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

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August 9, 1972

Paul Jalkanen

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Worked for C & H

Interview with CHARLES KIEFER
by Paul Jalkanen 8/9/72

- C: -----he worked there, and he retired when he was 58
- M: They got married in Keweenaw
- C: Keweenaw County, in Helltown, that's where they were married, and the 3 oldest children were born down there but I was born up here and a sister and a brother
- M: Charlie, you have 3 sisters, why sure, there's Kate, Susan and Annie
- C: I had 5 sisters and 4 brothers, there was 10 of us, I'm the only one left. They don't want me up there yet, the angels are not looking for me;
- P: When you're 94 they don't want you yet
- M: No, they want to wait until he's 100.
- P: What do you remember about your mom and dad? What kind of people were they?
- C: They were healthy until they died, my mother lived to be 87, and my father was 74 And he worked for the company until he retired at 58.
- P: He retired at 58?
- C: He wasn't feeling good. Because of arthritis. And he was home and I used to help him saw wood, with the crosscut. 10 cords a year, every fall.
- P: This was in the 1880's? When you were 10-12 years old?
- C: I was 12. I started to work when I was 14.
- M: And she was only just a housewife.
- C: Silver picker, I'd give half for the company and half for me.
- P: How did your dad like the company, did he like working for C&H?
- C: Oh, yes, they were all right.
- M: He liked it there real well.
- C: They were reasonable but they would never pay you much until the union got hold of them in 1913. The union got the union up here and unionized all the people, from that time on they had to pay, what others paid.
- P: Do you remember the strike of 1913?
- C: Sure, I was in business then. Started in the spring, and they pretty near broke me in the fall, pretty near had to quit! I could have locked the doors, the sheriff come up, I owed money and I couldn't pay them. And I knew the sheriff well, he come up and he said, Charlie, I got orders to lock you up. OH, I said, don't do that, (I forgot his name, a German fellow) well, he says, listen, try and make some payments, will you, I says, whenever I get started again, when the strike is over, I was in the parade, I paraded with the strikers,
- P: Did you?
- C: Sure. you had to be friends of theirs because they were the ones who bought stuff

P: So you couldn't side with the company

C: Oh, no, so he says, try and make some payments, here's the bills you owe. There was 2 places, I knew the 2 lawyers well, I worked for the fellow up Calumet, who had about \$800 to claim, I worked with him, he was a bookkeeper when I was there

P: That Hennes was down here in Lake Linden, wasn't it?

C: On the corner, where the Quality is now.

C:

P: And that's where you were manager for a while?/I had a team for 7-8 years, delivery

C: boy, from 1900 to '07, and then I worked inside. I didn't mind the job, it was hard work though, heavy, barrels of flour, bales of hay, and gallons of whiskey, wine, sausage, pig's sides; people used to buy a whole pig; I'd have a whole pig, maybe 3 or 4 in the brig; I stood one up against the door one time, I couldn't get in to weigh in, when the lady opened the door to go outside in the kitchen, the pig fell in on her. She bawled me out the next day, a frozen pig about that high. I stood it up against the door so it would fall in, feet first.

P: Come you quit being a silver picker for C&H?

C: They changed you as you get older. 7 months picking silver

P: How much money did you make on that

C: I used to get \$1 a shift. We used to help ourself to the silver, of course.

P: Then you'd go sell it on the side?

C: Down at Houghton.

P: How did you get to Houghton? From Lake Linden. Take the train?

C: I had a boy friend who had a nice horse, he had a grocery store and his father had a farm and he had a nice buggy horse. We used to go on Saturday, I'd be filled with silver, the _____ boys, silver pickers, we'd all go together. And I'd go and stay at my sisters', _____ at Hancock, he was a dray man, I stayed there, Sunday afternoon we'd go over to Condon's Park, my son-in-law, they named the park after Condon,

P: That's right!

C: Do you know Steve? District judge.

P: Ya, I know his boys, Condon boys went to Hancock High school

C: Charlie, Roger and _____. And I'd stay there and on Sunday, we'd all go over in the park and the girls wouldn't look at the Hancock boys when we got there. Because we had money, we could buy candy; when we got over there we had \$20 each. But we only got \$1 a day. Our parents gave us 50¢ a month, spending, they didn't know we had silver money, and I'd say to Keith, how much do you get a month from your dad? 50¢. I asked Ben Waara, how much do you get? 50¢. I think they were organized. We never got a dollar, never heard one fellow say he had a dollar home. I'd bring the check home, father would give me a 50¢ piece.

P: You get paid once a month?

C: 5 weeks sometimes, 4 weeks, right at the end of the month.

And we'd go over there, Tom Lompre, of course Edmund is too young to know, his father would know all those fellows, they're all dead now though, Tom Lompre was another

fellow that used to go there, he introduced me to some of the girls he thought would like to meet me;

P This was supposed to be 1902-03? Bornin '78?

C: I was about 16-17 years old that time; that was before 1900 because I started to work for Hennes in '98 and then I didn't go to Hancock anymore. Very seldom.

P: Just looked around Lake Linden?

M: Ya, he looked around Lake Linden!

C: She came along and I was 30 years old and she hooked me! She was 19 and I was 30. So she came up from Champion, she had her folks move out and they worked in the sawmill and she fussed around until she got me going.

M: I used to be dress maker; I used to do a lot of dress making.

C: I blame her for it, I was going to be an ol' bachelor.

P: Sure, and you would have a lot of money, too.

C: We got married in 1908, so it was about 5 years after that I went in business I left a big store and started one of my own.

P: How did you get the money to start on your own?

C: One of the agents that I used to buy dry goods from, got to talking about, she was talking about it, so I was talking to him about it, he says, I'll tell you what I'll do, Charlie, I'll get back again in a short time, I'll talk to _____ about it, one of the bosses in the Detroit house;

M: He started him in business

C: when he came back he said, I'll let you have \$2,000 worth of merchandise to start with. Then I got credit for about 1800, so for \$4,000 you could buy a lot of clothes those days; I had a tailor shop, too; we measured fellows up, sent to Chicago and had the suits made up; \$15 for a tailor-made suit. And we made about \$4 on each suit.

P: Trouble is you started the business at the wrong time, 1913, that was a tough time to start.

C: No, that was a good time, the strike didn't last long, a few months, they settled and it was better after that; when I got through with those agents, a fellow I knew as a lawyer in Hancock had some; I went to Detroit when I was working for Hennes before I was in business, I knew him well; so he says, hell, I'll write to them, we'll fix things up. I'll make 'em go 50-50, they'll have to give you half price; I says, no, I don't want that, I want to pay in full when I can. He says, don't be foolish, haven't you got _____ from them on your book already, I says, sure, well, he says, they're not paying you now, are they? No, well, he says, wouldn't you be glad to get half of it? I said, I 'spose. So he insisted and he wrote down and made them cut the bill in half; I can't think of his name.

M: When he started the business, he had a business. People were lined up to the City Hall to get in.

C: I had a tailor, helper, my niece and another girl working, besides my self and 2 clerks and a helper came in on Saturday afternoons from the smelter, Charlie Webber, from 1 until we closed. Summer time the double doors were left open all the time, and they were in and out, you couldn't hardly get in,

P: And all you were selling was clothing, basically

C: Ya, men and boy's. From 6 to men 54 size. I had clothes for men, 54 size; I had clothes for men, 54 size. I used to sell clothes for people that come up hunting, from Detroit and Chicago and Milwaukee that knew me; whenever they wanted clothes, big fellows; a fellow come in one day, says, Harry, have you got a 54 red jacket? Sure, boy, he says, if you didn't have it, I was going to hit you on the nose. He says, I could have got one down Detroit, but he says I'm going to wait till I get to Lake Linden and get it from you. So I got the jacket, put it on him, oh, boy, he says, that's fine, oh, boy! And throws down a bunch of money.

P: What kind of old characters do you remember in the 1880's, or characters that your dad told you about, who worked for C&H, people who were really different, or did funny things, or lived a hermit-life?

M: There wasn't very many, they were all pretty good people. Old fashioned.

P: I don't mean that they were bad people.

C: This was pretty much of a stamp mill people, smelter people, and lot of woodsmen. Several hundred woodsmen up here then. All by hand. There was no electric saws or gas machines and all handwork, hand chopping.

P: Do you remember some of those lumbermen that used to come in?

C: Oh, yes. Barber Joe.

P: What were they like? Can you tell me some stories of some of those men?

