FINNISH FOLKLORE AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN THE GREAT LAKES MINING REGION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT 1972-1978
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SUBJECT: Early Dairy Business

SOURCE: William Ranta
Marquette, Michigan

COMMENTS:

R: My name is William Ranta and I was born in Marquette, Michigan.
I: Where were you born...what street?
R: On Bluff Street, between Third and Fourth Streets.
I: Did your family live there at that time?
R: And my family lived there at that time. Then we moved to Presque Isle Avenue in 1906...no, I was born in 1908, and we moved to Presque Isle Avenue at that time. Father built a new house there and he worked at the LS & I Railroad on the bridge and building crew.
I: Now, how long did you live on Presque Isle Avenue?
R: We lived there 'til 1919. September 11th we moved to the farm ten miles south of Marquette on US 41 and we had done farming at that time...had cows, chickens and pigs...and we raised a lot of potatoes which we sold on the retail market, Mother and I, and then we sold the fresh milk to the Buck Dairy.
I: Now, going back to Marquette and living on Presque Isle, what school did you attend?
R: I attended normal school and that was the John D. Pierce Training School at that time.
I: This is where students did their practice teaching?
R: Before they went out into the field?
I: Right, and I went through six grades there.
R: Were there quite a few Finnish people there in North Marquette?
I: There were quite a lot of Finnish people living in that area.
R: What did the boys do for fun at that time?
I: Well, we had a lot of acreage in back of our houses where the athletic field of today stands. We played there in the sand lot, blueberries...
in the summertime and the beach wasn't very far...could go to the Lake Superior shores, and we were there in that area too for swimming, picking rocks.

I: So there was plenty to do?
R: Yeah, there was plenty to do.

I: How large do you think Northern Michigan University was at that time? There weren't too many buildings, were there?
R: There was two buildings and a dormitory. Where the St. Michaels Church stands now of today, the dormitory was there.

I: The old wooden building?
R: That old wooden building.

I: Do you remember any of the things you did in school? Did you understand Finnish when you went to kindergarten there?
R: I just spoke nothing but Finnish when I went...first started school.
I: But that was very true of many of them at that time.
R: At that time, yes.
I: And there were other Finnish children that went to John D. Pierce School?
R: Yes.
I: Do you remember anything about the teachers there...any of the teachers' names or anything?
R: I can't remember....but one of them was Mrs. Bates.
I: So, Mrs. Bates was one of your teachers?
R: Un hum
I: Now, what about the street cars in Marquette? Were they active at the time?
R: Yeah, they were in use at that time.
I: And they went past your house on Presque Isle?
R: Yes, on Presque Isle down to the island.
I: And you'd take the street car down by your house and get downtown?
R: Yes...go down.
And you heard a lot of Finnish being spoken at that time?

Yes...and then there was the two Finnish halls...one was on Washington Street, Liberty Hall...the other one was on Bluff Street, the Labor-tempa...Temperance Society.

So they had all kinds of activities going for the Finnish people

The Finnish people were very active at that time

Now, what about the things the boys did at that time? Did you go to the Island...hike up to the Island then?

Yes, we had a number of picnics every summer.

What about first cars coming to Marquette? Were there a lot of cars?

There wasn't too many cars. My father purchased his first car in 1914.

What was it like because there weren't many at that time?

No...it was a used car. He bought it from John Niemi who was a shoe store operator in Marquette and in fact he took that car to the country when we moved to the country in 1919.

Do you remember what make of car it was?

It was an Oakland.

How old was it when...

It was a 1912 Model.

1912 Oakland?

Was your dad able to drive it in the winter?

No, we weren't able to drive it in the wintertime...the roads...we lived out in the country and the roads were never plowed, they were just rolled with big snow rollers that packed the snow down and we just used horses and sleighs.

What about in Marquette? Was he able to use it...were the streets plowed in Marquette at that time...do you remember?

I don't think in the wintertime...cars weren't used.

What kind of a car was it...was it a touring car?

Yeah, a touring car.

