farm over there, about forty acres. And in those days, for a ton of hay, you got about twenty dollars. And for potatoes, a dollar a bushel. And there was little villages that started around there like; New Town, Hill Town, and places like that.

A: Were they all Finnish settlements?

J: They were all Finn. And almost every house had a cow, and they used to manure, and give him a dollar to take that load away. So, they had to keep the farm clean. And that's the way he made the farm grow.

A: Oh, he took the manure from the other ~~farms~~ and brought it on Cows

the farm. Well that makes a lot of sense. Fertilizer makes the crops grow----

- J: Well--food in those days--like potatos, a bushel would go a dollar. Donny Luoto, he ~~se~~ would sell potatos in Hancock at the Cyprus store and he would get a dollar a bushel.
- A: What was the name of the store again?
- N: Zacherys'
- A: Was that a Finn?
- N: Ya, Zachery.
- A: Did the Finns---the Finnish farmers generally sell their produce to a Finnish grocery man?
- N: I think if his namd was Henry Zachery-- and he was from the over there in Hancock----and he had a store
- J: Well--for my part----if he had a little farm, he sold to Germans mostly. There were not Finnish stores there. And these Germans would buy all the stuff he had.
- A: How did the Germans and the Finns get along together?
- J: Good. They got along good, and the French got along good with us. We worked together.
- N: In those days around Ripley over there, the Irish and the Finn never got along. They used to have quite a fight all the time. They used to come from over near Quincy Hill towards Ripley---
- J: Maybe there was fault on both sides.
- N: My father was going to visit some friends over there on Quincy Hill, but there were a couple of Irish fellows waiting----and they thought to themselves that they were going to give him a licking--so he had one of these what they call a Boucô----it was just a sharp blade on there----and somehow he got on his back--the Irish on his back, on top----then they tried to cut the skin open---and they rolled down the hill. And they thought it was \_\_\_\_\_ and we got it into the court, you know. I don't know who---was there from Chassell, but he was down in Houghton--I think his name was O'Brian. The Irish thought they would put the blame on him and try to kill him. Well---my father told how the case was and he was a small man and couldn't do anything with two big Irish men. Well--the judge let him go and said you had better keep away from the Finns.
- J: He was an Irishman too, perhaps. That was an Irish name.
- A: He sounded as if he was a pretty fair judge

X:

- J: Yes, he was, I remember that.
- A: Well--that is very interesting that the Finns couldn't get along with the Irish, but they got along with the Germans and the French.
- N; Well--years ago----the Irish and the Finns got along good When they come to know each other.
- A: Well---was one of the problems that the Finns didn't speak too good English, or what?
- N: Well--I don't know, maybe that was it too.
- J: I don't know can't remember----I was never up there. But, I had two Irish Foremen---you know what a foreman is, don't you (yes) and they were the two best foremen I ever had. One was George Connely and one was Jack Harrington---they are both Irish names. They were the best foremen I ever had.
- A: Did you ever have any Finnish foremen?
- J: No, but I was a foreman myself.
- A: Oh, was that right? You must have worked pretty hard to get that position.
- J: Well---I was only eighteen when I was the foreman of the old Tamarack Mill. I had some Irishmen working for me and I had Germans and Finns. They got along good. I got along good with the boys. And if you have got a good bunch of boys, your job is easy too.
- A: Were these miners-----
- J: They were not miners---they were mill hands--
- A: Yes, mill hands, I'm sorry. Were the mill hands married or were they single?
- J: Some of them were married, but most of them were single.
- A: Did they live in company houses then?
- J: Some did, and some were living at their old folk's home --- when they were that young. They didn't have their own homes. I remember Ed Rodgers----they had quite a few children, he was Irish, he worked in there and he was a good man too.
- A: Did any of the Finnish boys or girls or men and women get married to Irish boys or girls or French?
- N: Oh. not in those days.

J: I don't remember it ever.

A: Not in the early days, hey. Most of the Finns---if they got married they married their own nationality.

A: In those early days, do you remember anything about the church work of the Finns?

N: Yes, we had what they called a temperance hall. We didn't have a church. We used to have a minister come over there every Sunday.

A: Do you recall his name?

N: Well--sure, it was Nickendoili (sp). His son too.

A: Uho and Wilho. How about Routinen?

N: Routinen---we had him for quite a while. He took care of us. And then we had this Hedäimen come over there for a while. And from the National Lutheran Church----they used to come over too.