C: He used to cut their hair at the camps, they called him Barber Joe; his name was Joe Buvitz; and Tony Otterman, he was an old timer here, Russian, he used to run a camp; Frank Buschell, well-known, he bowled with our team in Hennes, he's in Detroit, he's living yet; he's 96 years old; he was over to see us 2 years ago, and then about 3 years ago I met him in Lake Linden; he came into Ed Chopp's insurance office at the time; depositing some money for the Building & Loan; walking with a cane; and he saw me; he shook hands with me and he was a fellow of about 6'1" and a swell looking fellow, well built and straight, well-educated, a college boy; and when he come in there, I had to look at him twice but I saw him here about 5 years before that, the last time I saw him about 3 years ago, why, he was shrunk way down, shoulders all bent over with a cane, he didn't look like himself at all, I think he's about 5' now.

P: And he's only about a couple years older than you are. 96 and you're 94.

C: He was walking, he wasn't straight. All stooped up, all shrunk down and fat. And he was a swell looking man, one of the go-getters; he used to hack them shows, home talent; light complexion, nice curly hair, straight as a whip, good bowler, too. We used to have a bowling team, I belonged to the team for a long time. I had appendicitis in 1911 and I had to go to _____ and have them cut it.

P: How long did you go to school? How many grades of school did you go? 8 grades?

C: I went to school until I was 14. But I bummed one year.

M: No, he didn't go that far, he went 3 years and he walked in the front door and walked out through the back door.

C: I went to school until I was 14. I was going to school when I went down to look for a job. C&H. Tom Dunstan was the head boss. I chored for him until about 2 years after that and he says

P: What is choring? What kind of job is choring?

M: He means the work, chores; he was a choreman

Take care of the garden, basement, beat rugs, had a cow and a horse; I used to milk the cow; I was about 16 then so ol' Tom says to me, what can I do for you, I said, I want a job; I was about 14 years old, parents didn't want me to go to work, they wanted me to go to school, I've already talked to them about school because I was expelled once,

P: What did you do that you got expelled?

C I went to the Convent. Catholic school

P: How come you got expelled? What did you do wrong?

C Everything, I guess. I used to raise the dickens I was expelled, I remember that Bob White was the teacher at that time,

M He used to talk back to that professor. He was a sassy boy when he was a young boy.

What did your dad say when you got expelled? Anything?

C I went to the Convent then, that's all

P You went to school there.

M They took him in then

C Before I went down to the works, I got the job, he says, what can I do for you, I said I want a job, what's your name, I told him (he didn't know me, Tom Dunstan) I lived way at the other end of town, he lived by the mill. He never saw me before. Well, he says come on tomorrow morning, bring your dinner pail, so I went home and said, I got a job so I went to work the next morning with a dinner pail, they put me on picking silver

out of the rock?

M out of the copper

pan copper, it was flat, and you had to have the scraper in this hand and you push it over, pick out the silver, all the white spots, and then shake it down to the bottom, put in another bunch, pick out the silver, just like a chicken picking corn.

I done that for 7 months, then they put me on finishing. _____ he worked on No. 7, I worked on No. 6, he died here a couple weeks ago, he was only 97 years young, he was a foreman, he worked for the C&H all his life till he retired.

M Edmund's father used to work down there.

C His daddy, his uncle, they all worked there at the mill

P That's all there probably was here.

C That's all there was unless you worked in a store, clerking or driving team.

M: There was lot of lumber camps, lumber jacks.

C: I worked choring 2 years and then I went up to Hennes' Store and I stood there, in the grocery side, Mr. Hennes come running down to me, how do you do, what can I do for you? That was Bob Hennes, not the fellow I'm talking about, he's dead long ago, he was a

bachelor, never was married, I said, I would like to work in the basement, be a seller if you could use one, oh, no, we don't want anybody in the cellar, I want you to drive team, he insisted on me, I was just about 19 years old, I said, I never worked in a store before, I might find it kind of difficult, oh, he said, we'll have a teamster with you for a week because he's going to the Klondike to seek gold and he's not coming back, Henry Murdessa. The Murdessa' lived close to where you live, Edmund.

P: You must have been -- 1897 when you got that

C: I was 19 years old

M: You know the first old people that came here

C: So he insisted on me taking the job and I didn't want it, I hated to go but he said, that's your job, I had the job, he said, you're going to work for us, I had you in mind because we used to deal there and I come in with the book and charge everything down, go home and the man would deliver the goods. So I went out. After I had it a week or two, I turned around one time by the depot and I was going to quit. Turned my horses around, I was going to go back and I was discouraged. I was young, I only weighed about 135 pounds and I had a lot of heavy things to lift.

M: You had wild horses, too, and they would run away.

C: So then I stopped for a while, pondered it over, and I turned around again and I went on the job and then that was it. Then I had job control, I was used to it, I worked there about 8 years.

M: Tell them about the first old people that came to Lake Linden. Old Doras

C: Old business, old Doras? Your grandfather.

M: My grandfather

C: They built our house-----oh, I got to tell you about the Lake Linden fire. When I was 9 years old it burnt from down the west end right to the north end, burnt the whole town up, all that hill, all those buildings, all you could see was main street, can't think of the year

M: It was a long time ago, I was just a small

P: You were 9 years old when the fire was?

C: I was 9 years old when the fire was so that was 86 years ago

P: 1886

C: Burned the whole town and I lived way at the end near the schoolhouse on the second street from way down from where you come in Lake Linden where that big building is, that's where the stores were, that's where it started, burnt the whole town, all the hills, the brewery, and I lived by the schoolhouse. One house past our place burnt right down and all you could see when you looked, every house had only wooden posts, never had brick or cement those days, all you could see in town was black posts about that high, all over town. And we young fellows used to go up, I'd take a wagon, I was 9 years old, I'd go over, we'd go down the basement, pull the sand away and there was boxes of tomatoes, pears, peaches

M: all that canned stuff

C and we'd load our little wagon and take it home. And then I'd go and eat over at the school house, they had in the basement those old, big long tables that everybody

used to have, the fire burned out, go over there and eat, they give you old clothes, if you didn't like it, you'd throw it away, come back and get something better. School kids, our teacher was waiting on table.

M: Didn't your father ever tell you about people that came here, like ol' man Doerns? And old man Norris?

C: Old Norris? Old Joe Beauchamp. Old Jim , your grandfather

M: They were the first ones that came here. And built.

and who's that other fellow lived by our house there?

M: I just told you a while ago, now I forgot.

Those 4 fellows built the house that I was raised in until I was 30. Right up from this block from the school house, the second street. Girou has it now. That's the house they built about 85 years ago and it's in good shape yet. I'll mention this: Joe Gregorie was a man who came here from Canada, brought a lot of big, French fellows out here, 250# men, 275# bushwhackers, he put up a big sawmill across the lake, and that was a pretty good sized city. They named it Gregorie Village. That's Gregorieville across there. And he run that sawmill for years, until he died. When he died the relatives let it go.

M: Old man Doras and old man Davorak came together, from Canada.

C: About 110 years ago. They built that house

the

M: They're the ones, they were the carpenters that built all/homes.

C: you sit on it, sit down flat, put it on a bench, sit on it, you turn it, an auger and I remember ever time I had a chance I'd get there and I'd start that thing, I'd be going there, it had 2 knobs and you bore, I was boring holes in the floor. They'd chase me out, I remember the old fellow, "get out of here" and I ran down the stairway, I never went back, I was scared of them, they scared me to death. I was 9 years old then. Built that house, they built this whole town, pretty near the same year it burnt, fire was in May, by winter the town was all rebuilt. And they weren't allowed to build a wooden building on main street.

P: Did they start building other kind of buildings?

C: They had to build brick buildings or rock, so they did until later on they started building wooden buildings, ^{moved some in} and they forgot about the ordinance. They didn't follow the ordinance, let it die out, then they started to put in a few wooden buildings,

P: What happened in the early 20's after World War I, when some of the mines closed down?

They closed down one year

P: They closed down 1920 or '21.

C: '21 or '22. I was in business; that was a tough one; but it didn't last; but in '29, '30, or '31 when we had that big slump, that was rough. Pretty near went broke that time.

P: How much money did you make in 1918 for the store?

C: Oh, yes, I had a good living; always lived good. In 1916 I built that big home,

we sold it to the school teacher, Short, we built that in 1916. See, I had a little money and I was a good friend of the banker, pals, we'd go around together, and I says, Charlie, I'm going to build a house and I need about \$8,000. Why, sure, he said, go ahead and build it. I built it, paid him, but after he died in '48, and _____ and I went over one day and says, Archie, I need \$7,000. \$7,000, what for? I know ARchie well. He's much younger than me. I said I've got some old shacks in town, I want to clean them out, I want to take the windows out, they're all broke, and make apartments out of them. There's one on the corner when you come into Lake Linden, bought that one, built the insides, then I bought one where the Sutton store was, same lot. Took the windows out, big plate glass, fixed it up, made apartments out of it. Then she saw another house, Chopp's.