So the top could come down?
R: The top rolled down.
I: Do you remember the color of it?
R: Black...un huh...and the driver always went around and drove on the left hand side...I remember now.
I: Was it a four-door?
R: Four-door touring.
I: What about tires and so on? Did they last very well?
R: No, they didn't last very long. I remember many times flats came very easily.
I: How were the flats fixed then?
R: Dad would fix them himself...sometimes he'd fix them right on the road...carry the patching along.
I: Now, the street car went past your house. Was there quite a bit of noise when the street car went by?
R: Quite a bit of noise.
I: And it went down...?
R: Every fifteen minutes
I: Now, there were other nationalities besides the Finnish that lived in North Marquette.
R: Yeah, Italians.
I: Quite a few Italians.
R: Yeah, quite a few Italians.
I: How did the two get along?
R: Got along very well.
I: Or did they stick by their own nationalities?
R: Well, they were more partial to their own nationalities.
I: And so the Finnish people visited amongst themselves?
R: Yes, un huh.
I: And of course Finnish people in other areas of Marquette too.
R: Yes, I guess so.
Now, you talked about blueberry picking. Do you remember any blueberry picking or raspberry picking?

Yes...I...

Where did you

We went out...the South Shore and Atlantic operated berry trains to out-of-town...ten and twenty miles and sometimes further than that even and they'd drop you off at these plains where the berries were and we'd stay there all day and then on the way back the train would pick us up.

Now these berry trains...would they leave early in the morning?

They left around seven or eight in the morning.

And usually on Sunday would they leave?

It was a big thing to do on Sundays when berry season was in season.

And whole families would go on these berry trains?

Yes

And then you all had to get back to the railroad track in time to catch the train?

Right. Our place picking berries was Gorden

Oh, you went to Gorden. Gorden is about how far from Marquette, about?

I would say about twelve - fourteen miles.

And what railroad operated these trains.

The SS & A.

And so you had to get down to the railroad station?

In order to get the train.

And all day...did you ever have a wet rainy day when you were out picking berries and you had to stay the whole day?

I can't remember that if it happened

Did you have fun doing that...were there other children?

Oh yes...it was something we looked forward to

The train ride?

The train ride and picking berries.
I: Bringing them back?
R: Right...I imagine the train ride at our age was the best part.
I: And then to get the berries back home and get them canned. And most of the Finnish families had quite a few berries canned.
R: Quite a few berries...berries were very abundant in those days.
I: No deep freeze...
R: No deep freeze...they had to be cooked in Mason jars.
I: And right today it's hard to get the Mason jars.
R: I remember the color of the Mason jars were blue then.
I: Which are very special and if you have them today then they cost quite a bit.
R: Yes, they do. I can say that.
I: So, you had all the canning to be done...did you ever go to Sugar Loaf or that area to pick berries?
R: Yes, we made several trips to Sugar Loaf.
I: How did you get to Sugar Loaf...do you remember? Did you hike?
R: We used a horse. We used to rent a horse from John Dorse Horse stables. Dad used to do that and we'd rent the horse for the day and buggy and then we also went with horse to Sands Berry Plains for the day. I remember both instances of that being done.
I: Did you look forward to that horse ride?
R: That was quite a day.
I: And now were there quite a few horses around at that time?
R: The Dorse stable...they must have had around fifteen horses for rent at that time.
I: What about the grocery stores? What were they like at that time?
R: The grocery stores...they would deliver the groceries to the houses and in them days they bought in large quantities...much bigger quantities than today. Mother would buy toast in the large drum...would that be about twenty-five or thirty pounds...crackers would be in ten-pound boxes and dried fruits...lot of dried fruits.
I: And they made their own bread usually.
R: Yes, they made their own bread. The flour was bought in hundred pound
I: Were there any grocery stores in North Marquette at that time?

R: Yes there was. One of the markets was Fines Grocery Store and Looensteins Grocery Store...and I remember they had a cooperative store that is there today yet.

I: And people bought from those stores?

R:

I: Did they have someone working there that could speak Finnish many times?

R: Just in the co-op store, that was mostly Finnish stockholders.

I: Now, did you have a cow, chickens and so on when you lived in Marquette?

R: Yes, Mother operated a boarding house. She had eight to ten men eating and she board most of them with rooms and she had two cows to supplement for milk.

I: Now, how large was your house on Presque Isle? Do you remember how many rooms you had on the first floor...second floor?

R: I guess a nine-room house.

I: Nine-room house.

R:

I: So you had boarders there.

R:

I: Where did these people work then?

R: They worked either with the Chemical Company or the Ore Docks or else the railroad.

I: Now your father worked for the LS & I Railroad.

R:

I: And he was in bridge and building.

R:

I: And did they fix the docks then for ore being shipped?