A: To the same temperance hall?

N: To the same temperance hall----they would all come in there and everyone went to listen to them.

A: What was it like, did you sing a few hymns, or----?

N: Oh, yes----they sang hymns and it was just like a church meeting----it was the same thing. They used to give communion every now and then---I used to remember that. And we had summer school there and we had Sunday school----I remember that Did you ever hear about the Song of the Old Woman?

A: Yep, I read some of his books.

N: Well----he boarded over our house. And he was a great man for going in the bush---and he used to find berry patches, and when he found a berry patch he would take all the people from our home picking blueberries. We had quite a time-- and he taught ~~Sunday~~ school there. We had summer school.  
SUMMER

A: What did you learn in summer school?

N: Oh, it was Bible history and catechism (sp) and all that, mostly about religion.

A: Mostly about religion. Did they teach you anything about the Finnish language or literature.

N: No no, I can't remember that. I don't know much about it

- A: I'd like to ask you a few questions about these early ministers. What do you remember about Routinen?
- N: Routinen, from my estimation was more of a historian--he was a good man on history. And Rouda, he was a regular preacher. That's all I can remember.
- A: And Ilnonen----?
- N: Ilnonen---I never heard him preach--he was going to Faith College when he was over there. I never heard him. They say he was good.
- A: How about old Mecander?
- N: Oh, he was a forceful talker----I remember how he used to talk--he was a good talker. His son was better yet. I enjoyed his son.
- A: Wilho Mecander----that was a few years later, wasn't it?
- N: Ya, but you ought to hear him. I really enjoyed his talk.
- A: What other organizations did the Finns have -----
- N: We had a temperance lodge there, we had an atheletic club; we had about forty-five in the atheletic club--we had girls too. I belonged to it for over ten years.
- A: What was it? Was it gymnastics, or running, or what?
- N: Everything. Running and throwing the discus, the hammer throwing, the jumping, and inside there was parallel bars, horizontal bars, and rings, and trapeeze, and slack wire.
- A: Why did the Finns get interested in all that?
- N: Well--at that time there was wrestlers around here. And the Finns were interested in this.
- A: You mean the Finns brought this over from the old country?
- N: Ya, like that Carl Lehto, he was quite a wrestler
- A: Did you ever see him wrestle?
- N: Yes, I saw him wrestle Sabisco----I could have bet that Sabisco could have put him down any time that he wanted. He was like a gorilla---a big, big man. He went beyond the weight, you see; Lehto was only about 180 pounds, but Sabisco must have weighed around 300.
- A: Mr. Palosaari, did you have an athletic club around there in Ripley?

J: NO.

A: What did the Finns do there in their spare time?

J: Well----swimming in the summer time and gun hunting and stuff like that.

A: Ya, was there church work going on there too? Was the Finnish church active in your neighborhood?

J: Well--I don't know

A: How often did you get down into the city of Hancock?

J: What's that?

N: How often did you get to Hancock?

J: Oh, I don't get there very often.

A: No, I mean when you were growing up---when you were in Ripley.

J: Oh, well I used to go there every other day. I used to go with the street car--down to Hancock. In those days it was from Franklin to Quincy---a nickel. To Calumet it was around 25¢

A: So transportation was pretty cheap then?

J: Ya.

A: Did you have a school there in Ripley that you attended?

J: Well--there was one school over there--about midway, but I never went to that school --I was too young.

A: Well--did you go to school then?

J: I was going to school at the Arcadian.

A: Were the teachers you had Finnish?

J: They were English.

A: I suppose there were many nationalities in the school then?

J: Well--

A: Did you learn to speak English there then?

J: Well--The people at home would talk in Finn all the time.

A: How about you, Mr. Hendrickson, where did you go to school?