M: We had 8 or 9 of them.

(end of tape)

P: So you invested by buying property.

C: We bought that big brick house on the corner, I got that for \$2,000,

P: That's pretty expensive for that time, that must have been '30's.

C: That was just about 10-12 years ago. That was the last one I bought. But I started out on the other end. There was a black, paper blowing. She said, look at that thing, I'm going to put a fire to that building, that was after we built out big home, well, I said, we'll buy it, do you want it? She said, yes. So I saw the fellow, Dave LeVeque had it, he was in insurance, I said, how much do you want for it, Dave? One lot, 50x100 and a house but the clairboards were all off the side and the black paper was blowing, he said, \$350. I said, all right and I gave him a check for it.

P: Was that in the 1920's?

C: Before that. After we were living in our new house. After 1916, a little later, so I gave him \$350 and her father came up and her uncle and they fixed the inside, made rooms, fixed it up better, and then we rented it for awhile, then I sold it to Russell Jilbert. Then quit for awhile; then she said, she wanted the house with the windows broke, that was left go, empty, and _____ place, it was a meat market, the windows were broke and everything inside looked bad. You could see it, old stuff in there, an old meat block, counters, I hated to see that; well, I said I'll buy it, so I saw _____, what do you want for that building, that was ART, he was living then, he said, I'll ask my son, I turned it over to him, he owed a lot of money and he turned all his property over to his son, so he had a grocery business, a meat market, he said he should get so-and-so but I'll let it go for \$1800. So we went over to the bank and fixed it up, so we fixed the building up, made 4 apartments, put a big stairway upstairs, she was the boss, I didn't take care of it. I just paid for it, she run the business. Then we bought the building up town where Gilles is now, that bungalow. I paid \$7,000 for it and sold it for \$11,500. I rented it for about 2 years. We kept on buying buildings; it was between Pearce and Kiefer who owned the most buildings in town. Altogether I owned 11; owned a summer home out here, sold that to "You know", people would say, who'd you sell it to, we'd say, "you know", his name was Uno and she said "you know", she couldn't think of Laplander, I had to tell them "Uno Laplander". I sold it to him for \$12,000, and I paid \$7,000 for it, put in a bedroom so we got 12 for it. We lived in it for 9-10 years, used to drive back and forth to work from here.

P: When did you get your first car?

C: '23. I bought it from Joe Shield.

P: Did you know how to drive, or learn?

C: No, I didn't know how to drive. I'll tell you a story about driving. I was walking down the street one Sunday and Doug _____ saw me and stopped me and asked me to go for a ride. Where you going? Just to spend a Sunday afternoon so I got in the car, we went to Hubbell and stopped at the first tavern and had a few drinks and we were going to go to Dollar Bay and Hancock and stop in all over, celebrate a little bit; so after starting the car, and going, and then to stop the car, in the next place and he couldn't stop, the pedal was stuck. So he says, I can't stop it, Charlie. I says, how much gas you got? He says, I just filled it before I left, he was going to keep going until the gas run out, I didn't know how to stop a car and he didn't, so he says, we'll go around the county till the gas is all gone. So I saw a key there and I reached over and I touched the key and it went off. And the car stopped. Well, you lucky son-of-a-bitch, he says. He swore at me, I never swear, but he did. Oh, you smart, he figured I was the smartest guy around. I didn't know I stopped the car. It was more of an accident, I saw the key and I just touched the key and it shut off, the car stopped. Oh, boy, you smart!

P Was he an older fellow? Older doctor?

C: 2 years older than me, we worked together in the stamp mill, before he was a dentist. And then went to college and came back to work vacations, 2 months. We used to throw water on him, and mud, and he threw a scraper at me one day and if he had hit me, he would have killed me. We used to throw water on him and tease him, he was with us for 2 months, there was about 42 young fellows, 16-25 years old, full of tricks, I was sleeping one night on a bench and they put a big, long fuse under the bench and they lit it, boy, I jumped, I thought it was going to be a bomb. I ran and looked around and saw the fellows over there laughing. So we used to have a lot of fun. It was a regular play, like a gymnasium, but we did our work.

Where were you staying then? In a boarding house?

C: Home! I was born in Lake Linden. That house is still there. I was born in a log house. When I was 3 years old, we built that house, \$1,000, nice big frame house.

P: Did a midwife come in when you were born? Did your mother tell you?

C: Neighbors came in. Didn't have nurses or doctors or anything, we had company doctors, 2 or 3, They had an office right across the street from the big building on the end of Lake Linden street. Cough medicine was colored and it tasted good like licorice and we always had a cold and we'd empty that bottle, we'd go in coughing and they'd give us a bottle about that big. We'd drink that. They got caught. Later on, they kept on getting the stuff and then all at once we got a white medicine and it was salty, it tasted like poison, Ptui, we threw the bottle over and never went back. They never had that good licorice no more.

P: Do you remember the old home remedies?

C: Woolen sock around your neck and if you had a bad cold, they'd give you a spoonful of kerosene oil. Drink that; kill the germs. Father would say, swallow it. Didn't taste very good. And then goose grease, they'd heat that. That's the home remedies, that's all they'd do. Never went to a doctor. I cut my hand with a knife, tried to bore a piece of _____ and the knife went through, boy, I got scared I was bleeding, my dad got out his old pipe and he scraped out all the dirt and he put it on there, and boy it cured it right quick.

P: From his pipe he put the stuff on his hand?

M: They used to use that those days.

C: Ya, corncob. And he just scraped the dirt out and it worked. And he put that on, put a rag around and in a couple of days it was healed. That was a home remedy when you got cut or hurt.

My dad used to have a medicine in the trunk, it might have been mixed with liquor. My father never drank liquor, he used beer. Never drank brandy, whiskey or wine, but we did, I did because I delivered wine, brandy and whiskey to everybody's home. Even to the temperance people! They were temperance but nobody knew it! They'd give you an oil can, and they'd call me, I didn't go there, they weren't customers of mine but when they wanted liquor, whiskey or brandy or gin or wine, they'd call me and I'd stop, they'd give me the can, I'd bring them their gallon of liquor the next day, they'd pay for it, tell nobody; they were temperance people, they were supposed to be, but they'd have a gallon of liquor around.

There were supposed to be a lot of Finns around who were temperance people.

Not those days. There were only about 2 families of Finnish people here.

M: They used to use medicines too.

But now there's lots; Lake Linden was about 90% French and probably 5% English and German; they had 2 churches, Methodist and Congregational and they were well filled those days; now they've got only about 3-4 families. And there's a lot of Irish people, now I don't know if there's any.

P: Was there a lot of fighting in the bars between Irish and English

C: Not religious fighting, drunks; the woodsmen would come in on payday in the spring of the year; they stayed out all winter and they'd come in with \$200 or so, that was their pay for all winter; and they'd come in and start to drink and the first thing you'd know, there was a big fight. And we kids would be looking in the window, watching them, and then they'd come running out the door and on the street fighting. And we'd see the fight, we'd see who it was, I knew them; there was one big fellow, Jack Stanton, I'm not sure, he was big and strong and he used to get into fights, and he was a good-natured fellow, but he'd get into fights. They'd put him in jail; they had a jail there about 8x8 with bars in the windows, we'd go down and they'd hand us nickels, (some of 'em had a little money) and we'd go up town to buy candy, come back and talk to them, and they enjoyed that. The jail is still down there, where _____ was born, in H _____'s house, down from the post office. The jail is still down there, in that yard, little jail with bars in the window, just one room.

P: What do you remember about prohibition times?

C: Everybody was moonshining those days, all over, wherever you'd go, they'd give you a drink of moonshine. If you went to Bootjack, all the farmers had it. They made it. All the stores had some. I used to always keep some.

P: Did you make your own?

C: No, no, buy it from the farmer. They'd sell it to you if they knew you.

P: Did it cost very much?

C: They started off with about \$20 a gallon and they ended up with about \$3 a gallon. Then when it went wet, they couldn't sell it no more. But there was more about when it was dry.

P: Didn't the law authorities do anything?

C: Some put 'em in jail. I just to go bond for all the fellows that went to jail.

P: They ever skip out on you?