R: Yes, he done repair work being done on the docks and also then all the bridges between Marquette and Negaunee and Ishpeming.

I: Were there quite a few Finnish people working for the railroads?
R: Quite a few

I: Do you remember how long days... how many hours your father worked... do you remember anything from that? Were they ten-hour days?

R: They were ten-hour days and six days a week.

I: Do you remember anything about their wages... what were their wages?

R: I don't remember that.

I: Now, these people that boarded at your house, were they Finnish people usually?

R: They were usually Finnish people.

I: That had come from Finland?

R: Yes

I: And if they were single people then.

R: They were single people, yes.

I: And so she had a lot of work...

R: They were all men boarders

I: And so she prepared breakfast and supper for them?

R: Breakfast and supper, yeah.

I: And she had to make their lunch.

R: And she made dinner pails for their lunch to carry out.

I: Did you have to take care of the chickens or cows?

R: Yes, I used to take care of the cows, used to bring them to pasture... out in the morning and then after school I'd go out and bring them back home again.

I: And that pasture was right within city limits.

R: Yeah, it was about a mile... mile and a half from home, the pasture.

I: But still it was within the city limits of Marquette.

R: Yes, it was within the city limits.

I: So you knew how to milk cows before you went to the farm.

R:
I: Now when you were in the sixth grade you moved to the farm.
R: Right
I: Did you go to school when you lived in the country? How many miles from Marquette then?
R: Ten miles south of Marquette. I went to seventh and eighth grade in the country.
I: And this was at the Green Garden School?
R: Green Garden School
I: Was that school much different from what you had at John D. Pierce?
R: Yeah, it was a one-room school.
I: And you had had a room for every grade at John D. Pierce?
R: Right...at John D. Pierce.
I: So it was an altogether different situation when you got over there.
R: Un huh
I: How did the students get along with the teacher there? Were there any discipline problems?
R: There were some discipline problems.
I: How were they taken care of if there was discipline...do you remember?
R: Well, I remember once the County School Commissioner, Simon Anderson, and was two of the boys that he took in the back room and he took the belt off his pants to give them a thrashing.
I: And he could do it at that time?
R: Yeah, and one of the boys...Used to be a famous wrestler once upon a time afterwards.
I: Somebody took care of him before that though, at school...Simon Anderson.
R: Yes
I: Now, how was the school heated and so on?
R: The pot bellied wood and coal burner.
I: Did the teacher take care of this then?
R: The teacher took care of it and some of the bigger boys in the class would also help her with putting block wood in there.
I: And often it was a very young teacher just out of school?
R: Yes
I: And you had all of your subjects in one room.
R: All the subjects in one room.
I: So, it was very different from what you had had at John D. Pierce.
R: There was about thirty-five of us in this one-room school.
I: And through the eighth grade?
R: Through the eighth grade, yeah.
I: Now, did they have any special Christmas program at that school? Do you remember any program?
R: We had some small programs and we had Christmas parties
I: Was there any kind of a picnic or anything at the end of the year when school closed?
R: Just a small picnic, just in the yard of the school.
I: Was the Christmas program held at the school or was it held in some other building?
R: No, it was held in the school building.
I: So that people could come to it
R: Yeah
I: And there were about thirty-five students in your school then.
R: Right
I: And you could go through the eighth grade.
R: Yes
I: And if there were discipline problems...bad ones...the County Superintendent of Schools would come and take care of them.
R: Right
I: Now, when you moved to the country that was in 1919, how was travel in the summertime to and from Green Gardens?
R: The travel...the biggest part...was by horse and carriage. The luckier ones...there was a few cars being used at the time
I: Now, how were the roads?
R: The roads...there was a hard road up to the Green Garden hill and it ended there and from there it was all just dirt roads at the time.
I: And so you had what...just about a mile or so of dirt road?
R: Of dirt roads...the Green Garden hill at that time was a plank coming up one way and sand going down. The sand was for the reason to keep the wagons from not going too fast.
I: It was a curvery road up to that hill.
R: Yeah
I: Now, in the wintertime how did you get in and out of.
R: Mostly in the wintertime if we didn't go with the horse and sleigh, it would be by rail which we had to go to the railroad station two miles to either Mangum or either Green Garden stations to pick up the train. It would come by about nine-thirty or ten o'clock in the morning and then come back about three-thirty or four o'clock in the afternoon, come back from Marquette.
I: But you could take one from Mangum at that time.
R:
I: And what railroad was that?
R: That was the LS & I Railroad.
I: The LS & I Railroad; but you could get into town?
R:
I: Now, how did you bring...did you come into town to bring eggs, milk, cream, butter and so on in those early years?
R: Yes, it would be mostly eggs.
I: Even by rail you would bring eggs?
R: Would bring eggs in, yeah.
I: Was it difficult to bring eggs all the way? Did you have special customers in Marquette?
R: Had special customers too...to bring the eggs to.
I: So you had to carry these eggs all around town.
R: Yeah, fifteen dozen in each box...had regular wooden carriers and they were loose; and my capacity was thirty dozen...to two carriers. That's what I could manage to bring on the train.
I: And then you had to go all around Marquette to sell them.