- N: I went to school here, and when we came back, we couldn't talk English. It was kind of hard for us at first, but then there was a teacher by the name of Miss Ones, from Lake Linden---she used to make the three of us, there was another boy who came over too--she used to make the three of us stay after school--and she would teach us English. She had forks, and knives, and spoons, and everything in her little box. She would ask, "What's that?" She taught us every night. Wasn't that pretty nice of her? She went out of her way to teach us English, and we learned. And then when Valentine's Day came, the three of us went in and boy, did we buy her a big one. And then we got that name, teacher's pet. But, we just did that to show our appreciation for what she had done. She was Irish too.
- A: Did most of the men who worked for you when you were a foreman----did the Finns know how to speak English then?
- N: Oh, yes. Those that worked for me----they all knew how. They were from the farms up there too, and they went to school too. In fact, they spoke more English than Finn.
- A: Alright, I'll ask you both about those early days. What was it like after World War I when the mining began to slack off a little bit? What happened--how did the people react to that?
- N; Well---they reacted. Lots of them where I live moved out. Lots of them went to Illinois---lots of them went to those coal mines down there. Some were left behind too, but then it gradually began to pick up again. I can't remember too much about that, but I know lots of them left our location. Houses were left empty, and then when I got married there were many houses in 1930, 1922; or something like that. Many of those houses were empty and I could pick any house I wanted. Company houses.
- A: So you got married just about the time the Depression started?
- N: No, in 1923. I did make a mistake at first and said 1930.
- A: What was it like during the Depression up here?
- N; Well----I'll tell you, it wasn't too good. Some of those families had to live on \$5 a month. And they couldn't buy what they wanted with that \$5, they told them what they could buy.
- A: Now, who is they---who told them what they could buy?
- N: Those who were running the relief.
- A: Was it the supervisor?
- N: The supervisor, yes. Bergan, I remember that
- A: What was the name?

N: Bergan. He was at the head, up there. And it wasn't up there, it was everywhere.

A: Oh, yes. Well----that was the time that F.D.R. came in

N: When he came in it was all changed. He put the men to work. And he closed those banks which was a good thing, because the men had their money in there and if it had went a little longer they would have never got them out.

A: How do you think most Finns voted in the early days----were there Democratic or -----

N: They were all Republican.

A: Did they change then when F.D.R. came in?

N: I changed after the Depression, because I never thought thing of those \_\_\_\_\_. V.W.A worked, or whatever it is. You didn't have to be on relief to get that. I never got relief. I will give you an instance. I was looking for a job from them for a long, long time---I couldn't get nothing, and one day Tom Cauffman; he was going to make that road to the airport----he came over to my house and asked me if I was working. I said, "No, they got my papers over in Houghton----looking over the bank and everything." I said, "I haven't got any money over there." He said, "I want a man to watch my toolshed, and you're right on top of it here." He said, "I'll like to get you to watch those tools over there and give out the tools in the morning and put them back at night." He said, "Ok, I'll go to Lake Linden and I'll find out and I will be back." He was Irish too, don't forget it. And he come back and said, "You start to work tomorrow----you give out those tools---- and I worked two weeks for him and I got a card to go and work at C&H. I told him and he said, ok, I'll make sure you get three paydays----by that time you'd be getting from Calumet and Hecala. He was a good guy---he was Irish, he was a ~~guy~~ *prince* of a guy.

A: Let's ask Mr. Palosaari what the Depression was like over there in Ripley.

J: Well---I wasn't down Ripley at that time. During the Depression

A: Oh, where were you at that time?

J: I was down Dollar Bay.

A: What kind of work were you in----or were you out of work at that time?

J: Well---I was out of work at that time. But, then I got on W.P.A.

N: Which I didn't get.

A: Ya, you didn't get that? What kind of W.P.A. project were you on?

J: Well---I was making new roads, and fixing the old ones.

A: Right around Dollar Bay, then?

J: Well----around Dollar Bay, and around Point Mills, and all that country around there. An~~And~~ sometimes I had to go on county shift and go and shovel snow off of the bridge in the winter.

A: How did you find the people during the Depression---were people trying to help each other, or were they kind of grumbly because it was hard times?

J: No. they didn't help

N: Some of them our way did

A: You found that they did help each other and you found that they didn't? What you had to ~~eat~~ dog? (end of side #1)

J: No, dog eat dog. They never wanted to help each other.

N: Well---our way they did. Some of them, I know it.

A: Well----at any rate, it really was a tough time for people. Whe<sup>n</sup> did you notice that things started to get a little better.

N; Well---as soon as this Roosevelt became president. As soon as he got in there it started to get better.

A: Did you run into any Finns in this area during the '30s who went back to Russia?

J: People down our way went to Russia. But, they came back and they wanted to get back in a hurry. But, the others who went over there from Covington----a boy from down there said he never had really hard work, but his father----he hated the place. He lost everything.

A: Oh----he had to give all of his stuff to the Russians?