C: No. Well, some of 'em would take their money over to me and put it in the safe. Close their place up, they'd go to jail. Or go to court. Sometimes they'd get a year or a month, some couldn't go their bond. They wouldn't accept bond. One time the judge said to me, (I know the judge personally), Charlie, don't let that fellow go back into business, he shouldn't, we're going to leave him off on probation. Fred Perry, in '29-'30-'31. So Perry came back, didn't open up, sold it to Joe LeSage from Hubbell who ran it for awhile, no, he died, he rent it to another fellow, he was upstairs and they wanted to will the building to me. I says, Fred, I don't want you to do that; you've got a sister and a brother, you will it to them. That sister of mine, she's a tough one, I don't like her, I don't talk to her. I says, I know, but she's your sister anyways, so I told Frank Prince, Justice of the Peace, he died when he was 92, got double pneumonia, healthy, got around good, nice fellow, and I used to go to him and he'd take care of my business, anybody arrested, I'd go over and say, Frank, get after this fellow, he's got a car and he's down and he's here from Detroit, he'd serve up the papers and kept the car.

P: If they owed you money?

C: Sure, confiscate the car. He had a payday before he could take that car

P: Did a lot of people leave bad bills with you?

M: Oh, loads of them! I wish we had -

C: Not me, everybody. This was a credit town.

P: How come you let so many people have credit, I suppose they're your friends.

C: I knew them all, most of them; but the trouble was, they always did that, years ago; when I was a little bit of a boy, everybody had a book and when you went to the store, you just went down there with what you're going to buy, with your book. They'd write it in the book. And write a sheet for the delivery man to deliver for you. Then you paid on payday. If you owed \$50 and you paid \$40, OK, I had to balance the 10. After a while it would be 2-300. I had some customers and Hennes, when I worked on the dry goods side I went on clerking for a while, and I went to _____, and Frank Buschell, he owed Hennes \$1100, _____ about \$1250, I went to him and said, won't you start to pay on this bill, so much a month? He looked at me, who are you? Are you a lawyer from Hancock? I said, no, I'm a young fellow from Lake Linden. My name is Kiefer, I only lived about a block from him, he was old, though. So he says, I'll try, but he never did; none of them, Buschell didn't either, and a lot of others, old Brown, he was boss at coal dock; everybody got credit, I never turned a bushwhacker down or a drunk, I knew some of them I wouldn't get any money from but I used to trust them, leave them have a quarter or a half or a dollar, give 'em clothes, dress 'em up, they'd go into the woods and if I'd see the boss and he sometimes collected and he'd bring in the money to me. Rueben _____ used to collect a lot for me.

P: How much money did you "get stuck" for, or out?

C: I never kept tract of that

P: Quite a few thousand dollars?

C: Maybe 25

P: \$25,000?

C: I was in for 57 years, that isn't bad, small percentage, you got a bigger percentage, you didn't sell as close as the cash store. You always had a little extra for that. The good payers paid for some of that bad stuff. If a fellow got arrested I used to go their bail; fight or drunk or anything; a policeman come in to me, I said, how many more

times you coming in here? He laughed, he says, well, you're the fellow they told me had the money, I said, what is it, he said, so much, I'd go their bail, \$15, \$10, \$5; some of them paid and some didn't, they went away and forgets it. But people that stayed here, like Tony Otterman, he owed me \$450 at one time; I bought 8 forties for him, Buschell got 'em after and paid for 'em. And he worked 'em, sell the lumber but they'd spend the money. But he paid me every cent.

P: So there's a lot of people that would wait some years and then pay you after maybe 5 years and come back.

C: He kept paying as he would get it, I'd see him every once in awhile, I'd say, have some money for me, Tony, next month, I need some, alright, he kept paying and finally he paid the whole \$450 and 80% of the people around us; this Louie D _____, he owed me about \$400 when he left here and went on the boats and every month I'd get \$100, paid it off. Never saw him since!

P: Never saw him but he paid off the bill.

C: Paid off the bill, in 4 months or so, it was paid. I used to feed him, pay his board and everything, take care of him, did chores for us too, mama used to have him working for her; he was a young fellow, healthy, but he would never have a steady job. Just pick up here and there. Hang around the gas station, so he got on a boat, the first thing you know, he was working for my nephew, my nephew was head of one of the big boat companies, head boss, he used to run the boat, he came up here with that big boat to Escanaba a few years ago, the biggest boat you ever saw, a young lad about 40-45,

M: he's about 60

C: jees' I always think they stay young, he's got a big job; so Louie worked for him, and when he found out he worked in Lake Linden he asked him if he knew me, and Louie says, sure, I worked for him; he says that's my uncle, her sister's son.

P: What kind of things did the C&H men come in and bitch about? When they had gripes, I'm sure a lot of men or people hung around the store, you'd see them pretty often and on the street and other places, what kind of things did the working man bitch about?

C: Well, they were always looking for more pay. Otherwise the company used people good.

P: Treat them pretty well. What about, they built a lot of things

M: They had a lot of homes, they got their homes cheap

P: That's right, they got their homes for \$100

C: \$1.00 a room in Calumet, all those houses out at Gay, Mohawk and around there, A \$1.00 a room; big houses with 8 rooms, lovely yards, \$8.00. Down here, I don't know just what they paid, but they got 'em cheap and the rent was only \$5-\$8 a month. And they moved houses, all the houses that were on this street, they tore away; that big place down the street, that was a little city of C&H houses. Perreault from Hubbell moved all those houses out where Edmund lives, that was about 1915, on rollers, horses pulling the houses, they put 'em all out where Edmund lives, all around, they moved them from there and put that big building there.

M: There was a whole street.

C: We were living on that street when they were moving those houses, about 1914-15.

P: How did you get along with the company men, the men who were bosses, captains, and that?

C: Oh, I got along; I knew them all well. Later on, lot of 'em were my age; younger than me, and I was still in business, they were still working, I'd kid 'em about the silver picking and the "catch boxes", how we used to turn the plug through the hole to the lake so that the box wouldn't get full; it would get full but only once and you had the plug over there and you'd see the boss coming, you went over and turned those couple of plugs back, he'd call you, box full, I'd have to shovel it out, course the box was full, it stays full all night, I never did shovel it out. But then when he came, we had to shovel, well, then we'd shovel and we'd watch and when he'd get back out of the way, we'd turn the plug again and quit shoveling. And we'd break shovels on purpose, stick it way down tight and then twist it off and we had an excuse, we couldn't, the shovel was broke. Well, go to the office, get one! Get a new shovel.

(end of this tape)

P: Those are great stories, people like 'em, enjoy listening to them
You mean in Lake Linden there was a theatre?

M: Yes, oh sure, we ran a theatre, our oldest son worked in it

C: A big dance hall upstairs, where we danced; later on we danced downstairs; and they burned it up; we were in it that night, we got home up on 13th street, she said, you know, I feel nervous being in that theatre. I said, why? I'm always afraid it's going to burn. First thing you know, that same night, the whistles started to blow, the bells rang, I got into the car and down I went, I had an automobile then already

P: Was that in the 1920's when it burned?

C: No, I don't know what year, '23, I must have walked because I didn't have a car until 1923; I might have ran down

M: I think you ran down.

C: Ran down, and the building, a very big building, was burning all around, it wasn't in this corner or that corner, like most fires, the whole building was on fire at one time, like one bonfire and the firemen couldn't go in, all they did was stay outside holding a hose on it and it was cold weather but that water was running, they just flooded the place but it burned down.

P: There was no one in there; it was after it was closed

C: It was after the show was over

M: We had just got out of it

C: We walked home and she says, I feel nervous in there, I said, why; she says, I'm afraid sometimes there'll be a fire; one night we were there, a show was on and the curtains caught on fire. And she jumped, I said, sit quiet, sit right here, don't you move; people started to rush out; they hollered, keep your seats, there's no danger just this curtain is burning, they pulled the curtain down and put it out. I got a hold of her and said, don't you move, stay right here until the fire gets about 5 feet then we'll run out, we'll have a lot of room. I read about the fire in Chicago, where it wasn't even a fire, they hollered "fire" and scared everybody ran out of the theatre and the doors opened inside at that time, and they were piled up, there was thousands of people suffocated and burned.

P: Just like in Calumet in 1913, they yelled "fire" and there was no fire at all.

M: Some people do that.

C: They all went down the stairway and piled right up. If that door opened outward, and there wasn't any fire.

M: That was a poor thing for a public place

C: That was the unions were fighting, the trouble with C&H.

P: Ya, that's when they had all the fights. Boy, they killed a lot of people

P: 70 some people got killed, a lot of children

C: they hollered "fire", "fire", and people rushed. Got excited.

The Grand Theatre

P: When did they start the Grand Theatre? Before it was a movie theatre, what was it before that? Opera house?

P: Ya, an opera house, sure

P: Used to have big shows come up from Chicago?

C: All the big shows. The biggest shows in the country came up to the county. My brother-in-law in Hancock had the franchise. He was the only one that could move the shows in Hancock, from the depot to the theatre. No other drayman could do it. They weren't allowed to take it. He had a hold on all that stuff.

M: Richard Wible.