R: Had several customers to bring them to

I: And then you had to do it in time to be back at the railroad station by three-thirty.

R: At least, yeah.

I: And there was only the one train that you could have taken?

R: Yes, just the one train.

I: And then people from your area would come if they needed to come to Marquette, they would come on that train.

R: Right

I: And if you needed medical care you would have to come on that train into Marquette.

R: Un hum...and the milk in cans was all shipped in the wintertime by this...by train.

I: You said that you sold your milk to Buck Dairy in Marquette.

R: Yeah, in bulk.

I: So, you had the big milk cans?

R: Ten-gallon milk cans.

I: And you had to bring them to the railroad?

R: Yeah, in the wintertime.

I: Now then, how did Buck Dairy get your milk in the summertime?

R: They had a truck.

I: That they'd go around the country...

R: Yeah, and the fartherest point at that time that they'd pick up milk would be up as far as Skandia, once a day. Sundays not including.

I: Everyday he would...

R: Everyday.

I: But he didn't have a refrigerated truck or anything...

R: Just a regular truck of that type.
R: Just an open truck.

I: Now, what year did you start into the dairy business and milk distributing?

R: In 1927...March 1st of 1927.

I: Now, you started with your father in '27, now how did you get your milk other than from your own cows?

R: Father would...when we first started, just from our own herd. Gradually we...as business grew we took on more farms and he would also get his milk as far as Skandia and Dukes and sometimes reach way into Romley even...Alger County.

I: Now with the milk then that you brought into town, did you deliver the milk into town then by truck?

R: Yes we did by truck and in the wintertime...by that time the roads were being open more in the wintertime...gradually getting more to that they're plowing; but there were lot of times we kept delivering with a horse and sleigh. The roads weren't plowed out as they are today. They plowed the roads out with a tractor which was real slow.

I: Now, do you remember what the price of a quart of milk in 1927 was when you brought it into town?

R: About ten cents a quart.

I: About ten cents a quart...and was this pasturized milk or just whole milk.

R: It was whole milk...not pasturized at that time.

I: But it was in bottles.

R: Yeah, in bottles.

I: That it wasn't bulk.

R: No, it wasn't bulk...in pint and quart bottles.

I: Now, your milk then when you were bringing it into town, did you ever have problems with your truck breaking down and so on?

R: Yes, we had trouble.

I: Do you remember any special occasion when that happened?

R: No, I don't remember of anytime...I remember once that the truck run away on me.

I: Is there anything more that you can tell about it?
R: Yes

I: Where it happened?

R: It happened on top of Fifth Street hill and.

I: That's one of the steep hills.

R: One of the steep hills in town and I went through a wood pile and into a house; and, of course, I lost all that milk.

I: You lost all your milk that time. Do you remember any other...how did you get customers and so on? When you first started, how did you get customers, do you remember how you went about it?

R: Yeah, my mother was the salesman. She went and talked to these customers and we picked them up that way.

I: Were they mostly Finnish people then?

R: They were mostly Finnish people at that time.

I: Now, did you ever have problems when you were going back...now, for instance Green Garden hill is a steep hill there just before your farm...would you have any problems on that hill getting up, you know?

R: Yes, we used to have a Model T truck and a Model T car and it was gravity fed and lot of times we'd have to...we'd get about three-quarters of the way up this steep hill and we'd have to turn around and go backwards down.

I: So, you'd have to play a lot of tricks on the car and truck to get up.

R: Yes, to get up.

I: Now, were there really problems on that hill...Green Garden hill...for cars?

R: Yes, it was considered a dangerous hill on account of the sharp curve in it.

I: Yes, they had problems on Green Garden hill, but most of the time the Finnish people in those early times would get their cars up. They would give it (???)...and if they could go up in high...do you remember any?