J: Sure. Well that Arnie Kilpela from Aura-----he was kind of a Communist too. He said, "Oh, he'll get a good job down in Ruasia, he will make a good body." So he took his carpentry tools, he took a saw, he took them all down to Russia. He never saw that stuff again----they put him to work in the lumber camps, sawing logs.

A: But, some of those people were able to come back then?

- J: Well---they had to skip-run over there to get away. If they wanted to get away and they told the Russians that they wanted to get away they would say nothing doing and we will take you over there into the field and shoot you." That they never wanted any of them to come back. That was how different things were run over there.
- N: I heard about it----but, not from our way.
- J: Then I asked them how it was down there in Russia and they wouldn't say a word, but I heard it from the grapevine that it wasn't as good as they thought it would be.
- A: Some of those who wanted to come back were unable to come, and those who did come back ----many of them were unhappy.
- J: Sure. Here was \_\_\_\_\_ Waisanen, he had quite a bit of money you know, and he left it with his other brother in this country when he went to Russia. Then when he had gotten away from the Russians over there on Finland's side ----he had to send a telegram to his brother to send him his money so he could get back to America.
- A: Later in the '30s, the Winter War broke out in Finland----do you remember that? How did the Finns in this country react?
- J: We never liked it. We didn't like the Russians getting after the Finns, so today we would have to go and fight against them. But, when we never had anything---how could we get over there to fight.
- N: We sent packages and everything we could to those poor people over there. To help them out.
- A: How about the other nationalities?
- N; They stuck up for Finland.
- A: They stuck up for Finland. And they put in packages too?
- N: Some did. They helped the people to fill up their packages Clothing----
- J: I used to send money and big bags of clothing over there-- coffee and sugar and stuff-----
- N; That's what they needed
- J It was pretty hard up over there in Finland. The only thing they missed the most was the coffee----because in Finland--- the coffee doesn't have any taste to it. But, what they got from Africa----that tasted like something. And they cooked that coffee many times to get the juice from it.

A: That was literally good to the last drop.

J: Mother and brother had come to this country and for a year he had been working at the Baltic Mine. And he told me that he wasn't going to stay long in this country-----that he'll go back to Finland. But he said he had to make a thousand dollars before he could go back. And he got that thousand dollars, and he left, and he said that he was going to have a little store over there----that he can make a living from that. Some years later on if you wrote to him----he's from Finland, and he said that they still have that American-Pierless around, you know. But he wanted to have something to chew---the tobacco they have in Finland doesn't have any taste in it, not like the Pierless he used to have. So I sent him a whole pound and I had many different kinds of cigarettes and stuff like that---and tobacco for him. And I sent that over to him and he said, "Oh, where did that pound package of Pierless come from?" It came close to Christmas time and they had a party----he called all the old fellows around and had them ----they were chewing Pierless and----and smoked the Pierless too at the same time.

A: Well---that's very interesting. I'd like to ask you both a little different type of question. Looking back on your life what do you recall as the biggest accomplishment of your life? What is the best thing you ever did?

J: Well----I don't know. That's hard to tell.

N: I don't know, but it seems to me that I worked with the Calumet and Hecala for fifty years. And you know these sprinklers that they have in the mills---they are all condemned because nobody took care of them. The lines weren't working or anything. They put the red flag up to raise the insurance, to make it like they never had them at all. So, the boss went around and asked different ones to fix them----they told him they don't know nothing about them, and he finally came to me. His name was Bill Warren. He came to me and I said I didn't know anything about them either, but I said, "I'll tell you what I'll do, Bill, I'll try it---if you give me a helper I will try it." I had to put air in the first one---that's because I was freezing up there and you had to put air in them. But, the minute the air goes out to a certain pressure, the water goes out. Well----we started and I had a fellow by the name of Nick with me---his name was Nick too, and he was a German. And we started in the lake mill there, and it took us half a day to clean that out----there hadn't been any air in there for years. There were four sheets that went in there; a lead sheet and a rubber sheet that went on top of that. And then on the ground there is two brown sheets for water. Well---we had to clean those perfectly---they had to be cleaned perfectly. I looked at the directions, and it took us----it was eleven o'clock when I got it set, and I had thirty-five pounds of air on there, and 140 pounds of water. One gauge showed that there was 35 pounds of air pressure and ----140 pounds of water. That 35 pounds of air held that water. So the boss came around and he