C: And here it was a showhouse with lots of seats, it was a big place, 3-400, could sit in it, for a little town, and then the first theatre was down on the other side of the Holy Rosary Church, torn away now, that was the first theatre, (movie house, little one) and Dishaw bought this hall, he was a druggist, and then he moved into the big one; Yvonne Gregory used to play the piano there. Upstairs there was a bowling alley, 2 alleys, Henry Duke took care of 'em and he had a saloon right next door and you didn't have to go outside to go in his place. Walk through and go into the tavern. You could come out and treat your girls you danced with, where you had to make the sign of the cross, before they'd drink it. It was white pop and I'd say, Tom, put a little wine in it, he'd take a spoon and pour a little wine in it, they were afraid that you were going to give 'em dope-drink because they wouldn't drink it, says there's no alcohol, nothing, it's white pop so they'd drink it. Oh, they had big parties there. We had a club, the Golden Star Club, I belonged to it at the time and we used to put on parties, have as much as 120 couples at that party. All invitations, nobody could enter without a card. Had people from Hancock, Calumet, Lake Linden, Hubbell, come there. Had 2 doorkeepers, they'd pick those cards up and you could enter; nobody else could sneak in and have the invitation no matter if they were big shots,

P: What kind of organization was that?

C: Gold Star Dancing Club. We used to have a lot of dances, every month, 120 couples, and they broke up later on.

P: What kind of things did you do on the 4th of July?

C: Big celebration.

C: Calithumpians, fireworks, same as they do now,

P: They were bigger then, though, weren't they?

M: You couldn't walk on the sidewalks, the streets used to be so full

C: Yes. There was no automobiles

P: Used to have circuses come up here?

C: Ardell remembers the time on a 4th of July, he got away from me, he got out on the road and a car, the horses were--he was under the horses, I ran out and grabbed him by the collar and pulled him out from under the yoke, he was already on to the horses, the poles, tried to stop the horses; calithumpians, they used to have some lovely booths and cars; Peter _____ used to be the fellow that would get first prize all the time, he was a foreman at the coal docks. They were elaborate, they were big and nice and cost lots of money. And the prizes were bigger those days than they are now. They were \$2-300 first prize. And they had running races, jumping and fireworks.

P: Did you try catch a greasy pig one time?

C: No, I never did; they used to have greasy pigs, greasy poles, I never did; I jumped once on a 4th, the fellows were down Hubbell, I never would go in the jumping stuff; but the fellow says if you go to Hubbell, I'm not going. So they got a hold of me, come on, jump, so just as I went to jump, I had all my clothes on, even my coat I didn't take it off, just my hat, and I jumped and they came. And I quit. And they got the money, I didn't. They had spiked shoes and they were trained; but when I was running with the firemen, Dale Gilles made a bet, \$2.00, with the fellows, they were jumping there, they had a standing jump, he says I'll bet you \$2.00 that Kiefer can jump further than any of you fellows. So when I came I was supposed to go down to _____ and run right to where the theatre was, about a 1/2-mile run, that's what we were trying, Frank Bednar and a bunch of us, so when I came over by the schoolhouse, Dale Gilles says, Charlie, I want you to jump, here's the mark. He says, I've got \$2.00 up on you that you could beat those fellows, try it. I had spike shoes, the first time I jumped with spiked shoes, so I got there and gave one swing and I went about that far over. They laughed! They never got over that! He was always kidding those fellows. _____ Vivian, Frankie Harris, 4 or 5 of 'em jumped and they had the top mark there. He said, this is the mark, Charlie, right here. They had a board there, so I didn't even try hard, I felt kind of ashamed like, I was young, only about 21, and I just give one swing, I went about 6 inches over their mark, Dale Gilles, he never forgot it; all his life he always kidded me, says, remember the time you beat those fellows, I got \$2.00.

P: What was courting life like? Before you got married?

Oh, I wasn't much for it, no. I had girlfriends, I went to Dollar Bay for awhile, and going to the smelting bosses' daughter down there and I had a girl, the father says, Charlie, when you get married, if you marry my daughter, he says, I'll start you up in business. I was working for Hennes then. Lizzie Easter, that was her name, so she went to Detroit and got married, children; I quit, she used to call up but I wouldn't go back, I went up there one night and she was gone down with a crowd of people down to Copper Harbor and my date was Sunday night and when I come there, she was down Copper Harbor. So her brother says, she'll be back soon and I says, the hell, I'm going home. So I went home and she'd call up and I'd tell the girl at the office, Theresa Browse, she was the bookkeeper, I'd say, when she calls, if you know her voice, tell her I'm out. And when I'd go to the phone she'd ask me to come up, I'd say, maybe so I never went back. She didn't care enough for me, I didn't want anybody that didn't want me,

P: How did you meet your wife?

C: She met me. I always accuse her of it, I was 30 years old. They wanted to go to the dance, she hinted, and I took her to the dance. And I was walking home with her, I was teeming then, and when we got between the church and the convent, I said, I'll be back at 7 o'clock and I grabbed her and I kissed her right there on the street, about 6 o'clock in the night. She says, she's going to make me pay for that kiss. And that's where we started. She used to go with Edmund's dad.

M: We were all just friends.

C: It wasn't love, like the paper says, if you didn't think about committing suicide it isn't love.

P: What kind of things did you do before you got married, go to dances

C: Go to dances, work, study, worked at Henneses and I worked there until 1913

P: Go over to her house and visit her at her house?

C: Oh, every night.

P: Go over there for a meal?

C: Once in a while I'd eat; I ate all the stuff in the frigidaire one night that was for her dad to go to work for breakfast, he had nothing to eat the next day.

P: Was she mad at you?

M: No, mother didn't get mad, she laughed about it.

C: We ate the sandwiches that were ready for breakfast.

M: Put everything on the table and he ate it.

C: He was blacksmith at the sawmill. So we ate what he was supposed to have the next morning.

M: He used to come over often, during the day and during the night.

C: I used to come down every night.

P: How late did you stay there? Late at night?

M: No, my father wouldn't like it

C: No, I stayed late one night and he hollered, time for you people to go home

P: Was it 9 o'clock or something?

C: 12

M: Midnight. He used to stay until 11 and midnight.

C: Then I'd go over to the club and play poker all night.

P: Drink and play poker?

C: We had a club, right across from the Quality, second building, upstairs. All business people and my boss was there, I worked for him and I was bowling with him; he never played cards, he told the girl, Theresa Brouse, I don't understand Charlie, never a

nickel over, never a nickel short when we settled every night when I come back from the drive, and Alec Barbeau was a French fellow, bachelor, and he'd always be short \$5.00 or \$1.00; we'd go through the books, I'd call off the prices; he was short \$10.00 one night, I said I'll check on that but I don't know what could have happened to that 10, he was just feeling me out, he told me after, he says, you weren't short. He says, I found it.

P: What were prices like at that time?

C: Peas, corn, rice, 3¢ a pound; butter, about 12¢ a pound; eggs about 12¢ a dozen; mean 6¢ a pound to about 10¢; nice sirloin steak for about 10¢ a pound; the only thing that was real high was summer sausage that Chris _____ made, he used to get \$1.00 a pound for it. That was swell stuff, that was something out of this world.

P: Not too many people could buy it then either

C: No, not too many; traveling men used to go over and take some back with 'em. Oh, he made nice sausage. And every kind of sausage, very tasty. He was from Germany, Chris _____; he used to dance with mama, every time I went to a dance he was there. Knew his dances; in Germany he used to give dances

M: He wore out the orchestra one night

C: and these old fellows would dance with her, they were considered old because they were about 10 years older than me; at that time I was probably 35 and they were probably 45 or 50. And _____ danced the _____ with her one night and the band kept playing and there were only a couple of us dancing; everybody quit; the gals, oh boy, they kept going and finally the band quit, they wouldn't keep it up.

M They couldn't wear us out!

C: We used to dance until 3 o'clock.

M: I could dance those days, my legs were good. I don't know what caused this.

P: Do you remember anything about politics? Political life in Lake Linden?

C: I never bothered with politics; I voted for everybody that ran, the marshalls.

P: Do you remember the first time you voted for president?

C: When I was a young fellow, 21 or 22. You had to be 21 those days before you could vote

P: Teddy Roosevelt came up here?

C: I saw Roosevelt up in Calumet-Laurium, at the Amphidrome, the rink they moved to Marquette. I used to go to Calumet to dances on New Years night, to the old place, old soldier's home and then they built another one. The Coliseum, they built that after; I used to dance in the old one; I danced in that one, too. I skated there one afternoon with 3-4 fellows; we were going and I could skate pretty good then; first thing, zing, I went down and went against the wall, I said, that's enough for me, boys! You can keep on skating, 4-5 us Calumet boys were out for an afternoon fun, I was single then, a young fellow; I took the skates off, they were skating for a while and we went back to the city to the saloon.