R: Oh yes, I remember that if a car would make it up in high gear, it was considered a real good car; but was not too many that made it in high gear.

I: And all the Finnish people would know about it if they made it.

R: Oh yes, they really remarked about it. It was considered a real good car when it made it in high.
I: And some of the Finnish people at that time were kind of fast drivers, weren't they?

R: Oh

I: They played their tricks on each other to get ahead.

R: Oh

I: Now, in your dairy business then, those were some of the problems that you had in early years and then can you tell me something as it grew and so on and how you got the milk and when did you have to start pasturizing it? About what year? Was it a city ruling or something?

R: A city and state ruling. It started in...about ten years after we started in the business...I would say about '37 that all milk had to be pasturized.

I: By that time all milk had to be pasturized?

R: Yes

I: That you brought into the city.

R: Right

I: Now, how did they find out if you did it or not.

R: The pasturizing unit had this recording clock that records the pasturizing temperature and the holding period and every day this chart had to be changed and marked the date of there the date it was used.

I: And didn't the health officer sometimes come around too?

R: He came down quite often, sometimes...quite often...that'd be once a month.

I: That'd be from the city?

R: From the city, and also from the state.

I: Now, did you know when the health inspector would come?

R: No, we didn't have no idea when they would come and they would also inspect the farms where you purchased your milk from.

I: Now, that has changed. You had to collect the milk at that time from the farms.

R: Yes

I: And get it to your dairy and pasturize it and bring it into town. And now, it's an altogether different situation, isn't it. You don't collect it. Now, how does it work now?

R: Now, the milk is all purchased through the Michigan Milk Producers Association and they in turn do their direct dealings with the farmers.
We just do our purchasing through this association and we just order the amount of milk that we anticipate that we're gonna use always a day ahead and you can get it in bulk form now.

I: To
R: Yes, in a big large tanker.
I: And then you bottle it. How many quarts of milk do you bottle a day?
R: In the neighborhood of twenty-two thousand pounds a day.
I: Do you use glass bottles yet?
R: No, all paper and plastic bags also in the bulk form. Otherwise, the cartons are in half-pint, pints and quarts, and half-gallons.
I: Now, who buys the bulk then? Where do you bring the bulk?
R: We're under contract with the University of Northern Michigan...we have a one-year contract.
I: Is this something that you bid for at Northern Michigan University?
R: Competitive bid...once a year.
I: And you have to bring it in by bulk.
R: Yes
I: And so, now the dairy business is altogether different now than it was in 1927 when you started.
R: Much different
I: You need much more equipment now than you did at that time?
R: All stainless steel and now we're all required to have deep drilled wells which we have three to supply our water.
I: Now, how many trucks do you have coming into Marquette delivering milk a day now?
R: There's seven trucks moving every day.
I: Seven trucks leave the dairy each day.
R: Yeah
I: In the beginning did you come daily...in 1927...or did you come a few times a week?
R: We came daily in 1927 and now we just deliver to customers three times a week.
I: But, you would come Sundays and holidays and everything in

R: Yes

I: But you had much less equipment then... and now it's more costly with the equipment.

R: Oh yes... all refrigerated trucks that we're using.

I: Which you didn't have to have in 1927.

R: No, we didn't know much about refrigeration then.

I: Now, how long does it take you to drive into Marquette now? About how many minutes?

R: Oh, about twenty minutes.

I: About twenty minutes... and the highway is much better than when you moved there in 1919.

R: Much... got all paved highway now.

I: And now it doesn't take long to get from one place to another.

R: It don't take long, no.

I: So, things have changed in the dairy business since 1927.

R: Very much so.

I: Now, you have to have more equipment now, you have to have stainless steel, you have to have this refrigeration and so on. How many people work for you in the dairy or how many people are working there?

R: There's eleven of us working.

I: Eleven of you working in there to get the milk going and so on.

R: Yes to get it distributed; and we deliver into three towns, Marquette, Negaunee, Ishpeming and then the Alger County, the outside areas of Alger County.

I: So, you also deliver outside of Marquette now, you deliver to Negaunee and Ishpeming, the cities, and you deliver into the rural areas.

R: The rural areas of these towns.

I: Skandia?

R: Yes

I: And, of course, there'd be a lot of sub-divisions that you would be going into.