said, "By God, go do the rest of them!" So after we had fixed up the Lake Mill we went over to the Osceola----that was a big one----and we fixed them. And we looked at all the indicator valves-----they had to say open or closed. Some of them were reversed and I had to turn them, so I told the boss, "I think you're alright now." So about three days after that the inspector came back, and his name was Peralieni----he came from Marquette, he was the fire marshal----so I went to him and we went over everything----I opened the----rang all those \_\_\_\_\_ for him and closed them up----and all those indicators, they showed good. He knew what section the fire was on, he just looked at them. Then he looked at all those indicator posts outside and he said, "I think you got them, hey!" He said, "Let's go over to the office." I was wondering why we were going to go over to the office. And he said to the superintendent---he said, "Mr. Bergan, your fire protection is in number one shape and I hope you keep it that way." So, Mr. Bergan said, "Yes, we will keep Nick on the job." Then I had to go down to the Meat Mill, and there was only two out of the whole bunch that were any good----there were fourteen different sections----and there were only two out of that fourteen that were any good. I had to fix all the rest. When I got through with that I had to fix the heating system. So, I think that was about----I think I accomplished a heck of a lot.

A: Yes. I would say that you did.

N: Because I didn't know anything about them. It was all on my own. And when you once learn----by your own experience---you will never forget it. And here too when \_\_\_\_\_ came down, he asked me to come and look at it when he turned the water on. He took a water test. He opened that \_\_\_\_\_ wide and saw how much that pressure went down---if it goes down too much he doesn't have enough water.

A: Well---very good.

N: That's all I can say about-

A: Yes, what about Mr. Palosaari? Have you thought of anything?

J: No, I haven't got anything.

A: OK. Let me ask you to <sup>think</sup> ~~think~~----we've been talking pretty much about times gone by---I want you to think a little ahead now. What would you predict----what is the future of this area?--- Say in the next ten to twenty years. What would you----

J: It might be good

N: Me too. I think the same thing. I think that some good companies that might come-----

- J: There is something coming up ----Calumet land---because there is alot of copper underground yet.
- N: Do you know what my idea is? If they ever do they will not have the mill trouble there. It will be all comeback, I think It will all be compact, like White Pine. Everything in one.
- A: In one area.
- N: Yes. And I think they can put a lot of sand in those old mines that are all mined up. They don't have to put it in a wreck. That is my idea about it.
- A: How about other things besides mining? Do you see other types of industry---or, ---
- N: Well--I think if a good mining company comes in here, they might even get wire mills and stuff like that, you know. Finish product core----that's what the C&H should have done. That's my idea. Why ship it to Detroit when they could have made it here,-----ship the finished product. They shipped that product to Detroit, and that cost money ---and then they had to ship that finished product from there again. But, they could have finished it here, and shipped it wherever it had to go. We got railroads---we got water----we got transportation----we have got everything. That's is my idea---I don't know, maybe I am all wrong.
- A: Ya, and there is beautiful country here. When do you think the best time of the year is?---here in the Copper Country.
- N: Well----I think about now. In the summer.
- J: Ya, this time.
- A: Thinking back years ago, what did you do in the winter time when you would get all that snow like you had last year?
- N: Well--we had skis. Nothing could stop us. We had skis, and we had a heck of a time---we had toboggans---we used to go a couple miles up the hill from where I used to live and we came down it. We had a sleigh with about twenty kids on it. One time a train was coming and that fellow steered that thing off the walk--- nobody got hurt, we all landed in the snow bank.
- A: Did you have horses--either of you?
- N: My dad had horses.
- A: What about you?
- J: What? What?
- A: Did you have horses?

- J: Horses? No, what we had on the farm---a few horses
- N: Well---that's what he means.
- A: Do you remember----what was the first car that you ever owned?
- J: Model T.
- N: Ours was a Buick open model 1917.
- A: Was it a pretty good car?
- J: You know that if the car got you up the hill pretty high, that it was a good car. It was pretty hard to get up the hill too.
- N: They had big wheels too. You could go on the big rutty roads with them.
- J: If you wanted -----you had to push the car back on the road again.
- A: How were the roads in those days?
- N: No good. They were just a couple of ruts all the time. Like the road going up to the airport----that road is pretty good now. It was just a couple of ruts, that's all it was. And these were all sand and gravel roads before.
- J: There was nothing but sand and mud holes all the time. You take the other care---if they went in the mud hole; they wouldn't get out.
- N: We had that Buick too, and we went right in the bloody swamp with it once. And we had to get the neighbor's team to pull us out.
- J: Then the model T's just had those clincher tires and you would always have to be patching the tires.
- N: They weren't much good, those cars. They had a heck of a time shifting into second gear. If you went a little too fast it wouldn't go. You had to slow up to shift into second. After you got into second----high was easy.
- A: Did most families have cars around 1920?
- N: No, not too many.
- A: How did they get around?
- N: Most of them walked, and in those days we had good transportation. We had the street cars and the Copper Range passenger train, the *Mineral* ~~Mill~~ Range to Hancock every day---two or three times