M: They used to call em saloons

P: Were there any speak-easies or blind pigs in Lake Linden at all?

C: Sure, even when there was saloons. 27 saloons paid licenses in one year in Lake Linden.

M: That whole back street was full.

C: There was a blind pig not far from here, and there was one in Lake Linden, and there was 2 out up on the hill, immoral houses, with about 5, 6 or 8 women in each one,

P: These were early, when there was not prohibition

C: Before and after. Finally somebody burnt them up. They were both burned away. Good ridance, one was called the Green House, that was on the left side, another one in further. They were there yet when we lived on 13th Street. Bill _____ from Hubbell married one of the landladies.

P: Ladies own the places?

M: Ya.

C: From Hubbell. Fine looking fellow.

M: Nice people they were

C: Married one of 'em and of course he retired then. They lived right close to our place where Faller's live. I couldn't think of that name the other day, the lady that was acting drunk that time when we went to Copper Harbor; we came back and she was acting - she had us laughing, she had us clowning, we were riding on punctured tire, fabricated tires, way back, when we were coming down the hill. I was riding on the rims.

M: I never laughed so much

C: Rootey-too-toot we were going through town and she was acting drunk, we got out, tried to patch the tire up, I think it was 1-2 o'clock in the morning, and she was acting drunk, talking drunk, and she was good; she had the kids laughing and we were laughing so much that we couldn't fix the tire so the back end, we rode home on the rims, clunkety-clunk.

M: All the way down the hill.

C: All the neighborhood. I had to get new rims, of course. All I had to do when I needed \$50 or if I didn't have what I wanted, I'd go over to the bank and say, Charlie, put me down for a couple hundred, I'm short. OK, give Charlie 200. He did at the desk, the old bank, this one is all remodeled now. And sometime I'd go over and talk to him and he was so nervous, we were out late that night, I'd go over and see him, he'd be shaking, I said, give me that letter, I'd open it, so steady, God, he said, I wish I had your health. He was a fellow about 45. So I said, I'll tell you what you need. You need a good drink like now. I had some last night, he says, come on, take those books out, I'd pick up the books and way down, finally I reached down and got a fifth of whiskey, take that out and have it in the back room. He'd lock the door and we'd sit in there and have a few, I feel better now, not so nervous. 48 years old, he died.

P: What was his name?

C: Charlie MacIntyre. Good looking fellow, the girls all liked him. They used to tell me, introduce me to your friend. I used to have to introduce him to a lot of girls; he was single, I was single, and I knew them all, he knew that; I had a lady come to me one time and say, will you introduce me to your friend, Charlie MacIntyre, I said, do you want to meet him, she says, sure, I do, she was a married woman, so I says, alright, so I got Charlie and I introduced him to her .

M: Tell us about Walter Sutton.

C: Oh, Walter, he was a card

P: Who was he?

C: He was the son of the Sutton Store and he was the only son, and he was a _____ boy, women, had clothes, every day he had a different suit, he got married, wife got divorced from him, married another woman, got divorced I guess, and he went out West He sent a picture back, to Archie McCarver, the banker and Archie showed me the picture. The last picture he had, his wife and him and he had a little baby in his arms. That's about maybe 10 years ago.

M: Oh, more than that.

C: But he lived to be 78. He had a foot off; he was out west on a farm horse riding, he said, I think some fellow shot him. I think he was going out of a window and he was shot. That's what we were told. But he says this horse sideswept against the building.

M: He might have said the truth

C: But he could dance, had a cork foot

M: He was a good man.

P: Was he popular with the women when he was young?

C: Oh, he was. He didn't care if they were married or single

P: It didn't make any difference.

C: No, not to him. The last time that he came back here, he stayed at the hotel. I had Hartel, we took him down to Keweenaw to a friend and set him on the porch there. The fellow says, don't leave him here, I said, ya, he told us to take him here. He said, will you take me down there, cross you heart? I had to cross my heart, I says, I'll take you down so I went over to the hotel, I said, are you ready Walter? He says, yessss I'm ready (drunk) so Mrs. Taylor says, get him out of here, she ~~was getting~~ paid because his sister was married to a rich fellow and she was sending him I think \$35 a month, or \$5 a month over the board but he would bum money from everybody.

P: For drinking money?

M:

C: Even down Keweenaw. We took him down there, and left him there and he was there about 5 years, he just like a bum,

M: Isn't that too bad, and he was brought up so nice. Such nice people

C: I remember a couple fellows took him home one night, and the Mrs. bawled the fellows out. They took him home drunk and she bawled the 2 fellows out that was taking him home nicely, she didn't bawl him out! So they said, the hell with him, after this he'll have to walk home. We won't take him home. He used to get paralyzed.

M: He was a nice-looking fellow.

C: Ya, he was crazy, that's all.

P: Do you remember any other characters like that?

C: Oh, there's lots of 'em. Frank _____ was one; he was around; he had a fiddle; he used to play the fiddle for the people.

P: Was he real good with the fiddle?

C: Oh, yes, he could play good. Just natural.

P: Did he go around town and play?

C: Taverns, or wherever he'd go, he didn't care; he'd have that with him, he'd play for the fellows and they'd dance and jig and he'd get all his drinks free; he never worked, very seldom, just once in a while; happy-go-lucky fellow; I had to take hold of him one time by the collar and by the seat and I shoved him out the front door; he told me, jees' you're strong; you picked me up like a doll; I says I handled bales of hay and barrels of flour, 200#, I used to put on my shoulder and carry 'em up the stairs; I weighed 135# and the flour was heavier than I was but I could do it. Topsy Barry come in the store one time and he got sassy, I said, Topsy, now you be quiet or I'll take care of you, he says, you, you couldn't hurt a fly. I grabbed him on the arm and picked him up like this, the bench was about this high, the shoe bench, and I sat him down and I says, now, sit down and be quiet. He says, I will. He told all the fellows in saloon, holy God, that Kiefer's strong. He says, you oughta' see him pick me up. The fellows told me after, what'd you do to Topsy? I said I just picked him up and told him to sit quiet. He was drunk. He felt that I could lift something because I was used to it, that was way back, 40 years old. Poor fellow got killed, he was up Calumet, must have walked out in the road, got hit and the car killed him.

(end of tape)

C: -----before that, he told his father, his father told me, he came around with the money, he said, Topsy told me, if anything happened to him, to pay me, so the old man came around with \$92. So I took \$90 and gave him \$2 back, and I said, go over and get a pint of liquor for yourself. Pete Barry was his father. Pete said Topsy told me when he was sick that if anything happened to him to pay me, so Pete came in after he was killed, after he got the insurance, paid the money Topsy owed me; he used to always come in a borrow money from me when he was drunk and bother me;

P: What kind of stories do you remember? Any special stories that you want to help him with?

M: Well, when I came here, he was pretty old; he went through a lot; he knew more people than I did.

P: That's right, you were 30 years old. You came here when you were 10-12 years old

C: I knew everybody.

M: I was 17 years old

P: Two years after you came here, you got married.

M: Yes

C: She visited first

M: Then I went back.

C: She went back after she met me, and got her folks to move to Lake Linden. When I was engaged and going to get married, they moved back and the father came back and stood for us. She had to move here; don't forget I knew she grabbed me. She was

after me. She didn't want me to be a bachelor. She was a small person those days.

M: No, no. Mr. Eddy asked me one day if somebody told them about

P: What kind of stories do you remember about those days?

M: There wasn't very many to remember, only the town was awful busy and he was working in the store, he was busy; I was doing dressmaking for everybody, all the graduation girls and I used to sew for them. I made a fortune, too.

P: A little fortune on the side for yourself.

C: She used to alter clothes

M: And I used to help with the tailor, I used to alter all the men's suits, help him out.

C: I bought the tailor out, he wanted to go away so I bought him out and I ran the tailor shop with a fellow from Chicago. And then he dropped dead with heart trouble so then I quit the tailor shop.

M: And I used to do all their repairing.

C: She shortened pants, put the cuffs on; I used to take in drycleaning, too, besides. I had a friend up Calumet, bring the clothes down, come and get the clothes. He used to charge, that was expensive those days, \$3 for a suit of clothes, I got a dollar-and-a-half and he got a dollar-and-a-half.

P: Did you do any ironing too?

M: Oh, yes, they were all pressed.

C: He did, they did, all pressed. But that was high, \$3, but people used to bring in their suits.

M: This is our wedding picture

P: He even looks young for 30 years.

C: I was 30. There I am in the orchestra, that was the last of 'em; we had 25 first and we ended up with 4.