R: Right.
I: Now, going back to 1919 when you moved to the country, what nationalities were in that Green Garden area?

R: They were...it was a German settlement and the church still stands there that these German settlers erected and then we lived right next to the German cemetery and then three miles further than this is the Swedish settlement which they call Yalmer...Skandia.

I: And were you the only Finnish ones in the German settlement when you went there first?

R: We were the only Finnish in that settlement at that time...the first one.

I: Now, being the first Finnish people in a German settlement, how did they take to you.

R: We were received really nice there. We were very welcome there.

I: That there weren't really any problems that way.

R: No.

I: Now, of course, it's a mixture already...

R: Oh yes.

I: Do you know anything about how early these Germans had come there? Do you have any idea when the Germans had come into that area of Green Garden?

R: I heard that, but I can't remember.

I: Would they be about the turn of the century in the 1900's when they had come?

R: It was in 1890 I think was the first settler and they were homesteaded, I think, all these farms that we moved to.

I: So they were homesteading on these farms?

R: Yes.

I: In the 1890's and now the farm that you bought has belonged to a German family.

R: Homestead...yes.

I: And what happened to that family?

R: That family then moved to the house that we left in Marquette.

I: Oh, you exchanged the house in Marquette for the farm there.
R: For the farm there.
I: Now, how much was there on the farm at that time...the acreage and so on?

R: Eighty acres.
I: Eighty acres and a house?
R: And a house and the barns.
I: And did they leave any of their cows and so on?
R: Yes, they left some of their cows there...I think it's around ten head and two horses.
I: What did you do with your cows that you had in Marquette? Did you leave them for the people then?
R: Took them to the farm also.
I: How did you get them there then?
R: We walked 'em there. When we moved to the farm we didn't have no truck to transport them, so we walked them up that ten miles and I took them there with my uncle, Jack Ranta.
I: Oh, you took them with my dad. How was it...along the highway did you go?
R: Along the highway...this one whole Sunday it took us to bring the two cows and a calf went along with them...so there were three of them.
I: So you had two cows and a calf that you had to take ten miles
R: Un hum...Uncle Jack led the two cows and the calf followed and I in behind and we walked the whole distance with the animals.
I: I bet you were tired, not just the cows
R: Yeah, I remember that day to this day
I: That was an experience that would be impossible today...to go along the highway with two cows and a calf ten miles. Now, what about your chickens and that that you had in town?
R: They were brought with the car.
I: Oh, the chickens got a car ride with the touring car.
R: With the touring car in a box.
I: That really is funny, you know, to have somebody...to think of someone
going from Marquette to Green Garden today, past the State Prison and so on, and along Harvey where you have so much traffic and a five-lane highway being made there now, and you two going on a Sunday with two cows and a calf.

I: What kind of a day was it?

R: It was September 9th when we brought these cows, and it was a real hot day traveling.

I: So, we had a hot day September 9, 1919

Stop in tape.

I: Now, going back to World War II, do you remember any problems you had in dairy farming and business during World War II?

R: Yes, I remember that being we had a number of dairy cattle and that we were farming the farm, I was considered to be drafted; so I post draft exempt on doing farm work and dairy work; but we weren't bothered with gas rationing although we had to apply for stamps due to the fact that we were in the food distributing and raising food, we had to have these stamps to get along. And we also had sugar which was in short supply at that time too. Coffee was short.

I: Now, in your rural school, you had one fellow that was beat up by the Superintendent of schools and he became quite famous wrestling and his name is?

R: Gus Sunnenberg... he became a famous wrestler and also one of the first professional football stars in the big time football.

I: Now, going back, would you give your father and mother's names?

R: My father's name was Solomon Ranta and mother's name was Aleena Ranta.

I: And where did your mother and dad meet each other, do you know? Were they married in Marquette?

R: They were married in Marquette... they met in either Chatam or Rumley area there in the lumber camps.

I: The noted lumber camps of Evan-Rumley area?

R: Yeah, in 1904 or 1905.

I: And what year were they married in Marquette, do you know?

R: Must have been married in 1907.

I: But, they were both working in Marquette then, at that time?

R: Yes
R: Mother worked as a housemaid for some of the well-to-do people here in town.

I: And your father was working for the railroad.

R: The LS & I Railroad.

Stop in tape

I: William Ranta; wife, Mary Louta Ranta of Negaunee; children, Jean Marlene, Robert William, Sheila Marie, and Catherine Joy.

September 28, 1974