- A: So older people could get around in those days?
- N: Yes. For a street car---for fifteen cents you could go from Hubbell to Red Jacket, that's a long way. Now they charge you, what is it for a taxi---five or six dollars?
- A: Well----transportation for older people was better than it is now?
- N; Oh, yes. You could take a Copper Range train or a <sup>Mineral</sup> ~~Mill~~ Range train and go to Hancock any time. Three times a day there was trains on both tracks. And one train went right close to our house----there was a depot there.
- A: Was there ever any robberies on those old trains?
- J: No.
- N: No, not that I ever heard of
- A: People were pretty law-biding then?
- N: Yes. I never heard of anybody being robbed; not like now--- this is terrible. You aren't safe anywhere.
- J: The only thing I can remember is when we used to pick silver at the mills----those fellows used to come and rob us over there.
- A: Do you remember any of your early sheriffs?
- N: Colhart was one. Sheriff Trudell
- J: Heikil~~ende~~<sub>x</sub>nen.
- A: You had a Finnish sheriff too?
- N: We had Honienon. Gus Honienon,----but he died.
- J: And Heikinen.<sup>K</sup><sub>A</sub>
- N: And what else was there? Frank Sonsisto----a good friend of mine.
- J: And Somienen
- N: Somienen---he was a sheriff, and he was Finn.
- A: So the impression I get from both of you is----even though there was a lot of people here in the old days, they were pretty law-biding.
- N: They were law-biding. There was no robbing, and burning like there is now. Never. You could safely walk any place and nobody would bother you.

- J: The only place they would rob you is if you went to a saloon
- N: Well----yes, but you had no business to go to a saloon
- A: Were there a lot of saloons in those days?
- N: Oh, there was a lot of them.
- J: You know, Tamarack Mills is a small place, but I counted five saloons there.
- A: How come there were so many saloons?
- J: I don't know, but they were making money. And they had free lunches and everything at those places. If you bought a glass of beer for a nickel----~~and~~ you could have all the sausage and cheese you could eat.
- N: That was an attraction.
- A: Did they have dances in those saloons too?
- J: Not that I know of.
- N: No. In some places they had dancing upstairs
- J: If a lady was caught in a saloon she was \_\_\_\_\_, she would never have any name left for her.
- N: The KK Hall in Hancock used to be a dance place years ago.
- A: They had a lottof dances there?
- J: They had a lot of dances there.
- N: I never went there---I never went there.
- A: How about you Mr. Palosaari, did you ever go there?
- J: Oh, I went over there. but I never danced. I tried to learn to dance, but the lady I was with said that I was all the time stepping on her toes. So, I never learned to dance.
- N: I've done more skating than dancing.
- J: But, I used to like to watch them when they danced. They played with the accordian and stuff like that.
- N: Will you open that window? Then it won't be so stuffy in here.
- A: Ya, why don't you open it up a little. Well----it sounds as if theypeople had a good time in those days
- J: Oh, they had a good time.