P: What were you playing, the guitar?

C; Mandolin. The other 3 boys are dead.

P: You're trying to outlive everyone out here, aren't you?

M: Yes. Everyone

C: All my friends and all the people I went to school with, all are dead. They're all over in the cemetery.

P: You got married in 1908, you've been married 64 years.

C: In May, we're going for 65. We were 64 years married, May 27. I remember that; those were joyous days. Wish I could go backward, start all over again.

P: You got your marriage certificate and everything yet.

M: Ya, 1908

C: May 27.

P: Did you have a nice church wedding, or did you have a wedding at home?

M: Oh, no, we went back to my home town, we had to get married there because that was my church.

P: Back in Champion?

C: We got married here, then I went to my sister's in Hancock, stayed there overnight, the next day we went to Champion and they shivareed us, her friends, and she didn't want them to know it, but the folks went and told

M: and the house was full

C: crowded. They were shivareeing and full of jokes, one fellow was telling jokes, they were having a good time. I didn't enjoy it too much, I didn't know any of them.

P: You didn't even hardly know her parents at all, very much, before that.

M: Oh, yes, he used to come over every day.

C: Oh, yes, I knew them because I used to go to the house in Lake Linden for over a year, then I'd see them, but I never saw her father very often because he was working, long day and then in the evenings he'd go to bed or be reading, he wouldn't be in the parlor with us. He'd leave us alone. He'd say, she's doing pretty well. She's working with me nicely. You know how it is, hey? She's a good woman, though.

M: Ya. I helped him a lot.

C: She helped and she worked. She farmed, too, you oughta see her. I gotta tell you of all the animals she had.

M: Now here's all the money I saved and I gave it all to him. Now look, this is all my own money, that I earned.

P: You put it in the bank yourself then?

C: No, I put it all in her name. What I did was spend it

M: I was telling Edmund. Women don't have to be poor and suffer. They can do things themselves. I did it a lot. I worked.

C: She had 3 lots she used to plant. I'll tell you about the birds she had. She raised a thousand chickens. She used to take care of.

P: Where was the farm at?

M: In Lake Linden, right back of our home

C: We didn't have a farm, we planted vacant lots. We had one lot of our own where Dion is, we used to plant that; then we used to plant the one that the nuns owned on the hillside;

M: That was willed to the nuns but the nuns never used it

C: And she had cows, pigs; we raised 2 pigs every year; she used to raise turkeys, ducks, chickens, canary birds, had a room,

M: we used to sell 'em for \$10,

C: and she had fish in the pond, goldfish; and we had turtles, geese

P: Did your kids help you take care of these?

C: Sure they used to help.

M: That's why I had all that.

C: Ardell used to help milk the cow 'till he was 14. I never did anything, I used to take care of the store. When I came home, I'd say, what do you want from the garden, she'd say, anything, so I'd go down and pick up carrots, beans, lima beans,

P: When was your first child born?

M: In the hospital, Lake Linden

P: What year?

C: 1909, March 6.

P: So right away you had children so you had them do all your work for you.

M: Why sure, I raised them with me. They worked with me

C: Ardell was born in 1910, in October, 19 months after

M: And we had rabbits

C: Then Elaine, Steve Condon's wife, then Alden, then Lester and Willys, I had twins, no more children, I was through; about 7 years after, we had Dorene and Giles. About 11 years.

P: The last one. When was he born?

C: 1929.

P: The start of the depression

C: Ya, the depression started about that time; then we had 2 babies. Dorene and Giles. The others were all big, they worked, going to high school; the twins were 10 or 11 years old when Dorene was born, this twin girl raised Dorene, mom never bothered with her, she raised her. She dressed her ^{and} played with her like a live doll.

M: She says, why don't we have a baby? Because Mr. Gagnon had one and she says, how come we can't have a baby? I said, you want a baby, ya, she says, so she got one. She got 2.

P: How was it during the depression? Did your store make it?

M: Yes, we didn't notice it so much, but we lived.

C: We didn't make any money.

P: But you never went broke.

M: No, no

P: You have already bought property before. What happened? The banks didn't close?

C: Yes, they closed for pretty near a year. I tried to borrow \$5,000 that I had in the bank in my safe, I knew he had \$5,000 because he had it in the safe for about a week or two; one day they come in and says to me, Hank _____ died. Jeess, I said, that's so? I got \$5,000 of his money over in the safe, but they was just foolin'.

M: They were just teasing him I guess

C: So I says, Hank, take that money and put it in the bank, don't leave it around here, I don't want it around here, something happen, so he took it to the bank and he deposited it. So that was before the depression. So when the depression was on, I says, Hank, why don't loan that money to me and I'll give you mortgage on the store and my home, the home is worth at least \$12,000, so he thought it over; but I said/tell anything to the bank, but I'll tell you something, this bank is going to close and you're going to be without money, remember that now; but I want your money because I had 10 stocks I was going to pick up, they were all down, Calumet & Hecla, one-dollar-and-a-half and so on; everything was way down; I have the 10 picked out and ready and I was going over to the bank, and I said, buy that for me, I got his money; I didn't have anything yet, we were just living on it; I said don't tell it to the banker because he won't want you totake it out; don't tell him, and he come back and says, no, I'm going to leave it; well, it's up to you but you're doing wrong, but this bank is going to close on you; lots of banks are going to close; it wasn't long after the bank closed tight; he went over to get \$5 and he couldn't get it. So he borrowed \$3 from me, he says, I didn't eat for 3 days, he didn't eat, he was suffering, and he had no work.

P: Did you have any of your money in the bank?

C: I didn't have any to put there then. Bad time, raising a family and paying that house and everything. So I give him the \$3, he paid me back; then he went out and worked for a farmer for his board so he lived until he got good again. He was a good workman.

P: Did you ever buy any stocks then later?

C: No, I never had a chance. No, I always had my money in business, buying houses I didn't want to.

M: I didn't want him to buy stock.

C: When I was a single fellow, I had about \$11,000 saved. And I put it in Calumet & Arizona at 90-some dollars and it went way down to 30-40, and the bank sold me out (before I was married); in 1907, the money panic, stocks went way down, around the 50% margin, and the bank sold me out. I said to Charlie, what do you want to do that for? Why don't you hold me on? I'll pay it later on, he says, it isn't me, the board had a meeting. Sold the stock and I had \$600 left. So then I started saving again, and in 1908 I got married. Got married with just a few hundred dollars.

M: So he went in the real estate business. Bought homes and fixed 'em up.

C: So anytime that I'd see a house that didn't look good, I'd say, that house makes me sick, I'd buy it.

P: Any other things to bring up, any major things, any other characters that lived around you?

C: Oh, I knew them all.

M: Why don't you tell them about ol' Gregorie used to live out here. Years ago

C: There's the Gregorie Sawmill. Ol' Gregorie came from Canada, put up a big sawmill,

and the year of the fire, all those houses burnt. I understood that he trusted pretty near all the people, that didn't have money, give them all the lumber they'd want, I 'spose he took a mortgage, I don't know, this was talk after; if you wanted to build a house, you went over to him, he'd build it for you. How much you want? How many thousand feet? My father did the same. \$1,000 for that house. I don't think he had the money. I think he trusted him and he paid him off by the month. He built the whole town up and most of the people borrowed from the bank or him. And he came up here with lot of big, French people, he brought them with him, he was a bushwhacker himself. After he worked awhile, he bought up all the good timber, and he opened up a big sawmill. He didn't have the money. He borrowed it from the banks and friends. He ran it and he was a bigshot; oh, he must have had several hundred men working for him. Biggest funeral in Lake Linden, he had.

M: How about ol' Mr. Bosch?

C: Joseph Bosch? He used to work in the stamp mill, feed heads; when he came here, he married a rich girl from Calumet and they put him up in a little brewery. I was a young fellow at the time. I saw the dogs, one dog would get in the barrel and he'd rotate the fellow washing the bottle. The dog was in there, rolling the barrel around. Then when that dog was so long in there, take him out and put the other dog in. They were big dogs. That's how they went on. Then they'd take the case of beer when they had a full case, take and haul it to you or whoever had the order, on their shoulder. That's how he started. Started in Lake Linden, right up from my store there, about 2 blocks up. They tore it away. He went to Houghton. Lucien Almen tore that down, the big stack,, he just had the stack pulled down. So he got to be a multi-millionaire. When he died, he had a lot of money and he used to give a lot of money away to people. He was good to the poor people. And his boy, his son, he was as tough as Sutton, he was a corker. I had a lot of trouble with Joe, Joe, Jr. Too much money, raised too good. You know that's going to take 10 years off your life. If you're slated for 90, you're going to live to be 80. I never used to gamble my life. I never smoked a cigarette.

M: It affects your lungs, you know.

I've seen Dr. Bradley all my life

P: Well, that kept you healthy. Some people who are tea-toddlers, will tell you, you shouldn't have drank when you were young because that takes a lot of years off your life, instead of living to be 110, you'll only live to be 100.

My dad used to say, on Sunday afternoon, go get a bottle of beer; I'd get it up; 2 big glasses, I drank, I was just a young fellow about 8-10 years old. Must have been 10, because we had our new house. And they'd put it in the coal stove, heat it, brush it off, and stir it up and cook it and it'd get hot, take the poker out and they drank it that way.

P: It was pretty warm then

C: It was warm, that's the way they used to drink it. They didn't like cold beer. Couldn't put it in the refrigerator those days. Right now, people want ice in it

P: What do you think is going to happen to the Copper Country? Say, when you're 130

C: We're going to see copper mining again inside of 5 years.

P: Do you think it's going to open back up?

C: It's going. There's all kind of copper. They diamond drilled all the way to Copper Harbor. They know what's there. This other company was crooked. They come up and took it over and when they had a strike, they closed her down. And they're selling

everything, the locomotives, the railroads, everything but some of the buildings

M: Charlie, why don't you tell about what I told you, about the college boy who was living in our home.

C: Oh, he said, in 10 years; that was about 10 years ago

M: Well, just about, not quite

C: He said, this is going to be a better country; don't sell your place.

M: There's big officials from Chicago are coming here, and they said, this is where they're going to invest their money. There's lots of good copper here and they need this copper. But of course they have a lot of copper on hand and they're waiting until their old copper is used up. And then they're going to start doing it.

C: Benedict, the head boss, he just left here a couple years ago, he's dead now, he told me himself, there's enough copper in there for a hundred years, they didn't take out 10% yet.

P: Lot of people like to come up here in the summertime.

M: This copper is the best copper, native copper, and they need that.

C: All those fellows, down in the city, that gets the bond or old enough for social security are moving back here; there's 2 here now who are only about 55-58 years old; they're retired and living on the bond they're getting from the company; they bought a place 20,000 over here; Sam Buschell got his mobile home on that and he's going to build; he's only about 58 years old; retired; and I've heard a lot of people from Calumet are coming back but they're already buying the basement living and you're going to see that most of the people that did live here, if they haven't got children where they're living, if their children have gone away from them, they're going to come back here. Even if they don't work, they have money; they get social security.

What do you think of all the people--most of the people that I've talked to or some of them, have criticized C&H and the other mining companies-----

C: This company that came and bought the C&H, they

P: they even criticized C&H for not helping the people enough

C: they paid what they had to; they organized the union in 1913, they got 8-hour shifts from 13 and more pay and everytime the union looked for what they wanted, they got it;

P: Ya, but there's also people who say that the companies are the ones who controlled the politics in the area, it's their people who won the elections

C: They did; a lot of Democrats were afraid to say they were Democrat,

P: I've heard that said before, too

C: That's true; they would never tell you that they're Democrats and I knew they were, some of them; my dad wouldn't tell 'em, my dad was Democrat; I always voted Democrat; but those people working at the company, liable to get put off;

P: Did he ever tell you those stories

C: Bosses were all Republican down here at the mill; Morgan and the whole bunch

M: You know, the Republicans are for the rich.

I used to march with a torch for the Republicans when I was a kid, we'd get a bunch of kids, we'd all have a torch lit up and march all along the streets, the band leading us

P: Your dad was a Democrat but you never told anyone.

C: I never voted Republican in all my life. My son-in-law in Hancock, he's a Republican. My daughter was Republican, she followed him of course. Ahh, I says, be a Democrat, don't be Republican because your husband is, don't you worry about him. She says, no, I like it. She used to give speeches too, for Republicans.

P: Do you still go out and vote now?

C: I ain't going to go out anymore; the fellow come out with the papers

P: Absentee ballots?

C: Ya, if he comes I'll sign them, but if he don't, I ain't going to bother; they don't run the country to suit me anyway.

P: They figure you're OK, you're going to make it

M: We make out own living.

C: They won't raise our pay no more.

blank)

C: but the C&H, that was a new company that came up 2 years ago and bought it over.

P But even earlier than that, the 20's and 30's

C: Oh, yes, they took that hospital down; the C&H quit their hospital, well, I 'spose it was a burden, was costing 'em too much money maybe,

M: and the libraries

P: One thing thought, a lot of people say C&H made a lot of money here

C: They paid dividends every year, they never hardly quit a dividend; people that owned stock got good dividends.

P: But those people who owned it, like the people in Boston, they made the money.

C: They owned the biggest part of it; they made a lot of money. But they never spent it here. The only thing they did, one time, they improved the ground, they had lawns made and flowers. That was somebody's will. There was 2 fellows.

P: That was Aggasiz. Aggasiz was supposed to be a pretty good guy

C Big German fellow. He did that.

P He lived in 1880's and 1890's.

C: And after he passed away, they sent MacIntyre here, he come up here

M: McNaughton

C: No McNaughton was the big boss; MacIntyre came here and got a job in Lake Linden.

In the mills. He came around with a book and 4 fellows were working on this job; he'd watch you; he'd time you; mark it down; the next group you'd come to, there was only 3; same work; maybe a month afterward, 2 of you would be doing the same work instead of 4; what happened, they worked men off. That's MacIntosh. He stayed there until he got rheumatism and then he died. That was only about maybe 30 years ago when he started that, he cut the labor force down pretty near in half.

P: In the stamp mill and that

C: Where the fellows were running ahead; my brother used to work with him; I used to sleep over there; the heads were pounding and I'd sleep like a dog. Didn't make no difference, so one man used to run one head; later on, I think they had to run 3; one man had to watch 3 heads, and when it would ding 'heavy' he'd have to run over to the other head and adjust it. The other one, oh, he was watching, one man-----

(end of tape

NAME - MR. CHARLES P. KIEFER

Keefe

6/3/74

Charles Kiefer, 96, recent Lake clothier, dies

LAKE LINDEN — Charles P. Kiefer, 96, passed away Saturday evening at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Doreen O'Brien, in Green Bay, following an illness of about a month.

6/1/74



Charles P. Kiefer

He was born April 21, 1878 in Lake Linden, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Kiefer.

He was employed by Calumet and Hecla from 1892 until 1898 and by the Hennes Department Store of Lake Linden from 1898 to 1913 where he was a teamster and later the clothing department manager.

In 1913, he opened a men's clothing store in Lake Linden, which he operated until he retired in 1968.

His days with the Hennes firm highly were important in that his outlet was used in its supplies out of Houghton and Portage Entry via the Tug

had an important outlet in Houghton which the deceased also, occasionally, served.

On occasion, the deceased worked aboard the craft which hauled the supplies out of Houghton in that Copper Range train service did not begin in Lake Linden until 1902, the earliest.

When the former Calumet and Hecla worker started his own business it was with Mose Beauchamp as a partner. Not long after the association began he purchased his shares and continued to operate the business as a private affair.

At one time Mr. Kiefer was a member of the Blue Lakes Bowling Club, the premier unit of its type in the western Upper Peninsula. He valued his membership in the group and contributed his part to the high rating the unit acquired.

For years the deceased was hailed as the man who continued in the clothing business in the same building for over a half-century. This record, he was told, was not equalled in the Copper Country at the time the material was compiled in 1963.

On May 27, 1908, he married the former Mary Louise Carriere at St. Joseph Church, Lake Linden, with Fr. N.J. Raymond officiating. She preceded him in death Jan. 23, 1973.

A daughter, Mrs. Stephen (Elaine) Condon of Lake Linden, passed away in January, 1956, and a son, Charles L. died in March, 1968.

Mr. Kiefer was a member of St. Joseph Church, Lake Linden, and a charter member of the Torch Lake Knights of Columbus, the Lake Linden-Hubbell Lions Club, Hubbell Aerie of Eagles and the Torch Lake Chamber of Commerce.

Surviving are two daughters, Mrs. Marjorie Dayton of Lake Geneva, Wis., and Mrs. Doreen O'Brien of Green Bay; four sons, Ardel H. of Rochester, Mich., Aiden A. of St. Clair Shores, Wyllis W. of Fresno, Calif., and Giles J. of Houghton; 28 grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

Friends may call at the Pearce Funeral Home Tuesday from 2 to 5 and 7 to 9 p.m. There will be a prayer service at 8 p.m.

Funeral services will be Wednesday at 11 a.m. in St. Joseph Church, with Fr. Otto Sartorelli celebrating the Mass of the Resurrection. Burial will be in Mt. Calvary Cemetery.