- N: In those days, I will tell you what. We had a baseball team in town and nobody had cars hardly----everybody went to the ball game. Well----they could afford to have a ball game. And after when everybody got their cars----nobody went to the ball games---they all went there own way. Picnics and whatever. All the ball teams were tied down---they had ball teams in every town. That killed everything.
- A: So, the coming in of the car?!
- N: Ya, that killed a lot of things. And that killed our transportation too---like those street cars and everything-----that's what killed it.
- A: How about the radio? Do you remember the first radio you had? Was that about that time too?
- N: The first radio----I can't remember----I know I had
- J: Oh, that came long afterwards.
- N: Ya. The first radio I ever heard was a little crystal set they had up on the farm up there----and we were listening and I heard a couple of little peeps out of it and I thought I heard something.
- J: They had those crystal outfits. That's what they called them
- N: But then I got a radio that was called Atwater Kent---did you ever hear that name? (no) Well, that was my first one, it was in 1928----or something like that---I can't remember. That was my first machine and it was a metal cabinet---I remember that But, it came in good with that----it was an electric set.
- A: Well----you were talking about how the car changed the social life--I imagine--getting more recent----that the television made a great change.
- N: Ya, the television keeps a lot of people home---they watch TV.
- A: Do you have a TV here, by the way?
- J: No.
- N: I had one though.
- A: Let me ask you this question--to kind of wrap up our discussion. How do you feel about life today? You had many years of experience---if you could sort of sum up your feeling about life in a few words----what would you say?
- J: Oh---I would like to have my life like the old days.
- A: You would like to have those old days back?

J: Sure. Everything was cheap in those days and you could go wherever you wanted to go, but now you can't do it. It is so expensive.

N: Like going to school.

A: You didn't get a chance to go to school?

N: I could have, but I was too bullheaded. I went to work----father and mother told me to go to school. My younger brother went to school and he took a full commercial course. He worked with the Calumet and Hecala in the office and we were over there shoveling.

Did he go to Suomi College or Tech?

He just went to that business college in Calumet. And he took the whole thing. Typewriting and shorthand and everything. Bookkeeping. I wouldn't mind getting the old days back, though But, I would live a little differently---I'd go to school and  
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A: Is there anything else about the good old days that you liked except that it was cheaper? And you could get around a little better.

J: Fishing and everything.

N: There was more fishing in those days.

J: The fish was in the rivers----it was Speckled Trout---it was nothing to get sixty a day.

N: NO, there is not any fish any more.

J: But, with the rivers now, you can hardly get any. And they were native trout. Not what they plant now.

N: I'll tell you one thing, though. When we first started to work, we used to work ten hour shifts. The day we got \$1,23 a shift, I took the pay.

A: When you got that paycheck were you unhappy that the pay was that low?

N: No, we didn't realize it. Then when I got raised to \$45 a month, I thought-----OH, BOY!

A: You had it really made then

N: I had it really made. Some fellows make that in one day. And we had to work hard.

J: You bet we had to work hard.

- J: We had a lot of spending money anyway---out of those small wages.
- A: Do you think that people in my generation have forgotten what it is to work hard?
- N: It seems that way---some of them. The young people, they don't realize that people had to work hard like that years ago. I know I had some helpers there in the end too--young people---- smoking cigarettes while the other people were working. They didn't do anything. That is why the C&H shut down---they didn't want to work. You had to work---you had to take interest in the work,---that's why the C&H kept going even with the low wages, everybody took interest in their work.
- A: Did ----Were you a member of the union then in the last years?
- N: Yes, I was---right until the end. And one time they told me that you fellows wanted to find out about the union----go to the meeting. If there is anything you want to ask---ask! So I went to the meeting and they named the expenses and they had four hundred dollars listed for miscellaneous expense---- and I thought that that was a whole lot for a small union in miscellaneous expense. So I got up and asked in a nice way---I said, "Would you mind listing just a few of those miscellaneous expenses?" You know----they got mad. And when I left I said, "You won't see me at any more union meetings." "You told me to ask and I asked." You know what some other fellows found out afterwards-- they use that money for big parties--the union committee has big parties. They found out that they had those parties and that is where their money went. And that was our money. I had a reason to ask where that money went. What is that?
- A: This is the Western Federation of Miners. You got in in---is that March 15th?
- J: Yes. It was a union of the steel workers.
- A: That was in Hancock. Do you remember who the organizer was?
- J: Organizer----Moyer.
- N: He is the one that they shipped over here, and I guess he was half dead.
- A: Did you ever hear Moyer speak?
- J: No, I never heard him speak.
- A: But, there were a lot of Finnish labor organizers too, weren't there?
- J: Well---there is the secretary. Udiala.
- N: I heard that Moyer talk up there in Calumet in the Armory.

J: At that time they gave a kind of coupon book----for three dollars a week--to get your food on. And they had a union store down there in Hancock. They had tickets from 10¢, 5¢, and 25¢, and 50¢----something like that.

N: We were left out because we weren't in the union.

J: You had to bring coupons from here to get your food at the union store.

(end of side #2 of tape)

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